

Visit to 401 North College February 29, 1976

Reverend Jerry Henneberry, who bought this house in August, 1975, showed it to me.

Front porch and north terrace have quarry tile floors and concrete bannisters with "turned" balusters. The front door and the inner door beyond the tiled vestibule both have sidelights of leaded glass, and the French doors into the north parlor also have these sidelights.

The north parlor has a brick fireplace with a square area above the mantel with inset square tiles; the sunroom on the east front has a similar fireplace backing the other one. Sunroom floor is tiled, and roof is beamed; this is now used as a chapel.

The south parlor, a much smaller room, has a molded plaster ceiling; at the position where ceiling and wall meet, a design in relief, probably plaster, adds further decoration. The fireplace is marble with a wood mantle.

The large hall is paneled. Wood may be oak. To the right is the entrance to the original kitchen, completely tiled. A stairway, enclosed, leads to the basement, which has brick partitions separating various rooms. The original boiler which supplied city heat is still there, although this is no longer used: a new furnace was installed several years ago when city heat service ceased.

At the end of the front hall is another hall at right angles on the south, leading to a side entrance. The stairway to the second floor is on the west side, to the left of the dining room entrance. The dining room has a long radiator in front of the south windows, covered by a wood grille. Brass wall sconces may be original. On the west wall, built-in, is a cupboard with glassed doors and a large panel of art glass above these.

The breakfast room just west of the dining room has exposed beams and windows on south and west side. The radiator has a breakfast warmer on it: this is of metal, with a design painted over, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet long and about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet high; it has doors which open out to show two shelves. Mr. Henneberry said this was original.

There are several bedrooms on the second and third floors. The master bedroom on the north has a fireplace with sunroom or sleeping porch on the east, above the one on first floor. Partitions on the third floor mask the original layout.

Extra tiles for the roof have been stored in the house and are used for replacements.

There is a Greek key design at the top of the wainscot (which is low) in the north parlor.

*Margaret Meyer*



91 • 100 •











This Decatur landmark located at 401 North College Street, has been converted into a House of Prayer by a former local in-

urance man. Rev. Jerry W. Henneberry left the business world to follow what he believed was a call to a special min-

istry, which included the old England mansion. The story of his work in the mansion, along with pictures can be found on

pages 10 and 11 of this edition. (Photo by Larry W. Turner, Staff Photographer)



December 31, 1916.

# NEW HOME IN COLLEGE S



C. England Home from East.



Living Room.

## DECATUR READS MORE

### Library Now Has More Volumes

The year 1916 marked the history of the library. In it for the first time the authorities began advertising the Decatur public library and will be the first to show the library could and will do for it, and the public in ways that surprised even workers.

#### BOOKS LOAN

The most interesting year was the week beginning in the campaign, the library had the ready assistance of every organization and of many individuals in the city, a consequence brought within a few days of Decatur people had almost forgotten. Since Library Week the library has advanced an amount of the building has per cent.

#### BOOKS ISSUED

An increase of more than 5000 during the year has been issued to Decatur people with the exception of 3000 increase in Decatur a building. The library has 25000 the close of the year.

#### BRANCH

Another important event in the history of the library was the opening of the branch at the corner of the school. It has added volume and interest to the library. The library department was opened in the Miller drug store on the corner of East street and East avenue. The school collection was the first to be made in the library. The branch is now open and the library is now open. The library is now open and the library is now open.

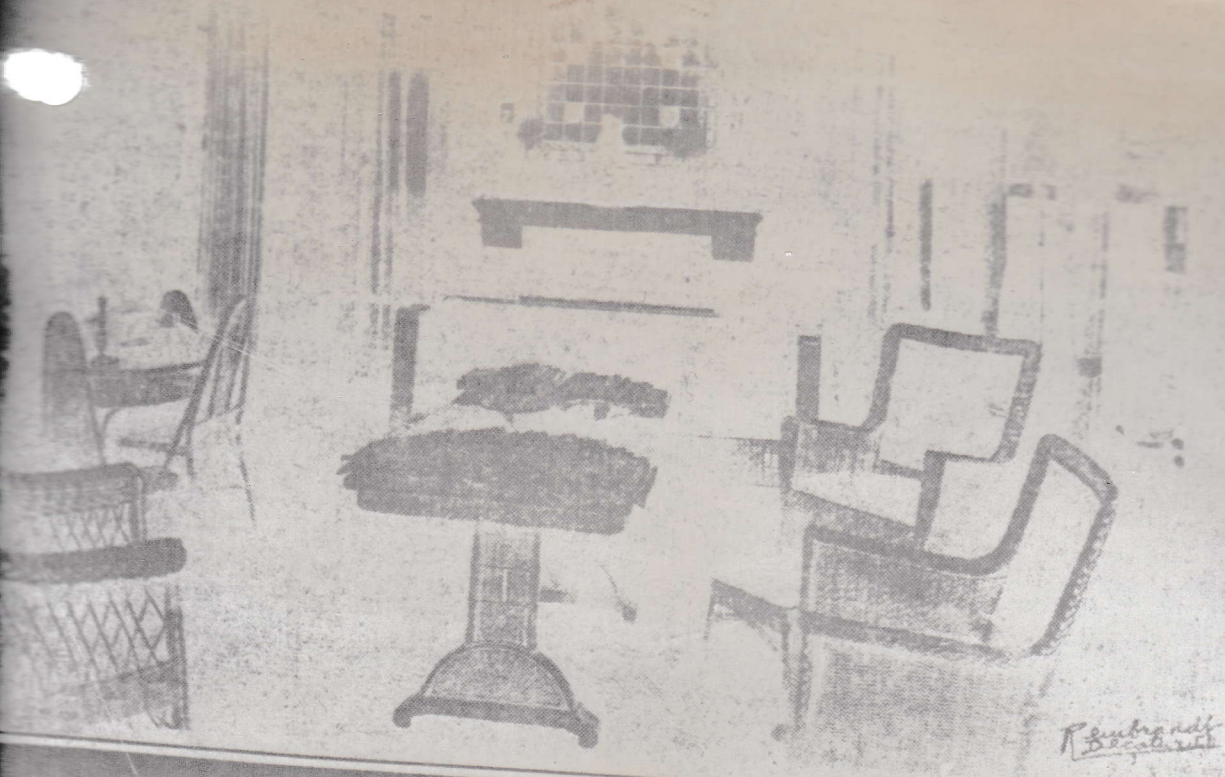
#### LIBRARY

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#### IN DECATUR

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Rembrandt Photo

The decoration above fireplace in the sun room is an unusual design done in bronze and is completed by the statue of a child looking over a bowl of gold fish. The room itself catches the eastern sun which lights up and blue interior.

Dec. 31, 1916

The gray bro of flowers that an

# ENGLAND HOME OF SURPASSING BEAUTY

able Interior Decorative Effects Attained in Furniture, Draperies and Woodwork Designed Entirely by Firms.

most beautiful addition to the host of beautiful last year, is that of E. England, who have the old mansion built by William B. Chambers, into a tasteful, sumptuous and individual. It beggars description, not only by the beauty of the interior, made with exquisite regard for its atmosphere. There has been made in the living room any set style or colors that are used in the home are combined. Hangings of soft richness to the oak panels around the Newport, all upholstered in raspberry velour, and the fireplace, but about the rooms are and raspberry, with a wicker chair that in the days of the two handsome mahogany, as and artistically a tapestry of cloth and the other of and the lamp the other is a of all the colors.

and mahogany. The walls are a soft gray, the fireplace a soft gray and above it a mural painting of a child with Pan-like grace. One of the beauties of the dining room is also a mural painting extending the length of one wall, all the subdued colors blending with the brown of the oak panels, the somberness of the Jacobean furniture and the hangings of gold and blue.

**Breakfast Room a Gem.**  
From the elaborateness of the dining room, one steps into the informality of the dearest breakfast room imaginable. It is all gray. Windows on all sides let the sun shine in on a gray nest of a room. The gray hangings are gay with little birds in purple and lavender and the gray furniture is decorated in the same way. The woodwork, of birds-eye maple, is gray finished and smooth as satin. In the lamp above the table are dressed grasses, dragonflies, and dragonflies. The little drop leaf table has not yet arrived but its charm can be guessed from the drop leaf cupboard which it is to resemble.

Up stairs, the rooms of Miss Helen and Miss Dorothy are dainty feminine affairs, the furniture of solid mahogany overlaid with ivory. The hangings in the one are of blue brocade with rose, and in the other, a rose brocade. The room belonging to the sons of the family is simple and masculine, with inlaid circles of walnut furniture and hangings of green and yellow.

**Personal Guest Room.**

touch. The large room belonging to Mr. and Mrs. England, has both simplicity and beauty. The furniture is massive but simple, the hangings, of blue and pink brocade, and the wall decoration of apple blossoms. A cedar closet, white enameled, is one of Mrs. England's especial pleasures.

All of the sleeping porches are finished in willow green with hangings of blue and rose, and all of the other woodwork is of ivory enamel, with doors of mahogany.

**Rugs and Ceilings Match.**  
On the lower floor, the rugs are patterned to match the ceilings, and all are gray with only the outline of the pattern in the different colors. Sunshine flitters all through the home during the day, as there are about 150 windows and lights spring out over the home by night from the 200 lamps. A number of the fixtures are gold plated and all are of unusual design.

The home is a triumph for Decatur as it is every bit the product of Decatur. A local architect drew the plans, an equally fine an artist decorated the hangings. The furniture was ordered by a local firm and local firms supplied the plumbing, and the appointments. It took almost a year to complete the building as the first grading was done Jan. 2, 1916, and the family moved in about Nov. 17.

**LYCEUM NUMBER JAN. 1**

The Bohannans Appear in First Register of New Year's Night.

The Bohannans, readers and students, will appear on Monday night, Jan. 1, in the auditorium of the First Baptist church, as the third number in a Lyceum course under the auspices of that church.

Jean and Ord Bohannan are vaudeville favorites and their program includes readings, impersonations, tenor and soprano solos, duets, musical readings and sketches.

Mr. Bohannan has acquired distinction as a composer, several of her songs having found a ready market in England and Germany.

Mr. Bohannan has

## R. R. "Y" MEMBERSHIP SHOWS BIG INCREASE

Captured Championship of West in International Campaign in November.

The Railroad Y. M. C. A. shows 1916 as the most successful year in its history. The membership has increased 154 over the figure a year ago due to the association's enlarged activities in the railroad circles as well as the East side community in general. The Decatur association also captured the championship of the West in the international membership campaign in November, the local association securing more than 170 members, including some renewals.

**26 Meetings a Week.**  
An idea of the association's work can be gained by looking over the records of the meetings held under its auspices. The records show that a week, including the religious, social and educational classes. The social side is confined mostly to the East side, where the attention is concentrated a splendid organized community work. In one night, recently, there were six different meetings in as many places.

The night school is one of the features of the work, and is growing in favor every year. Arrangements have been made so that the student can graduate after five winters of work. There are four different classes in the night school, two of which are in common branch work, another in mechanical drawing and the last in mechanics. The "Y" building has one of the most complete schools in as many places.





The gray breakfast room is a delightful place with its gray furniture, decorated with the same birds and sprigs of flowers that are the motifs in the hangings.

—Rembrandt Photo

Dec. 31, 1916

## MEMBERSHIP BIG INCREASE

Increased membership and the increased activities. The lunch room, in which about 200 men are served daily, is small and probably will be enlarged in 1917. Arrangements are also being made to double the pool-room space, so that another table can be added. The library, containing about 2,000 volumes, is more popular than before.

"The Pines," the home of Col. J. M. Coker, at Seventh and William streets, which has been used by the association

for the East side community work, will be turned over almost entirely to the association after the first of the year. Shower baths, a reading room and social room will be fitted up in the home. The supervised play work, which was successful in 1916, will be enlarged in 1917. A number of pieces of play apparatus will be installed on the ground.

In the last year, the association has extended its work, so that it reaches

directly or indirectly the entire East side community.

### RECEIPTS FOR MONTH

Controlled by L. L. McNabb reports receipts for the general fund in December to have been \$4,322.99 and the disbursements \$10,000.00. The big item of receipts was \$1,000.00 water rent.

A detailed report is a later part of the winter work.

## Championship of West National Campaign in November.

The Y. M. C. A. closes 1916... successful year in its history... membership has increased... a great part due to the... enlarged activities... as well as the... in general. The... also captured the... of the West in the... membership campaign in... association securing... members, including some...

...a Week... the association's work... looking over the rec... meetings held under its... records show that an... gatherings are held... the religious, social... classes. The social... mostly to the East... association is conduct... organized community... meetings in as many...

...one of the feat... and is growing in... arrangements have... the student can... numbers of work... classes in the... which are in com... in mechan... in mechan... of the... the study of...

We furnished the  
Electric Wiring and  
Lighting of the  
C. E. England Home

Estimates for electrical work of all  
kinds cheerfully furnished.

R. W. Trotter Electric Co.  
151 East Prairie St.



July 18, 1947

MANSION TO BE MADE INTO APARTMENT HOUSE



Remodeling of the former C. E. England home on College

hill into six apartments has begun. The house was purchased

recently by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stalain from Mr. England.

Board Delays Route Action

Action by the Decatur park board on re-routing highway 36 through Fairview park was delayed last night after problems which hinder the approval of the plan were discussed at a meeting of the board.

The position of the park board was outlined in a letter written to the city planning commission and the Association of Commerce requesting a definite outline of the project, including what would be done and how much land would be required.

Mr. Monroe, park board attorney, said the board does not have title to certain portions of the requested right-of-way which it may transfer or convey. In an opinion to the group, Mr. Monroe reported that much of the land in question can be held by the park district as long as it is used for park purposes but reverts to the original owner when not used as a park.

The letter stated that in addition to the legality of the transfer of the land, there were other major problems which hinder the suggested plan. Roy M. Black, board president, explained the board has no definite plans and is undecided regarding the proposed route which would place route 36 on Elderado

Remodeling England Home College Hill Mansion to Become Apartment

The C. E. England home located on a one-half acre tract of land on the north half of College hill is being remodeled into six apartments by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stalain who recently bought the property.

Mr. and Mrs. Stalain of 244 West Green street will occupy one of the apartments.

The large house, which has for years been one of the show places in Decatur, has a large living room, sunroom, music room, dining room, breakfast nook, butler's pantry, kitchen and a half bath on the first floor. The kitchen and butler's pantry has tile floors, side walls and ceilings.

The upstairs has five bedrooms, two with connecting bath and three with individual baths, all with tile floors, side walls and ceilings. Three of the bedrooms have sleeping porches adjoining, and spacious closets.

On the third floor is an apartment for maid and a large ballroom. The basement is partitioned into several rooms with masonry

walls. The home can be heated with city steam or by stoker. There is also an apartment over the three-car garage located on the west side of the estate.

The property was bought by Mr. England in 1916. On it at that time was a house built many years before by William B. Chambers of the Chambers-Bering-Quinlan Co. and a former mayor of Decatur. In the 1880's the house was occupied by the Silas Packard family and in settlement of the Packard estate was bought by James T. Whitley who sold it to Mr. England.

The original house was completely rebuilt and the property landscaped at a cost estimated at the time between \$20,000 and \$30,000. The appraised valuation of the property is in excess of \$75,000.

Newspaper reports in 1916 said that the home was "by far the most beautiful addition made to Decatur a host of beautiful homes."

The recent sale of the property was handled by P. H. Sproat & Co., realtors.

Fifth Boy Scout Camp Period Begins July 27

Boy Scout Camp Robert Faries will be open for a fifth period this season beginning July 27. Scout Executive William B. Soules an-

Long Session Seen for Jury

Rehabilitation Program Aiding Cases of Vets, Civilians Handicapped

Even disabled civilians who were not in the armed forces can obtain aid under the state and federal vocational rehabilitation program.

This broad plan of aid has been available for several years. In 1943 it was expanded under the Barden-LaFollette act, but comparatively few persons apparently know of the provisions.

About 1,500 disabled civilians in this area during the last four years have been placed in paying jobs or aided in holding their present positions. Fred Ziese, vocational rehabilitation officer here, said today.

OF THESE, 450 cases were handled during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1947. These figures are for the 33rd district, including Macon, Moultrie, Christian and Piatt counties.

The work of the local office includes two types of cases. Many of the disabled persons could not hold paying jobs before being rehabilitated. But there are also many who were disabled while holding a job.

The rehabilitation problem for these is to provide them with a new limb or whatever is needed so that they can retain their old jobs.

Mr. Ziese said that his office sometimes trains the individual so that he may advance rather than just hold his old job. The training may extend from a few months to as long as four years of college.

When it will correct a physical handicap, the rehabilitation office will get surgery or other treatment for the individual, if such treatment will make the person able to go back to work.

THE CASES handled by the local office concern only persons with physical or mental disabilities. They may include veterans whose disability was not connected with their work in the armed forces.

Usually, only those who are over 16 or who have completed high school can receive aid under the law, Mr. Ziese said. Younger persons are referred to the University of Illinois division of services to crippled children.

The average age of the persons who have applied to the local office is 35 years.

According to local records, when a handicapped civilian has been rehabilitated, his annual earnings are just about equal those of a person without a disability. But Mr. Ziese says there are still some employers who are doubtful that a handicapped person can do a day's work for a day's wage.

The average cost to rehabilitate

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the maid room and the maid's room are located on third floor, with an individual bath in connection with the maid's bedroom.

Recently a garage with room for three cars has been added on the rear of the grounds. The garage is made of rough faced red brick and is at the right of the concrete drive leading from the street.



Sun Porch

The sun porch is done in pink and blue and has a Japanese rug of old rose and tan. The furniture in the porch is heavy and the material is of Bookwood.



Guest Room in the England Home.

Like the other rooms of the second floor the guest room is finished in ivory. The furniture is mahogany.



North Front C. E. England Home.

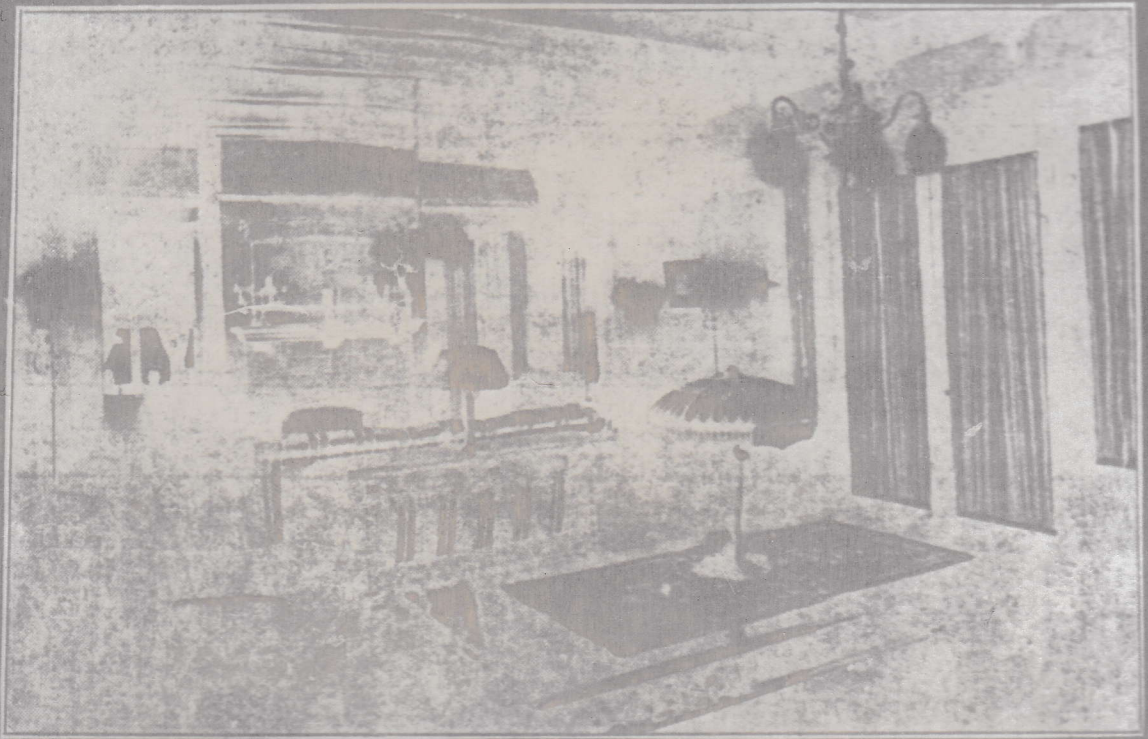


Delightful Boudoir in the England Home.

Finished completely in white ivoré the boudoir of Miss England is one of the most beautiful in the world.



C. E. England Home from East



Living Room.

Living room is done in mulberry with oak furniture of the Jacobean style.



The Spacious Dining Room.

One of the most attractive rooms in the whole house. The room is finished in dark fumed oak.

(fumed oak)



### Had Fine Homes Here and in Miami

Back in the 90's when A. E. Staley used to visit Decatur as a starch salesman he would stroll through the residential district, taking particular pleasure in a spacious home atop a hill in the west part of town.

"I always thought that it was the finest I had ever seen," Mr. Staley said in later years. "I wondered if I would ever have a chance to own one like it."

Years later he moved to Decatur. The Ennis property on College hill became vacant and, in 1913, Mr. Staley bought it for around \$20,000. He spent more than \$50,000 remodeling it.

#### Had 20 Rooms

Erected in the early '80's by W. J. Quinlan, the house has more than 20 rooms. It was sold to W. H. Ennis in 1891, and Mr. Ennis added the barn which the Staleys later made the garage.

Hardwood was used throughout in the original construction, the floors being of walnut and oak. Much of the framework and woodwork, too, is of walnut.

Its appearance was not changed materially by the Staleys. Most of the improvements made were of the interior and for the most part consisted of modernization.

Before moving into the College hill home, the Staleys, after their arrival in Decatur from Balti-

more, lived in a rented house at 324 West Prairie avenue.

#### Built Florida Home

In 1930, Mr. Staley went to Florida for the first time and, after that, Miami became his winter home. There he bought a three-story home erected on a built-up mango swamp. On the grounds are two additional guest houses.

Royal palms line the drive of the Florida residence and Mr. Staley also laid out a formal garden.

The Staleys frequently entertained Decatur sojourners in their Florida home. Notables, too, often were their guests. Entertained were former Gov. James M. Cox of Ohio, the Democratic nominee for President in 1920; the late U. S. Senator James Hamilton Lewis of Illinois; George Ade, the humorist; the mayor of Miami and other civic and business leaders of the resort state.

#### Had Roses as Hobby

Mr. Staley's favorite flower was the rose and there was always a red one in his buttonhole. On the "mound," which College hill is often called, there is a bush which blooms as continuously as any shrub can do in this climate, and when he acquired his Florida estate, Mr. Staley began to develop his hobby of roses on a larger scale.

He set out 500 rose bushes on the grounds and during one season his gardener reported cutting more than 5,000 blooms. At the Staley office building here two roof gardens are brilliant every spring with the blooms of Mr. Staley's red and pink roses.

From

Mr. Staley's obituary

During the summer, 1975, Mrs. C.A. McMiller (Mrs. Eleanor Barnes McMiller) phoned Charlotte Meyer, questioning the date of construction given in Places and People in Old Decatur for the Quinlan - Staley house on College Hill. Her grandfather, Dr. B. Chambers, built the house next door at 401 North College. She recalled being told many times that her mother, Anna Chambers and Albert Barnes, were married in 1883 in the parlor at 401 North College, but the wedding supper was at the door in the new Quinlan house. Mr. Staley



# C. E. England, Ill 1 Month, Dies at 89

C. E. England, 89, of 585 Powers Lane, prominent Central Illinois landowner and farmer, died at 5:05 a.m. yesterday in Decatur and Macon County Hospital.

He had been hospitalized one month.

Until his retirement in 1945, Mr. England supervised farming interests in Macon, Platt and other Central Illinois counties. He was recognized as an authority on farming and one of the major landowners in this area.

Mr. England was born near Deland April 9, 1866, a son of the late Albert L. and Harriet Plunk England. He was married to Estu Fitzwater Dec. 18, 1893, in Deland. She died Sept. 14, 1936.

His father was a Platt County farm owner and veteran of Civil War service in Company E of the Second Illinois Cavalry.

His grandfather, the late Rev. John England, a Christian Church minister, was one of the early settlers in Central Illinois.

Mr. England started his farming career when he was a youth. His father gave him 160 acres of unimproved land near Deland, which he turned into a profitable farming operation.

Through his early experience, he learned surveying and farm drainage methods. He did surveying for other farmers in the area for several years.

Mr. England moved from Deland to Decatur in 1907 and continued to expand his farming operation.

### Rebuilds House

In 1916 he purchased 401 N. College St and rebuilt it into one of the most beautiful homes in the city. He sold the house in 1947.

He made his home in recent years with a daughter, Mrs. E. B. Penhallegon of 585 Powers Lane.

In addition to supervising his farms, Mr. England was presi-

dent of the Builders Lumber Co., which was in business here from 1919 to 1941.

He also was a director of the National Bank of Decatur for 47 years and a director of the Blue Mound Drainage District.



C. E. England

Mr. England was a member of the Central Christian Church and the Decatur Club and a charter member of the Deland Masonic Lodge.

Surviving are two daughters, Mrs. E. B. Penhallegon and Mrs. Henry Curry, both of Decatur, and two sons, Leland S. England of Warrensburg and E. Herbert England of Decatur.

Seven grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren also survive.

The body is in the Dawson & Wilkoff Funeral Home, where friends may call after 4 p.m. today.



surveillance operations. Recent disclosures about FBI surveillance and harassment of the late Rev. Martin Luther King, many other prominent Americans, and who knows how many less-known citizens dramatically indicate that such guidelines are needed.

But in making the case for congressional direction of FBI activities, Mr. Kelley apparently could not resist the face-saving technique of passing the buck.

Although he conceded the

that he commit suicide is neither honest nor well-motivated. It was more than a mistake. It was a despicable act. There were other such harassments by the FBI of the Rev. Mr. King and others.

FBI agents should not need congressional guidelines to know what is legal and well-motivated and what is not.

As the head of the bureau, Mr. Kelley may have thought that such an effort was necessary to bolster the morale

proven that again. This aside, however, Mr. Kelley did look the senators in the eye and say something that needed to be said.

"No one who is looking for the cause of our failures should confine its search solely to the FBI or even the executive branch," he said.

"The Congress itself has long possessed the mechanism for FBI oversight, yet seldom has it been exercised."

Indications are that Congress is at long last recognizing the validity of that criticism, hardly a new one.

Now it is up to Congress to provide legal guidelines for FBI conduct, spelling out when surveillance is needed, and permitted as well as how it will be controlled.

If nothing else, Mr. Kelley put that ball in Congress' court, where it should have been all the time.

where pigs rooted in the unpaved streets.

So uncertain was the future of the national government that most men in public life considered high positions in Washington less preferable to positions in their own villages and states.

Only four of the six men George Washington chose to sit on the Supreme Court actually showed up for the first meeting; one was involved in more pressing activities at home and the other declined the appointment. And the number of men who voluntarily resigned from the Congress was greater than those who failed the test of reelection.

Yet in a peculiar way, the very difficulties of life in Washington served the cause of democracy — particularly in the Congress.

The Congress was originally designed to represent the popular will in the states and localities. Think how useful it was, in fulfilling that function, to have a rotating representation from the population at large, descending on Washington each year, coming fresh from the people, bringing with them new demands, ideas and power.

Each new election brought a turnover of 50 per cent, which meant that more than one-half of the representatives to the House every two years were freshmen.

In the early 1800s the average length of service in the House was only two terms, in the Senate one. In 1900 only 9 per cent had served ten terms or more.

With new men continually filling the chamber, little premium was placed on age or experience. Many of the leaders of the Congress were in their thirties.

#### Career Professionalists

The constantly changing Congress of the 19th century was a far different body from the more insulated institution we know today, where fewer than 10 per cent of the members turn over in any one election, where more than one-half the members have served more than five terms, and one in five has served more than ten terms.

The average age of the

be 41 years be chair the House committee, 39 ye could lead v committee.

when he became the Rules commi Apparently it are changing to elections have shake-up in the House of Rep but the dominan 20th century re which the Congress are s and longer.

Mobile amateu come and go — career professio to stay in Wash as possible.

How did thi about?

It can be attri the changes in the world since tury.

In the last 100 tion has unde dustrial revolut worldwide pow wars and suffer for economic de

The 20th centi nationalization economic prob growth of

organization them. These have concentrat central governn the states and k

In 1801, the e of the nation numbered 2,87 years later, th grown to 351,79 1971 the nation had 5,637,000

stituting almos the labor force.

As the distri has shifted a states and lo tractiveness o careers has d pull of work in strong that vo tion from high now merits fr tion.

To leave th mount to leavi home is to be Little wonder. tradition of n has virtually d

The rules c changed, mal

## New Mission Helps People

To the Editor:

In these days when so many of us are busy condemning the things that seem to be wrong I would like to put in a word for something I believe to be right. I am speaking about the House of Prayer Ministry located in the old England home on College Hill, 401 N. College St.

This place started recently by a man and his family who were themselves made new creatures in Christ Jesus have set about to help others who find themselves on the wrong side of life to change.

In the natural man tends to degenerate from day to day and year to year. The imagination of the thoughts of his heart are only evil continually until he comes face to face with his need for a saviour.

The mission of the church is

## Thanks for Help at Fire

To the Editor:

On Nov. 29 our garage and part of our house was taken by fire. Leo and Shirley Adams and family would like to thank everyone that was there to help us move out our furniture when the house caught fire, and also to friends who are still helping us to get settled in our new home. Thank you all so very much.

Thanks also goes to the volunteer fire department who did a great job. Thank you.

Mr. and Mrs. Leo Adams  
Decatur

## Views Of Our Readers

to bring about this change. But due to the nature of sin many times people are ashamed to go to their pastor, or other responsible person in the church to unburden their load of guilt and shame. It is in this area that missions, and other church-related ministries prove their value.

The House of Prayer Ministry here in Decatur is no exception. Daily lives are being straightened out. Marriages that are almost on the rocks of despair are being cemented firmly together, people with a tremendous sense of guilt and shame are being made to realize that the Saviour still cares for them, and has proved a sacrifice for their sin.

Through this ministry as well as the church, Jesus is saying, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

Eugene H. W. Beneze  
Decatur

## About Letters

Letters to the editor must carry a written signature and a street address or rural route number. The writer must permit use of his name. Letters of 350 words or less are preferred. The Herald and Review will not edit letters to meet space requirements.

## Day by Day

### Ten Years Ago—1965

The Decatur Board of Education Tuesday broke the six-week summer school program into two four-week periods for a trial period of one year.

A pioneer work on educating the culturally deprived written by teachers at Washington Elementary School is fast becoming a best-seller in its field.

### Twenty Years Ago—1965

More than \$2.75 million is expected to be spent in Decatur stores on Christmas presents this year. One major store manager estimated purchases at his store last Saturday were nearly \$50,000.

Macon County supervisors Wednesday afternoon rejected a proposal to name a five-member committee to discuss employment questions with representatives of Local 457 of the union of state, county and municipal employees.

### Fifty Years Ago—1925

More than 500 new telephone subscribers have been added in the last year, according to E. J. Howells, manager.

The Association of Commerce has accepted the offer of the IPL to have its engineers make an industrial survey of the city.

Monday Dec 15 1975  
p. 6  
Review



# W. B. CHAMBERS DIES IN TEXAS

Former Mayor of Decatur Victim of Paralysis—Will Be Buried in This City.

William B. Chambers, former mayor of Decatur, died at 5 o'clock Thursday at his home in Orange, Texas. His death was caused by paralysis. It was his fourth stroke, the first coming in January, 1914. He would have been seventy-eight years old in March. Mr. and Mrs. L. L. Race reached Orange Tuesday night and at once wired back that Mr. Chambers' condition was critical and that his death was but a matter of a few days. Mr. Chambers had been an invalid the past five years. The message was sent by Mrs. Albert Barnes Thurs-

day night stated that Mrs. Chambers and Mr. and Mrs. Race would leave Orange tonight with the body, arriving here Sunday morning. No arrangements will be made for the funeral until further word is received from them.

### SURVIVING RELATIVES.

Mr. Chambers is survived by his wife and three daughters, Mrs. Albert Barnes of Decatur, Mrs. A. R. Dillon of Kansas City, Mo., and Mrs. L. L. Race of Decatur. A message from Mrs. Dillon stated that she would reach Decatur tonight.

### THREE TIMES MAYOR.

For many years W. B. Chambers was one of Decatur's most prominent citizens, socially, in a business way and as a public official. Three times he was elected mayor of the city, and some of the most important public improvements were made during his term of office. He had also served on the school board, was president of the library board, president of the Decatur club and was also connected with other organizations and was always deeply interested in any movement that was for the general welfare of the community.

Mr. Chambers was born near Ithaca, N. Y., March 15, 1838. Four months after his birth his family moved to Kane county, Ill., and a few months later settled at Batavia. There Mr. Chambers lived until he was seventeen years old, when he went to Mendota and took a position in a general store. Later he engaged in the hardware business, but after a time sold out and took a position as traveling salesman for Barbey & Hawley of Pekin.

### FORMED C. B. AND Q.

In 1863 the company moved to Deca-



W. B. CHAMBERS.

Former mayor of Decatur, who died Thursday at his home in Orange, Texas. The body will arrive here Sunday morning.

ture of a full line of corn planters, hay loaders, check-ways and side delivery hay-racks.

Mr. Chambers and Miss Adelia Gullett were married in 1857. Three children were born to them, all of whom are still living.

### ON SCHOOL BOARD.

Mr. Chambers served as a member of the Decatur board of education for twelve years. He was first elected mayor in 1875, and was reelected the following term. He was elected the third time in 1891. Always interested in public improvements, his chief interest

centered about the city water works, and it was during his first administration that the plant was rebuilt in its present location. The first Allis pump was put in and the plant was considered one of the best in the country for a city the size Decatur was then. The improvements made then included the building of the first filter house, and this served the city until the plant was recently rebuilt.

Mr. Chambers was a man of excellent judgment and in every possible way he strove to advance the interests of the city.

He built the residence on the north half of College square which is now the home of the late Miss...

### MOVED TO ORANGE.

About twenty-two years ago Mr. and Mrs. Chambers moved to Orange. There Mr. Chambers had a rice plantation of 500 acres, and it proved to be one of the best properties in that state. In their new home Mr. and Mrs. Chambers became factors in the business and social life of the community and they have always been held in highest regard there as well as in Decatur.

and with the company came Mr. Chambers. After awhile the company failed. Mr. Chambers assisted in setting up the business of the firm and in 1878 he, with J. E. Bering and W. J. Quinlan, formed a partnership for the manufacture of the first wire fence ever placed on the market. In 1880 the firm changed to a stock company and was incorporated under the name of Chambers, Bering & Quinlan and engaged in the manufac-



# LANDMARK CONVERTED INTO HOUSE OF PRAYER

*Decatur Tribune, January 7, 1976.*

A Decatur landmark, the old England mansion, located at 401 North College, has housed a variety of occupants over the years, but its present family is providing it with the most meaningful distinction of its long history.

On August 11, 1975, the House of Prayer Ministries Inc., an interdenominational ministry, purchased the mansion and converted it into the House of Prayer.

Rev. Jerry W. Henneberry, pastor-director of the House of Prayer told the Tribune that the non-profit organization includes a 24-hour chapel, prayer fellowship, counseling, library, music group, tape room and the Truthmobile, a mobile unit for evangelizing and distributing Christian literature.

Henneberry, former manager of Prudential Insurance Co., received a diploma in Ministerial studies from the Berean School of the Bible on May 30, 1975.

For over 20 years Henneberry enjoyed a successful business career in teaching, counseling, insurance sales and management in Decatur.

He won all kinds of trophies, awards and citations, including the 1975 I.A. "Pete" Wallins Man of the Year award in recognition of outstanding service to his business and community.

"I had an experience on July 29, 1974, that superceded all the experiences of my previous life," said Henneberry. "I had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ."

"My wife, Dottie, had been trying to get me to go to prayer meetings and revivals for almost a year after her acceptance of Jesus Christ, and for a year my wife and children plus many other Christians in Decatur and elsewhere prayed for my salvation."

## ONCE VOWED TO STAY AWAY FROM REVIVALS

Although he vowed to stay away from all revivals and prayer meetings, Henneberry relented and went to a revival on July 29, 1974, in Shelbyville.

"The evangelist holding the revival had an altar call and I went forward and accepted Jesus Christ as my

personal savior and as Lord of my Life," said Henneberry.

Henneberry said that before her conversion, his wife had spent seven years searching into all areas of the occult, including ESP, reincarnation, transcendental meditation, astrology, horoscopes, handwriting analysis, palm reading, and even hypnosis.

"My wife spent day and night 'preaching' to friends and my children about the occult," he said. "However, after her conversion to Christianity, she 'preached' day and night about Jesus. We thought she has flipped her lid!"

Henneberry, quoting a scripture relative to the conversion of his family, said that 2 Corinthians 5:17 states "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

Henneberry said that his wife became that new creature and all five of their children also accepted Jesus Christ into their hearts, and then started the effort that culminated in his conversion.

For several months after his encounter with Jesus Christ, Henneberry said the Lord impressed a ministry upon him, and at the same time his wife received scripture verses confirming the ministry.

"In December, 1974, I had a recurring dream two nights in a row in which I saw a large house to be open for the service of the Lord," said Henneberry. "I did not know the location of the house I dreamed about, but I described it to Nan Levine, a friend of the family, and through her efforts the house was found."

The England mansion was the house Henneberry saw in his dreams.

The schedule of activity at the House of Prayer keeps the structure alive with Christian work.

Prayer meetings are held on Tuesday and Friday at 7:30 p.m., and on Sunday there is a Bible Study at 9:30 a.m. and Worship Services both at 10:30 a.m. and at 7:00 p.m.

Henneberry said that God has blessed the ministry in many ways.

"The music group composed several pieces of mu-

sic through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and the music is a blessing to all ages," said Henneberry.

Alcoholics Anonymous hold their fellowship at the House of Prayer on Monday evening, and according to Henneberry, many individuals under bondage have been set free.

Henneberry also said that many young people on dope have accepted the Lord, and the Lord has changed their lives, as a result of the ministry of the House of Prayer.

Married couples, who have been separated and in the process of divorce have been reunited, and according to Henneberry, the sick have been healed and others with personal problems have been helped, including people out of work who have found employment in answer to prayer.

Through the grace of God many have received the precious gift of the Holy Spirit," Henneberry said.

Helen Hebel, who has made the House of Prayer her church, said, "I have never felt or seen so much love manifested as that at the House of Prayer."

"All the Henneberry

children are obedient to their parents, something not found in most families. Children's attention is held as well as adults at the prayer meetings and at worship services when Henneberry preaches and teaches.

"We need more places like the House of Prayer."

"I love it!" was the reaction of Donna Kunz to the House of Prayer. "It is my point of contact with God."

"When my daughter Laura came to the House of Prayer I doubted the ministry; but when my daughter Carolyn came and received the Holy Ghost, then I knew I would go to the House of Prayer. I went and received the Holy Ghost also."

So, the England Mansion, transformed into the House of Prayer, has become a beacon of hope to many local residents, and put to rest the skepticism of those who say dreams don't come true.

Henneberry's dream of the service that could be rendered in the old England House did come true, and the nightmares of many local residents, brought on by alcohol, dope and immorality, have been eliminated through the ministry.

Text by Victoria Henson



# C. E. ENGLAND'S HANDSO

—Photos

FROM the standpoint of the "House Beautiful" the C. E. England home on College Hill, is one of the most handsome residences which has been completed in Decatur in years. In the transformation of the old homestead, not an item has been overlooked in making the residence one of the most beautiful and at the same time one of the most serviceable built in Decatur during the last twelve months.

### NEW THROUGHOUT.

The house has practically been rebuilt, only the foundation and basement showing traces of the older residence which formerly stood there. The grounds themselves have been transformed. The lawn has been planted with shrubbery, a formal garden has been built in the rear of the house and the lawn has been terraced.

### CONVENIENCE.

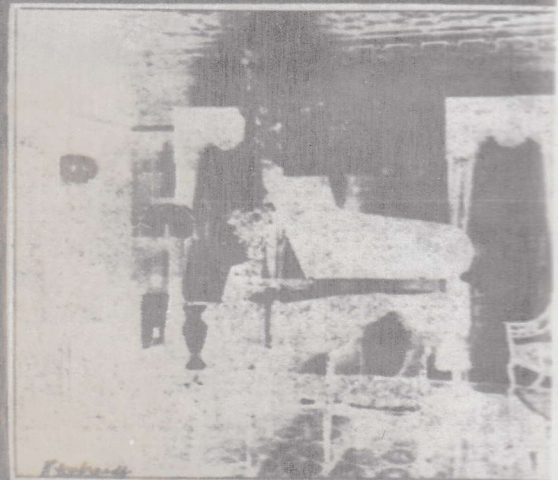
In the arrangement of the rooms in the house, convenience has been the prevailing note, although beauty of design and decoration have both found place in the completion of the residence. In the first floor of the house are located the sun parlor, the music room, the living room, the dining room, the breakfast room and the kitchen. The living room and the dining room are finished in dark oak, the music room in ivory, the breakfast room in birds eye maple and the sun parlor in willow.

On the second floor, each of the bedrooms, there are five, has a sleeping porch and a bath, with the exception of the guest room which has a bath room. Without exception the rooms on the second floor are finished in ivory.

### BALL ROOM.

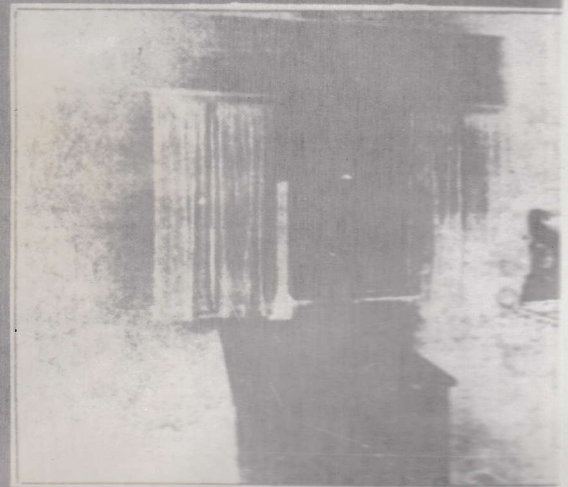
The ball room and the maid's room are located on the third floor, with an individual bath in connection with the maid's bedroom.

Recently a garage with room for three cars has been added on the rear of the grounds. The garage is made of rough faced red brick and is at the right of the concrete drive leading from the street.

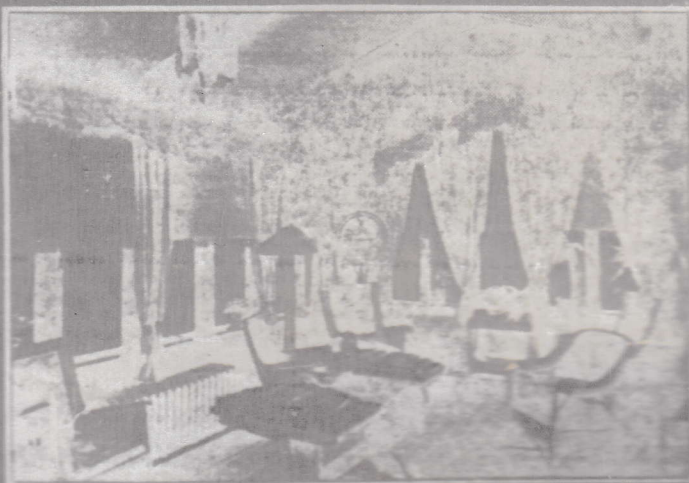


Music Room.

In the music room the walls are of light green, and Mahogany furniture is used in the room.



Sun Porch



Living Room



By Sally Burcham

One of the stately old mansions is being given a fresh coat of paint. The other has a "For Sale" sign in the yard.

Both, which are located at West North and North College streets, were once family dwellings for Decatur's socially prominent. Now, they have been divided into apartment houses for college students, young marrieds, and singles.

Long before either house stood on the North College Street location, the site was called the "Mound."

It was so known because its height was considerably greater than it is at present, and was visible for a long distance across the prairie.

For this reason, it was a famous rendezvous and general meeting place. If there was to be a wolf or a deer hunt, the "Mound" was the appointed spot of meeting.

Around 1829, however, an early Decatur minister, Rev. William Truman Crissey, wanted to have a Methodist college for young women built on the site.

The plot was first transferred from the government to William Hanks Jr. in 1829. Hanks in turn sold it to Crissey.

Crissey laid out the entire western addition to Decatur, and platted "College Square" with the object of establishing his Methodist college there.

The dream was never fulfilled, and when he died, he bequeathed the plot to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Illinois.

There was no such society.

The dream of Rev. Crissey, to devote this property to the church, failed, and the land went to his heirs.

A temporary tabernacle was built on the site in June of 1867, and the Illinois Sunday School Association convention was held there.

It was the first state religious gathering in the city, and there was no building large enough to accommodate the crowds, hence the temporary building.

It was constructed of rough lumber. The sides were not enclosed and the ground was covered with straw. People from all over the state reportedly came to the meeting.

Then, for many years, the plot called "College Hill" was unoccupied, except for an occasional circus tent that dropped anchor there.

The property changed hands many times during this period, and was finally sold to W. J. Quinlan and W. B. Chambers, who built the mansions that still occupy the knoll.

When those houses were built, part of the mound was sliced off, and the site of much merry-making from the old days was gone from the Decatur scene.

The 20-room mansion that stands to the south at 361 N. College St. was built in the early 1880's at a cost of \$28,000.

It was sold first to W. H. Ennis in 1891. Then, in January of 1913, A. E. Staley bought the house from Mrs. Louise Ennis for about \$20,000.

Staley reportedly spent several thousand dollars remodeling the house that stands on a 240-by-120 foot lot.

In September, 1951, Mrs. Emma L. Staley donated the house and property to the Decatur YMCA. In turn, the Y sold the property to Roy Phillips, using the \$25,000 it received for their new YMCA building.

J. J. Swartz Co. purchased the home from Phillips in July, 1953, and converted it into 16 apartments. Ownership went back to Phillips in May, 1957.

The apartment house-mansion that stands beside it on the north was first owned by Silas Packard, according to records.

It was sold in 1916 to C. E. England, who practically rebuilt the house.

A sun parlor, music room,

living room, dining room, breakfast room and kitchen were located on the first floor.

The second floor boasted five bedrooms, three of which had their own sleeping porches. There was a bathroom to accompany each of the bedrooms.

The ballroom and a maid's apartment was located on the third floor, with an individual bath connected to the maid's bedroom.

At the rear of the house was added a three-car garage. The garage was made of rough-faced brick and stands at the right of the concrete drive which leads from the street.

The house was sold after Mrs. England's death to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stalain, who remodeled it into six apartments in 1947.

The cost of remodeling at the time was between \$20,000 and \$25,000. The house was appraised in excess of \$75,000.

The mansion is again for sale, and now has nine apartments. The asking price is \$119,000.

9/8/1974

DECATUR SUNDAY

HERALD AND REVIEW



Decatur, Illinois, Sunday, September 8, 1974

## 2 Mansions Have Undergone Several Transformations

SUNDAY HERALD AND REVIEW



The old Staley mansion on the left and the England home on the right, taken around 1929.



Chambers, Bering, Quinlan Co, Wm B Chambers, prest; Wm J Quinlan, secy and treas; J Edward Bering, supt; agricultural implement mnfrs, 662 N Jasper.

Chambers Francis M, painter, res 522 N Monroe.

Chambers Wm B, prest Chambers, Bering, Quinlan Co, 662 N Jasper, res 411 N Main.

Chandler Alfred, carp, res 405 E Bradford.

Chandler Charles W, lab, res 405 E Bradford.

Chandler Elkin, clk Geo R Bacon & Co, bds St Charles.

Chandler Elmer E, fireman Wabash Ry, res 405 E Bradford.

**CHANDLER EMMETT W**, Boot and Shoe Maker, 146 S Main, res 525 N Water.

Chandler Lewis G, clk Wood Bros, res 405 E Bradford.

Chandler Wm A, clk Wood Bros, res 227 S Water.

Chapman Helen (wid Wm), res 705 S Broadway.

Chappel S & Son, dairymen. e of city, P O box 1397.

Charnock James A, miner, res 1355 N Church.

Chenoweth Cassidy (W J & C Chenoweth), res 149 W Main.

Chenoweth Wm J (W J & C Chenoweth), res 151 W Main.

**CHENOWETH W J & C**, (Wm J and Cassidy Chenoweth), Physicians, 149-151 W Main.

Cherry Abram M, carp, res 1054 E Marietta.

Cherry Anna B Miss, res 1054 E Marietta.

Cherry James W, finisher Decatur Furniture Co, res 1118 E Marietta.

Chew Jane (wid Minor T), res 431 W Main.

Chilcote Bella Miss, dressmkr, res 320 S Main.

Childs Charles H, bkkpr Decatur Printing Co, bds 604 W William.

Childs Margaret M (wid Franklin L), res 604 W



P

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164 N. MERCHANT STRE

- Pabel Edward, miner, res 1048 E Wood.  
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 Packard Charles E, clk Linn & Sruggs, res 247 W  
 Wood.  
 Packard John, lab, res 1060 E Herkimer.  
 Packard Silas, res 401 N College (College Hill).  
 Page Henry P, res 570 W Prairie.  
 Page Jacob (col'd), lab, res 606 S Main.  
 Page Jennie Miss (col'd) domestic 758 N Edward,  
 res 1159 N Main.  
 Page Polly Mrs (col'd), res 1159 N Main.  
 Page Thomas (col'd), barber Rogan & Dansby, res  
 1159 N Main.  
 Pahmeyer Frank H, packer F W Pahmeyer, res 541  
 N Water.  
 Pahmeyer Fred W, cigar mnfr, 223 N Water, res 541  
 N Water.  
 Paine Frank H, master mechanic Wabash Shops, res  
 968 E North.  
 Painter Jacob A, blksmith, res 545 E Herkimer.  
 Painter John L, engineer, res 552 N Mercer.  
 Palen Henry M, carp, res 1171 E Marietta.  
 Palmer Ambrose W, res 359 West Decatur.  
 Palmer Anna J (wid Arthur), res 1078 E North.  
 Palmer Frank C, chief train dispatcher Wabash Ry,  
 res 928 E Eldorado.  
 Palmer James, lab, res 604 W Wood.  
 Palmer John E, res 604 W Wood.  
 Palmer Mamie C Miss, res 604 W Wood.  
 Palmer Mary A Miss, res 1078 E North.  
 Palmer Michael, teamster, res 604 W Wood.  
 Palle Oscar, brakeman Wabash Ry, bds 637 E  
 North.

WILL HOUSE, 114 S. Water.



P

1891

Decatur  
City Directory

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Packard Silas, res 401 N College (College Hill).

Padgett Stacia (wid Henry), bds 1060 E Eldorado.

Page Henry P (Outten & Page), res 570 W Prairie.

Page Mary Mrs (col'd), res 1333 N Church.

Page Jacob (col'd), bds 536 S Main.

Page Wm, teacher High School, rms 706 W Prairie.

Page Wm Thomas (col'd), barber J Jacobs, res 1333 N Church.

Pahmeyer Anna Miss, res 541 N Water.

Pahmeyer Frank H, cigarmkr F W Pahmeyer, res 541 N Water.

Pahmeyer Frederick W, cigar mnfr, 223 N Water, res 541 N Water.

Paine Frank H, master mechanic Wabash Line, res 968 E North.

Painter Jacob A, blksmith, res 1070 N Main.

Palen Malinda (wid Henry M), res 1171 E Marietta.

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Chambers Frank M, ins agt, res 967 S Colfax.

Chambers Jeanette Miss, res 359 N Church.

Chambers Wm B, prest Chambers, Bering, Quinlan Co,  
res 359 N Church.

Chambers Wm L, rms Curry's European Hotel,

Chambers Wm T, trav agt, res 553 N Franklin.

Champlin Nina A, bkkpr J G Starr & Son, rms 157 W William.

Chance Wm M (Walker & Chance), res 1027 N Main.

Chandler Alfred, carp, res 404 E Bradford.

Chandler Annabrad Miss, bkkpr Geo R Bacon & Co,  
res 867 N Main.

Chandler Carrie Miss, res 756 N Main.

Chandler Charles W, boss wreck crew Wabash Line, res  
404 E Bradford.

Chandler Elkin, trav agt Geo R Bacon & Co, res 867 N  
Main.

Chandler Elmer fireman Wabash Line, res 437 E Marietta

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153 N Main, res 525 N Water.

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DECATUR, ILL.

LIBURN & CO Photographers PORTRAITS



# The Story Of Decatur.

By E. B. Hitchcock

## CHAPTER 37.

### THEY SAW THE BEGINNINGS.

#### Mr. and Mrs. Silas Packard Were Children of Early Pioneers and Grew Up With the Community.

In the days when Daniel Boone was the hero of every small boy, Silas Packard dyed his coonskin cap green. He was a very little lad, and he didn't know what he was doing. But it nearly broke his heart. That was one of the few mistakes that Silas Packard made during a residence of seventy-eight years in Decatur, and he often recalled the incident in his later years.

This is how it happened:

One day in the late fall, young Silas saw his sister dyeing some home made garments. She was using a vegetable dye

which she had made herself. When her back was turned, the boy hid behind a bush and thought he would experiment a bit for himself. His shirt and pants were not to be considered, but he remembered his precious Daniel Boone cap, made of coonskin and dangling a long tail, which his mother had made for him. He plunged his cap down into the steaming fluid and sloshed it around for a minute, then pulled it out. He was astonished to see that the rich brown tones of the fur had turned to a bright green which grew more vivid as it dried in the sunshine.

#### THE CAP SHRANK.

Something else happened, too. The skin shrank and shrank, despite young Silas' best efforts to keep it stretched, until he couldn't even get it over his fist.

When he ran to his mother with his ruined cap she was righteously indignant and gave him a sound trouncing. Caps, like clothes and shoes, were scarce in those pioneer days, and more than scarce with the Packards.

Silas and Lydia Packard had driven from Royalton, Vermont, in the late summer of 1830. They had a covered wagon, loaded with some household goods and seven children, the youngest of whom was named Silas, after his father. He was eighteen months old. They were heading for the new Illinois territory, whence glowing reports had come back to them of the fertility of the soil and the temperate climate.

#### HARD WINTER.

That winter was anything but temperate, however, as it was the famous winter of the deep snow. Before winter had set in, however, Silas Packard Sr. had died about six weeks after he had reached Decatur. That made the winter all the harder for the widow and her seven orphaned children. Silas Packard used to wonder in after years how she managed to pull through and to rear her family, in such poverty and with such hard-

But she did it, somehow, beginning out where her dead husband had established the family in a cabin home, about where Dantz' greenhouse now are, on Harrison Street. She saw to it that they were well educated, too, all the sons going to college except Silas, the youngest.

A good many years after an addition was laid out north of the Wabash right-of-way and west of North Water street and several of the streets were named for this pioneer family—Packard street, to honor all of them, Marietta street for a sister, Mason (now Wabash Avenue) for a brother, and King street for a brother-in-law, and other streets in Decatur bear Packard names.

#### FAWN FOR PET.

The children's pet was a tame fawn, around whose neck they tied a piece of red flannel so that hunters would not shoot it. They cried when it "presumed on civilization," got old and mean, and had to be killed. Deer, prairie chickens, and quails abounded. All about them was flat prairie land, with high grasses and wonderful wild flowers, and along the streams and bordering the river were wildernesses of forest growth. Only a few more than a thousand people lived throughout the country in those days.

#### WORKED AND SAVED.

As soon as he was old enough, Silas Packard worked as a farm hand. That was his business for five years, and he got twenty-five cents a day for his work. He carried the mail between Decatur and Paris and between Decatur and Bloomington, at an expense of fifty cents a day to the government. He saved money, too.

Then when he was twenty years old Silas Packard was able to contribute his quota toward the purchase of four mules and a wagon for a certain little trip that he made in March, 1850, to California, where he searched for—and found—gold.

When he returned to Decatur in 1855, via the Isthmus of Panama, he was able to embark in business. First he established a lumber yard, and several years later he went in to the hardware business. Some years later he became a dry goods merchant.

#### INVESTED IN LAND.

All the time he was investing in Macon county lands and Decatur real estate. He became a factor in the banking business. He showed shrewd judgment in every deal. He made no large sums in any single transaction but he piled up his savings a little at a time until he had accumulated a fortune of considerable size. And in every one of his financial operations he exercised the most scrupulous honesty and observed the best ethics.

#### WIFE BORN HERE.

Silas Packard and Mary Sawyer were married May 27, 1856. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Sawyer and was born in Decatur March 4, 1837, in a house which stood where the Y. W. C. A. building now stands. Her girlhood was spent in the Sawyer homestead north of the city.

Mr. and Mrs. Packard had no children, but they adopted Mrs. Packard's niece when Orlando Sawyer's wife, Ann Maddox, died soon after the birth of her child. The Packards brought this niece up as their own daughter. She is now Mrs. Robert I. Hunt, 502 West Prairie Avenue, and was the prin-

cipal heir to the Packard fortune when Mrs. Packard died in 1914. Silas Packard's life having ended January 27, 1908.

#### SAW GREAT CHANGES.

In the early nineties, Mr. Packard bought the north half of College Hill, where C. E. England now resides. There he and his wife lived together for seventeen years, in peace and comfort, and surrounded by luxuries of which they had scarcely dreamed when they commenced their married life.

Together they saw Decatur grow from a scattering settlement of log houses to a city of size and importance. They saw the earliest beginnings and they helped with the subsequent developments that have distinguished the community. They were children-in-pioneer Decatur, and they grew through youth to manhood and womanhood ready to do their parts of all times, to make conditions better. And they used to say that they enjoyed it all and would have changed but few things were it in their power to go through the same period again. But Silas Packard always had a mental reservation about that Daniel Boone cap.



finest residence districts of Decatur and its gracious hospitality has been enjoyed by a circle of friends that is constantly increasing. Both are members of the Methodist Episcopal church and its work has received their co-operation and also generous and financial support.

Mr. Packard votes with the Republican party and has ever been firm in his advocacy of its principles, but political honors and emoluments have had no attraction for him as he has preferred to give his time and attention to his business affairs. He began life as a farm hand and now stands among the capitalists of Decatur. Such a history should serve as a source of encouragement and inspiration to others, proving as it does the potency of industry in the active affairs of life. He has always been willing to devote his wealth and his energies to any feasible undertaking that would increase the prosperity of the city and add to the comfort of its inhabitants. His life has been a success. He has accumulated a large fortune and has used only such means as will bear the closest scrutiny. He has bestowed on worthy causes large sums of money, and uses his fortune to the advantage of the community as well as to his own profit. To such men as he is the development of the west due. He has for nearly forty years been an active factor in advancing the city of Decatur, and during that entire time has so conducted all of his affairs as to command the esteem, confidence and respect of all classes. Personally he is sociable, ever willing to accord to anyone the courtesy of an interview. Although a man of great wealth, he is unostentatious in a marked degree, and in this age, when anarchistic and socialistic doctrines are inflaming the masses, the demeanor and actions of such men as he do more to quench the fire of envy and malice than all other means combined.

Mr. Packard's actions have during his life

been such as to distinctively entitle him to a place in this publication, and although his career has not been filled with thrilling incidents, probably no biography published in this book can serve as a better illustration to young men of the power of honesty and integrity in insuring success.

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#### S. O. HILBRANT.

S. O. Hilbrant, who is engaged in the banking business in Argenta, was born in Botkins, Ohio, in 1872, a son of Samuel and Jemima Hilbrant. The father was also a native of the Buckeye state and about sixteen years ago he came with his wife to Macon county, Illinois, settling on a farm near Argenta, where both are now living. Mr. Hilbrant there owns eighty acres of valuable land, constituting an excellent farm, and he also has some town property.

S. O. Hilbrant was but a boy when brought by his parents to Illinois and in the schools of Argenta his early education was acquired. Later he attended the business college at Valparaiso, Indiana, and thus well equipped for the practical and responsible duties of life he entered upon the task of winning for himself a creditable position in the business world. Returning to Argenta, he gave his attention to farming, which he followed for two years, and then removed to Medaryville, Indiana, where he occupied the position of assistant cashier in a bank. He spent two years in that place, during which time he gained a good knowledge of the banking business. Returning to Argenta once more, he was appointed cashier in the bank of Gerber & Son and has since attained a third interest in the institution, which was founded in 1887. This is an important factor in the business circles of the town and the success of the bank is attributable in no small degree to the business sagacity, the enter-



ment, he has garnered in the fullness of time a generous harvest which is the just recompense of indomitable industry, spotless integrity and marvelous enterprise.

Silas Packard claims Vermont as the state of his nativity, his birth having occurred there on the 15th of April, 1829, but when he was only about a year and a half old he was brought to Decatur, Illinois, by his parents, Silas and Lydia (Tracey) Packard, the former a native of the Green Mountain state, while the latter was born in Massachusetts. The family was of English extraction. Silas Packard, Sr., was a farmer by occupation, but he was not long permitted to engage in that pursuit here or to enjoy his new home for in the fall of 1830 he was called to his final rest. Upon his widow devolved the care of a large family of children, namely: Charles, Anson, Edward, Mason, Marietta, Elizabeth and Silas.

Decatur was at that time a mere village and its advantages were proportionate to its size and importance. The public-school system had not been established and Silas Packard, the subject of this review, pursued his education in a subscription school. As the family was left in somewhat straitened circumstances it was necessary that he early provide for his own support and for five years he was employed as a farm hand. Then attracted by the possibilities for the rapid acquirement of wealth in the far west, owing to the discovery of gold in California, he resolved to seek a fortune on the Pacific coast and in 1830 purchased a team and started with a company of twenty-three wagons from the present site of the Transfer House on West Main street, Decatur. They crossed the plains and made their way through the mountains of the west until they reached the mines. Such a trip was fraught with many hardships, but it also brought much valuable experience and knowledge to the young man, making him

realize the responsibilities of life and the difficulties incident to a successful business career. It taught him that there is no royal road to wealth, but that perseverance and energy are the surest basis of prosperity. In California he engaged in gulch mining and was fairly successful so that he brought with him upon his return to Decatur enough capital to enable him to embark upon an independent business career. It was in 1855 that Mr. Packard again reached this city. Establishing a lumberyard, he continued its conduct for several years and was afterward in the hardware business, while at the same time he carried on agricultural pursuits, having purchased a tract of land, to the development and improvement of which he gave his personal supervision. He became a dry-goods merchant of Decatur, continuing his operations in real estate through the purchase and sale of farms and as his financial resources increased he became a factor in the banking interests of Decatur. His greatest success, however, has been achieved through his operations in realty. His purchases have been very carefully made and thus he has been enabled to realize a good profit when disposing of his landed interests. For sixty-two years he was the owner of the eighty acre tract of land constituting Riverside Park. A part of this has been platted and laid out into town lots and substantially and attractively improved.

In 1856 was celebrated the marriage of Silas Packard and Miss Mary Sawyer, a native resident of Decatur and a daughter of John and Eliza (Ketring) Sawyer, who were numbered among the pioneer settlers here, coming from Pennsylvania to this city in the year 1836. Mr. and Mrs. Packard have had no children of their own, but reared an adopted daughter, who is now the wife of Robert I. Hunt, a prominent business man of this city. Mr. and Mrs. Packard have a beautiful home in one of the



period, the family having in the meantime returned to this city, he joined his brother in business, and they took charge of their father's affairs, comprising business interests unsurpassed in volume and importance. Since that time the brothers have continued in the management of the estate. They are gentlemen of excellent business sagacity and foresight, and in the supervision of the property interests have shown marked discrimination and unflinching diligence. On the 2d of June, 1887, Mr. Powers was united in marriage to Miss Effie Rogers, a daughter of Senator Jason Rogers, and unto them have been born two children: Orlando Rogers, who was born January 10, 1891, and died on the 18th of April, of the same year; and John Howard, who was born August 23, 1895, and is now at home. The parents are members of the Presbyterian church, in which Mr. Powers is serving as a trustee. In politics he has always been a Republican, but has never consented to hold office. Anabel Powers was married June 17, 1890, to Charles Kerney, of Evansville, Indiana, who died August 1, 1902, and she and her brother Howard are living on the old Powers homestead. She has one child, Charlotte Wright, born January 4, 1895. Howard William Powers received his education in Decatur and Jacksonville and is associated with his brother in the management of the estate.

Mr. Powers gave his political support in early life to the Whig party and when Mr. Lincoln was first placed on the Republican ticket as nominee for the presidency he joined the ranks of the new organization, with which he continued to affiliate up to the time of his death. He was a man of generous impulses and gave freely of his means to charitable and benevolent objects, and yet his giving was always free from ostentation or display. He long held membership with the First Presbyterian church of Decatur, and many thousand dollars

found its way from his purse to the church exchequer. He contributed very largely toward the building of the two edifices which have been occupied by this organization and in many church offices he labored for the welfare of the denomination and the extension of its influence. Some years ago he founded a scholarship in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Northwest. With Mr. Powers friendship was inviolable and he gained many friends throughout his life, the circle of his friendship being almost co-extensive with the circle of his acquaintances. When those who needed assistance came to him his aid was never withheld, if it could be rendered, and many a business man and firm in Decatur owes its prosperity in large measure to the generous assistance received from Mr. Powers in time of need. His own business career was unassailable. Honor and integrity characterized his every act and he was never known to take advantage of his fellow men in any business transactions. He enjoyed to the fullest extent the respect and esteem of those with whom he was long associated.

#### SILAS PACKARD.

For seventy-three years Silas Packard has been a resident of Decatur—a record perhaps paralleled by that of no other citizen here. The little village in which his boyhood days were passed has developed into a city of metropolitan proportions and advantages, being among the largest in the state and with its improvement Mr. Packard has kept abreast, always maintaining a place among its leading business men until today he is accounted one of its most prominent capitalists. He early had the sagacity and prescience to discern the eminence which the future had in store for this great and growing country and acting in accordance with the dictates of his faith and judg-

*From Past and Present of the City of Decatur  
and Macon County, The S. J. Clarke Publishing  
Co., Chicago, 1903, pp 167, 168, 169*



George R. White, treasurer; H. Prather, assessor and collector; G. W. Gilbrath, Zebulon Cantrall and William Webb, constables.  
 1840—Joseph King, president. Trustees, Henry Goodman, William Cantrill, B. F. Oglesby, David Wright, John G. Speer, David E. Ralls. H. M. Gorin was clerk; G. R. White, treasurer; I. C. Pugh, collector; William Webb, constable.  
 1841—Thomas P. Rodgers, president. Trustees, J. H. Elliott, D. E. Ralls, G. R. White, Henry Goodman, Benjamin R. Austin, J. D. Tait. J. S. Post was clerk; J. H. Read, treasurer; Joseph Stevens, assessor and collector; William Webb, constable.  
 (The 1841 meeting was the last held for five years.)  
 1846—David Krone, president. Trustees, Elijah Krone, Joseph Kauffman, Michael Elson, Thomas H. Read, E. B. Hale was clerk; G. A. Smith, constable.  
 1847—D. Krone, president. Trustees, T. H. Read, M. Elson, Joseph Kauffman. Nathan P. West was clerk; E. McClellan, constable; B. H. Cassell, assessor.  
 1848—J. H. Elliott, president. Trustees, H. Prather, H. Armstrong, E. O. Smith, Joseph King. N. P. West was clerk; E. McClellan, constable; B. H. Cassell, assessor and treasurer.  
 1849—Joseph Kauffman, president. Trustees, H. J. Armstrong, J. H. Elliott, Joseph King, W. S. Crissey. N. P. West was clerk; B. H. Cassell, assessor and treasurer; H. Goodman, constable.  
 1850—Joseph King, president. Trustees, W. J. Stamper, William Prather, C. H. Pringle, William Wheeler. B. H. Cassell was clerk; William Wheeler, constable; B. H. Cassell, assessor and treasurer.  
 1851—William S. Crissey, president. Trustees, William Prather, C. H. Pringle, Joseph King, W. J. Stamper. B. H. Cassell was clerk, treasurer and assessor.  
 1852—W. J. Stamper, president. Trustees, W. S. Crissey, William Prather, C. H. Pringle, Joseph King. B. H. Cassell was clerk, treasurer and assessor.  
 1853—William Prather, president. Trustees, W. S. Crissey, W. J. Stamper, Joseph King, John Ricketts. B. H. Cassell was clerk, treasurer and assessor.  
 1854—William Prather, president. Trustees, William J. Stamper, William S. Crissey, Joseph King, Thomas H. Wingate. B. H. Cassell was clerk.  
 1854—Thomas H. Wingate, president. Trustees, William S. Crissey, William Martin, Elias Tanner, John Ricketts. B. H. Cassell was clerk; H. Churchman, constable.  
 1855—Thomas H. Wingate, president. Trustees, A. L. Kellar, J. R. Gorin, William S. Crissey, William Martin. B. H. Cassell was clerk.

## MAYORS

Following is the list of mayors of Decatur since 1856:

1856—John P. Post.	1875—R. H. Meriweather.
1857—William A. Barnes.	1876-1877—W. B. Chambers. ←
1858—James B. Shoaff.	1878—Franklin Priest.
1859—A. T. Hill.	1879—L. L. Haworth.
1860—Sheridan Wait.	1880-1881-1882—H. W. Waggoner.
1861—E. O. Smith.	1883-1884—W. B. Chambers. ←
1862—Thomas O. Smith.	1885-1890—M. F. Kanan.
1863-1864—J. J. Peddecord.	1891-1892—W. B. Chambers. ←
1865-1866—Franklin Priest.	1893-1894—David C. Mottt.
1867—John K. Warren.	1895-1896—D. H. Conklin.
1868—Isaac C. Pugh.	1897-1898—B. Z. Taylor.
1869—William L. Hammer.	1899-1900—George A. Stadler.
1870—Franklin Priest.	1901-1904—C. F. Shilling.
1871—E. M. Misner.	1905-1906—G. W. Lehman.
1872—D. S. Shellabarger.	1907-1908—E. S. McDonald.
1873—Martin Forstmeyer.	1909-1910—C. M. Borchers.
1874—Franklin Priest.	

## COMMISSION FORM

1911-1919—Dan Dinneen.	1923-1927—Elmer R. Elder.
1919-1923—C. M. Borchers.	1927—O. W. Smith.

## COUNTY GOVERNMENT

County governing boards, at the time Macon county was laid out, consisted of three members. Such boards were abolished, however, by act of the legislature approved Feb. 12, 1849, and the county court was established. This provided for the election of a county judge, and two additional justices of the peace. The county court plan lasted in Macon county from 1850 to 1860. On Feb. 17, 1851, the present system of township organization was established by law, in this state, but Macon county did not put it into effect until in 1859.

Solomon Garver, representing citizens of the county, presented a petition to the county court Sept. 8, 1859, asking for an election to

*Richmond, Md., Centennial History of  
 Decatur and Macon County, Decatur Review,  
 1930, p. 148*



there was coal here, and they subscribed \$5,000 for the purpose of making a thorough test. J. E. Bering bored the second hole, but it had to be abandoned on account of quicksand. Another attempt was made by Mr. Bering and at a depth of 290 feet a stratum of the black diamonds was discovered. Specimens were placed on exhibit at the Peddecord and Burrows bank on Jan. 14, 1876. Two or three years afterwards a coal shaft was sunk, and later two other shafts were sunk in Decatur.

In 1879 the waterworks dam was completed. That same year Decatur had its first telephone service.

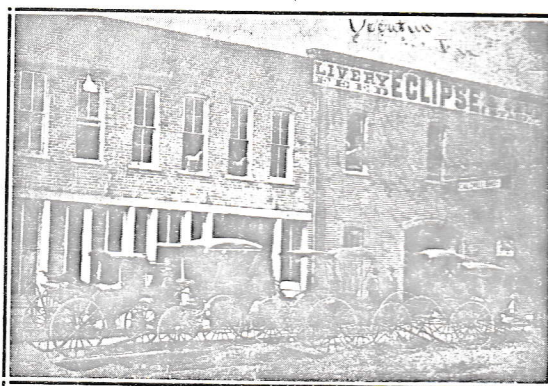
In 1878 the Decatur Tank Line company was organized, and it served a large territory. It was a branch of the Standard Oil company of Cleveland.

In 1871 Adam Blenz and G. J. Danzeizen started a meat market. It led to the establishment later of the Danzeizen Packing house.

S. M. Irwin came to Decatur in January, 1877, and purchased a stock of drugs that occupied the building at 100 East Prairie. His drug store is across the street now.

Among the industries established in the '70s was the plant of Lyon, Gipson & Co., which is still in business today as the Lyon Lumber company.

The Chambers, Bering and Quinlan company was formed in 1875 by W. B. Chambers, W. J. Quinlan and J. E. Bering, to manufacture the Champion and Brown hog ringers, Barnes wire check rowers, and other articles. The company bought the Decatur Agricultural works plant.



CALDWELL'S LIVERY STABLE

Charles M. Caldwell started a livery business in 1871 which he continued until 1919. Most of that time it was located in the 100 block West Main street. In the halcyon days of the livery business Mr. Caldwell always kept as many as 50 rigs busy. Caldwell's barn was known for many miles around.

*Richmond, Mabel, Centennial History of  
Decatur and Macon County, Decatur Review  
1930, page 288*



~~and, aside from so rapidly increasing his business, he bought a lot and erected a house in the city. About nine years ago he removed to the farm, and has since successfully carried on agricultural pursuits. He cast his first Presidential vote for Gen. Grant, and has since voted with the Democratic party. Himself and family are members of the Catholic Church.~~



**H**ON. WILLIAM B. CHAMBERS, ex-Mayor of Decatur, is one of the prominent citizens of the county seat of Macon County. On several different occasions he has filled the executive chair of the city, and for many years he has been connected with its educational interests. He is one of the stockholders in the Chambers-Bering-Quinlan Company, proprietors of the largest agricultural implement works in the city.

Mr. Chambers was born near Ithaca, N. Y., in Caroline Township, Tompkins County, March 16, 1838. Four months after his birth his father, William H. H. Chambers, removed with his family to Kane County, Ill. The Chambers family was one of the old Dutch families of the Empire State. In New York, Mr. Chambers married Adeline Booth, who came of an old English family. After their removal Westward they spent a short time upon a farm twelve miles west of St. Charles, and then, in 1842, went to Batavia, Ill., where the father worked at his trade of wagon-making until his death, which occurred at the age of sixty-six years. The family numbered six children.

The subject of this sketch resided in Batavia until 1855, when, at the age of seventeen years, he went to Mendota, Ill., where he was employed as clerk in a general store. In 1857 he embarked in the hardware business, which he carried on until 1862, when he sold out and engaged as traveling salesman for Barber & Hawley, of Pekin, Ill., manufacturers of agricultural implements. In 1863,

when Barber & Hawley removed to Decatur, our subject accompanied them. His employers failed in 1867, and Mr. Chambers assisted in settling up the business. By this time, he aspired to set up a business of his own, and was joined by two wealthy and well-known citizens of Decatur, Mr. Bering and Mr. Quinlan. A partnership was formed by the three gentlemen in 1876, for the purpose of manufacturing agricultural implements. They were the first to manufacture the wire check rower and soon became leaders in their line, particularly in check rowers and corn planters. In 1882, the partnership was changed into a stock company, and incorporated under the name of the Chambers-Bering-Quinlan Company. The stockholders are Messrs. Chambers, Bering and Quinlan, who were the former partners, and they are successfully engaged in the manufacture of a full line of corn planters, check rowers, hay loaders and side delivery hay rakes. They employ one hundred and seventy-five men, and do a constantly increasing business. This industry stands at the head of Decatur's enterprises.

On Christmas Day of 1857, our subject married Miss Adelia Guiles, daughter of Daniel D. Guiles, a merchant of Mendota. Unto them have been born three children. Annie, the eldest, is the wife of Albert Barnes, manager of the Macon County Abstract and Title Company; Cora is the wife of L. L. Race, a prominent young citizen of Decatur; Jennie is now attending St. Mary's School, in Knoxville, Ill.

In politics, Mr. Chambers is a Republican and warmly advocates the principles of his party. For twelve years he has served on the School Board. In 1876 he was first elected Mayor of the city and was re-elected the following year. In 1888 he was elected for a two-years term, and in 1891 was again called to the same office for a similar length of time. The people of Decatur gave him their trust and found it was not betrayed, for in all possible ways he advanced the best interests of the city and carefully looked after its welfare. He is a man of excellent judgment, sincere, generous, modest, yet withal manly. He is one of Decatur's most popular as well as highly respected citizens.

*Portrait and Biographical  
Record of Macon County, Illinois,  
Lake City Publishing Co., Chicago,  
1893.*



Jan. 6, 1914

## W. B. CHAMBERS SERIOUSLY ILL

Former Mayor and Manufacturer of Decatur.

A telegram came to Decatur Tuesday morning telling of the serious illness of W. B. Chambers at his home, nine miles from Orange, Tex. The first word told of a stroke of paralysis and was to the effect that he was seriously ill but his condition was not thought to be critical. Two or three hours later a second telegram came that he was much worse and that relatives here should come at once.

William Barnes, grandson, left on the 10:30 a. m. train. Mrs. L. L. Ross, a daughter, will go tonight. Mrs. A. R. Dutton of Kansas City, another daughter, is expected will go in once to Texas. Mrs. Albert Barnes, the third daughter has been ill and it is thought by physicians cannot make the trip.

Mr. Chambers has not been in good health for some time. He is seventy-six years old. It is feared his illness may have a fatal outcome.

### PROMINENT IN DECATUR

Twenty years or more ago and for many years before that Mr. Chambers was one of the most prominent men in Decatur. He was twice mayor, and both while in office and outside was much interested in public improvements. The waterworks especially interested him and it was through his efforts that some of the most important undertakings in connection with it were put through, including the installation of the Allis pumps and the building of the first filter house.

### A MANUFACTURER

He was for many years a member of the Chambers, Boring & Quinlan Manufacturing company, at that time one of the principal industries of the city. His family was prominent in social and other life of the community. Mr. Chambers built the residence on the north half of College square, now owned and occupied by Mrs. Silas Packard.

He was an officer of the Decatur club and active in other such organizations.

About twenty years ago Mr. Chambers moved south and became owner of the plantation on which he has since been living. This includes 500 acres nine miles from Orange. The principal crop is rice.



# Company Tied 'Famous Knot'

By Ron Frazier

Of the Herald and Review

Nearly 100 years ago, a business firm "tied the knot that made Decatur famous."

The "knot" was work of Chambers Bering Quinlan Co. (CBQ) of Decatur, which invented the first successful check rower in 1877.

A check rower was of great importance to farmers of the time. Until the invention of the wire unit by CBQ, all others had proved to be relatively unsuccessful.

The check rower was used to plant corn at regular inter-

vals, making cultivation easier. Rope was first used, but farmers were never satisfied with the results. CBQ recognized that a wire system was the only answer.

In Bloomington, brothers Addison and Monroe Barnes were experimenting with wire and their findings were purchased by CBQ.

### Workable Solution

J.E. Bering, of the firm, improved the wire idea until he finally arrived at a workable solution.

The problem was to stretch an 80-rod length of wire and

prevent it from kinking or tangling.

After much study and research, Bering devised the knot that made Decatur famous. The principal thing he did was cut the wire into pieces from three to four feet in length. These were joined by a knot that gave each link of wire room to play. This was all that was necessary.

The check rower was relatively simple to operate. The farmer would stretch the knotted wire between posts at either end of the field he was planting. As each knot passed through the check rower, it tripped a lever, permitting grains of corn to drop from a container at regular intervals.

The advantage of this piece of equipment was to make it much easier for the farmer to cultivate his crop.

### Knot Looked Simple

Bering's knot looked simple enough, but it was that little knot that stood between many other men and fortune.

The company placed its first wire check rower on the market in 1877. Its success caused a great demand from all over the United States.

The first season 2,000 were manufactured and sold, but by 1879 the number had expanded to 8,000.

The Chambers Bering Quinlan Co. was also quite successful in the manufacture of hog rings and other agricultural items.

In the farming methods of today, check rowing is a thing of the past. With the use of improved herbicides and other methods of planting, the check rower is no longer needed.

Chambers Bering Quinlan is still in business today in Decatur, but its complexion has changed. It makes no agricultural items, whatever.

At 700 N. Jasper St., CBQ now manufactures gray iron castings, drop forgings, stampings, zinc dye castings and drum fittings.

Although a foundry today, 100 years ago the firm "tied the knot that made Decatur famous."

Illinois, Sunday, February 4, 1968



A farmer uses the check rower manufactured in Decatur. The cylinder, near the front wheel, contains corn for

planting. Of special importance is the wire passing through the unit, with evenly spaced knots which cause the

seed to drop in even rows. The check rower was designed and produced by the Chambers Bering Quinlan Co.





Christians from Decatur and the surrounding communities come to the House of Prayer on Tuesday and Friday evenings for Bible teaching and praise services. Music is a part of the ministry and those participating include both the young and the old.

*Decatur Tribune*

*Jan. 7, 1976*