

## **Addendum to Cyrus Truitt's Introduction to Mostly Ghost**

By Dona (White) Truitt

*Mostly Ghosts* is the title that Cyrus R. Truitt, a long time citizen of Novinger, Missouri, gave to his extensive collection of 1,000 photographs which he assembled over a period of approximately 15 years, beginning in about 1950. The Adair County Historical Society ("ACHS") sometimes uses the title *Cyrus R. Truitt Collection*. Cyrus R. Truitt, Novinger's beloved historian, died in 1981, and in the following year Mrs. Cyrus (Ruby) Truitt and their daughter, Lillian (Truitt) Loe, gave the collection to the ACHS. The photographs include some originals which were taken mostly by Raymond Loe, Cyrus' son-in-law, or by Cyrus himself. As he stated in his introduction, Cyrus copied many of the photographs from collections of his friends and acquaintances. This valuable pictorial history includes street scenes, people, homes, businesses, churches, coal mines, trains and depots, organizations and schools in the greater Novinger area. There are also some photographs taken in Kirksville and other Adair County areas and a few beyond. Cyrus' assembly of this collection was a tremendous contribution to local history. However, the photographs themselves would be of little value were it not for the hundreds of hours that he spent researching and writing the captions for each photograph including the identity of individuals wherever possible. Cyrus wrote many of the captions from his personal memory since he spent almost his entire life (1891 to 1981) in the Novinger area.

Unfortunately, Cyrus mounted his valuable collection using materials unsuitable for long term storage. He used masking tape to affix the photos to any paper readily available to him, including brown wrapping paper such as that used in paper bags. Because the original albums themselves were deteriorating, and since the high acid materials used would eventually destroy the photographs, I (Dona Truitt) volunteered to solicit funds from Truitt family members for materials and to assist in reconditioning the collection using all archival quality materials. The masking tape had to be removed, all photographs remounted and placed in new sleeves and then placed in box binders. Also, I either retyped or copied every caption on acid free buffered archival quality paper. Editing of some of the captions was necessary.

The renovation of the collection was done by Gary and Claire Lloyd and me in 2003-2004. Financial supporters of this project besides myself were nieces and a nephew of Cyrus Truitt including Dianthe Cable, Jeanne Coy, Mary Anna Eaton, Shirley Watkins, Robin Drivon, and Gary C. Truitt. Randy Walker donated the wood for the bookcase he made to accommodate the collection, and Marty Jayne arranged for its construction.

Mrs. Charles R. (Dona) Truitt

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