



HISTORY OF DIXON

by Irene Bell

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According to records researched, Dixon was born a railroad town and its fortune at first, depended on the Frisco Railroad. Although a number of nearby towns were older than Dixon and had survived the Civil War, the first town was a camp of approximately 100 workers building the railroad. This was in 1867 to 1868. The camp was located on "C" Highway which is now the Bennett Jones property west of town. The workers later moved into town.

The South Pacific, the first railroad attacked and destroyed during the Civil War, ran only to Rolla before the war. The Frisco Railroad Company was organized in 1868 and the line was completed to Springfield.

Milton Santee of Rolla, a Frisco surveyor appears to have led the naming of Dixon. Mr. Santee came from Dixon, Illinois and it is said he suggested the name Dixon, but others tell of different versions.

Dixon came into being in 1869. Around

1873, Dixon became a railroad division center. A round house for four engines and a residence for four crews was located just south of the tracks and a short distance east of the station.

Three years later, the division moved to St. James. In 1878, it was returned to Dixon and around 1884 it was moved to Newburg permanently. Passenger service was once a thriving business and stopped each morning and night at the Dixon Depot. According to files, it took three attempts to incorporate and in November 1889, William Heller, T.A. Murphey and others petitioned the County Court for incorporation. This was granted and a number of citizens were appointed as trustees to serve until an election.

The village was made a 4th Class City in 1906. Old timers remember the Pagoda in the middle of the town square, where band concerts were held on the top level and a well for the thirsty was underneath.

The Dixon water and sewage system was begun in 1938 and the sewage system was ready in 1942. Some of the early businesses in Dixon were the stores opened by William Heller, Jr. in 1880 who bought produce and he also owned a Grist Mill and elevator.

W. L. Wilson, A. H. Franklin, T. A. Murphey, August Sease and James Crismon, C. F. Walter and C. Miller were among early merchants to open stores and buy other businesses, some owning more than one. The peddlers went from house to house peddling their wares.