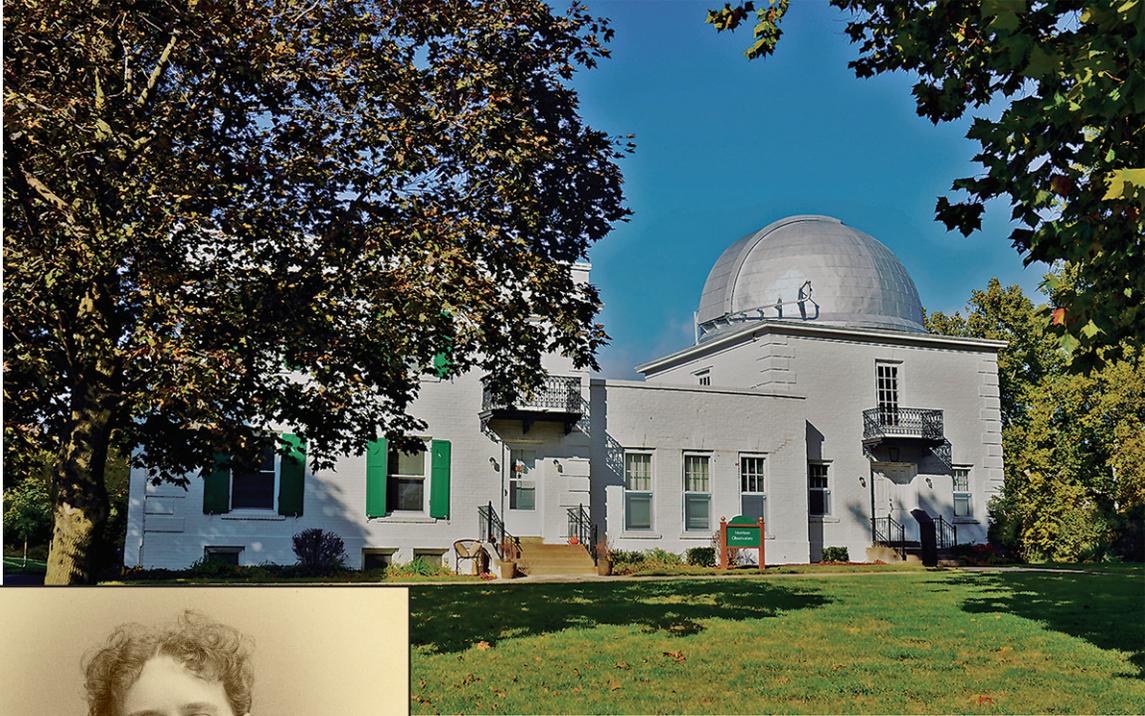


# BOONE'S LICK HERITAGE QUARTERLY



## Essay on the Morrison Family Part III

**Berenice Morrison, benefactor of Morrison Observatory and Pritchett Institute**

### **The Morrison-Fullers in Glasgow**

*A Young Girl's Remembrance of Eglantine Castle*

**Bicentennial History of Howard County Published**

**VOL. 15 No. 4 — WINTER 2016-17**

**BOONSLICK HISTORICAL SOCIETY PERIODICAL**

## The Morrison Chronicles, Part III: Berenice's Legacy

*"Non quam diu sed quam bene"*—"Not how long it takes, but how well it is done."

Words of wisdom in Latin from a classically educated Berenice Morrison that appeared on her personal stationery at the tender age of twenty five ... and again, at her instruction, on her Bellefontaine Cemetery tombstone sixty-five years later after she died in St. Louis in September of 1947.

Teenage heiress, world traveler, recipient of a first-class education in the humanities at fine Eastern finishing schools for young ladies and European schools

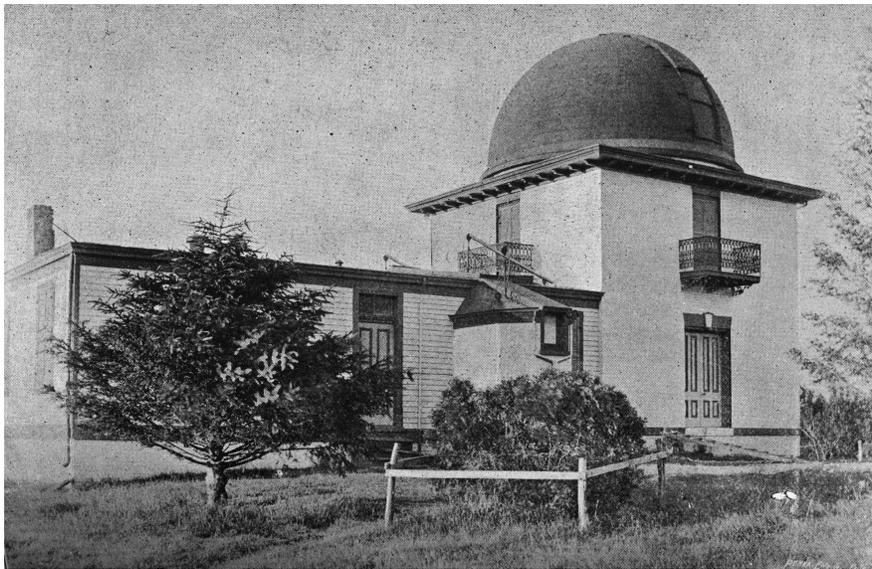
for scholars, shrewd financial manager, suffragette, society matron, wife and mother. Berenice Morrison-Fuller was all of these and more; a remarkable summing-up, especially when measured against the cultural barriers faced by women who lived from the middle of the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth.

Even when the challenges of advancing age affected her health and diminished her community activism in later years, Berenice Morrison-Fuller did not withdraw quietly. Her many decades of participation in – and observation of – the body politic and changing social climate left her with a conflicted sense of things in the world—a disenchantment, prompted by what she surely saw as a coarsening of the society around her, that bumped up against her inherently sanguine disposition.

"In her eighties," essayist Lynn Morrow writes, "Berenice acknowledged her long and eventful life and recognized the improvements in standards of living and that isolation internationally was a thing of the past. She maintained her conservative culture

and bemoaned the loss of cultured manners in private and public discourse: 'All is exaggerated. Women's finger nails resemble bloody claws. Raucous sounds are called music. Daubs of paint, without form and void, are labeled pictures.' She maintained optimism for a better future, yet, admitting all of us 'learn in the hard school of experience.' She closed her chronicles saying that 'Beauty and the freedom of the spirit have their own harmonious laws.'"

Perhaps the structural icon most associated with Berenice is the still-standing Morrison Observatory, now located in Fayette and owned by Central Meth-



Historic photo of Morrison Observatory when still located in Glasgow. Image courtesy of Central Methodist University

odist University (CMU), which operates it as a historic observatory open to the public for viewing the night skies and as an educational facility for students of the natural sciences. It is still fulfilling all the purposes intended when Berenice endowed the construction of it with a \$100,000 gift to Pritchett School Institute (later college) in Glasgow at

the age of 19 in 1875. It surely represents a legacy of social obligation she inherited from her Morrison and Swinney antecedents, all of whom emphasized education – family contributions that are now part of CMU's legacy bequeathed by its benefactors.

Thus this issue of the *Quarterly* marks the end of a long, scholarly journey by historian Lynn Morrow, who spent more than two years researching and writing about Berenice Morrison and her extended family and societal connections. It represents a significant addition to the historical record of the Boonslick and the state of Missouri. It, too, is a noteworthy legacy.

—Don B. Cullimore

*Boone's Lick Heritage Quarterly* is published four times a year by the Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233.

We encourage our members and others interested in history to contribute articles or other information of historical interest, including family histories, pertaining to the region. Please address all contributions and correspondence related to the periodical to the editor, Don B. Cullimore, 1 Lawrence Dr., Fayette, MO 65248, or email to: Don.cullimore40@gmail.com, phone: 660-248-1732. Editorial guidelines may be obtained from the editor. Publication deadlines are February 1 for the March (Spring) issue; May 1 for the June (Summer) issue; August 1 for the September (Fall) issue; and November 1 for the (Winter) December issue.

The Boonslick Historical Society was founded in 1937 and meets several times a year to enjoy programs about historical topics pertinent to the Boonslick area. Members of the Society have worked together over the years to publish historical books and brochures and to mark historic sites. They supported the founding of Boone's Lick State Historic Site, marked the sites of Cooper's Fort and Hanna Cole's Fort and have restored a George Caleb Bingham painting on loan to The Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art at Central Methodist University, Fayette.

Membership dues are \$15-Individual, \$25-Family, \$50-Sponsor, \$250-Patron, \$500-Life. The dues year is January through December. Receive our publication, *Boone's Lick Heritage Quarterly*, and attend annual Society events highlighting the region's history. To become a member, send a check made out to the Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233.

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# BOONE'S LICK HERITAGE QUARTERLY

Boonslick Historical Society Vol. 15, No. 4 • Winter 2016-17

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*By Lynn Morrow*



**Berenice Morrison-Fuller, Glasgow Heiress**

This issue features Part III of a major essay on the Morrison Family being serialized over three issues of the *Quarterly*. Below is the title of the last installment.

**A Girl's Remembrance of Eglantine Castle** Page 22



The late Olive Conran Westhues (1902-2003) wrote about her first visit to Eglantine Castle in 1918 when she was 16. From her 1992 autobiography *Prairie Fire*.

**Bicentennial History of Howard County** Page 24

Cover photo of Berenice Morrison-Fuller courtesy of Scarritt-Royster-Swinney Family Papers Collection, SHSMO-KC. Key: SHSMO = State Historical Society of Missouri. Morrison Observatory photo by Jim Steele

## Special Three-part Essay

# Salt-boiling to Star-gazing: The Morrison-Fullers in Glasgow

By Lynn Morrow

The Morrison-Fullers arrived in Glasgow in late October 1899. They occupied Eglantine Castle and wrote to Berenice S. Royster, a new mother, who, in June 1898, had given birth to Berenice A. Royster. “The process of getting settled goes on slowly, but surely. We already have two rooms fairly comfortable.” The great house had stood for years as a sentinel in the midst of the former tobacco, agricultural, and stock farms of the Swinneys.

The Morrison-Fullers hired a construction crew to start updating Eglantine Castle for an extended stay. The initial issue of *The Pritchett College News* announced their arrival that fall as a “source of pleasure and gratification to the citizens of Glasgow, as well as the College.” Berenice consulted with Mrs. Thomson at Inglewood and then wrote to Mrs. Royster: “I looked over your Grandfather’s silver a few days ago with Mrs. Thomson & took a list of the articles, which I herewith enclose. I brought my silver fruit bowl & dessert forks out with me (you will recollect them), but left everything else with Mrs. Thomson.” Berenice lauded Mrs. Thomson’s work for the Swinneys and told her niece that “She is a noble woman.” Berenice Morrison-Fuller’s daughter, Berenice, “has a beautiful Shetland pony & she and Bessie [Thomson] have spent the day on her.” Berenice socialized at community events in Glasgow, attended civic board meetings, and grew closer in friendship with the Thomson family.

Berenice, “at the invitation of the board,” attended the annual meeting of Pritchett College in July 1900. “This was the first time she had ever been able to be present,” and a board resolution made her an advisory member. Morrison-Fuller did not wait to make her views known about the Morrison Observatory. She reintroduced Uncle Oswald’s discussion with Washington University to them. The new advisory member requested that the board form a committee “to ascertain if Washington University would offer to purchase the instruments, etc., at Morrison Observatory.” Everyone knew that Carr W. Pritchett’s retirement was not far into the future

(it came in 1905). As a cosmopolitan heiress, Berenice also knew that schools like Pritchett College faced hard times with competition from the emerging public schools; Pritchett College had only acquired a library in 1891. But, her main concern was the obser-

vatory, not the school, and she increasingly expressed her dissatisfaction to the Pritchett trustees about its management. Lady Berenice, in her mid-forties, and John, pushing forty, forced this locally difficult topic into public discourse. John’s personal manner that ignored traditional conventions and Berenice’s enviable wealth resulted in the pair becom-

**This is the final installment of a major essay on nineteenth-century heiress Berenice Morrison-Fuller (1856-1947) that has been serialized over three issues of the *Quarterly*. It was written by Missouri historian and BHS member Lynn Morrow and is based on his intensive research over several years. Part I was “The Traders: Keelboats to Steamboats.” Part II was “Oswald and Berenice: Berenice Morrison’s Education and Oswald’s Visions.”**

ing topics of conversation themselves.

*Pritchett College News* was anxious to give Berenice all due credit for student success. In September 1901, the campus serial reported that “only one-third of the expenses of Pritchett College for the last year were met by tuitions, the other two-thirds being supplied by interest on the endowment so generously given by our friend and benefactor, Mrs. Morrison-Fuller, who year by year is

doing more for the educational work of Pritchett College than all its patrons combined.” The prior month, Berenice joined others in donating to the gymnasium fund. The July 1902 annual meeting reported that the average annual interest rate for investments of the college funds was over 8.5%, “a remarkable figure.” At that meeting, Pritchett College’s treasurer for twenty-six years, George B. Harrison, presented his final report for his stewardship of the resources.

That same month, July 1902, Col. W. H.



**Berenice Morrison-Fuller, as the young wife of John Fuller.** Image courtesy of Scarritt-Royster-Swinney Family Papers Collection, SHSMO-KC

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Lynn Morrow is the former director of the Local Records Preservation Program, Missouri State Archives. He holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in history from Southwest Missouri State University (now Missouri State University), Springfield.

Chase, a Wall Street financier and promoter, with important Republican political ties to his home town of Toledo, Ohio, announced a "Proposed Electric Line" to be built from St. Charles west to Howard County. A team of ten surveyors began work to identify the transportation corridor for acquisition by the railroad; the surveyors slated the line to cross part of the former Swinney tobacco lands.



George Billings Harrison (1844-1911)  
Image courtesy of Jim Denny

Col. Chase sponsored a series of town hall meetings in the counties impacted and sought local financial pledges for the project. He chose Glasgow for his corporate headquarters and established an office on the second floor of the Glasgow Savings Bank building. George B. Harrison, cashier and younger brother-in-law to Thomas Shackelford, became president of the Missouri Central Electric Railway. Harrison's choice was a good one – he had been president of the Missouri Bankers Association. Harrison, active in banking circles for decades, assumed the role as chief Missouri promoter and introduced Col. Chase to village and town elites

across the state. The Savings Bank was well acquainted with railroad corporations, as its president, Thomas Shackelford, was a two-decade director for the Chicago and Alton Railroad, local attorney for the Wabash Railroad, and a high-profile attorney in corporate litigation in Missouri courts.

John Morrison-Fuller was outraged at the projected invasion of his pastoral retreat near Eglantine Castle. John quarreled with Harrison when the railroad director came to *Eglantine Castle* to ask for Morrison-Fuller's cooperation, and then John took his fight public. He tried to get the *Glasgow Missourian* and other papers to publish his critical attacks on the proposed railroad, but they refused to do so. Another who snubbed him was the *Columbia Statesman*. John, taking umbrage at their earlier willingness to work with a new editorialist, hired Oswald S. Barton to sue them for breach of contract. The *Chillicothe Constitution-Tribune* did take notice of the fight against Col. Chase's railroad and John Fuller's signed essay that requested local farmers to communicate with him for sup-

port. The traditional progressive profile of small town newspapers dominated rural Missouri journalism and they trumpeted the proclaimed progress championed by railroads. To counter them, John picked up his pen and became a newsprint journalist, purchasing the *Fayette Weekly Globe*, and in September 1902, renamed it the *Glasgow Globe*. Charles M. Diggs served as editor.

J. Morrison-Fuller "bitterly attacked the officers of the railroad," and hired detectives to investigate the career of Col. Chase. At the time, Missouri politics was deeply mired in alleged and actual political "boodle," the payment of bribes for legislation. Morrison-Fuller's investigators supplied ammunition about Col. Chase's Ohio connections to Republican Mark Hanna's record-setting fundraising for President McKinley in 1896 – the McKinley "Boodle Fund," as termed by Democrat opponents. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* supported most boodle attacks against the Republicans and Booneslick regional papers reprinted some of Morrison-Fuller's writings that denounced corporate director and banker, George Harrison. Essayist Fuller accused Col. Chase and his supporters for connections to corrupt political financing at the national level.

In the midst of the public wrangling, Pritchett College President and Mrs. C. C. Hemenway sponsored a reception at the president's house – Thomas Shackelford's *Boscobel* – where the president, who had married Ida Shackelford, lived. Shackelford's son-in-law, Rev. C. C. Hemenway, had added student rooms onto the rear wing of his house a decade earlier and sanctioned the promotion of his property as part of the Pritchett campus. Joining the presidential couple in September 1902 to receive the students was Berenice Morrison-Fuller. The assembly enjoyed "music, cakes, and ice-cream until 11 p.m." The *Glasgow Missourian* always reported on these social events, but as the public rhetoric rose over the electric railroad, the town's primary newspaper noticeably decreased, but did not end, announcements of Mrs. Morrison-Fuller attending Glasgow gatherings. Col. Chase and his Missouri Central



*Boscobel*, a Greek Revival home, was built by Thomas Shackelford Jr., in 1859. Rooms later added to the rear were used to house Pritchett College students. Photo courtesy Jim Denny

Electric Railway began a vigorous promotional campaign in the *Glasgow Missourian* and the mid-Missouri regional press. Chase and Harrison acquired testimonials for the community benefits of an electric railroad that were reprinted in Howard County. They came from Brookfield, Columbia, Moberly, Sedalia, and from Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and elsewhere. In December 1902 the survey for the projected 194-mile rail line from Brookfield to Cuivre Junction was complete. Moreover, the project slated Glasgow as the permanent headquarters for the longest future electric line in the United States. Keytesville banker, Gen. Edwin W. Price, and vice-president of the electric railroad, proudly published a photograph of his five-year-old grandson in the *Glasgow Missourian* with a notice that the child, with 116 corporate shares, was the youngest capitalist in Missouri. But, it only increased Morrison-Fuller's personal resolve to oppose the new corporation.

John designed a number of events to attract attention to his position. He hired a St. Louis cartoonist to come to Glasgow to create political sketches lambasting the corporate and political establishment in his serial, just as he had done in Boston. The caricatures of George B. Harrison and images that ridiculed the railroad became a *cause celeb* in Glasgow and nearby market towns. He contracted with a St. Louis carpenter to construct a circular platform "ten feet in diameter" and built around the edge was a "miniature railroad track and train" powered by a motor, labeled "Missouri Central Electric Railway." Workmen set up his model train on the street corner near George Harrison's bank office and "seated on the curbstone he [John Fuller] operated the railroad all day." Morrison-Fuller explained to the gathered crowds that "this was the only opportunity they would ever have to see the Missouri Central Electric Railway in operation." At dusk, he gave the demonstration railway to a local lad.

The combative Morrison-Fuller's ire had plenty of steam to blow. He composed a burlesque song that targeted George B. Harrison personally. He recorded it and played the song on a phonograph record for public audiences. Moreover, he also recorded his speeches against the railway's promoters and would "grind them out as often as he could get a crowd to listen to them." The Morrison-Fuller couple staunchly and publicly resisted the overtures of the electric railway to sign a right-of-way access to their property east of Glasgow.

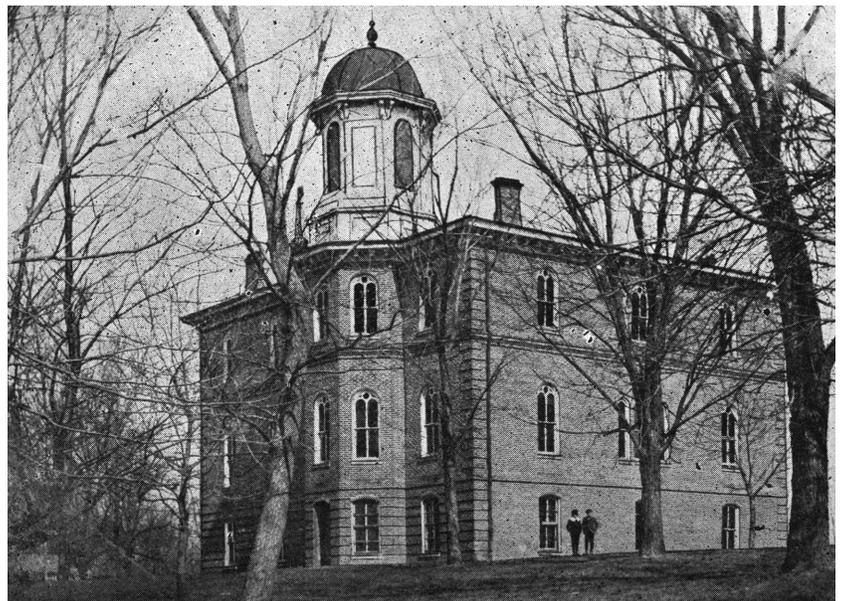
John succeeded in irritating Col. Chase. In February 1903 the Wall Street executive proposed a change in the newly-incorporated line with \$4,000,000 in stock. Chase, instead of laying track from Steinmetz through Morrison-Fuller's property, proposed an alternate local route that ran south of Glasgow, up Hurricane Creek, and then toward Fayette – avoiding the intractable J. Morrison-Fuller. Meanwhile, the local press ran promotional articles about how the electric railroad would raise land values, create more markets, add employment, and how railroad progress would benefit everyone. In April 1903, "Me Too," the Steinmetz correspondent to the *Glasgow Missourian* wrote, "If the prospect of the electric railroad has advanced the price of land to its present high price, where would the price go to if the railroad was in actual operation?" Promoters touted that one of the new electric, industrial power plants for the line would

be built in Glasgow.

The truth of the matter was that John and Berenice themselves contributed to the escalating real estate prices around Steinmetz. Berenice already owned hundreds of acres, but she further expanded her holdings beyond the historic W. D. Swinney thousand-acre family farm and uncle Oswald's former real estate east of Glasgow in the Steinmetz neighborhood. In March 1903 they purchased four farms, as the Morrison-Fullers positioned themselves as a legal obstacle to the corporation. John was anxious to put his arguments about personal liberty squarely in the path of Wall Street.

Berenice was not a novice in real estate transactions. When she returned from Switzerland to St. Louis in 1879, she actively managed her property. She purchased and sold several inherited parcels in and around Glasgow, including marketing several acres and town lots to the Chicago and Alton Railroad, part of her grandfather Swinney's legacy. The newly-built rail line needed space for a section house, freight depot, and tool house for commercial expansion and room to conduct maintenance on their tracks, and Berenice obliged; she sold larger acreages and Glasgow lots to individuals. Perhaps forecasting a personal future in Glasgow, Berenice purchased lots and acres in East Glasgow and added over 120 acres to her ownership by the spring of her marriage in 1886. Most of her acquisitions came from land Oswald and Maria Swinney had owned, partial recompense for funds that Oswald owed to Berenice. In 1903, the Morrison-Fuller couple had a long public road frontage between Glasgow and Steinmetz.

The rhetoric between J. Morrison-Fuller, and George Harrison and Col. Chase, spilled into popular gossip. Berenice, however, steered herself toward Pritchett College events and Glasgow civic groups. She paid close attention to the competitive awards of the college students at Pritchett, where her general endowment funds supported tuition for more scholarships than all others com-



**Pritchett School Institute in Glasgow. Established in 1866, it became Pritchett College after 1897 and closed in 1922.** Image courtesy of Historic American Buildings Survey

combined. The next month, Berenice presented a new chemical fire-extinguisher to Lewis Library, where she served on the board of directors. Berenice coordinated the emergence of the Hazel Ridge

Poultry Farm and directed the resident manager's business on one of Morrison-Fuller's several country properties leased to locals.

During the first three years that the Morrison-Fullers lived in Glasgow, Berenice's daughter, and Mrs. Thomson's daughters became good friends. The girls had attended classes together at Pritchett College. By 1902, Jane (1885-?) headed for Chicago to attend Lewis Institute and then the prestigious Smith College in Northampton, MA, for women. Young Berenice Morrison-Fuller, Jane, and her sister Bessie Thomson (1887-?) rode the trains between Chicago and Glasgow visiting each other. The occasion of Jane leaving home prompted Mrs. Thomson, too, to prepare to move to Chicago. Thus, *Inglewood* and its contents required disposition by the ladies involved.

In February 1902, Berenice Morrison-Fuller wrote on her letterhead stationery, "Eglantine, Glasgow, Mo.," to Berenice Royster in Kansas City about "old things in the house." An inventory circulated among the ladies and Mrs. Morrison-Fuller offered to purchase selected items that Mrs. Royster did not want saying that "my claims ought to come next to yours." Berenice identified a bureau, washstand, her mother's piano ("which was always mine"), and her grandfather's "old writing desk which Uncle Oswald gave me." Mrs. Royster consented and gave other articles to Mrs. Thomson to ship to her Chicago home.

In May 1903, the Missouri Central Railway directors announced that 90% of the right-of-way was secured and that they would seek condemnation for the remainder – the Morrison-Fullers were not the only holdouts, only the most vocal. The *Glasgow Missourian* published extracts from the Missouri statutes that explained the legal authority for condemnation. At *Eglantine Castle* Bernice entertained college students, and sought relationships with local civic groups, but perhaps gossip in polite society that criticized her husband had reached such a crescendo that it caused Berenice to resign her position on the library board. A new member appeared when Savings Bank president Shackelford's son-in-law, James H. Denny, came to the board as treasurer. John and Berenice Morrison-Fuller, however, retained their life memberships in Lewis Library. By this time, in spring 1903, another circumstantial event played into the hands of publisher, J. Morrison-Fuller.

A torrent of high water flooded the Missouri River Valley. Flood damages to agriculture, buildings, and the economy was historic. Wall Street grew nervous about new investments, including the proposed \$4,000,000 for the Missouri Central Electric Railway. Neighbors in Saline and Chariton Counties suffered the distress of the disaster. The town of Glasgow, however, situated on the high ground, could still celebrate its June commencement at Pritchett College. Students graduated, and then the public promotions for the Missouri Central Electric Railway went silent.

Col. Chase left Howard County and went back to New York for the summer. By September he and his wife were back in Glasgow and announced that work on the railroad "will begin soon." The newspapers reported that Wall Street money was tight and he regretted the "immense losses caused by floods to the various railroad interests of Missouri." Nevertheless, the next month, the Glasgow town council began the process of granting a right-

of-way to the corporation through the city. Town dwellers also debated an ordinance to regulate saloons. The combined railroad and saloon issues produced a raucous meeting summarized "Hot Time in the Council" by the local press.

The prospects of progress rallied the *Glasgow Missourian* and local businessmen to form the Glasgow Commercial Club in February 1904. They established a membership fee and declared "every citizen of Glasgow and vicinity eligible." The newspaper published their rules and regulations and ended with a summary of the executive session that elected attorney J. H. Denny as president and A. B. Southworth as vice-president. However, the hiatus in eastern capital earlier pledged to the electric railroad continued. So, Col. Chase and his supporters took the opportunity to enlarge their vision – the railway should be extended to Kansas City and become the "largest electric railroad in the world," 360 miles long. Promoters formed a committee to visit with farmers about their willingness to donate a right-of-way along the projected line.

Optimism for the electric trolley railroad flowered in the March town council meeting. Officials moved the public presentation process forward to approve of the right-of-way along streets, avenues, and alleys for the Missouri Central Railway Company. The real estate primarily impacted was on the eastern and southern limits of Glasgow. Local leaders had to plan for the electric trolley that would include telegraph and telephone poles, wires, room for a single and double track, switches, turn-outs, crossover tracks, and the anticipated freight and passenger traffic. Local government approved the required ordinance. In May 1904, George Harrison provided a map of the proposed line from St. Louis to Kansas City, and a northern extension from Glasgow to Brookfield, expressing "confidence in its early completion." That July, the railroad's board of directors sent Harrison to New York "to close up some preliminary matters" and the *Glasgow Missourian* told readers that "the electric railway is an assured fact."

When Harrison returned to Glasgow, J. Morrison-Fuller had not ceased his two-year attack on the electric railroad and, in particular, on its president, George B. Harrison. On the evening of August 12, 1904, the sixty-year-old Harrison, who feared physical assault by the forty-two-year-old Morrison-Fuller, walked down 1st Street with a loaded pistol in his pocket. The two men met and a brawl erupted. The city prosecutor arrested both men for disturbing the peace, but focused on Harrison for the additional charge of carrying a concealed weapon. The city dismissed the charge against Morrison-Fuller, but impaneled a jury to hear the Harrison case. The court summoned Morrison-Fuller to testify, but he refused. The jury deliberated three minutes to return a verdict of not guilty for Harrison, and added parenthetically, that in view of John's verbal, public assaults that Harrison "had every right to carry a pistol to defend himself." The conclusion of this case did not end litigation between the two men.

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Subsequent to the August fracas on 1st Street, Harrison filed a libel suit against Morrison-Fuller. It came up on the Howard County circuit court docket in April 1905. Harrison hired a five-member all-star team of regional attorneys led by Cooper County Judge W. M. Williams, while Morrison-Fuller had three attorneys in his cor-

**"On the evening of August 12, 1904, the sixty-year-old Harrison, who feared physical assault by the forty-two-year-old Morrison-Fuller, walked down 1st Street with a loaded pistol in his pocket." — see map pages 12-13**

ner led by Oswald Barton. The latter obtained a change of venue to Saline County for a May trial. The judge, however, continued the high-profile trial until fall. Suddenly the *Glasgow Missourian* announced on September 28, 1905, “Geo. B. Harrison Vindicated.”

The evidence presented outlined a complex series of charges that Morrison-Fuller brought against Harrison and the Glasgow Savings Bank over its activities of the previous two decades. John’s claims involved improper banking procedures on a mortgage, interest rates, evasion of taxation, and forged checks. Plaintiff attorneys brought copies of newspapers. In December 1902, Morrison-Fuller wrote in the *Glasgow Weekly Globe* about George B. Harrison, “Bunco-Steerer . . . and denounced Harrison, banker, Glasgow, Howard County, Mo., as a common swindler and inveterate liar.” A lawyer from Slater told of his visit to Glasgow. He passed the *Globe* office and heard Morrison-Fuller singing “doggerel rhymes about Harrison, a ‘bunco-steerer’ on a phonograph with the tune set to the music of ‘Come to Jesus.’”

On Morrison-Fuller’s side were complaints against the Glasgow Savings Bank by Thomas Erskine Birch, III, and Rector

Fuller’s view, Carr Pritchett’s leave of absence from the school, with no astronomer appointed to direct the observatory, meant that the trustees had violated Berenice’s 1881 Declaration of Trust.

Glasgow native, George Harrison, testified that he and his family had suffered a great deal of annoyance. So much had Harrison been traumatized that his agony caused “nervous prostration” the past January and he spent one month in a Kansas City hospital. Harrison further told the court that Morrison-Fuller took extreme umbrage when the Glasgow Savings Bank refused a \$4,000 loan to him without security. One wonders if Morrison-Fuller’s attempt at a signature loan wasn’t a tactic rather than a sincere request. Nevertheless, a parade of Howard County men affirmed the integrity, reputation, and honesty of Harrison, including Uriel S. Hall, president of Pritchett College, professor R. T. Hood, Central College, Fayette, and attorney R. B. Caples of Glasgow. Testifying for Morrison-Fuller, Thomas E. Erskine, formerly of the Glasgow Savings Bank, talked about Harrison’s wavering reputation around Howard County.

Then, in a dramatic tradition of great country lawyers in Missouri, Judge W. M. Williams summarized the case for Harrison. “The court house [in Marshall] was crowded to its utmost capacity, and the audience and the jury listened to one of the greatest presentations about character” and the protection of it in recent memory. “Such a speech was needed to encourage the young men of our land to rise above the temptation [to] vent their spleen in the defamation of character under the guise of freedom of the press . . . this great speech will never be forgotten by the waiting crowd.” The jury took “a short time” and awarded \$4,000 [\$106,500] to the plaintiff. Morrison-Fuller later negotiated his damages payment to \$2,500 plus court costs.

While citizens anticipated the historic trial during summer 1905, Glasgow women formed the Thursday Club. Berenice Morrison-Fuller and her daughter Berenice signed up. The group met and listened to programs given by its local membership and, in August, the Morrison-Fullers entertained the women at *Eglantine Castle*. At that meeting, the ladies made plans to give a dance at Lewis Hall (i.e., Lewis Library) for club members to honor the Misses Jane and Bessie Thom-

son of Chicago. The former students at Pritchett College, now fast friends of the Morrison-Fullers, vacationed at *Eglantine Castle*. After activities, at the end of the month, young Berenice Morrison-Fuller joined the Thomson sisters on the train headed to Chicago and a respite in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

By January 1906, George B. Harrison, and railroad promoters were back in New York. Gen. E. W. Price, and three others from Missouri met for three days with a delegation of eastern financiers in a Fifth Avenue hotel that included representatives from an oil company, Brooklyn Rapid Transit, and the Knickerbocker Trust Company. The group released to the public that the line now sometimes termed, “the county line railroad,” for its projected depots in county seats, that it would cost \$37,000 per mile or \$17,000,000 to connect St. Louis and Kansas City. Promoters were happy with the number of rights-of-way already secured and concluded “work is



**The original Glasgow Savings Bank building. The two-story brick structure (circa 1871) is an example of high Victorian architecture. Located on the corner of Market and Main Streets, it now serves as Glasgow City Hall. Photo by Don Cullimore**

Barton. Harrison’s plaintiff lawyers exhibited Morrison-Fuller’s *Globe* papers and “showed a number of copies containing cartoons to the jury.” Morrison-Fuller took the public brunt of Gen. Edwin Price’s friends at the *Chariton Courier* in Keytesville that denounced Fuller “as a brute in human form, a pensioner on his wife’s bounty, whose name does not appear on the tax books, and that he had his throat cut while trying to steal a jack pot [a gambler’s winnings]. . . .” Morrison-Fuller replied to the Keytesville paper. He penned another assault on the electric railroad, titled “Trustees and Trash,” and “alluded to the catspaw council, Harrison-Southworth-Shackelford gang.” Moreover, Morrison-Fuller accused two of Shackelford’s sons-in-law, C. C. Hemenway and James H. Denny of Pritchett College, “who were in illegal possession of \$100,000 of Berenice Morrison-Fuller’s money – a trust fund obtained by a swindle.” By way of explanation, in Morrison-

expected to be commenced shortly.” Col. Chase’s political friends in Ohio had already advanced Congressional discussions for new rail bridges at St. Charles and Glasgow. Back in Glasgow, George Harrison told the *Missourian* in February that the “only obstacle now is an entry into St. Louis.” But, the urban financiers remained cautious and did not yet release any funding.

A year later, D. C. Willoughby, a wealthy Englishman, who “has money to finance,” appeared in Howard County to discuss the Missouri Central Railway. He held public meetings to talk about the line and to gauge public support. Willoughby had an office in New York and was a major investor in electrically-operated industry. Meetings continued until spring when George Harrison, still president of the Missouri Central Railway, went to Paris, France, to meet with international businessmen. From Paris, Harrison traveled to London, and back to the United States. John Morrison-Fuller took notice of Harrison’s trip by publishing critical articles about the railroad in the St. Louis press. Just as the 1903 flood had played into Morrison-Fuller’s hands, the emerging 1907 Panic stifled investments in new railroads. Moreover, state government was introducing a different transportation issue – Missouri’s highway engineer traveled the state in 1907 to hold public meetings for proposed automobile routes.

When Harrison unpacked his bags at home, Morrison-Fuller was again in the Glasgow press. The country’s national-issue debates during this Progressive Era filtered through the municipality of Glasgow. Local government and business leaders wanted improved streets, public water facilities, fire protection, and hitch racks for horses on 1st Street. City Hall levied tax assessments to support these efforts. They sent Glasgow’s merchants’ tax bill to Morrison-Fuller, who refused to pay it. The local collector served multiple notices until the town council brought a delinquent tax suit against him. However, when the issue came before the judge, city attorney, R. B. Caples, had the charges dismissed which made the city liable for costs. Caples explained that Glasgow did not have an appropriate ordinance to enforce a merchants’ tax. Caples dutifully drafted a new ordinance and submitted it to the town council. The council, itself, was anxious to restructure its own financial management, as Glasgow municipal government, in 1907, regardless of its aspirations, operated at a deficit. Moreover, new Missouri laws required more public transparency of local government with their minutes and budgets to be printed in a county newspaper.

John Morrison-Fuller prepared for another season of very public campaigns. For two decades Missourians had debated the local option law that gave jurisdictions the opportunity to vote for or against the legality of selling alcohol in their communities. The result was the formation of “wets” into supporters for the licensing of alcohol, and the “drys” as proponents for ordinances that criminalized the sale of it. John espoused the wets at his bank and initiated a “fight for personal liberty.” Once again, he initiated newspaper editorials to argue his views. A veteran satirist, he em-

ployed another urban cartoonist to issue “placards, bulletins, and cartoons attacking the drys.” The town council put saloon owners on notice in May 1907. They presented an ordinance that required dramshops “to remove all obstructions to a view of the interior between closing time Saturday night and opening time Monday morning.” Some town folks themselves intended to visually inspect businesses for compliance to local regulations.

**"For two decades Missourians had debated the local option law that gave jurisdictions the opportunity to vote for or against the legality of selling alcohol in their communities. The result was the formation of 'wets' into supporters for the licensing of alcohol, and the 'drys' as proponents for ordinances that criminalized the sale of it."**

Berenice had financed the Morrison-Fuller Bank in 1904 with nearly \$90,000 [\$2,395,000], where John’s detractors said, “he’d have a place to loaf.” John’s newspaper ads answered his critics with his anti-

corporate position, “Banking, No Railroads--No Real Estate--No Life Insurance--No Fire Insurance—Just Banking.” Berenice left John to manage his own interests in his own way. The women in his family, however, did not neglect their interests in urban St. Louis. They took trips to the city to shop and attend social events. In February 1908, the two ladies gave a tea at the trendy Washington Hotel, east of Forest Park, where Berenice had an urban retreat. The cold “horrid day” made Berenice fear that no one would come to her social. But, she wrote to Ed Scarritt in Kansas City that “we had over two hundred.” That night, mother and daughter attended the Imperial Ball, “which is always a beautiful affair, of course, we are doing all sorts of gay things in a smaller way.” Conscious of her social calendar, Berenice asked her friendly attorney in Kansas City, “When will the Pritchett College case come up?” Berenice had asked Ed Scarritt to explore breaking the trust with the school. She didn’t know how long they would remain in St. Louis, but intended to leave for Mardi Gras in New Orleans. She hoped Ed and Margaret “would run down [to St. Louis] while we are here.”

John Fuller, as many called him, used the bank building as his primary office located just a couple of doors south and on the same side of the street as the Glasgow Savings Bank. Increased transparency in public business had heightened the awareness of Morrison-Fuller’s extraordinary resources. Sources estimated at the time that Bernice was worth two and one-half million dollars [\$66,510,000]. The *Glasgow Missourian* began an annual listing in January 1908 titled, “Our Wealthiest Citizens, Taxpayers of Howard County Who Pay More than \$50 in Taxes.” The Glasgow Savings Bank led the list by far with \$1,236, but Berenice Morrison-Fuller was second at \$689, while the Morrison-Fuller Bank paid \$283. The largest stockholder in the Glasgow Savings Bank, George B. Harrison, paid \$514. The public notice established that everyone in Glasgow knew what R. J. Lackland had long ago told Oswald Swinney, “Lady Berenice holds the purse strings.” Berenice’s financial allowance to her husband was the subject of much local grousing about the wealthy banker. And, most of Berenice’s wealth resided in St. Louis.

City Hall promoted an increase in revenue for public improvements via a fifty-cent tax on \$100 valuation, a commonly accepted municipal levy. In late January 1908, the newspaper refined the county tax list to one just for Glasgow in an article, “Is Your Name Here? A Complete List of Taxpayers of the City of Glasgow for

1907.” Promoters wanted everyone to know who would be responsible and for how much to modernize the town with increased taxation. The largest payer was Glasgow Savings Bank at \$482 and Berenice Morrison-Fuller at \$209. Then the amounts fell for other banking entities, officer, J. W. Southworth, \$141, and the Morrison-Fuller Bank at \$102. The municipal tax burden then descended to \$93 and plummeted down to single digits for many.

The tax burden was a hot topic. The Anti-Saloon League in Howard County sponsored editorials and championed a dry county. Local tax analysts called for caution. In Glasgow, the saloon license netted \$2,400 [\$61,500] annually for the city. A *Glasgow Missourian* editorial on January 16 noted that in a review of the city budget, were it not for the saloon licenses, Glasgow would have to close the city waterworks, turn off the street lights, and cease road repair. To make up for the saloon revenue, Glasgow individuals would have “to pay almost double their amount of city taxes.” The local government, however, did retain the authority to levy and collect a business tax on merchants, hotels, restaurants, carts, drays, job wagons, etc. Would Glasgow enact and defend a business tax?

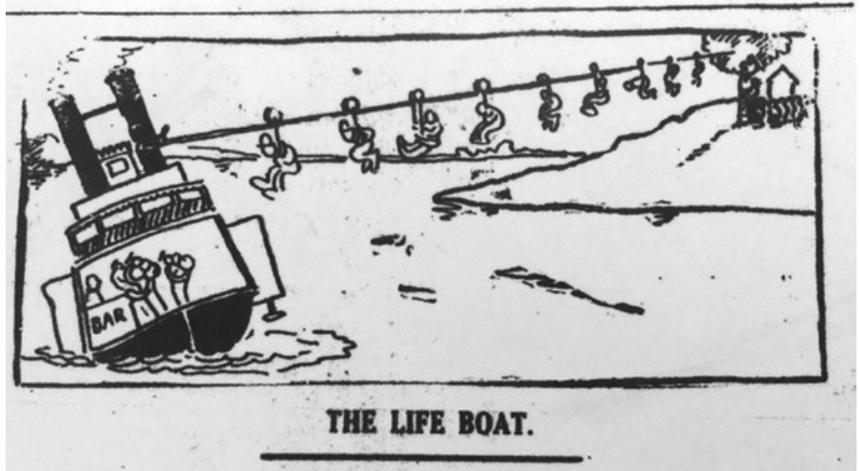
Readers of the press saw increasing editorials on prohibition and its relationship to liberty – John Fuller was far from the only one against prohibition. One of the most passionate for continuing the open saloon ordinance came from the rural correspondent, Me Too, at Steinmetz. The writer spoke, in part, for the many German Catholic families who had made the Glasgow area home in the previous generation. Equally impassioned was the early April submission by Uriel S. Hall, president of Pritchett College. Hall claimed that going against the local option to close the saloons “would kill the three colleges in Howard County.” He said, “even ‘wet’ men will not send their children to the only saloon-ridden college county in Missouri.”

Saturday, April 4, 1908, citizens went to the polls. Men cast over 3,000 votes in the county for a 195-vote margin in favor of prohibition. In Glasgow, however, male citizens voted 2-1 (489-244) against prohibition and in favor of keeping the saloons open. John Morrison-Fuller had campaigned vigorously against the Anti-Saloon supporters and felt vindicated, so the “wets” had reason to celebrate in Glasgow. In the face of four local saloons that closed, John decided to award those in town who chose personal liberty at the ballot box.

The Glasgow banker announced a Personal Liberty Banquet at the Fuller Building on 1st Street “to commemorate the great victory of the ‘wets’ over the ‘drys.’” He printed invitation cards that were not transferrable and blacklisted all ministers and politicians. The *Salisbury Press-Spectator* wrote that the event “outrivaled in brilliance and splendor that given by Belshazzar” in the Old Testament. A St. Louis caterer and twenty-five uniformed waiters served nearly 200 guests. They enjoyed barrels of fish and frogs, candy, and special lighting brightened the gala. “Speeches, toasts, wit, and laughter” rang through the hall with Oswald Barton drawing enthusiastic applause for his speech. The combined program and menu “formed a unique souvenir, the apt quotations and poetical selections fitting time and occasion. The room was

beautifully decorated with flags and bunting, while the walls were covered with cartoons and inscriptions.” A Salisbury photographer took a “flashlight photograph” of the group. In this Jim Crow Missouri, Morrison-Fuller gave one banquet for whites and, one week later, a separate one for blacks. Observers speculated he spent \$1,500 [\$40,000].

Weeks later, a small steamboat came upriver from St. Louis and anchored in the river in plain sight of Glasgow. Evading the prohibition of serving alcohol on land, “thirsty people took advantage of the opportunity” and went out to the boat “to secure a supply of liquid refreshments.” A cartoon in the press labeled the vessel, with a bar on the lower deck, *The Life Boat*. Accompanying verse from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* included:



**CARTOON CAPTION:**The steamer *Chester* landed at our wharf Monday evening and remained there about an hour. A considerable number of thirsty people took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded to secure a supply of liquid refreshments. *Glasgow (Mo.) Missourian*.

*Sing ye also of the way  
They're saving landlubbers to-day  
With their fresh-water crews and a full line of booze  
When the life boat puts into the bay.*

The *Glasgow Missourian* did not comment whether or not John Fuller had asked the boat to come upriver or not.

Laughter soon turned to serious consequence. Uriel S. Hall, lawyer and Democrat U.S. Congressman (1893-97) from neighboring Randolph County, had served as president of Pritchett College since 1905. His position included that of professor of political economy, civil government, and mathematics. The latter responsibility placed Hall in an official role at the Morrison Observatory, as C. W. Pritchett retired without an immediate replacement at this time when Berenice Morrison-Fuller sat on the board of trustees in an advisory capacity. Berenice complained about the lack of a trained astronomer to supervise the Morrison Observatory. So, she hired Edward Scarritt's law firm in Kansas City to file suit against president U.S. Hall and Pritchett College to regain her \$100,000 endowment; Berenice alleged that the college had violated their agreement pertaining to her trust that a trained astronomer manage the facility.

Pritchett College trustees were not oblivious to the sad state of the observatory. They contacted the U.S. Naval Observatory

and negotiated a short-term assignment for Dr. Herbert Morgan to come to Glasgow as an astronomer in residence. Morgan spent fifteen months on the job. He “overhauled, cleaned, and calibrated the instruments; re-shelved books, and installed an electric line” for lights. He used the telescope to observe comets, asteroids, and stars and recorded his results in a report to the college at the end of his tenure, December 31, 1906. He told the administration that observatory work is still “hindered by lack of modern” technology for the equipment and “for want of a better library.” Pritchett trustees appointed an acting director, without a professional background in astronomy, to cope with the much-maligned observa-



**Pritchett College Trustee James H. Denny was a Glasgow attorney.** *Photo of courtesy James M. (Jim) Denny*

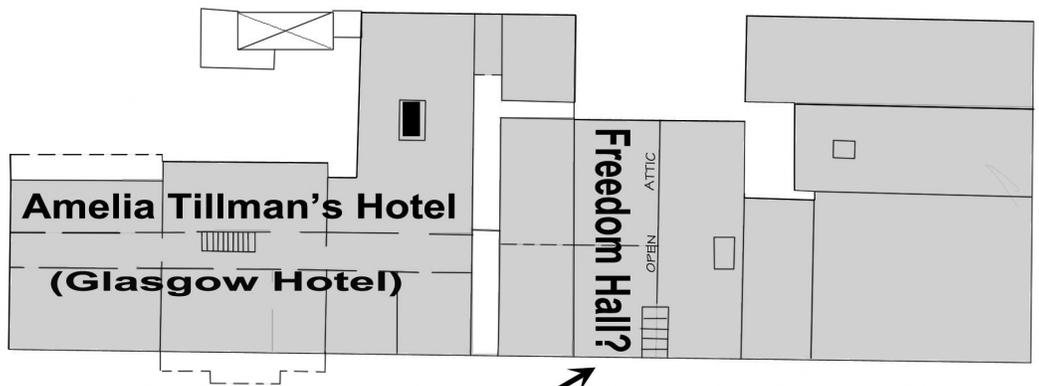
tor. Concomitantly, during the local option campaign of 1907-08, John Morrison-Fuller published criticisms of President Hall personally, and the college generally, for their support of the Anti-Saloon League. Berenice then pressed the board to find a way for the scientific instruments at the Morrison Observatory to be moved to another institution. College trustee, James H. Denny, in 1907, asked the Williams law firm in Boonville for its legal analysis of Berenice’s 1881 Declaration of Trust to the board of trustees. W. M. Williams concluded that the endowed fund, donated to Pritchett School Institute, “nor any property acquired with those funds, could not be used for another and different purpose.” He further explained that Berenice had no legal standing in the fund – she “gave it irrevocably for a charitable use.” Williams did write that the board of trustees could make “application to a court of equity” to settle the question. Meanwhile, Denny discussed the legal opinion with the trustees and they communicated Williams’ opinion to Berenice. George B. Harrison followed with a letter to the president of Boatmen’s Bank about the original trust document. R. J. Lackland responded in a curt note in January 1908, “I beg to say I know nothing whatever of the matters you speak of in your letter. I never saw any declaration of trust. That was managed altogether by Mr. J. O. Swinney when he was curator of Berenice Morrison.” A legal distinction was that Berenice’s observatory gift was to the trustees, not to the college

corporation. The issue of the observatory did not go away.

During spring 1908, U.S. Hall “went to Fuller’s bank and assaulted him for making use of his name in a publication.” Apparently, no one filed charges or complaints about the fracas. Hall’s irritations did not end. On Friday morning, August 27, Hall raised the stakes in his disgust with Morrison-Fuller. The college president waited for the banker to open for business on 1st Street. Morrison-Fuller’s “daily custom was to stop at H. G. Digges’ drug store for a supply of cigars, go next door to the post office for his mail, and then to his bank,” the three businesses adjacent to each other. Morrison-Fuller carried his glasses and cigars toward his front door when fifty-six-year-old Hall, wielding a “loaded cane, struck Mr. Fuller across the head and side of the face, knocking him down. Before he could arise, Hall struck him five or six blows, delivered with all the force at his command.” Fuller “scrambled to his feet, drew a revolver and pointing directly at Hall’s breast, snapped the trigger, but the gun failed to go off.” Hall drew his gun and Fuller ran into the bank to get another weapon. Hall shot at Fuller “shattering the glass in the door.” Fuller returned fire and struck the door facing. “Fuller was severely though not dangerously hurt,” said the newspaper. One has to wonder, what conversations did Berenice and John have about his public life?

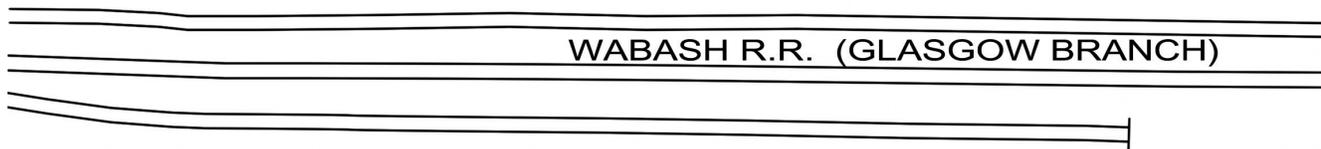
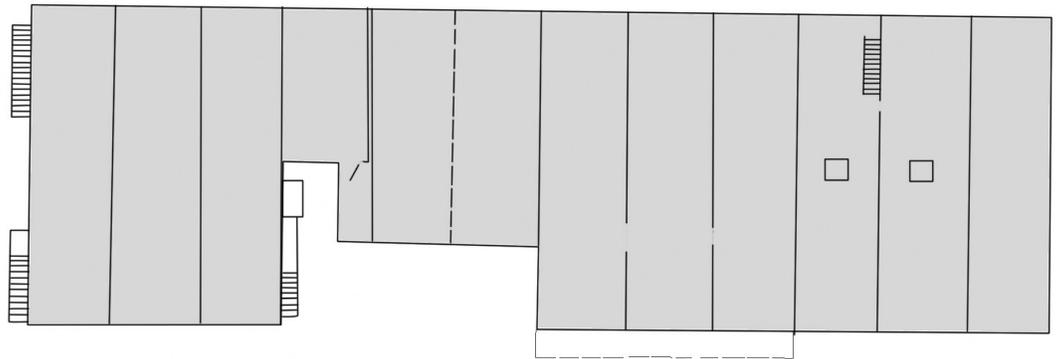
Authorities arrested president Hall for disturbing the peace and leveled a fine of \$50 [\$1,330]. Law enforcement then presented Hall with a warrant for his arrest with “intent to kill with a cane, and assault with intent to kill with a revolver.” Hall pleaded not guilty before the local magistrate, who set bond at \$500 [\$13,300]. George B. Harrison, James H. Denny, and C. H. Southworth gave their securities for Hall’s temporary release and the case headed for November circuit court. The newspaper had covered the results of Fuller’s battles in Glasgow. However, the paper remained silent about judicial proceedings against Hall. Surprisingly, Fuller did not press charges and the case was dismissed as there is no plaintiff entry in the Howard County circuit court record book. Months earlier, Fuller did not press charges against Hall after their spring scuffle. And, in 1904, when Fuller could have testified against Harrison on the concealed weapon’s case, he refused to do so. The intemperate John Morrison-Fuller maintained his own set of personal rules for his contests over individual liberty and counted his victories differently than others did.

Prohibition in Glasgow forced the issue of raising municipal taxes in March 1909. The waterworks, at the foot of Saline Street, operated in the red, and needed improvement. City council passed an ordinance for a merchants’ license tax over the grumbling of local businessmen. They paid it, but Morrison-Fuller Bank refused. Promptly arrested, Morrison-Fuller gave bond, and hired Oswald Barton to represent him. Barton issued 310 subpoenas, “three-fourths of the voting population of Glasgow.” The mayor’s court allowed 264 of them. The jury, however, heard testimony from a far fewer number. Percival Birch, the city’s attorney, got a conviction on Morrison-Fuller with a \$54 fine and all court costs. Fuller appealed the case to Howard County circuit court and announced he would continue to the Supreme Court, if necessary, as the “constitutionality of the tax” had never been litigated. A majority of Missouri towns already had such a license, a fact that appeared to forecast failure for Morrison-Fuller’s intention. In circuit court, however, the resolute Morrison-Fuller prevailed on a technicality that the “city council did not have authority to pass a merchant’s



**1<sup>ST</sup>** *In defiance of City prohibition of alcohol, John Morrison-Fuller dispenses free beer in "Freedom Hall," October, 1908*

*George Billings Harrison, bearing a pistol, encounters John Morrison-Fuller on 1st street and a public brawl ensues August 12, 1904*

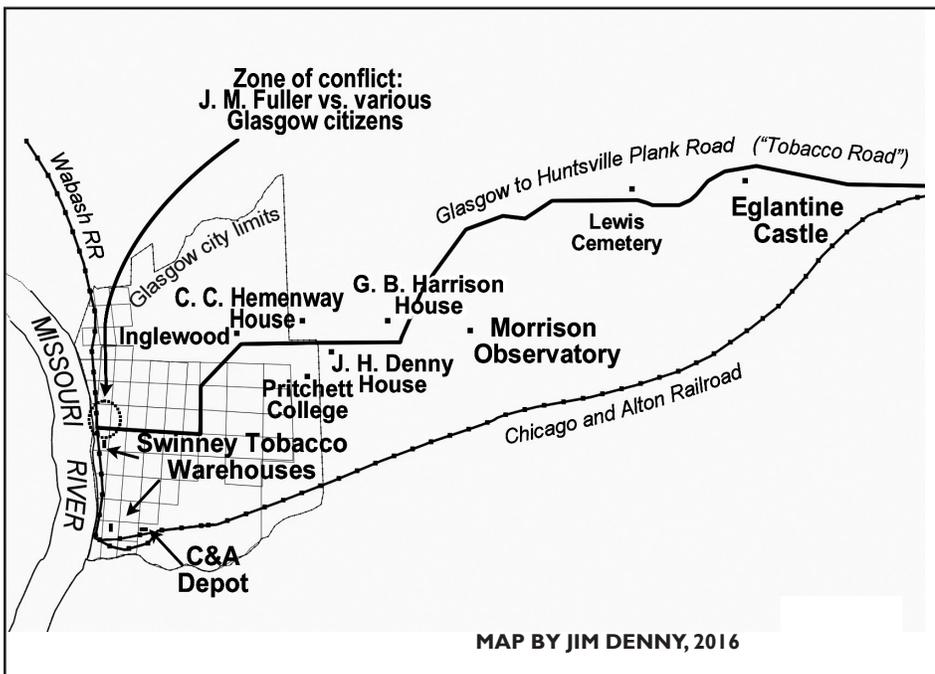


**WATER**



Map by Jim Denny, 2016

Depiction

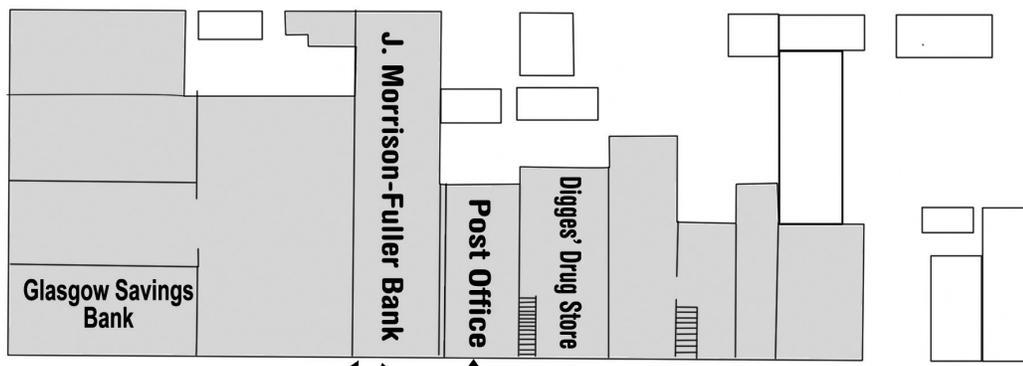


MAP BY JIM DENNY, 2016

**"On the evening of August 12, 1904, [Fuller] feared physical assault by the forty-year-old [Harrison] and went down 1st Street with a loaded pistol"**

**On August 27, 1908 "... fifty-six-year-old [Fuller] was struck across the head by a cane, struck Mr. Fuller across the head and fell down. Before he could arise, Hall stood over him with all the force at his command. [Fuller] drew a revolver and pointing directly at Hall, the gun failed to go off.' Hall drew a knife to get another weapon. Hall shot at [Fuller] through the door.' Fuller returned fire and struck [Hall] though not dangerously hurt,' said [Fuller]**

STREET



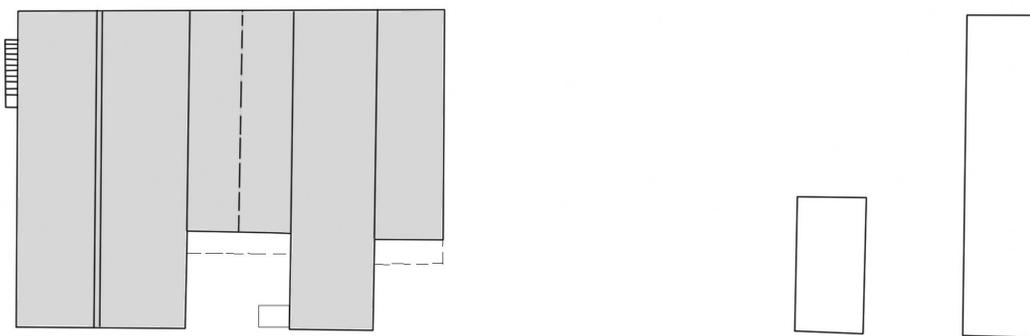
loaded  
Fuller  
issues,

*Uriel Hall assaults J M Fuller with  
cane, and gun battle ensues,  
August 27, 1908*

*John Morrison-Fuller's  
daily routine, ca.1908*

STREET

MARKET



○



STREET

*of commercial district based on 1893 and 1910 Sanborn Insurance Maps*

the sixty-year-old Harrison, who  
two-year-old Morrison-Fuller, walked  
in his pocket."

ear-old [Uriel] Hall, wielding a 'loaded  
head and side of the face, knocking him  
truck him five or six blows, delivered  
Fuller 'scrambled to his feet, drew a  
all's breast, snapped the trigger, but  
his gun and Fuller ran into the bank  
Fuller 'shattering the glass in the  
ck the door facing. 'Fuller was severely  
the newspaper."



A modern day photo of building on Glasgow's Main Street (formerly 1st Street) where John Morrison-Fuller operated his "Freedom Hall." Photo by Don Cullimore

ordinance” at the particular meeting in question. The defendant was dismissed, but the court assessed the excessive number of witness fees against him. The City of Glasgow was granted an appeal to the Kansas City Court of Appeals and prepared to bear the continuing attorney fees to get a merchants’ license tax for the city. In the short run, Glasgow had to float bonds to pay for public improvements.

While Morrison-Fuller argued about the constitutionality of local government authority, he created a more public spectacle to promote his views. He deeply resented the wave of local temperance sentiment and the legislative assault upon his personal liberty. In October 1908, he rented a two-story, five-room commercial building downtown, next to Amelia Tillman’s hotel, and remodeled it into his “Personal Liberty Club.” Black and white uniformed attendants waited on customers, who seated themselves in “easy chairs and settees and [read] the latest newspapers and magazines” for conversation and relaxation. “Rich men or poor, working men or idlers, strangers or natives, were welcome to turn the faucet” and gathered there with him to enjoy unlimited free beer at John’s expense. He called his open-door facility Freedom Hall, where anyone could drink gratis, except on Sunday – that was illegal -- but giving alcohol away on other days “as free as water that flowed in the Missouri River” was not.

The sheriff arrested John for serving alcohol. Attorney E. W. Henry represented Morrison-Fuller at a change of venue in Randolph County. The state examined twenty-two witnesses, but the court ruled that the local option law “was not intended to cover the gift of a drink of liquor by a private person, who is in no sense a dealer in liquors.” John returned triumphantly to Glasgow. Old families in Howard County, who had known his grandfather, Dr. William A. Smith, “one of the founders of Methodism in Western Missouri” and a scourge of the “rum traffic,” were aghast at his behavior. The local banker replied that “I don’t let my ancestors do my thinking for me.”

John continued his crusade to persuade his neighbors that they had been duped and that their constitutional rights in liberty demanded that they alone should personally choose when and where to have a drink. He continued his Freedom Hall campaign for a year, where anyone “turned the spigots and quaffed the steins” gratis. Morrison-Fuller finally decided that “I could not educate the people to a spirit of resentment against the laws that were de-

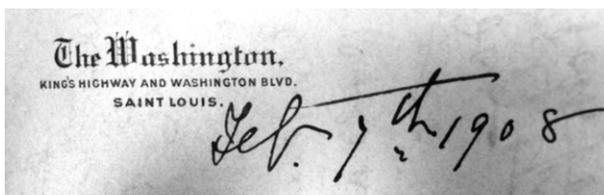
priving them of their liberties to eat and drink what they chose. I found that they did not care. They are spineless slaves.” A reporter concluded that “Glasgow, had a Sahara thirst, but still no taste for sociological reform and wondered what Morrison-Fuller would do next, and secretly, it is hinted after dark, that he will find some

means of introducing a hops flavor to the foamy Missouri.” The press claimed that John’s experiment cost \$7,000 [\$186,000].

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* posted that “John Morrison-Fuller was the most disgusted man in Howard County.” Gazing over a parched Glasgow, he closed Freedom Hall in May 1909. At Pritchett College campus, trustees eliminated its advisory board seats. The flush couple shuttered the Morrison-Fuller Bank, and in August, Berenice advertised a sale of “a lot of household goods at Morrison-Fuller Bank, auction to begin at 2 p.m., Saturday, August 27.” Then, the family moved to St. Louis. Berenice’s once common presence around Pritchett College dissolved, but

trustee and secretary, James H. Denny, continued to provide her with annual reports of the college administration.

It is unknown how John Morrison-Fuller viewed his future in St. Louis with Berenice and their twenty-three-year-old daughter. John’s future though was short. On a freezing cold December night in 1910, he socialized at the Southern Hotel, and when he stepped outside, he slipped on the ice and cracked his skull. Knocked unconscious, he was taken to City Hospital. Attendants summoned his family who were living at the Washington Hotel. The two ladies sat at his bedside when he died, reportedly of meningitis. The Fayette *Democrat-Leader’s* obituary described him as a “Glasgow banker and man of picturesque, original, and eccentric ideas.” Harvard alums remembered John “though he might be termed a mild sort of anarchist, he could not be regarded as an eccentric. He was withal a gentleman, a devoted man of family, firm in his friendships, which he preferred should not be many, and which were often with persons of very different fibre from himself; a good fighter, but a fair one.” Journalists nationally and regionally had carried stories about his Freedom Hall in Glasgow and newspapers from New York to national temperance serials took notice of his death. In January 1911, the *Glasgow Missourian* in its



Modern-day photo of the former Washington Hotel in St. Louis where the Morrison-Fullers were living when John Fuller died in December 1910. Above is stationery showing hotel masthead on a letter Berenice wrote in 1908. The hotel was her urban “getaway” when she lived in Glasgow.

Hotel photo courtesy of Lynn Morrow, stationery from the Scarritt-Royster-Swinney Family Papers Collection, SHSMO-KC

“Chronicles of the Year 1910,” in the last line of the local notices, mentioned his passing. Less than eighteen months later, George B. Harrison, his corporate foe, was also dead. Berenice buried her husband in Bellefontaine Cemetery. And, in Glasgow, the collective memory preferred to transmit local history that did not include John Fuller.

When the Morrison-Fullers moved to St. Louis, they occupied rooms in the fashionable Washington Hotel, constructed for 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair tourism. Located across Kingshighway from Forest Park, the hotel was at the end of Washington Avenue in the city’s central west end. As 1911 approached, Berenice needed to carve out a new future for herself. As part of her new life, she chose involvement in the country’s second wave of feminist suffrage activism.

### Suffragist & Traveler

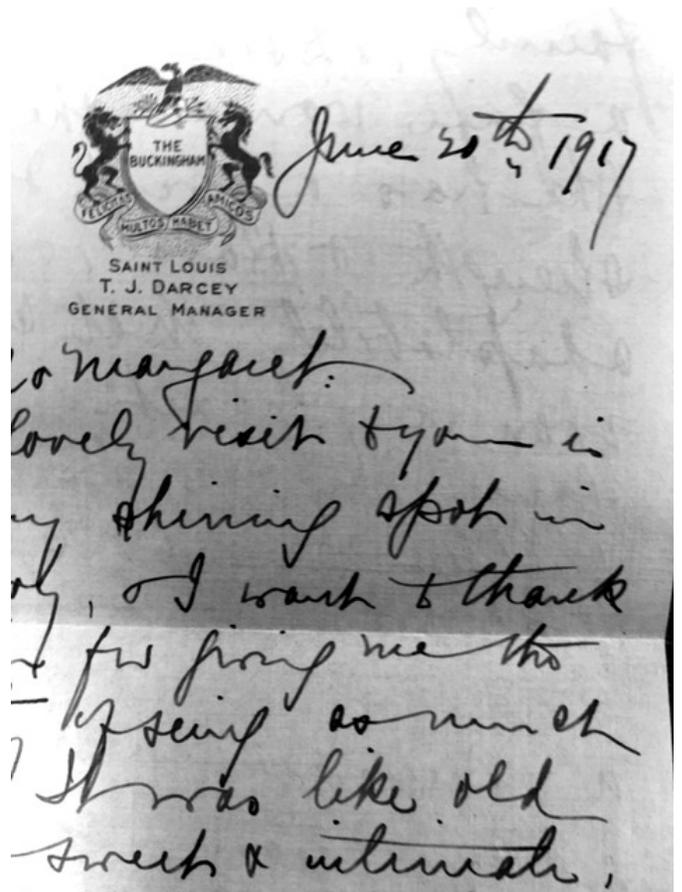
In early 1911, clubwomen of St. Louis met and organized the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association, adopting a constitution. “The Association was at first little more than a name, but that name was at once honored and brought into notice by having its vice-president-at-large, Mrs. Berenice Morrison-Fuller, appointed a delegate to the International Suffrage Convention,” in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1912. Berenice once again began a modest activist role informed by her experience with her mother-in-law, Mrs. John P. Fuller. Berenice’s advantage, of course, is that her wealth and connections, demonstrated by her listing in the prestigious *Social Registers* and *Woman’s Who’s Who of America* of the day, allowed her access to influential people and institutions. Berenice appears to have interacted with the Alexander Brookline Equal Suffrage Association in Massachusetts, but was not an office holder. The *Bankers Magazine* highlighted the names of wealthy women stockholders with the largest accounts. At Boatmen’s Bank Berenice ranked fifth. Thus, she could support the international travel, attend the Stockholm meeting, and make a report back to the St. Louis suffragettes.

Mother and daughter Berenice were anxious to travel. They considered the West, but decided on Europe instead. Young Berenice went to Chicago for “a farewell visit” with Mrs. Thomson and her two daughters. In St. Louis, Berenice had their belongings stored and booked passage on a Red Star Line passenger ship for Antwerp, Paris, Sweden, and an option to Norway. Daughter Berenice intended to study German and Italian in Europe, as her mother had done a generation earlier. And, as she had done for years, Mrs. Morrison-Fuller kept a regular correspondence with Margaret Scarritt in Kansas City.

The two women traveled first class, only twenty-two such passengers on their steamer *Kroonland*, “which suits me as I hate crowds,” wrote Berenice from the steamer. “Already, we are feeling our nerves rested.” On board was a “very charming passenger, Miss Mary Neal, who has been to America” to introduce English folk dances. She “is a woman of independent means, who devotes herself to philanthropic work for girls & through this she started her folk songs and dances.” Neal’s experience as a social worker, a lady with socialist political views, and suffragist ideas appealed to Berenice. A highlight of their trip was attendance at the coronation of George V at Westminster Abbey in June. The ladies shuttled back and forth across the English channel going to Paris, Switzerland, Germany, but always returning to Paris, where

Berenice spoke the language. Berenice encouraged the Scarritts to join them, “Americans are simply swarming over here!” The St. Louisans prepared for an extended Parisian holiday. In December 1911, they rented rooms on the sixth floor of a “cozy little apartment pleasantly situated” that overlooked the public space around the Eiffel Tower until June 1912. Berenice visited friends in Sweden and dutifully attended the International Suffrage Convention in Stockholm. The two Morrison-Fullers returned to the states in the fall. Daughter Berenice spent a lot of time in Chicago with the Thomsons, where she had become friends with a Connell family, especially one of its sons. Mrs. Morrison-Fuller returned to the Washington Hotel.

Berenice resumed her society engagements and moved up the street to the Buckingham Hotel, a seven-story, U-shaped, fashionable hotel also built to accommodate World’s Fair visitors. It, too, was across the street from Forest Park at its northeast corner on



Letter written to Margaret Scarritt by the widowed Berenice Morrison-Fuller in 1917 on Buckingham Hotel, St. Louis, stationery. See letter text on page 16. Berenice lived in the hotel during World War I. Image courtesy of Scarritt-Royster-Swinney Family Papers Collection, SHSMO-KC

West Pine – she had to change her address in the Social Register. While in Europe, Berenice had completed other business, too. Working with the French and American consular service in Paris, she sold most of her Glasgow town properties to banker Richard E. Turner in March 1912, and in February 1913, she sold the *Eglantine Castle* farm for \$18,000 (\$435,500) to stockman, John P. Donovan. She divested herself from remaining Howard County

real estate after she moved into the Buckingham Hotel.

In May 1913, Berenice announced the happy occasion to celebrate the marriage of her daughter, Berenice, to George Walton Connell (1874-1965). Her older cousin, Mrs. Henry Hitchcock hosted the event at 54 Vandeventer Place, her mansion on a private street where the acknowledged aristocracy of St. Louis lived. Mary Hitchcock was the eldest daughter of George Collier and the two women had known each other since their girlhoods on Lucas Place. The nuptial setting was just a few blocks from Berenice's hotel residence. Once married, the Connells made their home in Chicago.

While the wedding plans matured for daughter Berenice, Mrs. Morrison-Fuller and Jane E. Thomson planned a European tour. Since 1907, Jane Thomson and Berenice had traveled to and from Glasgow, St. Louis, and Chicago. Ms. Thomson had worked for several different institutions. She taught high school, became an administrator for a children's hospital, then director of the Self Culture Hall, St. Louis, for 1910-11. She returned to Illinois to work in the Equal Suffrage Association, becoming vice-president of the 34th Ward, Cook County, Illinois, then worked with urban youth, as director of the Gad's Hill Center, Chicago, in 1912. Thomson published articles and lectured publicly to advocate suffrage, and was a charter member and treasurer of the new Missouri Equal Suffrage Association. One suspects that Berenice mentored and inspired Jane to some degree in Glasgow, sponsored her attendance at Smith College, and the relationship of the two women became analogous to the one experienced by Mrs. J. P. Fuller and Berenice Morrison.

Preparing for Europe, Berenice wrote to Margaret in Kansas City. A melancholy Berenice had looked for a St. Louis house to move into and, all the while, thought "so strongly of the dear one who is gone, but never lost to me, whose companionship is always with me in thought." The *Post-Dispatch*, following the closure of Freedom Hall in Glasgow, had published that "Mrs. Morrison-Fuller is very much in love with her distinguished-looking husband and approves of all he does." With Berenice's daughter married and in Chicago, Mrs. Morrison-Fuller anxiously looked forward to Jane Thomson's companionship. The two ladies went to Boston and boarded the steamer *Cincinnati* for Hamburg. "You know I love the restful ocean voyage," she wrote Margaret. The women went to Sweden to stay with Berenice's friends in a country home "by the sea with wonderful pine woods in which we wander. Is not this ideal?" After months in Europe, Berenice planned to resume house-hunting in St. Louis the following winter. Ultimately, the heiress decided to remain for a time at Buckingham Hotel.

When Berenice returned to St. Louis, the state and national suffrage movement began to gain noticeable momentum. Activists held public meetings and presented petitions to legislators, as draft bills moved through legislative committees and received incremental support. The Missouri Equal Suffrage Association repeatedly reelected Berenice to her position as vice-president-at-large, and meetings, such as one in Columbia, Missouri, in May 1914, listed her residence as Glasgow, even though she lived in St.

Louis. That November, Jane Thomson and Berenice attended the national convention of the Woman Suffrage Association in Nashville, Tennessee. Berenice was one of nine Missouri delegates, and both women met journalist-activist Emily Newell Blair, who was attending her first convention. As Missouri got ready to enter

World War One, the suffragettes opened an office in Jefferson City. Meetings and conferences continued. The following year in 1915, Jane was listed in the *Woman's Who's Who of America*.

**" If our men could only realize the importance, the necessity of women's work, or have the sense to see that women always have and always give of their best, they (the men) would demand that we be made true citizens, equal partners in all respects."**

### Letter to Margaret Scarritt

Berenice and daughter, Mrs. Connell, took a train to Kansas City in spring 1917 to visit Ed and Margaret Scarritt and William and Berenice Royster. She later wrote that "it was like old times, so sweet and intimate. I now feel we have caught up many of the threads." The family discussed the suffrage movement. Berenice, back in St. Louis, updated the Scarritts that "we are doing patriotic work as well as suffrage. In fact they hang together in a wonderful way. If our men could only realize the importance, the necessity of women's work, or have the sense to see that women always have and always give of their best, they (the men) would demand that we be made true citizens, equal partners in all respects. We could then present a true democracy to the world and not wait to be forced into it by the public opinion of other nations after the war." She closed telling Margaret that she would travel to Chicago after July 4th to see Berenice [Connell] for a fortnight, "and later to Cape Cod, Dear old Cape Cod!"

A survey of Berenice's correspondence during this time suggests that she thought little about what was going on at Pritchett College. She remained three weeks with Berenice in Chicago, stayed in Milwaukee for a week, traveled to Cape Cod, and in mid-September lodged in a Berkshire cottage in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Mrs. Henry Hitchcock had been there all summer and the two cousins regaled each other. At a pre-arranged time, daughter Berenice Connell arrived at the cottage and joined her mother for drives through the Berkshires. "Have you ever motored through the Berkshire Hills?," she asked Margaret. Always a music lover, Berenice attended composer and pianist, Elizabeth Coolidge's three-day chamber music festival. Later, the pair went to Boston for a few weeks. At the end of September, Berenice asked Margaret, "Have you been in Missouri all summer?"

In March 1919, suffragists celebrated fifty years of their activism at a jubilee convention of the national association in St. Louis. Berenice, one of twenty-six Missouri delegates, joined them at the Statler Hotel. She was "Chairman on Hospitality for Committee of '1872'," and as a speaker addressed the "Daughters of Pioneers," an evening audience. Berenice reminded them of a suffrage convention a half-century earlier in 1872 in St. Louis, one that Mrs. John P. Fuller had attended, and "introduced three suffragists present who had attended that meeting." A sixty-two-year-old lady, Berenice began to recognize her own historic struggle for personal liberty, an old conversation that she often had with



**SIGNING MISSOURI'S RATIFICATION OF THE FEDERAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE AMENDMENT: Picture taken in the office of Gov. Frederick D. Gardner, July 3, 1919. Berenice Morrison-Fuller stands in the second row, third from the right. Seated at the table, L-R, Sen. J.W. McKnight, Lt. Gov. Wallace Crossley, Gov. Gardner, S. F. O'Fallon, and Hon. W. E. Bailey. Second row, L-R, Mrs. S. F. O'Fallon, Mrs. Nelle G. Berger, Mrs. J.W. McKnight, Mrs. J. Rudd Van Dyne, Mrs. Fred English, Miss Marie B. Ames, Mrs. George Gellhorn, Mrs. Olive B. Swain, Mrs. John R. Leighty, Berenice, Mrs. Claud Clark, Mrs. W. R. Haight.**

*Image courtesy of Scarritt-Royster-Swinney Family Papers Collection, SHSMO-KC*

her late husband, John. But Berenice was not one to stay home and brood about it. In spring, she left for the Gedney Farm Hotel in White Plains, New York. She wrote to the Scarritts proclaiming that “trunks are my home ... I am a real tramp.”

Finally, after the U.S. Congress agreed on women’s suffrage, the states began to ratify a constitutional amendment. At Jefferson City’s New Central Hotel, on July 1, 1919, celebrants sponsored a “ratification dinner.” Mrs. Berenice Morrison-Fuller and Mrs. George Warren Brown of St. Louis escorted Lt. Gov. and Mrs. Wallace Crossley. Berenice raised over \$300 at the event “for the future of the Jefferson City League.” On July 3rd, Gov. Frederick Gardner signed the ratification bill with Berenice and her fellow suffragettes looking over his shoulder. In October, at the Statler Hotel in St. Louis, the Missouri Suffrage Association merged with the new Missouri League of Women Voters.

### **Berenice’s Last Pitch for Morrison Observatory**

Between Berenice’s suffrage meetings in St. Louis, she made another request of Pritchett College. The board, in its May 1919 minutes, noted that she wanted to act on the legal advice given by the Williams law firm in Boonville more than a decade earlier – she wanted the board to ask the proper Howard County court “to grant the aforesaid Board the right to transfer the property and endowment funds of the Morrison Observatory to the proper Board of the University of Missouri at Columbia.” Berenice “claimed that the observatory funds were not being used in accordance with the articles of agreement between the Board of Trustees of Pritchett College and Morrison Observatory and the donor, Mrs. Berenice Morrison-Fuller.” The board had a vigorous discussion and chose to “defer the subject at this time.”

The next month, Central College officials from Fayette at-

tended a Pritchett College meeting. They asked that Pritchett College turn over the little-used Morrison Observatory to Central College so they could advertise its use in the upcoming student catalog curriculum. However, Central did not have any funds to pay Pritchett for rent or to maintain the observatory. Everyone knew that Pritchett College’s days of student enrollment would not be many; Pritchett trustees eventually closed the school in 1922, but kept the endowment funds in an interest-bearing account. Locals used the interest for Glasgow public school district expenses.

Through the years, Berenice was used to receiving annual reports from the college. When James H. Denny resigned as trustee secretary

in 1916, after serving since 1902, school officials still met at Denny’s office for legal work and business sessions. While living at the Buckingham Hotel, Berenice traveled and worked for suffrage, but she did not keep current on Pritchett’s institutional status. She, like others, knew that most students now headed to public schools, and small liberal arts colleges were in the midst of dire financial stress. Mr. Denny’s replacement as secretary to the trustees discontinued the annual mailing to Berenice. In 1920, sixty-four-year-old Berenice, once again, came to a Pritchett board meeting. Her familiar agenda this time was another advocacy proposal for the University of Missouri to acquire the observatory and “she talked at length about it.” She concluded by saying that she wished the board to pursue a court petition for that purpose.

Another year passed. In November 1921, Berenice wrote to the Pritchett College secretary from her cottage at 87 Ivy Street, Brookline, Massachusetts. As an aging widow, she occupied a 3,300 square foot house that was one-third the size of her former Prescott Street mansion that was around the corner from her current address. In her quietude, she became irritated with no communication from Glasgow. She had not received her customary financial report, a “duty and courtesy that has been omitted,” since 1917, and she wrote, I have “never been obliged to ask for a statement.” Obviously, she was remiss in not asking for one the year before when she attended the Pritchett board meeting. She now requested the several reports from 1917--current to be forwarded to her. Although Berenice’s attempts to transfer the observatory to Washington University and the University of Missouri had failed, she had not forgotten the option for the trustees to file a court petition in Howard County.

Berenice lived in Brookline for several years. Finally, in the

summer of 1925, daughter Berenice Connell and her mother decided to go on an extended European excursion. She kept in touch with the Scarritts in Kansas City, because she engaged the Scarritt law firm to file a petition to the Howard County circuit court to move her Pritchett endowments and the observatory to Central College in Fayette. In March 1927, Scarritts' legal work successfully transferred the \$77,000 [\$1,064,000] combined Morrison endowments to Central, much to the chagrin of folks in Glasgow. However, the Morrison Observatory still sat on a summit east of Glasgow.

In August 1927, Berenice wrote "My dear Ed" from the new, swanky art deco, Hotel Roblin, in Paris. She began by expressing "her gratification of the result of your and Will's efforts. At least the observatory will be removed from Glasgow and be turned over to a responsible board of trustees, who will see that it is used to fulfill its original purpose. I have lived to see this day, and I feel sure that you rejoice with me." Ed's younger brother, Will Scarritt (1861-1938), a law firm partner, had been on the Central College board of trustees for thirty-five years. In court, the Scarritts represented the Central College curators as plaintiffs who successfully sued to obtain legal possession of the observatory and its financial assets. Subsequent negotiations allowed the Glasgow school district to retain the Pritchett College real estate.

Then the heiress revealed to Ed that "Berenice and I have been abroad for over two years," but expected to sail soon on the *Empress of Australia* to Quebec. The ladies looked forward to being back in St. Louis, where "we have engaged rooms. Berenice is divorced. It came about in a very startling manner, for George Connell got the divorce behind her back, with no intimation of his intentions or wishes. It took place last February, but we did not hear of it for months! Naturally it was a great shock to Berenice and an undeserved insult. She is bearing it splendidly however." Just how much George Connell was involved in the plan for a two-year European excursion is unknown.

Berenice's St. Louis residence changed one last time in 1928. The nearby and new Chase Hotel attracted the prominent clientele

of the wealthy and the Buckingham Realty Company went bankrupt. Berenice moved, but, as before, not far. This time she went to the north side of Forest Park to 265 N. Union Boulevard, nearly opposite the entry gate to Portland Place. She chose the new Senate Apartments and daughter Berenice adopted the adjacent Congress Hotel; a basement passageway connected the two

buildings. Berenice unpacked and pored over old photographs, sending some to Kansas City relatives. She wrote that "it was good to live" with old things again and each "object may be a precious link to the past."

Near Christmas in 1934, Berenice received a long letter from Henry S. Pritchett and an update on an "old thing" that had occupied her mind for sixty years. The two had never socialized, but Henry had just visited Howard County and summed up his family history from Virginia to Glasgow, where he had once worked at the Morrison Observatory under his father. Like Berenice, he was disgusted at the "utterly neglected" equipment. He told Berenice that he had made a \$25,000 [\$447,500] application to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, where he had been its president for a generation, to move the scientific equipment to Central College. Henry "felt great responsibility both on my father's part and by reason of your own generous gift." A combination of Carnegie funding and private donations accomplished the move and the facility opened in Fayette in June 1936.

### A Reflective Berenice

Henry Pritchett's correspondence may have encouraged Berenice. Pritchett wrote that "Poor old Glasgow is a decadent place .... I attended the old Methodist church which you and I knew as children. There were twenty-five people," while hundreds attended the local Catholic church. "Everything about the place looked forlorn and decadent .... none of the old families whom we knew are now represented among the business and professional men of the old town." On the other hand, Henry summed up the prosperous college town of Fayette and was gladdened by the "liberalized teaching" at the Methodist school. He told Berenice that Dr. Robert Fleet, the designated director for the Morrison Observatory, who had trained in Heidelberg, "will not be much of a sectarian."

During the depths of the Depression, the senior citizen reflected upon her past and put her thoughts to paper while sitting at her grandfather Capt. W. D. Swinney's desk. She remembered a dramatic Civil War tale in Glasgow that was told to her more than a half-century earlier by her grandfather's sister and great aunt, Mrs. Elizabeth Thomson (1816-83). The Missouri Historical Society at Forest Park published it as "Aunt Lizzie's Story," in April 1935. She turned her attention to her childhood years in Howard County, wrote of her adulthood, recounted many of her far-flung vacation destinations, and with hindsight, remembered popular culture events that "stirred up the dust in little back eddies like Glasgow." Berenice wrote that she greatly enjoyed her new typewriter that keyboarded her memories.

Near eighty-years-of-age, Berenice penned "Missouri Plantation Life," set at her grandfather's Sylvan Villa. It radiates a flowery Victorian romanticism and recites family tradition, it is suffused with her love of landscape and horticulture, and it provides an honest recitation of remembered scenes on one of Missouri's largest slaveholders' domain. Much of it describes interactions in slavery, domestic arts, and the "good life" that the Swinney clan lived. She took joy in naming the games that delighted white and black playmates, supervised by Berenice's mammy, Fanny, but included receiving cautions about never going back of the Big House to "the quarters," where the slaves lived. She delighted in music and singing, gardening and flowers, interior furnishings, sartorial appointments, and numerous animals on the farm. She was espe-



Berenice Morrison-Fuller lived and died in the Senate apartments, right, and daughter Berenice lived in the Congress apartments, left.  
Photo by Lynn Morrow

cially adept in her descriptions of the “plantation hamlet” around the Big House, mentioning the stable, barns, yard, rear kitchen, laundry house, smokehouse, ice house, loom house, her playhouse and dolls, and rooms on the back porch, including the one where they took summer baths. Nearby was Capt. Swinney’s three-story frame tobacco factory where the product hung to dry on the top floor and workers stripped leaves on the second in preparation for transport. Berenice concluded her essay writing that “Negroes and many whites are still suffering from the social upheaval” that began in the Civil War. Her papers, however, do not include any rumination about race.

Berenice did conclude that her antecedents, who settled in St. Charles, represented “a nucleus of educated, superior men such as the Morrisons, Colliers, Pettuses, Yosti, Easton and others.” She counted her French relatives from Portage des Sioux -- the Lefebvre, Giard, and Saucier families, among them, too. When grandmother, Lucy Ann Swinney, had charge of Berenice after her father’s death, she “took me every year to visit my Aunts” in St. Charles. Although she never knew Jesse Morrison, she became “well acquainted with his grandchildren” who lived in the Boston area and credited them with teaching her about her grandfather Morrison’s generation. She remembered her father as a man “of medium height, black, wavy hair, violet blue eyes and very fair skin, a man who had what we call ‘presence.’” The Swinneys’ records confirmed William’s “affable and charming manner, natural dignity, and upright character.” Berenice placed her family among the pioneers who had “the inheritance of gentle manners, expressions of good taste and good breeding.”

Berenice was well aware that her given name resonated among her numerous relations. Her grandfather, James Morrison, brought the name into the family from Kaskaskia reflecting the long and successful business association between the William Morrison and Col. Pierre Menard families. James named his daughter Jane Berenice (1815-48) after Pierre Menard’s daughter, Berenice (1801-88), who had married Pierre Chouteau, Jr.’s, son, Francis. Francis and Berenice became the “first family” of Kansas City where Berenice Chouteau is often termed the “Mother of Kansas City.” The year 1848 was a horrendous one for the Morrison family. Father James, son William M. Morrison’s first wife, Mary, and James’ daughter, Jane Berenice Lockwood, all died.

After William and Kate Swinney married, their only child carried the name Berenice. Her favorite cousin, Anne Swinney, named her only child Berenice (Berenice Swinney Scarritt Royster)

and the two women became life-long friends. John and Berenice Morrison-Fuller continued the name with their daughter, Berenice Morrison-Fuller Connell (1887-1972). Berenice S. Royster named her daughter Berenice A. Royster (1898-1905). And, Berenice Morrison Lockwood Marshall (1874-1957) ultimately joined the family at Bellefontaine Cemetery. Family connections long echoed the name carried from the French settlements into the merchants’ families.

In 1943, Berenice donated her mother’s English harp to the Robert Campbell House, the lone remaining estate in old Lucas Place. She transcribed and typed old correspondence and gave it to the State Historical Society in Columbia the same year. She gathered other family papers, especially genealogy, and donated them to the Missouri History Society at Forest Park. For several years prior, she had spent blocks of time reviewing them, writing family history and free verse poetry that she exchanged with Berenice Scarritt Royster in Independence, Missouri. The Roysters had taken the train to visit Berenice in St. Louis several times over the years. In her eighties, Berenice acknowledged her long and eventful life and recognized the improvements in standards of living and that isolation internationally was a thing of the past. She maintained her conservative

culture and bemoaned the loss of cultured manners in private and public discourse. “All is exaggerated. Women’s finger nails resemble bloody claws. Raucous sounds are called music. Daubs of paint, without form and void, are labeled pictures.” She maintained optimism for a better future, yet, admitting all of us “learn in the hard school of experience.” She closed her chronicles saying that “Beauty and the freedom of the spirit have their own harmonious laws.” But, had Uncle Oswald and the Morrison Observatory soured her on philanthropy? We don’t have evidence of any other institutional gifts by Berenice.

Her failing health required a full time nurse. She died at her Union Boulevard home in the company of her daughter Berenice, at age ninety, in September 1947. A lifetime earlier, when recently returned from Europe in 1879, her personal stationery sported a crest and banner that read “*non quam diu sed quam bene,*” not how long it takes, but how well it is done” -- Berenice had the phrase chiseled in granite on her Bellefontaine Cemetery tombstone. True to her feminist leanings, a recent female graduate of Washington University School of Medicine, Dr. Grace E. Bergner, attended to her. Medical students today can apply for the Bergner Distinguished Alumni Scholarship at Washington University School of



**Berenice Morrison-Fuller as an elderly woman. She died at the age of 90 in September 1947 in St. Louis. She was buried in Bellefontaine Cemetery, next to her husband John.**

*Image courtesy of Scarritt-Royster-Swinney Family Papers Collection, SHSMO-KC*

Medicine. Berenice, like her Morrison and Swinney antecedents, who all emphasized education would be very pleased if they did.

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There are several internet web sites that calculate inflation and wealth comparisons. This essay used the Inflation Calculator at [westegg.com/inflation](http://westegg.com/inflation), rounded off numbers, and used the year 1800 for the earlier 1790s figures; all others used the span from 1800-2015. The intent is to establish patterns and comparisons, not exactly how wealthy someone is, as that total has too many variables. — Author's Note

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### **J. Morrison-Fuller, Harvard University**

It is no extravagance to say that in breadth of culture and intellectual capacity John Fuller had no superiors in his freshman class. He had resided with his mother in Geneva, Switzerland, for a number of years, and he came to college a master of German and French, skilled in mathematics, science and philosophy. He was an omnivorous reader, and in his ability to get books out of the library beyond the limit was the marvel of his friends.

Only one thing hindered his standing among the first half-dozen men in the class, and that was his antipathy to rules prescribed by the college authorities. Not feeling the need of attending chapel or lectures with any approach to regularity, he was continually under fire from the Dean's office; and naturally had to be terminated, so he left college in his sophomore year.

He had ample funds and was aristocratic in a way, but not snobbish. For a time he took charge of the Co-operative Society in its infancy, when the salary was very small. He followed teaching and various forms of business, but these always seemed to be avocations rather than gainful occupations. Probably through his career in later life the income from his work never equaled the outgo, but this was to Fuller a mere incident.

He strove to make his editorial ventures a success so long as they interested him, but not for the money return. He had ideas he wanted to promulgate, and he put them before a generally unappreciative public in his own way. Though he might be termed a mild sort of anarchist, he could not be regarded as an eccentric. He was withal a gentleman, a devoted man of family, firm in his friendships, which he preferred should not be many, and which were often with persons of very different fibre from himself; and he was a good fighter, but a fair one.

With his mind perhaps the one thing needful to make Fuller a distinguished man was poverty; life was always too easy for him. This did not rob him of energy, but it was unfavorable to consistent work along a definite line. His death, December 12, 1910, followed a fall on a slippery street in St. Louis. His wife still lives in that city, and a daughter Berenice, born in 1887, who married in 1913, George W. Connell, resides in Chicago.

*Harvard Graduate Magazine*, December 1911.

## A Young Girl's Remembrance of Eglantine Castle

*In recalling her childhood as a farmer's daughter in Colorado and her young adult and adult years as a farmer's wife in Glasgow, Missouri, Olive Conran Westhues (1902-2003) describes rural American life in the twentieth century. In her autobiography Prairie Fire she recalls her first visit to Eglantine Castle, the magnificent Italianate-style mansion built in 1869 by Berenice Morrison's uncle James Oswald Swinney and later owned by Berenice, who lived there with her husband John Fuller. The long-abandoned house was destroyed by fire nearly four decades ago.*

*Westhues's story is a personal memoir of family and friends and their interaction with farm and small-town life. Major events of this century, such as European immigration, the depression, World Wars I and II and the Vietnam era, are presented from the vantage point of a country woman living in the Midwest.*

*The book was released in 1992 in celebration of the author's ninetieth birthday. It was edited, with an introduction, by her son Kenneth Westhues, professor emeritus of sociology at Waterloo University in Ontario, Canada. This title is now out of print, but copies are available at many city and university libraries in the Midwest. A limited number of copies can be found online at Amazon.com and AbeBooks.com. The Chapter Three excerpt is reprinted here with the permission of Kenneth Westhues and K & A Westhues Publishers.*

—The Editor

### PRAIRIE FIRE: CHAPTER THREE

#### Glasgow Girl: 1918-1922

Each time I pass the ruins of the once magnificent castle on Highway No. 5 east of Glasgow, my mind goes back to Saturday afternoon, August 31, 1918, when I first beheld its regal beauty as the rays of a setting sun filtered through the trees surrounding it. Once known as *Eglantine Castle*, it had been built in the grandest English style by a wealthy plantation owner's daughter. It was there that I spent my first night in the community that would become my home.

Papa, my two brothers, and this carefree lass of sixteen had driven the 150 miles from Grandma's house in Jonesburg, and we were tired and hungry. As we neared the house two young men came out to meet us, and their parents, too, soon appeared on the veranda waving their welcome. Mr. and Mrs. Donovan were my father's friends. Like us, they had moved to Glasgow from Montgomery County. Their son-in-law had been our neighbor and my godfather at baptism. Both of them spoke with an Irish brogue just like my Grandma Conran's. Mrs. Donovan's "Yez come in, supper will be ready in a few minutes," was enough to endear the gracious old lady to us three motherless kids from Colorado. With the Donovans we felt almost instantly at home.

After supper and quite a lot of what Papa called "jawing," he, my brothers and the Donovan boys went to bedrooms on the second floor. Mr. and Mrs. Donovan slept in a first-floor room, across a wide hall from the kitchen and dining room. The huge high-ceilinged rooms by themselves were

enough to awe and frighten me, and I had seldom slept more than ten or fifteen feet from Papa in our little house on Colorado's plains. When kindly Mrs. Donovan led me to the front bedroom at the extreme end of that cavernous hall, my skin crawled with terror. Being sixteen years and one week old, however, I acted

the part of the mature young lady I thought I was. I thanked her and then, with a sinking feeling, watched her pad away down the hall to their room. Her closing of their bedroom door echoed in the distance, proclaiming how alone I was. Somewhere in the labyrinth of walls my father and brothers were climbing into bed, but they seemed a thousand miles away as I undressed and quickly slid between the crisp white sheets.

With covers pulled tight against my throat I lay there rigid and tense. Perhaps I had fallen asleep, perhaps not yet, but suddenly I was roused into panic by a deafening crash of thunder. As it rumbled away another came, then another and another, as the wind shrieked and the windows rattled from the violence of a late summer storm. Storms had always left me petrified, but in this one I was alone. I hid my head beneath the covers. Never in all my sixteen years had I felt so abandoned. But the fury of the storm lessened in due course. I could hear the steady fall of rain outside, and smell its freshness. Relaxing to some small extent, I drifted off into fitful slumber.

Then all at once I heard a steadily magnifying roar and my room became light as day, only to be plunged the next instant into inky blackness once again. My mouth seemed to shrink it went so dry, and my heart pounded



wildly. I tried to call Papa but no words came. I could not have held my breath much longer but at last the shrill whistle sounded of a train. Again its lights flashed through my room, as the iron monster sped through the night on tracks that-so I saw the next morning-lay but a hundred yards from the house. I slept no more that first night in Glasgow, and soon the first rays of the sun streaked across the room.

Almost as if by some secret signal the whole household had arisen and we were all piled in a fringe-topped surrey, the team clopping through deep mud, on our way to Mass at St. Mary's Church. It was the first Sunday of the month, and the Guardian Angel Sodality was receiving Holy Communion as a group. The children sat in the front pews, boys on St. Joseph's side, girls on the Blessed Mother's. The children's choir sang, "To Jesus' Heart All Burning." I thought I had never heard anything quite so beautiful. Even now I cannot hear that song but for an instant I am sitting beside comfortable old Mrs. Donovan, feeling strange and alien, yet sensing somehow that here is where I belong, here would be my friends and home.

Back at home after church we ate hot biscuits, ham and eggs, and then George took us on a tour of the house. In the light of day the 28 rooms and halls did not frighten me at all, but still I stood in awe of this magnificent mansion ten times the size of our Colorado home. The walls were a foot thick, even inside ones. Three floors had seven rooms each, and then a winding staircase led up

through the blue room-a mark, so they told me, of a true English castle. On through smaller rooms we climbed to the top of the tower, from which the whole countryside lay before us. Drenched by the night's downpour but now bathed in sun, the Missouri-farmland looked lush and rich. If my eyes could have pierced the future I might have seen the spot a couple of miles north where I would spend the greater part of my life. But such is not the capability of men, much less of a young woman. My thoughts were of that very day and of the next one, when I would begin the year at St. Mary's, the first Catholic school I had ever attended.

\* \* \*

That first Sunday afternoon George invited me to ride back into Glasgow with him, so he could show me the town. George was a handsome young man probably a few years older than I, and I was overjoyed when Papa said I could accept his invitation. He helped me into his shiney new buggy and away we went. No teenage girl ever felt so sophisticated as I did that day. The highway was as yet unpaved but the mud had settled some since morning, and the spirited young horse moved swiftly. We passed well-kept farm homes, and fields luxuriant with corn and clover. The deep dark green of the trees and undergrowth along the road made startling contrast to the sandy barren roadsides I had known in Colorado. I seemed to be in some kind of fairyland.



**Historic color photo of *Eglantine Castle*, Italianate residence of John and Berenice Morrison-Fuller after they returned to Glasgow in 1899. It was sold in 1913 to the Donovan family. No longer standing, it was located a short distance east of Glasgow near Lewis Cemetery in Howard County.**

*Photo courtesy of Rachael Scott and Duane Perry.*

## Boonslick Historical Society

P. O. Box 426

Boonville, MO 65233

### Bicentennial History of Howard County Published by Genealogical Society

A major publication chronicling two centuries of Boonslick Country history has been published and is available for purchase.

Titled *Howard County: From Prairie Land to Promised Land – A Remembrance Across Two Centuries*, the 180-page hard cover book marks the culmination of more than two years of planning, writing and information gathering.

More than two dozen local historians contributed to the coffee-table sized volume, which was edited by Jim Steele, retired publisher of the Fayette newspapers. Some of the book's information comes from well-known deceased Howard County historians from years past, including B. I. Lawrence, Louise Coutts and others.

Steele dedicated the publication in honor of two former Fayette newspaper editors who also were noted historians—the late John Hert and the late H. Denny Davis.

In words and photos, the work is designed as an all-encompassing look at the county's past and is made possible under the auspices of the Howard County Missouri Genealogical Society, with generous donations from several local businesses, organizations, institutions and individuals.

Included is a three-part introductory chapter, 14 additional chapters, and four sidebar articles. The book is being published by the Donning Company, a subsidiary of the Walsworth Company in Marceline.

The book includes approximately 265 photos (32 pages in full color). The cost is \$24.95. There is a \$5 shipping charge, plus \$1 shipping cost for each additional copy ordered at the same time. For those wishing to avoid shipping charges, books may be picked up in the office of the Howard County Genealogical Society at the rear of the Fayette Public Library. Hours will be: Fridays, 1 to 6

p.m.; Wednesdays, 1 to 5 p.m.; and second and fourth Saturdays, 10 to 3.

Order forms for the book are available at several locations including the Fayette newspaper office, the Commercial Trust service desk, and elsewhere. These forms also may be secured on-line from the Fayette newspaper website, the Fayette Public Library website, and the website of the Howard County Genealogical Society.

The society is headed by Harold Kerr II. Several years ago he had proposed the historical publication as one means of recognizing the county's 200th anniversary. The society was joined in this effort by the South Howard County Historical Society, the Howard County DAR, the Boonslick Historical Society and others.

Howard County was formed in 1816 and, as a result of the vast area it covered and the number of counties formed from it, was dubbed "The Mother of Counties."

The book covers the entirety of the county's journey, including larger communities as well as the smaller towns which have a rich legacy but are now just places on the map (and some that aren't).

This will be the first county-wide history since 1883, so it will include coverage of more recent happenings, plus updated histories of church, school, business, transportation, recreation and infrastructure developments, in addition to various aspects of the county's legacy, which took place prior to 1883.

"This has been a work in progress since early 2016," Steele said. "As our group evolved and developed the project, we came to recognize and eventually include several parts of our rich history that may have been previously overlooked."

