

# Bisbee Family Connection

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**VOLUME 20 ISSUE 2**

**May 2008**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello cousins,

Are you all getting ready for THE REUNION? You need to get your hotel reservations and send your money to Viola for the House on the Rock trip and the Sunset Cruise as soon as you can. We have to put the money up this month for those things. But DON'T send the \$70 for the bus around town. We are not involved with that and you'll have to take care of it when you get to the Dells. I really think you'll have a good time. There is sooo much to do with enough variety for everyone. Fritz and I are bringing our camper which can be "Bisbee Central". We'll be glad to help with any questions, etc. Come and sit under our canopy and visit, have something cool to drink, get to know your cousins and relax with family.

I have been working on some things for the Bisbee Family Web Site (bisbeefamily.org) and I need your help. There is so much more we could be getting on there, but we need people to gather up some things and get it to David (Vice President) preferably via e-mail. Let's show the world what a fine group we are!!!

And one last thing, don't forget Jim. He needs articles and news for the newsletter. It takes your support to make it work. And you've never let me down yet.

SEE YOU ALL IN WISCONSIN!!!!!!

Your prez,  
Dianne

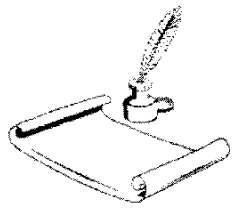
## TREASURER'S REPORT

**Checking:**  
**Balance @01/01/08: \$2,993.92**  
Deposits: \$1,675.64  
**Net: \$4,669.56**  
**Expenses 01/01/08-04/30/08:**  
**Total Expenses: \$ 434.23**  
**Net Balance @05/01/08: \$4,235.33**

**CD:**  
**Balance @01/01/08: \$6,240.63**  
Interest Earned: \$ 49.07  
**Balance @05/01/08: \$6,289.70**

**Overall Balance @05/01/08:**  
**\$10,525.03**

Respectfully submitted,  
Shirley Bisbee Bruton



## Notes & Letters

*Email from Rick and Carol Bisbee of Congress, AZ,  
January 29, 2008:*

Dear Jim,

This letter is long overdue. I wanted to let you know that I have updated and added new material to my website, [www.bisbeefamily.com](http://www.bisbeefamily.com). I have created a whole new section of cemetery and gravestone photos with inscriptions. I am also continuing to add Civil War pension records with abstracts and photos of the original documents. A high speed connection is necessary to download all the photos and documents. I am only supporting modern browsers. If you have trouble viewing any of these pages, please let me know.

\*\*\* Even though I have copyrighted the material, the Bisbee Family Connection has my permission to use and/or republish any of the material posted on this website. Viola may include it in her new book if she wishes to do so. There is a lot there and I would not blame her if she did not want to retype it. I think it is possible to download it right into her MS Word. If she does not know how to do it, perhaps she has someone around that can show her. \*\*\*

If the BFC would like to create something similar on its own site ([www.bisbeefamily.org](http://www.bisbeefamily.org)) for the use and benefit of the larger Bisbee family, I stand ready to assist in any way I can. If BFC members want to provide material for it, I am able to furnish advice and programming assistance.

Now for the sad news. My sister, Karen Elaine Bisbee Watson (#11-433 on page 407 of *BFC 2000 — editor*), passed away on July 29, 2007, near Cleveland, Ohio, after a ten year battle with MS and cancer. Karen was born a twin sister on August 8, 1952 to Lynn Melvin and Margaret Jane Dunnihoo Bisbee in Erie, Pennsylvania. After high school she worked as a book keeper for several Erie firms, and enjoyed boating and fishing. Karen married and divorced several times and is survived by three children; Becky Rodrigues of Erie, and Ricky and Amanda Watson of Concord, Ohio. She is also survived by two granddaughters, one sister, and one brother. Her parents and another brother preceded

her in death. Karen was a loving mother, grandmother and sister. She was also a great fan and supporter of the Cleveland Indians. Buried near her father, grandfather and great-grandfather in the family plot in the Wattsburg cemetery, Wattsburg Pennsylvania, Karen has left a space in our hearts that can never be filled. Here is a link to her picture and gravestone if you want it: <http://www.bisbeefamily.com/cemeteries/Wattsburg/w10a.html>.

On the subject of Bisbee Family history, I regularly meet new cousins on the Internet in pursuit of our common history. This summer I corresponded with a fourth-cousin who grew up in Cortland County, New York and provided a lot of new information, some of which I have yet to add to the website. However, she also threw me this absolute gem about my third great grandparents, Reuben and Lydia Cushman Bisbee of Kingston, Massachusetts. It seems that after Reuben and Lydia were married (1797), Reuben went to sea on a two-week fishing trip. His boat foundered and he was picked up by African pirates. Because he was young and strong, and a good sailor, the pirates forced him into their crew where he helped with the sailing and plundering. In her nineties, Reuben's daughter, Sophia, recalled sitting on her mother's bed, looking out the window for her father's ship. It took two years, but the first time Reuben set foot on English soil again, he escaped the pirates and returned home to Kingston. Stopping at a neighbor's house, he learned that he had been given up for dead and that another man was courting his wife. When he did meet with Lydia, she did not recognize him. Thereafter, the whole family moved to New York, and Reuben vowed never to go to sea again!

My correspondent confirmed that a picture I already had was indeed a picture of Lydia Cushman (born 1797), and I have posted it on the genealogy page of my website. She also informed me she used to have a picture of Reuben himself. When she retired she gave it, along with a lifetime of other memorabilia, to her son, an Army officer now living in Tennessee. Her son says he does not have it (or at least he cannot find it) and my heart is breaking. I came so close!

Best regards  
William & Carol Bisbee (BFC Book, 11-431)

*Rick and Carol, thanks much for the offer of assistance,  
the sad news about Karen, and the info about your  
family branch — editor*

Email from John W. Bisbee of Fort Collins, CO, February 6, 2008:

Jim,

Last October I was given a one-gallon metal can with the label: "BISBEE PURE RAW LINSEED OIL".

The side of the can listed BISBEE LINSEED COMPANY, mills in Philadelphia, Pa, Amsterdam, NY & Chicago Heights, Ill.

I've attached two photos of the can. I received the can from a friend in NC who bought it at an antique market on the east coast--probably in VA or NC or SC.

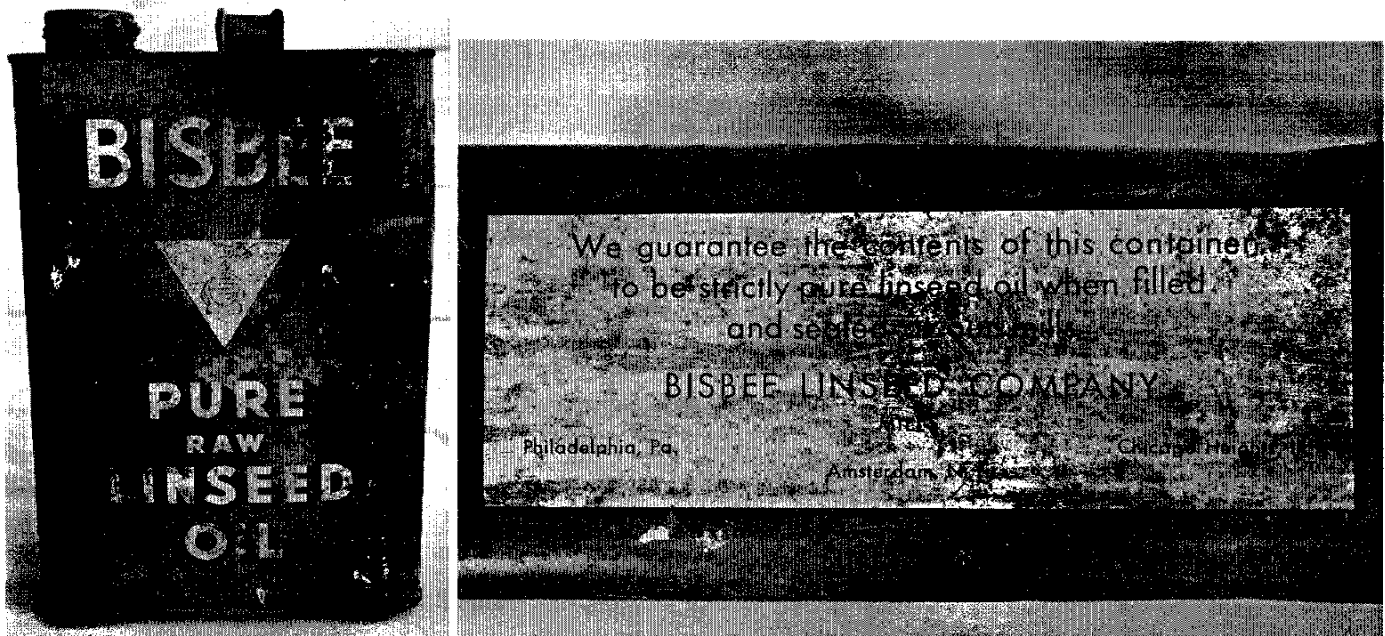
I wondered if readers of the "Bisbee Family Connection" could tell me anything about the company or the Bisbee that owned or started the company.

Thanks for your help.

John Warrick Bisbee (11-1532)

*Thanks, John. The can is pictured in two views, below. It is red overall, with white block lettering (raised/shadowed in black) on the front. The logo on the front is a bee, flying up toward the top of the can, apparently colored (body and wings) in a (faded) pink, with black limbs/accents, in a white triangle. The side panel with the guarantee and company name/locations is a white panel with black lettering and medium-thin border, surrounded by the red of the can. Anyone with information, please contact John or myself (and I will forward the data to him); one of us will make sure the results are in the newsletter — editor.*

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*Email from Ivonne Burmeister of Otis, KS, December 31, 2007:*

Dear Jim,

I probably am the great-granddaughter that Lil McAdam is talking about (*see the letter from Lil McAdam in the September, 2007 newsletter — editor*). In 1989 we visited the Bisbee family home near London, Ontario and the people living in the house had her name as she had visited them before us. We corresponded a few times. I will tell you from memory the main part of what I know, as my notes etc. are filed somewhere but with the last four years being taken up with caring for my parents and having a hip and two knees replaced (the last one this past Dec. 4) things are not at hand.

When I was in junior high my grandparents Milton and Jennie wrote the history for me as they knew it about the last Indian raid and Reuben's part in it. He was a Methodist circuit rider and usually stayed at the Laing home after services in their area. For some reason (I have heard that it was a lame horse and/or also that Hannah his wife was ill), he went on home that time. All of the Laing men were killed in the raid. Reuben had 13 caskets from the slain lined up for the funeral service. This was not the entire group of people killed. I have not found any of this in the histories that I have read. Reuben never believed that the Indians were responsible for the killing but that white men dressed as Indians were the killers. My Grandfather Milton discussed this with my father-in-law who was very knowledgeable about the Indians' cultures and even corresponded with Chief Red Cloud's grandson Edgar. In the early 1990s my husband, son and I went to Devises to the cemetery and on to the museum in Oberlin. While in the museum we discussed the raid etc. The person there said that two weeks before we were there they had a Laing family from Ontario visit the museum and they were asking about any information that the killers were not Indians and family lore had it that they were not. This makes me think that the women of the Laing family must have gone back to Canada after the raid. Unfortunately no one that I know of has any proof, just hearsay in their family. Reuben did write some of his experiences after he was retired but it is so rambling and not very detailed about actual events. Reuben and Hannah are buried in the cemetery near Ford, KS, which is a short distance from Dodge City.

I was sorry to hear about your mother. I never met her but I know that my mother, Twila Riebel and aunt, Opal Ingersoll visited with your parents in Salina at least one time. I can see a family resemblance between them. Mom no longer knows us and Opal has her trials at age 91, so a lot of the family history is not available first hand. Reuben started a number of churches in NW Kansas: my sister and husband, and my husband and I have attended one 100 years observance of a church he started in Norcatur, KS. There is a web site I came across, [www.gypsyjournal.net/last\\_indian\\_raid.htm](http://www.gypsyjournal.net/last_indian_raid.htm), and others I have visited. How accurate some of them are is debatable. Decatur Co. is where Oberlin is located so there might be info there. I just haven't spent much time looking. I hope that this is helpful and perhaps you will find more information in your mother's materials when you have time. Unfortunately we won't be able to come to the reunion this summer as we already had a commitment for that weekend.

Sincerely, Ivonne Burmeister

*Thanks for the info, and your kind thoughts, Ivonne. Due to space/time constraints, this letter was postponed from the January newsletter. — editor (Jim Thorpe)*

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*From the editor:*

Dear Cousins,

As promised in the January newsletter, the current list of addresses you have volunteered to be made available to your cousins is on the next page (page 6.)

Starting on page seven is some material originally submitted by Donald Mayo Bisbee (11-1632, page 477 of BFC 2000, of Arlington VA), about his father (Arthur Raymond, 10-1456, page 357 of BFC 2000), and his immediate family. I've lost track of who sent it to me, or just when — my best guess is Viola Bisbee Drake forwarded it to me. Since each of the articles provides slightly different/additional information about the Art Bisbee family, and space is available, all three articles are included, even though there is some overlap in content.

Fred Underhill has sent us the sad news that his mother, Vera Adele Bisbee Underhill (10-1672, page 371 of BFC 2000), passed away in January. One of our long-time members, she will be missed. Her obituary is given in the Obituaries section at the back of this issue.

Unfortunately, the deadline for the House-on-the-Rock and Sunset Cruise reunion activities pre-payments will have passed by the time you read this. For those deciding at the last moment on making Reunion 2008, June 25th through 28th, 2008, please contact Viola Bisbee Drake at 269-621-4641; her mailing address is given in the list on page six. Perhaps she can do something, or suggest something you can do, to join us in these activities, even past the deadline of May 15th. The schedule of activities and the hotel/campgrounds instructions may be found in the January, 2008 issue.

Let me add my plea to those of others for more fresh material for the newsletter, especially Bisbee-related genealogical articles or family stories, but also your current activities and so forth. I've got a couple of submittals for which there is not sufficient room in this issue, but the supply of backlogged articles is currently low. We will probably have plenty of material for the September issue of the newsletter from the reunion coverage, but things are scarce for future issues.

Of course, I can always reprint material from, say, the first ten years of BFC, but many of you will already have it from your back issues of the newsletter. Please, keep the new material coming.

Most of the current issue just happened to reach me via email, but for those without email, surface mail is just as good for pictures, book/magazine/newspaper articles, etc. See both of my addresses on page six, or the masthead on page one. Incidentally, email attachments are just fine, with "JPEG" files (produced by many digital cameras) preferred for images, but Adobe PDFs and the various Windows-standard picture formats can also be handled. For text without images, text-only and Microsoft Word files are preferred, but again PDFs are just fine. I currently am limping along with Word 97, but hopefully can at least read newer formats of ".doc" or ".rtf" files. For material received by surface mail, I have a scanner capable of 8 1/2 by 11 inch (letter-size) documents, with scanner software that does an adequate job. An example of the scanner in action is Vera Bisbee Underhill's obituary, found further back in this issue. Her photograph was in color; since our newsletter is in black-and-white, I converted the JPEG file from the scanner to grayscale using "IrfanView" (freeware by Irfan Skiljan, available for download at [www.irfanview.com](http://www.irfanview.com)), and then read the resultant ".jpg" file into Microsoft Publisher 2000, which is used to produce the BFC newsletter.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Reunion!

Jim Thorpe

We are publishing the current list of mailing “snail mail” addresses, and also email addresses, intended for sharing with other members **only**. Due to space constraints in the January newsletter, the list appears here in this the May issue. Updates and new listings will appear periodically, with the next full list scheduled for January, 2009. If you want to add an email and/or surface mail address to the list, please submit it/them to me via email to [j.c.thorpe@hotmail.com](mailto:j.c.thorpe@hotmail.com), or in writing to my home address, **12 Timberline Dr., Round Rock, TX 78665-9409**. To make sure I get your identity straight, be sure to include your name, along with the city and state, in any emails or letters sent in response to this request.

Thanks, Jim Thorpe

### **Email addresses and mailing addresses**

#### **Email addresses:**

Bob & Carol Bisbee, Kansas City, MO	<a href="mailto:CarolBisb@aol.com">CarolBisb@aol.com</a>
David C. Bisbee, Princeton, MA	<a href="mailto:biz907@yahoo.com">biz907@yahoo.com</a>
David Wise Bisbee, Reed City, MI	<a href="mailto:davidbisbee@hotmail.com">davidbisbee@hotmail.com</a>
Donald M. Bisbee, Arlington, VA	<a href="mailto:donaldbisbee@starpower.net">donaldbisbee@starpower.net</a>
Jane C. Bisbee, Edmonton, Alberta, Can	<a href="mailto:difirenza@hotmail.com">difirenza@hotmail.com</a>
Mary Louise Bisbee, Lincoln, NE	<a href="mailto:mlbisbee47@alltel.net">mlbisbee47@alltel.net</a>
Mike Bisbee, Rockwood, Ont. Can	<a href="mailto:m_bisbee@hotmail.com">m_bisbee@hotmail.com</a>
Richard S. Bisbee, N. Attleboro, MA	<a href="mailto:dickbisbee@comcast.net">dickbisbee@comcast.net</a>
William F. (Rick) & Carol Bisbee, Congress, AZ	<a href="mailto:bisbee@escapees.com">bisbee@escapees.com</a>
Ivonne Burmeister, Otis, KS	<a href="mailto:iburmeister@ruraltel.net">iburmeister@ruraltel.net</a>
Mary Bisbee Capman, Gardner, MA	<a href="mailto:marybizmary@aol.com">marybizmary@aol.com</a>
Linda L. Emery, Bastrop, TX	<a href="mailto:linemery50@yahoo.com">linemery50@yahoo.com</a>
Beatrice Bisbee Geib, Farmington, CT	<a href="mailto:BebeBmail@aol.com">BebeBmail@aol.com</a>
Pat Bisbee Johnson, St. Paul, MN	<a href="mailto:Patbisbeejohnson@Comcast.net">Patbisbeejohnson@Comcast.net</a>
Rita Bisbee Joyner, Cabot, AR	<a href="mailto:RitaJoyner1931@yahoo.com">RitaJoyner1931@yahoo.com</a>
Phyllis & Al Moony, Ocean City, NJ	<a href="mailto:amoony@verizon.net">amoony@verizon.net</a>
James C. “Jim” Thorpe, Round Rock, TX	<a href="mailto:j.c.thorpe@hotmail.com">j.c.thorpe@hotmail.com</a>
Fred Underhill, Rochester, MA	<a href="mailto:funderhill@hotmail.com">funderhill@hotmail.com</a>
Joanna Waugh, Hamilton, ON, Canada	<a href="mailto:j.waugh@sympatico.ca">j.waugh@sympatico.ca</a>

#### **Mailing addresses:**

Nancy Bisbee	2400 White Blvd. Naples, Fl. 34117
William F. (Rick) & Carol Bisbee	P.O. Box 271, Congress, AZ 85332-0271
Viola Bisbee Drake	65481 CR 376, Bangor, MI 49013-9645

If any of these are incorrect or out-of-date, please contact me with corrections (my addresses are given above.) Again, please give us permission to put one or both of your addresses on the list. Thanks — Jim.

*We have received the following concerning Arthur Raymond Bisbee, #10-1456, page 357 of BFC 2000, and his family — editor:*

*From "The Story of Mitchell County 1851-1973", compiled by the Mitchell County (Iowa) Historical Society and published by Klipto Printing Co., Mason City, IA:*

### **BISBEE FAMILY**

The Bisbee family moved to Toeterville (*in Mitchell County, IA — editor*) on 22 January 1923 and consisted of Arthur Raymond Bisbee, wife Melissa Betty (Morstad), Elaine Harriet and Donald Mayo. My sister, Maxine Virginia, was born later in Toeterville on 8 June 1925. Elaine was born at Rhame, ND on 13 September 1918, and I was born on Link Palmer's farm one mile north and four miles east of Toeterville on 8 October 1921.

Art, as my Dad preferred to be called, bought the blacksmith shop from Frank Kovarik and contracted to buy the 2 story, 2 BR frame house from Henry Toeter. Mother said that Dad got along well with Henry Toeter and cut his hair.

Dad was born in Mower Co., MN, to Hannah and Virgil Bisbee on 3 February 1897. Grandparents Hannah and Virgil were also residents of Toeterville for a short time in the Krahn House, Eleanor Grube's. Hannah had Norwegian parents; Virgil was English, descending from immigrant Thomas Besbee, who came from Sandwich, England to Scituate, MA in 1635. However, Granddad Virgil always considered himself "Yankee".

Mother was born 16 June 1896 in Mower Co., MN, the seventh child of nine children. Her parents, Torsten Gilbert Morstad and Aagot (Helgeson), both emigrated from Norway. Mother was confirmed in Norwegian at Six Mile Grove Lutheran Church, later joined the Union Presbyterian Church, then became a member of St. Peter Lutheran Church in Toeterville.

At age 13 Dad moved with the family from Minnesota to a homestead near Baker, MT in 1910. He and Mother were married in Lyle by the Rev. Elmer Moe 27 February 1917. They farmed in Rhame, ND for a time and returned to farm in IA in 1920.

When they moved to Toeterville in 1923 I believe they found some clannish sentiment, but such was likely in most communities at that time. Dad and Mother were outsiders; they were members of the Union Presbyterian Church, not Lutheran; and were Norwegian, not German. It was later reported that Dad was expected to last only three years in business in Toeterville. I believe Dad and Mother earned their place in the community very shortly.

Dad recalled some early hardships in an article in the local newspaper, "Art Bisbee Finishes Half Century As A Blacksmith" by Mrs. Clyde Roehr in 1973. Dad started business with \$5.00 cash in his pocket. His main job was shoeing horses for 25 cents per shoe nailed on and fixing bobsleds. He remembered the winter of 1924 when there were six weeks of ice and he shod horses from 6:30 in the morning until 10:00 at night. The hitching posts on both sides of the street were lined up with teams waiting to be shod. Dad took sideline jobs for more income. One winter he worked part time at the Mundt elevator unloading coal for 20 cents a ton. Then he rigged up his own crosscut saw machine and went in the country to saw firewood for farmers and earned \$100.00 one winter. Another additional job, besides his business, was keeping Frank Sedlacek's 32 draft horses shod the year round. When spring came the winter shoes came off and summer shoes replaced. Sedlacek was a vegetable grower and farmer in the St. Ansgar area.

Mother said that for a time Ralph and Clarence Ramsey rented a bedroom. Later she had teacher Kate Dockstader for room and board. There were times when a train crew would get stranded in snow and townsfolk provided food and shelter. Mother was very outgoing in helping others in painting, wallpapering, canning, and delivering babies. She "first washed" many babies in and around Toeterville. Mother says, "We helped each other with those day to day things". Life was serious, but there were fun times, playing cards at birthday parties, holiday picnics and dances. I remember Dad usually got his limit of pheasants and we had to watch out for the shotgun pellets.

Dad purchased the Charlie Decklever house on Lot 1 and rented it for a time to his brother, Raymond Bisbee, and family. Later, Dad sold that to Bill Hoffman, who in turn sold the big house, which was moved to Austin, MN,

and built a new house on Lot 1 and sold the south 37 ft. of Lot 3 and north 1/2 of Lot 4, Block 2 (in Toeterville) to Darwin and Betty Fossey.

Mother retained Lot 2 and the north 29 ft. of Lot 3, Block 2. Her old wooden became unrepairable, such that she decided in 1984 to tear it down. In its place we sited the new 2 BR house (26 ft. by 40 ft.) about 15 ft. west of the east wall of the old house. The south wall of the new house is about 6 ft. north of the old house porch. The foundation was poured by Klouse Concrete Construction and a Kensett Homes one-story house was delivered in two halves. It came completely wired; the floor coverings and all bathroom and kitchen appliances were in place. The entire Toeterville community was especially helpful to Mother at that time and she appreciates all the help her good friends gave her. She has been very happy to have the new home in Toeterville.

At this time (December, 1988), Elaine (Bisbee) Williams is living with her husband, V. Richard Williams, in Summit, NJ. Donald and wife, Ruth Ann (Tubbs), are in Arlington, VA and Maxine (Bisbee) Nagel and husband, Carson J. Nagel, are in Hopkins, MN.

A short article concerning Art Bisbee's blacksmith business can be found in the Toeterville section of this book. *(This article is reproduced following the picture of the Art Bisbee family below — editor.)*

Melissa B. Bisbee died Monday, March 13, 1989, at Methodist Hospital, St. Louis Park, Minnesota. Burial was at St. Peter Cemetery, Toeterville, Iowa.

by Donald Bisbee



**A.R. Bisbee family, Toeterville, Ia. ca. 1939. Front, L-R: Elaine, Melissa. Art. Back: Maxine and Donald.**



## A. BISBEE MARKS 50th YEAR AS BLACKSMITH

by Mrs. Clyde Roehr

A. R. (Art) Bisbee, oldest business man in Toeterville, has just completed 50 continuous years of business in his blacksmith shop.

He stated, "I started out here on Jan. 22, 1923, I'd seen hard times farming at Rhame, N. D., and in Iowa before I came to Toeterville and I started my business with \$5 cash in my pockets. My main jobs then were shoeing horses for 25 cents per shoe, nailed on, and fixing bobsleds. I remember the winter of 1924 when there was six weeks of ice and I shod horses from 6:30 in the morning until nine and 10 at night. The hitching posts on both sides of the street were lined up with teams waiting to be shod."

Art took in sideline jobs for more income. One winter he worked part-time at the Mundt elevator unloading coal for 20 cents a ton and he unloaded as much as three tons an hour and got 60 cents, and he said, "my boss thought I was making money too fast."

Then he rigged up his own crosscut saw machine and went in the country to saw fire wood for farmers and earned \$100 one winter.

Another additional job besides his business was keeping Frank Sedlacek's 32 draft horses shod the year around. When spring came the winter shoes came off and summer shoes were replaced. This was before tractor days when Mr. Sedlacek was vegetable grower and farmer at St. Ansgar.

After tractors were replacing horses he added a business of sharpening plow shares, a trade he learned while living in North Dakota.

Art said, "I finally got my farm customers trained to bring their plowshares during February and March so when spring came everything was ready for spring plowing. I did as many as 350 during the winter."

When rubber tires for machinery first were introduced, Art constructed an old car frame with tires, for a farm wagon and the "old timers laughed at me," he stated.

In 1928 he branched into car repair work. He worked daytime as a blacksmith and a mechanic at night and "it became too much for me," stated Art. He approached Darwin Fossey who had learned the trade from him in part-time work, to take over the garage mechanic work and in 1957 (1947? *See the article on the next page — BFC editor*) when Darwin returned from service he took over and the name was changed to Fossey Garage. Mr. Bisbee kept on with his blacksmith work.

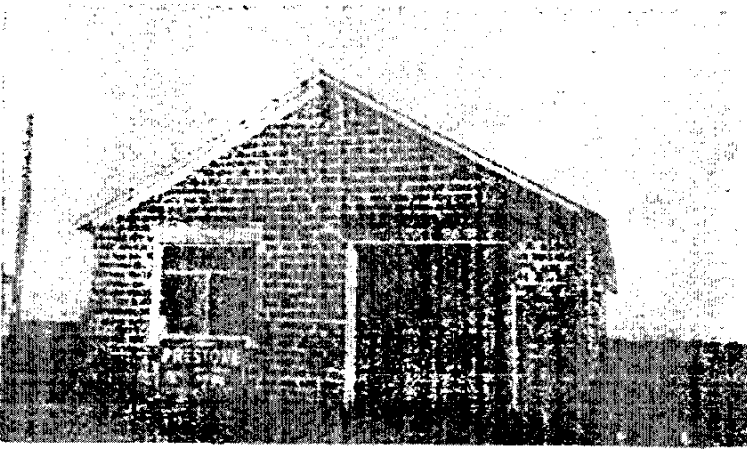
"Times have really changed since I came to Toeterville in the horse and buggy days. It was quite a railroad town. Two trains a day brought freight and passengers including many traveling salesmen. The population was bigger here then too. Today there are only three other residents besides myself still living in Toeterville who were here when I came."

"There were quite a few business places then and now the only ones left are the Co-op Elevator, grocery store, Co-op bulk fuel, and my business," stated Bisbee.

"The highlight of my life was in October, 1972, when Iowa Representative H. R. Gross of Washington, D.C., was campaigning in Mitchell County and came in my shop and I had my picture taken with him. After I had sent him a photo of us, in his reply of thanks he told me the photo will always remain on his desk in Washington," Mr. Bisbee stated.

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*The short article following on the next page, also written by Donald M. Bisbee, is from "HISTORY OF MITCHELL COUNTY, IOWA", product of a project directed by Leona Montag, and published by Curtis Media Corporation in 1989 — editor:*



### **Bisbee Blacksmith Shop, Toeterville, IA.**

tractor for a horse breeder's association. When Louis Perau sought a patent for a binder soybean harvesting attachment, Dad manufactured them for him. Dad worked on some patent ideas too; one was a paint-mixing stir. In the 1930 Depression days he built a portable sawing vehicle and traveled to cut much needed wood. Cast-iron gears in the power-take-off for that rig did not work, so he had to make steel gears on a turning lathe, without a milling machine. Dad loved to work with iron.

Back in the days when Toeterville Elevator needed a potato sack conveyor, Dad built a 20 ft. conveyor from scratch, using 3 inch angle iron and constructing everything except the 16 inch wide rubber belt and four casters. One of his last projects, of which he was proud, was a small tractor completed about 1972.

In the later '20's Dad, in partnership with Lawrence Rockafellow for a couple of years, added a south lean which doubled the floor space of the old blacksmith shop. Car repair began in the expanded shop. My recollections center on the 1930 Depression years. Dad did not make much money in business, but he did eke out a living for us. He lost money on bad accounts. When the banks closed in 1933, he owed a note for tools and had to pay back every cent. He was always reluctant to charge very much for services because customer satisfaction generated continued business. I helped him in some side merchandising, selling Zenith radios, ABC clothes washers and Vega cream separators.

Sometime about 1938 Dad tore down the old shop and built a block tile shop on the line of lots 3 & 4. I helped John Markow in that building by mixing mortar.

I remember these who worked for Dad sometime in the shop: Harold Fox, Raymond Bisbee, Martin Lastine, Dick Cummings, and Darwin Fossey. In 1947 Darwin Fossey took over the shop for the Fossey Garage and Dad built an add-on block building (30'x30') at the rear. Darwin engaged in auto repair and lawn mower service and Dad did welding and blacksmithing exclusively. Darwin added a new roof to the shop and continues in business to this day.

*Thanks again for the informatory articles about this era and about your family, Donald. Incidentally, Donald still (as of 2008) lives in Arlington, VA. — editor.*

## Obituaries



Vera A. (Bisbee) Underhill, 95, of Rochester, went home to be with her Lord. Wednesday, January 23, 2008 at Forestview Nursing Home in Wareham. She was the wife of the late Frederick W. Underhill Sr.

Born and educated in Saugus, she was the daughter of the late H. Dwight and Sarah (Mosher) Bisbee of Saugus. Mrs. Underhill graduated from Framingham State College, class of 1935. She lived in Rochester for the past fifty eight years.

Mrs. Underhill was formerly employed as an Extension Agent in Essex County, MA and worked as a teacher at New Bedford Vocational High School as well as the Middleboro school system.

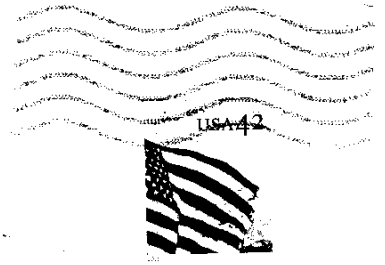
She is survived by her son, Frederick W. Underhill Jr., Her grand daughter, Kimberly Underhill Correia and two grandsons: Matthew and Mark Underhill all of Rochester. She is also survived by five great grandchildren.

She was a member of the First Congregational Church of Rochester, the Framingham State College Alumni Association, the Massachusetts Teacher's Retirement Association and the Rochester Historical Society.

Mrs. Underhill was co-author of two books, "Creative Hooked Rugs" and "Blessings of a Legacy". She was noted in many local papers for her craft work which included: Japanese Bunka Embroidery, Quilting, Hooked Rugging, and historical presentations at the Old Colony Regional Vocational High School.

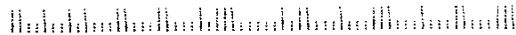
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