

AUTHOR: UNKNOWN

Stephen Miles

An old burying ground, the Miles cemetery, is of great historical interest. It is situated on the brow of the bluffs overlooking the fertile river bottom land. Going up the Dug Hollow road to the cemetery and wandering about you will find the tombstones of Judge Shadrach Bond, the uncle of the governor, the Moredocks, the Shooks, the Jameses, the Vorises, the Alexanders and others prominent in Monroe County history. It was here in 1858 that Stephen Miles I erected a large and costly stone and marble vault for himself, his family and descendants, under the care and direction of the oldest male heir of the family. It cost \$25,000, a fabulous sum in that day. A long time ago the tomb was opened by vandals, seeking the jewels which were supposed to have been buried with the Miles family. The tomb is now sealed.

It is said that Miles could stand on the hill and say, "Here, as far as the eye can reach, the land belongs to me." Then he would go back to his beautiful home at the foot of the bluffs which is situated at what was then known as Eagle Cliffs. The post office was there, a general store, an agricultural implement shop and the Miles residence. It is a pretentious one mirroring the affluence which was once the Miles'.

It is a two-story house, fifty-seven feet long, with twelve rooms, twenty-eight doors and thirty-one windows. A veranda extends the entire length of the front of the house. A huge entry hall with an open staircase leading to the upstairs, leads also into two spacious rooms on either side of the hall downstairs, each being 18 x 20 feet. In these rooms are enormous fireplaces, so huge that shelves have been built into the sides. Rooms not so large are in back of these, and what was once a porch is now enclosed. At either end of the back are rooms where once the colored mammies stayed who took care of the children. These mammies were privileged in the old days, and had better quarters than the other slaves who worked in the fields.

In the rear are also quaint staircases, winding dizzily upwards, with tow landings and turns which lead to the many bedrooms upstairs.

The house itself is constructed of solid oak and walnut with weather boards of walnut. No nails are used in the construction for the builders tenoned and mortised. The house has withstood the storms and stresses of 115 years, for it was thought to have been built in 1844 or earlier. It is situated on Claim 322 Survey 399 in the Bottom. The Miles Cemetery is recorded as Claim 321, Survey 400.

It has been said that the land for the home was purchased from Shadrach Bond, first governor of Illinois, but this could not be substantiated, even when a check of the story was made with Edward Miles of Carbondale, although he too, knew of the story.

Miles married Lucretia Shook, beautiful daughter of a Moredock precinct family.

Edward Miles' grandmother's name was Mary Tyrell. Mr. Miles' middle name is Vieux Temps, as was his father's name. Mr. Miles has no idea of the meaning of the name. His

grandmother, after the death of Edward Miles' grandfather, Stephen Miles II, married Thomas Quick. His mother's name was Chloe Frazer.

After the passing of the Miles family the settlement was bought by Isaac Eberman, farmer and wheat thresher, in 1878. Eberman came to Monroe County in 1827, married Nancy Hill. She passed away and Teresa Carpenter became his second wife. Eberman and J. B. Smith of Smith's Landing were business partners. They bought, sold and shipped wheat by river boats to the Port of St. Louis, their favorite boat being the "Emma Abbott". Grain in that section of the country was brought to Eagle Cliffs to be weighed, stored or sold. Some land was still in the possession of the Miles heirs, but most had been sold. The first Miles was fabulously wealthy, the second modestly so and succeeding generations not so prosperous.

Isaac Eberman was also a bridge builder. When the Eads Bridge, spanning the Mississippi river at St. Louis was in the planning stage, he made a model of a covered bridge and submitted it to the bridge committee. His model was not accepted, but James Eads; was. Eberman's model is still in the Miles Homestead which is now in possession of the Fred Laub heirs. Mr. and Mrs. Stemler live here, Mrs. Stemler being the former Edna Laub. Fred Laub bought this property after the death of Isaac Eberman in 1893. The other Laub heirs are Mrs. Arthur Schmidt, nee Hilda Laub, and Arthur Laub. All three of the Laub children were born in this home and Mrs. Stemler has never lived any other place. Mrs. and Mrs. Charles Bergmann, Sr., lived in a part of the spacious house for a time when the Ebermans lived there and here their daughter Frances, now Mrs. Fred Laub, was born in 1892.

In the house were left many bookkeeping sets, showing in detail and beauty the immense business interests of the Miles family and the succeeding Eberman and Laub Families. A heritage from the Miles family is a powder horn, a shot bag of tooled leather, and a musket of ancient vintage. The door keys of the house are enormous and these are still in use. A slab of marble from the Miles tomb is on the premises. Distant relatives the Laubs were Martin and John Horr who were oxen drivers for Stephen Miles I. A visit to this house is like turning back the years and finding yourself in the exciting days of our pioneer ancestors.