

# *Linden* **HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Preserving the History of The Linden Wisconsin Area

## **New Car buying experience for Linden family-1914**

Buying a new car today is a major investment and a big deal preceded by research of car models, options and angst over a good price. Over a century ago buying a new car was not only a substantial purchase but a really, really big deal that warranted front page newspaper coverage such as the Edward Bowden family of “East” Linden received.

Bowden bought a new Ford touring car in early March, 1914 from the Star Auto Company located across from the Post Office in Mineral Point. The dealership was owned by Ernest Fiedler. (Continued page two)



The Bowden family were auto pioneers in the Linden area with the purchase of this Ford touring car. Pictured behind the wheel is Edward, his wife Ella (Crane) and in the back are Eliza Bowden and Ida Wearne. In the far right of the photo are two Star Auto employees leaning on the counter. Not easily visible is the Studebaker name engraved in the window. Hats were an important accessory!

## Car buying in 1914 (continued from front)

In 1914 Star Auto was a dealer for Oakland, Empire, Studebaker, Cadillac, Maxwell, Rayfield and Ford automobiles. Fiedler promoted his business with large weekly display ads in the *Mineral Point Democrat*. He also hyped his business in other clever marketing ploys such as giving each customer photo postcards of themselves in their new cars to give or mail to friends and family. This same photo appeared on the front page of the *Mineral Point Democrat* as a news item. (1)

Bowden and other early motorists of the era needed not only the financial means to own and maintain a car but also the courage to drive on dirt roads more adapted for a modern four wheel drive vehicle.

In the winter months the car was put up on blocks and the radiator drained. The horse and sleigh took the Bowden family where they needed to go. Edward and Ella Bowden lived in a stone house (not extant) two miles East of Linden. Today dead-end Bowden road meets Sunny Slope road one mile East of Linden, from there it was almost an additional mile to their home.

According to the Benson Ford Research center online, this Model T Touring car of Bowden's had an L-head 176.7 cubic inch four cylinder water cooled engine that developed 22 horsepower. Tires were 30 x 3 inches on the front and 30 x 3 1/2 inches on the rear. (2)

Bowden's touring car was a step up from the regular and smaller Model T which was first introduced in October, 1908. In the early 1900's the infrastructure of roads, gas stations and auto mechanics struggled to keep pace with the output of cars and trucks from Detroit.

Maybe the assurance of a reliable service department at the Mineral Point dealership was a deal closer for Bowden. Fiedler recognized the need for trained mechanics for the cars he sold in what was then an early state of the art service department.

In one of his ads for the Star Auto repair department it was stated, in part, "It is a

regrettable fact that many garages make the mistake of employing men in the repair departments who know very little about automobiles. No owner of a car should be required to pay for time wasted by so-called repair men who are trying to find out what is the matter with the car. What we want is men who know what is wrong with the car the moment they see it; and who have the ability to repair it so that there may be no waste of time." (3)

The head of the repair department was Thomas Bishop from Chicago. The ad further proclaimed that Bishop, "has had many years experience and is an exceptionally high class service man. He will be assisted by Russell Ryan, a graduate of the Studebaker Automobile School at Detroit."

Could these men, Bishop and Ryan, be the guys leaning on the counter in the Bowden photo?

Edward Bowden was the son of Cornish immigrants: Richard Bowden and Eliza Jane Jeffrey Bowden. Eliza is in the back seat of the Ford touring photo. Edward retired from his farm in East Linden and moved to Mineral Point in 1919.

If you are interested in buying a 1914 Ford touring car just like the one Edward Bowden had, there are restored examples for sale if you do an online search. If you buy a 1914 touring like the one Edward had let me know if you are going to drive down Bowden road behind my house, I will be there to take a picture and hitch a ride. Jim J.

Notes:

- 1) The Edward Bowden photo appeared in the *Mineral Point Democrat*, March 12, 1914. Picture postcard was in collection of Harlan & Lorena Goldsworthy. Harlan was a nephew of Edward.
- 2) Benson Ford Research center, more information online.
- 3) Display ad in *Mineral Point Democrat*, March 26, 1914.

We enjoy seeing the Parish owned Model T truck of a few years later vintage in Linden parades. Maybe a story on that later ?

## MADISON PASTY SHOP WITH LINDEN ORIGINS SURVIVES

Linden native Myles Allen introduced several generations of Madison residents and students to the Cornish pasty at his tiny take-out shop at 101 State street in Madison, Wisconsin.

When Myles lost his battle with cancer several years ago, a former employee, Raymond Johnson bought the shop and continued the business which Allen started in 1976.

On November 1, 2014 the Teddy Wedgers shop got another new lease on life when a brother and sister bought the business from Johnson. Siblings Anthony Rineer and Karima Berkani have fond memories of the shop when they were younger and display photos of Allen & Johnson to pay respect to the earlier pasty pioneers.

Teddy Wedger was a pasty nickname that Myles adopted when he started his business. His father, Foster Allen was a miner and pasty maker and the inspiration for the venture.

Then, as now, you can buy the traditional pasty with steak, potatoes and onions as well as a host of vegetarian pasties, pasties with cheese, etc. Myles once told me that the meat and potato pasty we are used to in Linden made up just one third of his sales. Like any good businessman he gave the public what they wanted which was pasties with alternate fillings.

The article I saw on Teddywedgers in the *Wisconsin State Journal* stated that, "Allen grew up near Mineral Point. The Mineral Point area used to attract Cornish miners who came for the lead mining opportunities, bringing the Cornish pasty recipe with them."

Yes, Linden is near Mineral Point but knowing Myles Allen like I did, I'm pretty sure he would have proudly said he grew up in Linden.

Foster Allen's restaurant brought people into Linden on pasty day. Anyone want to make a really good pasty and replicate what Foster did here? Linden could use a good pasty cafe to help put us on the map.

## ENQUIRY ON LINDEN MINER 1850-1860

I received an email query from Timothy McElhatton regarding his great-great grandparents, Daniel and Elizabeth McElhatton, who emigrated from Ireland and show up on two Linden census records of 1850 and 1860.

Timothy wrote, "My great-great grandfather was a miner, as listed on the census records. They raised a large family in Linden. He enlisted in Army (11th Wisconsin Regiment) in 1861, and served four years in that horrible conflict (later joined by his oldest son, Daniel Jr., in the same regiment). Tragically Daniel Sr., died in a skirmish at Fort Blakely Alabama on the last day of the Civil War. We came across a reference to the incident in the *Mineral Point Tribune* dated May 24, 1865, which was a letter reprinted from a fellow comrade. My great-great grandmother apparently moved to Mineral Point some time later, and raised her children alone, and lived a fairly pleasant life there, passing away in April, 1889 in Mineral Point. Other descendants lived there as well, although most apparently moved away later seeking better fortunes."

Timothy is seeking information as to when Daniel and Elizabeth McElhatton may have settled in Linden, where he lived and where he worked as a miner. A family tale states that Daniel went to the California gold rush but returned home.

The census page of 1860 shows seven children and lists Daniel as 38 years old, a miner, born in Ireland. The family has been unable as yet to determine what part of Ireland Daniel emigrated from. The children all show they were born in Wisconsin.

On the 1850 census page names listed before him are: Wm. Hughbank, a miner born in Indiana; Walter Roscoe, a miner and property owner, born in England; Nick Fallow, a miner, born in England; Wm. Lancaster, a miner, born in England; Wm. Randall, a miner, born in England followed by Edward Boucham, a farmer, born in Canada.

Since the McElhattons lived in the Linden area perhaps there are connections in the family trees of one or more of our members. It wasn't until the 1880's that the village of Linden was separated from the township, making it difficult to determine exactly where someone might have lived.

Any help with information or guidance would be most welcome. Write to: Timothy McElhatton, 2106 North 53rd Street, Milwaukee, WI 53208.

His email address is: [tmcelhatton@wi.rr.com](mailto:tmcelhatton@wi.rr.com)

## DONATIONS RECEIVED IN 2014

Jerry Holmes	\$50.00
Jim Jewell	100.00
William & Lois Ralph	8,225.00
Donald Vial	25.00

William and Lois Ralph are descendants of John Ralph, a miller in the old Laxey neighborhood in the 1860's and 1870's and of James Callow and James Skillicorn, farmers at Laxey. "We are pleased to help, in a small way, to preserve its history", Lois wrote.

## 2015 CRYSTAL BALL OUTLOOK FOR LINDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Looking ahead to 2015 I expect at least some of our archival material will be online in a digital format. This will be a learning process but there are some good resources to help.

One project that stalled out last year was the Linden area history book. This will be a major goal for us in 2015.

In January the Linden Historical Society's affiliation request to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin will be presented to the board of curators at their January meeting.

By our next newsletter we will have program details on our annual meeting in June.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

President & newsletter editor: Jim Jewell, 2073 Sunny Slope Rd., Mineral Point, WI 53565 PH: 608 623-2772 email-minerjim7@gmail.com

Vice-President: Randy Baker, 2212 Sunny Slope Rd, Mineral Point, WI 53565 PH: (608) 574-4067

Treasurer: Catherine Whitford, 151 Jail Alley, Mineral Point, WI 53565 PH: (608) 987-9930

Secretary: Judy Vivian, 2178 Hwy 39, Dodgeville, WI 53533 PH: (608) 623-2293

Board Member: Lisa Springer, 2776 Wearne Rd., Mineral Point WI 53565 PH: (608) 341-8686



**When hats were in fashion, Easter bonnets maybe ?**

**An old undated photo from our collection, Ella (Crane) Bowden is seated on the far left. On the back of the photo is written, "Ed Bowden's wife and sisters, Emma, Ethel and Ida. However, that leaves one woman un-identified. On the front page everyone has their hats on and the top down. Begs the question- how many people lost their hats when a hot foot driver said, "Let's see what this old Model T will do ?**

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## MEMBERSHIP IN LINDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

\$10 per year for either single or family. Make check payable to Linden Historical Society and send to:

Jim Jewell, 2073 Sunny Slope Rd, Mineral Point WI 53565