

Shelby County Centennial Farm, 1975

March 26th Edition

The Perry Farm



The Perry home, as it was during this year's winter blizzard.

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The original owner of the Perry Centennial Farm in Taylor Township was Ambrose B. Perry, whose ancestors came from Kentucky.

Ambrose was one of four Perry brothers who rode mules from Kentucky to Missouri in 1841 to look over the land to find a place to settle and bring their families. He found land to his liking two miles west and one-third mile north of what is now Leonard.

Another of the brothers, Joseph, located on land near Kellersville. The other two decided they liked Kentucky better, and returned there to stay.

Ambrose built a two-story house from bricks made on the farm. In 1842 he was married to Elizabeth Baker, who was born in Callaway County. She was the daughter of Martin and Ann Miller (West) Baker, who had come to Missouri from Millersburg, Kentucky, in Bourbon County. They moved from Callaway to Shelby County around 1834 to 1835 to a farm near Kirby now known as the Ralph Weems farm. The Baker family burial plot is on this farm.

Ambrose and his wife Elizabeth reared a family of six children in the brick house on this farm, living through the turbulent years of the Civil War. He died in 1869. The house has been unoccupied for several years and is deteriorating, as vacant farm houses do. At the present time, the farm is operated by Russell Gander.

A granddaughter of the first Ambrose and great-grandchildren own the farm now. Ambrose's

son, Ambrose P. and his wife Ida McWilliams became owners of the farm through inheritance and purchase from other family members. They had five daughters, now all dead but one, Margaret Perry Derby of Houston, Texas. She and the children of her sister, Salome (Loma,) and husband Lionel (Onie) Martin Shofstall own the farm.

The children of Salome are: Weldon Shofstall, Tempe, Arizona, who has just completed five years as state supervisor of education; Waymon Shotstall, who is retired after serving as athletic director and teacher in various Missouri high schools; and Naomi Delta, wife of Raymond Van Hoose of Louisville, Kentucky. Her husband is a civil engineer and vice president of Miracle Miles Renovator company. Naomi works part time as executive secretary for her husband.

While none of the present owners live in Shelby County, they have an interest in the farm and the area in which they grew up. The Perry family has always been a highly respected family in the community and various members have been active in many fields of endeavor, such as business, banking, and education.

The Perry cemetery is located on the centennial farm, and both Ambroses (father and son) and their wives are buried there. There is a slave burial plot not far away.

This farm is another typical example of the ability of the pioneer farmer to carve out a gracious life for his family in a new land.



Standing outside on the porch of a house, Mr. and Mrs. Lionel (Oney) Shofstall pose with their daughter Naomi. Mrs. Shofstall was the former Saloma (Loma) Perry, granddaughter of the first Ambrose Perry. Her daughter Naomi is now Mrs. Raymond Van Hoose and acts as agent for the farm.