

SPIRIT OF GHOST TOWNS

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"Ghost Town."

Waldo!

It is nearing Christmas now, for the 80th Anniversary Jubilee of the trail blazer whose road ran at the foot of the cliff by Waldo is set for December 15th, and of old Waldo all that is left standing is the store building erected in 1863—and it in ruins—ghost town!—and the memories of old Waldo are so distinct that among the Sons and Daughters of the Illinois Valley Pioneers there is a woman who had hoped that there might have been this year a community Christmas tree at Waldo, with candles on it and with singing carollers about it—as there always was in the glorious days when the miners and the people of the Valley foregathered in the old store—in ruins now. There is to be a community Christmas tree along the Redwood Highway—she had longed for one on the old trail road that runs through the townsite of Waldo. It must needs be on the Redwood Highway,—But there might yet be one on the memoryful ground at Waldo, on the ground that had grains of gold in it.

There is still another woman who remembers that her folks were one day and a night; another day and another night; and a day—three days and two nights on the trail road in going from Waldo out of the Illinois Valley to the sea. As the crow flies it is only twenty miles from her old home in the Valley to the far sounding sea.

"Did you drive it often?" she was asked.

"Yes, quite frequently," she replied.

"On business?" her hostess asked.

"Oh, no!" she replied, her face beaming and her voice raised "For pleasure!"

A woman living on the Redwood Highway recently drove it in one hour.

"Three days and two nights!" "three nights and two days," this lovely daughter of an Illinois Valley Pioneer repeated in a reminiscent mood as she thought once again of the other days that were love lustered and filled with pleasures and wonders scarcely known today.

"Ghost Town!"

Waldo is its name!

There are too many ghost towns in America the beautiful.

Only a few have such memories as the first born in the homes of the Illinois Valley Pioneers carry in their treasuring and evaluating minds.

And there is a daughter of a

certain pioneer who wishes to see the golden days of historic Sailors' Diggings—later called Waldo—this daughter wishes to see again the glory that never has departed but lingers still in the ruins—even in the ruins of the old store building now standing—but in ruins—she wishes to see the old building restored and the ground around it parked and made beautiful once again: as beautiful as it was when the Chinese dug the precious metal out of the gulches and held a feast of their faith in God and their gratitude to Him for His gift of gold.

So she wishes to see the old store building made life like again—as she and ever so many remember it to have been.

"Sentiment," you say—sheer sentiment.

That is true.

But somehow sentiment is the foundation of everything.

It is the lasting foundation of the home.

It is the final word for the world.

Love IS a sentiment.

Men are dying for the lack of it!

Sentiment rules the world. So we must agree that this daughter of an Illinois Valley Pioneer is quite justified in indulging her sentiment since the memories which linger about the old store building concern her mother and father and their devotion to all that is highest and best.

One of the hallowing memories that adorns the ennobling picture gallery in her mind is of the night the man came who in her religious faith stands for all that is good in life—and in the old store, with mother and father close by, she was baptized into the faith that was theirs and is hers—and ever will be: the faith which is the victory that overcomes the world.

Do you wonder that this daughter of an Illinois Valley Pioneer longs to see the old store restored?

The store building may be restored for it still stands—in ruins to be sure: but it can be easily restored.

Not so the house which stood by and stood in almost pristine grandeur until a few short seasons ago when it was demolished. And that is the house which had been papered with newspapers, so they say. No, really, the papered walls was the suggestion of a library. For the newspapers were arranged in order and told the printed story of the Civil War,

that is why writers were wont to come to Waldo for informing news about those heroic days. That house cannot be made to live again but the old store can be made the beginning of that unfulfilled dream which a thoughtful person conceived for the preservation of historic documents.

It is a matter of genuine interest that one of the several objectives in the 80th Anniversary Jubilee of the trail blazer—(fragments of whose kindly consideration of the people of his time are to be seen in portions of the trail road which remain as it was, only now the workers on the highways keep it in repair).—one of the objectives in this remembrance of the trail blazer is to memorialize the discovering miners and the pioneering families following close upon them.

But what form of permanent value and historic interest could stand for all the eventful and colorful life of Sailors' Diggings and Waldo?

As a beginning toward this devoutly wished expression of growing appreciation for the pioneers in those glorious days the following program is being widely discussed and is arousing unusual interest

1. Secure the town site of Waldo.
2. Make it into a Memorial Park.
3. Restore the old building.
4. Make of it a Museum of the vast quantities of rare materials to be found in the homes of the descendants of the Pioneers.
5. Build a replica of the old Briggs Home—the famed house fortress to which the early settlers repaired during attacks by the Indians.
6. Make this an Old Miners' Memorial Home.
7. The residents in the Memorial Home to be custodians of the park, curators of the museum, and guides to visitors.

BETTER THAN BRITAIN

The Empire of Great Britain has one: Illinois Valley has two!

And the building of the Redwood Highway is responsible for it.

The sailors came over land in the fifties of the last century and they found gold: and the place of their finding was called Sailors' Diggings. The sailors got gold and went away.

The permanent settlers of Illinois Valley were homesteaders largely, coming with the tides of population which swept over the western plains and climbed the Rockies and rode down the river courses toward the sea.

They are the truly remembered and highly prized pioneers, winners of the west and builders of the larger, grander nation.

Here in Illinois Valley the remembrances of them are beautiful indeed.

To keep in perpetual remembrance their deeds and their lives it is proposed to build finally the Waldo Memorial Museum, or something similar to it; and thus preserve the fast fading memorials of increasing value with the swift passing of the years. A few Illinois Valley Pioneers who came in the early fifties and bore the arduous tasks of those difficult days, great souls and heroic, have lingered until lately. This is written to our irreparable sorrow:—within the space of several months they have moved over into the Lightsome Land beyond the stars—and they took with them imperishable values lost to us here because there was no suitable way of treasuring them. The project of providing such a place merits the heartening and the encouraging which we all together might give.

To carry over and to carry along the mighty works of the creators of the intermountain world in which we live, the Sons and Daughters of the Illinois Valley Pioneers has been organized, with Mrs. Addie Skeeters Martin as president.

Now there are two wonder groups growing up together in Illinois Valley: descendants of the early settlers and the folk who may be styled the new comers.

It is the Redwood Highway which makes the difference.

The descendants of the folk who came to the Valley in the last century are eligible to become members of the Sons and Daughters of the Illinois Valley Pioneers. The century marks the difference.

The late comers, the less favored people who did not discover this delectable place until recently, they are marked off by a distinction which is very modern indeed: It is the building of the Redwood Highway. That is the point between the real pioneers and the late arrivals.

Now the British Empire has only one aristocracy: Illinois Valley has two! There is the aristocracy the social prestige which inheres in actual residence in a land. Then there is the aristocracy which inheres in the social standing of the traveled trader: professional folk who come late into settled communities the world over.

Illinois Valley has both orders of society.

And one of the prime purposes to be served in the 80th Anniver-

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