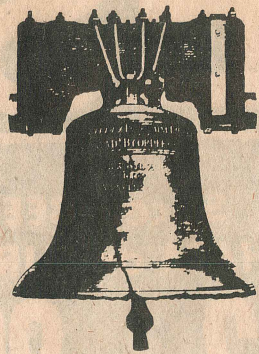
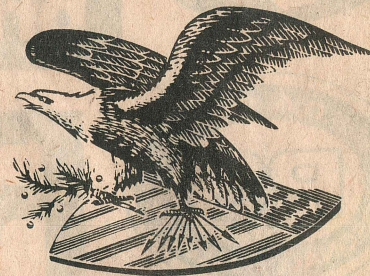


MADRID

AREA



BICENTENNIAL



1776-1976

"Rememberances of Days Gone By"

Father worked here after we moved from Scandia to a small farm near the old Elk Rapids Bridge west of Madrid.

could be made safe, depending on the worker himself. It's a job that someone had to do and with not much selection in other jobs, it was pretty rewarding. It's a job that all 500 of us at the mine discovered that we had to learn or we would beat our brains out."

Naming of Douglas Township

It was on March 8, 1858 that the area of Douglas Township received its name following a proclamation issued by county Judge Sam B. McCall. His decree stated the following: ORDERED. That for the convenience of the inhabitants and election, judicial and municipal purposes, the following named new township be created, bounded as follows: Commencing at the northeast corner of section 12, township 82, range 25; thence to run west along the section line dividing sections 1 and 12 to the Des Moines river; thence down said river to the south boundary line of said county. Thence east along said boundary line to the southeast corner of said county; thence north to the place of beginning; said township to be known and designated as Douglas township, Boone county, and to be organized at an election to be held in the town of Madrid, in said township, on Monday, April 5, 1858 according to law. This little river side township, the smallest one in the county, contains the second sized town in the county and with the exception of Perry, the largest town on the main line of the Milwaukee railroad between Tama City and Council Bluffs.

It was on this day in March that McCall disposed with Pleasant township, reduced its territory and gave it the name of Douglas, after Illinois senator, Stephen A. Douglas, and ordered that an election be held to elect officers for said township. Up to this time, Madrid residents had to go to the community of Belle Point to vote.

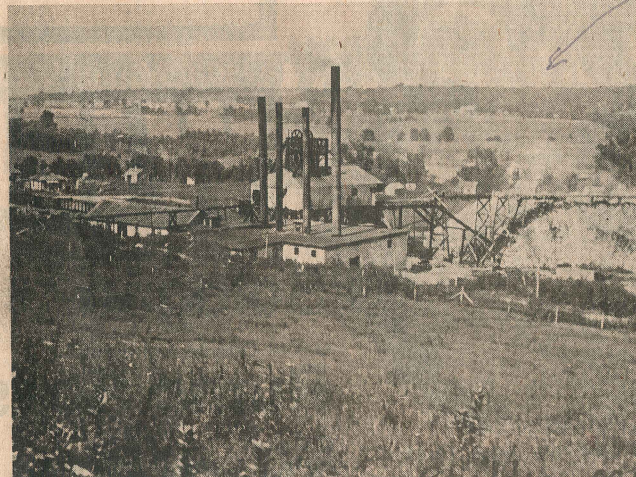
The old poll book used at this first election was composed of two sheets of fools cap paper and is now in the possession of the Madrid Historical Society. The Judges of this election were J. M. Householder, Jacob Sowash and A. C. Stevens. The clerks were G. W. Nelson and James Chapman. There were 90 votes cast and the following township officers were elected. Justice of the Peace, John Bailey; Constable, J. H. Smith; Township Clerk, James Chapman. This election was held about seven months after the name of the town was changed to Madrid, notwithstanding the fact that when Swede Point became a town with a recorded plat from May 20, 1851 to September 14, 1857, a period of over six years elapsed with no elections held within its limits.

It was one of the earliest settled portions of the county with Gaston settling in this area in January 1846. It was in September of that year that the first permanent settlers were recorded and they were Mrs. Anna Dalander and her family and friends from Sweden.

The first death was that of Mrs. Elsie A. Williams, wife of Ben Williams, which occurred on June 10, 1847. She was buried in section 34 and her burial was also the first in the township.

The first marriage came in 1848 with the uniting of Henry Holcomb and Mary J. Hull.

The first birth was that of a son, Henry, to John and Sophia Hull, which was not only the first birth in the township, but also in the county.



This is a picture of the Phildia Mine as it appeared around 1906. This mine was owned and operated by the Phillips Fuel Company of Ottumwa. Wallace Convey was the superintendent while the mine was in operation from 1910 to 1915.

wages." Similar to an engineer of a train, the motorman pushed the empties back to the jobman and saw that each man had an equal share of cars. He then took the loaded cars to the top for transfer purposes. This was his final job at the mine before it closed in 1943. Reasons given for the close were that the mine was too deep and that it took too long to remove the coal.

Tom Davis, a long-time Madrid worker was the pit boss at Number 4. He worked nights and his job consisted of many tasks. He was an inspector and checker of the men's duties as well as assigning other jobs upon completion. He worked side-by-side the men and was kept informed on their progress.

When the mine closed in 1943, Vance sought employment at the Shula Mine Company near Waukegan and remained there until a mine injury forced his retirement six years later. He served as a Duck-Bill man and machine worker at this mine.

The job of the Duck-Bill man was an interesting job to say the least. He used a machine to scoop the coal on a large conveyor belt where it was transferred to a sifting screen where the large and small chunks of coal were separated. The larger chunks were used in home furnaces while the smaller particles were used in stokers.

When looking back on his job he concluded with the following statement. "It was a dangerous job, but it



This picture shows the Scandia Coal Company as it looked in the 1920's. Coal was shipped on a track from the old Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad line between Madrid and Woodward. The mine was abandoned in 1917.



This picture taken in 1921 shows the High Bridge Coal Mine that was located west of town. William Iley was the foreman and the mine was in operation for a 19 year span from 1907-1926.

Vance recalled some interesting happening at the mines, one of which was a job called shot-lighting. This task was done usually by the smallest or shortest man in the mine. A shot was a type of blasting method that was used when the coal could not be removed with the pick or shovel. A small hole was dug into the area and a type of black powder, was packed into the hole. Then a scraper was used to lightly tap the powder to keep it compressed and then coal dirt was added to further compress the charge. This was done by the worker and Vance recalled doing this on numerous occasions. The job of the shot-lighter then came next. He checked the rooms daily to see if his services were needed. If they were, a piece of paper would be lying near the hole telling him how many shots had to be fired. He then would insert the six to eight foot fuse, notch it in place, and light it. Props or supporting beams were always placed in the blasting spot to keep the walls from caving in following impact. These braces were supported against the railroad tracks, temporarily installed in the rooms so the cars could be moved in and out with relative ease.

His next job at the mine was that of the dirtman. This job received the least pay and was the most strenuous. It was his job then to haul dirt in cars, inside the mine and before a shot could be fired, the props had to be covered with dirt for further impact resistance. The floors of these rooms were of a hard bottom material while the roof was composed of slate.

Shafts in the mines averaged 275 feet in depth and he stated that these shafts provided the air for the miners. Occasionally a ventilating fan was installed at each entry to blow the air in the rooms as an added booster.

From his dirtman job, Mr. Mataya was next employed as a job trailer. This job received better pay but still required a great deal of manual labor. His position required him to switch the loaded and the unloaded cars in the mines so they could be brought to the top and unloaded for shipping.

At his next job, as a motorman, he received "top

Vance Mataya Relates Early Coal Mine Experiences

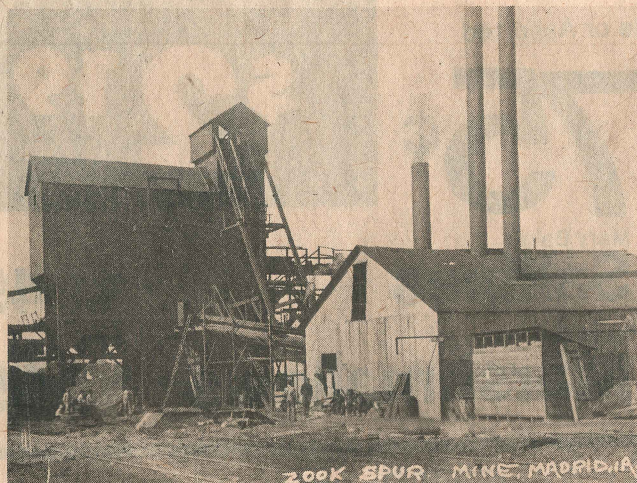
Vance Mataya of Route 2 was one of many Madrid area residents that worked in the coal mines at the start of the 20th century. Coal mining was a big influence in the life of this community, and even though the pay was poor, it was a very rewarding job. Mr. Mataya was employed at Scandia Coal Company, Mine Number 4, just south of what is now Edgewood Park.

He has been a resident of the Madrid area for 53 years and was 16 when his mining career began. Born in Quincy, Michigan, Mataya was the oldest of three children. When he was two his family moved to Yugoslavia, and remained there for almost 13 years before returning to Quincy and later to Madrid by 1926.

Upon receiving employment at the mine, Vance worked side-by-side with his father, Tony for a period of two years when he learned all the "tricks of the trade" about the mining operation. It was a law, however, that any new employee working for the first time in a mine had to work with his father or a guardian for these first two years to learn the trade and then were out on their own. Being the eldest in his family he went with his father, to follow in his footsteps, which also was a type of unwritten law.

His first job was digging coal in a mine room which he did for the next two years. Pay at that time was poor as workers were paid according to the tonnage of coal they extracted from the mine each day. A day's pay was usually between \$4.25 and \$7.50, with the initial figure the common salary. This pay averaged out to between 80-83 cents per ton of coal taken out.

As mentioned, for the first two years, Vance worked with his father in a coal room. These rooms measured 24 feet wide, and up to 150 feet long. These rooms were off-shoots of the main tunnel which averaged 3000 feet in length, and the chambers were 36 feet apart. The workers then set about removing 65-75 percent of the coal from this particular area.



Scandia Mine Number 2 or the Zook Spur Mine was located one and one-half miles south of Madrid. The mine was opened in 1911 and was under the supervision of H. Zook and later Owen Reese. Coal from this mine was shipped to various parts of the state by way of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad, Boone branch.