

It's a long way to

# Tipperary

Many of the small towns in Adair County have interesting histories. Some are now near ghost towns, but were once bustling with life. Many of them have names that have aroused our curiosity—like Tipperary.

Fred Kob once ran a general store in Tipperary and was generous enough to share with us his knowledge of the history of Tipperary.

The town of Tipperary, formerly known as Midland Camp No. 4, is currently located two miles south of Novinger on Route K. The only buildings left now are six houses and the old schoolhouse. At one time, Tipperary was noted for its boot-leg joints. Some called it the boot-leg capital of the world.

About 1915, thirty-four houses owned by Emmett Corrigan, were moved by coal-burning tractors to 52 acres owned by Joshua Cook and bought by Corrigan to set the houses on. This camp was on the Adair County map at the courthouse in Kirksville as Midland No. 4 camp. This mine produced as high as 1200 tons of coal a day.

The new camp had twenty-nine 4-room houses and six 6-room houses. After the homes were moved, each house had to be replastered and a new chimney added. These homes were occupied by people of different nationalities—mostly Italians.

This town was really up with the times, having two outdoor dance halls, where they held dances every Saturday night and Sunday afternoons. These dances drew a lot of business from all around, including Kirksville.

One night, a carload of people from Kirksville came to Joe Morlin's dance floor about midnight, but they left for

Kirksville leaving behind a young girl. This girl was inebriated and had no way home, so she called a cab from Kirksville. When the cab driver asked where she was, she replied, "I'm in Tipperary." Since the song, "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" was popular at that time, the name stuck.

The other dance floor was owned by Jim Nardina who also owned the general store there. Fred Kob bought out Morlin's general store and also purchased Morlin's house. The prices in the store were really hard to believe! Pop was 5 cents a bottle, sugar was 25 cents for three pounds, men's work shoes were \$1.50 a pair, mens overalls were 75 cents a pair, and men's silk B.V.D.'s were 55 cents a pair.

Fred operated the store for only a short time, then sold the stock to Jim Nardina. One Sunday afternoon Nardina's store burned down.

On the outskirts of Tipperary was a one-room schoolhouse called West Center School. One more room and one teacher was added when the houses at the camp began to fill up.

The main attractions in Tipperary were the Bocce games played with hard wooden balls, an Italian game similar to lawn bowling (See story on Page 6), and the dances called "Kitchen Sweats." Coal miners and their wives liked to dance, so they had a lot of "Kitchen Sweats." Sometimes the only music for the dance would be a French harp. At other times it would be an accordion or a concertina.

When the mine closed down, most of the Tipperary houses were sold to individuals and moved to Kirksville.



Left, an Adair County Coal Mining Camp. The two photos above show Della and Fred Kob.

Story by Terry England,  
Greg Barnes and Brian Winslow

# IT'S A LONG, LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY

By JACK JUDGE and  
HARRY WILLIAMS

Allegro con spirito

*p-f* It's a long way to Tip-per - ar - y It's a

long way to go; It's a long way to Tip-per-

ar - y, To the sweet-est girl I know!

Good - bye Pic-ca - dil - ly, Fare-well, Leices-ter

Square, It's a long, long way to Tip-per - ar - y, But

1. my heart's right there!" 2. It's a there!" *sf*