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NO 44

Madison County Good Roads

First, a calf wended its way along the hillside, and, grazing here and there, knocked the dew from the tall grass but left behind it the broken stalks, and a passer-by, wishing to avoid the wet and the dew, followed in its trail, and a second and a third and at last before the day was done a beaten path was formed. A horseman came and saw the track and followed it. It was the thoroughfare and traveller and horse and stock followed it and it became the public highway, protected by law and secure to man. Through our mountains the roads have followed the ways of the past, and up hill and down at slight grade and steep, the wagons and the horse, the footpasser and the stock have followed the time-worn roads that have been complained of, but that were laid out not by human skill or human choice but by a wandering calf.

But as the years have passed men have come to wonder why we have followed the beaten paths at so much discomfort and at such an expense to wagon and beast. Roads that have no reason for being and which have been maintained at such an expense and discomfort to all.

Men have to be told that discomfort is premeditated and that time expended on a bad road adds to the cost per ton of the thing hauled. They have to see that time means also life and that time saved is money saved.

It is necessary to show that a ton hauled over a rough road and steep is done at the same cost of power and at twice the cost of time as double that weight on good roads. So for many years we have been satisfied with our old roads that were fair for a part of the year and almost impassable for the rest of the year. That wagons and buggies wore out in half the time they should because of the roughness of the road. And this conviction came to us presto a change and a rapid change, and the county starts on new era of progress and new roads appear and the riches of the county increase, and men begin to wonder why they were content to travel the old track so many years, following the aimless wanderings of a preadamic calf that wandered over the hills in search of provender.

Madison county is laying out a good system of roads that are easy to follow and which are not a drag to the horse and add pleasure to the driver. In the last

legislature a law was passed permitting the county to issue bonds for good roads, and when this was done half those bonds were issued and the good work began.

With a road commission composed of Fowler Shelton, Guy V. Roberts, Geo. W. Wild, S. V. Brown, and A. F. Sprinkle, the plans were made out. Engineer Cling was employed to lay these roads out, and so through the county there have been surveyed the routes that are to be followed. The money was appropriated to the different townships according to their taxable values and in a great many of them the work has been begun and a fair system has been given to us. With a grade of 4% to 5% we can travel in comfort in many directions and where it was impossible before to go with a machine. The time is coming when we can travel in almost every direction easily.

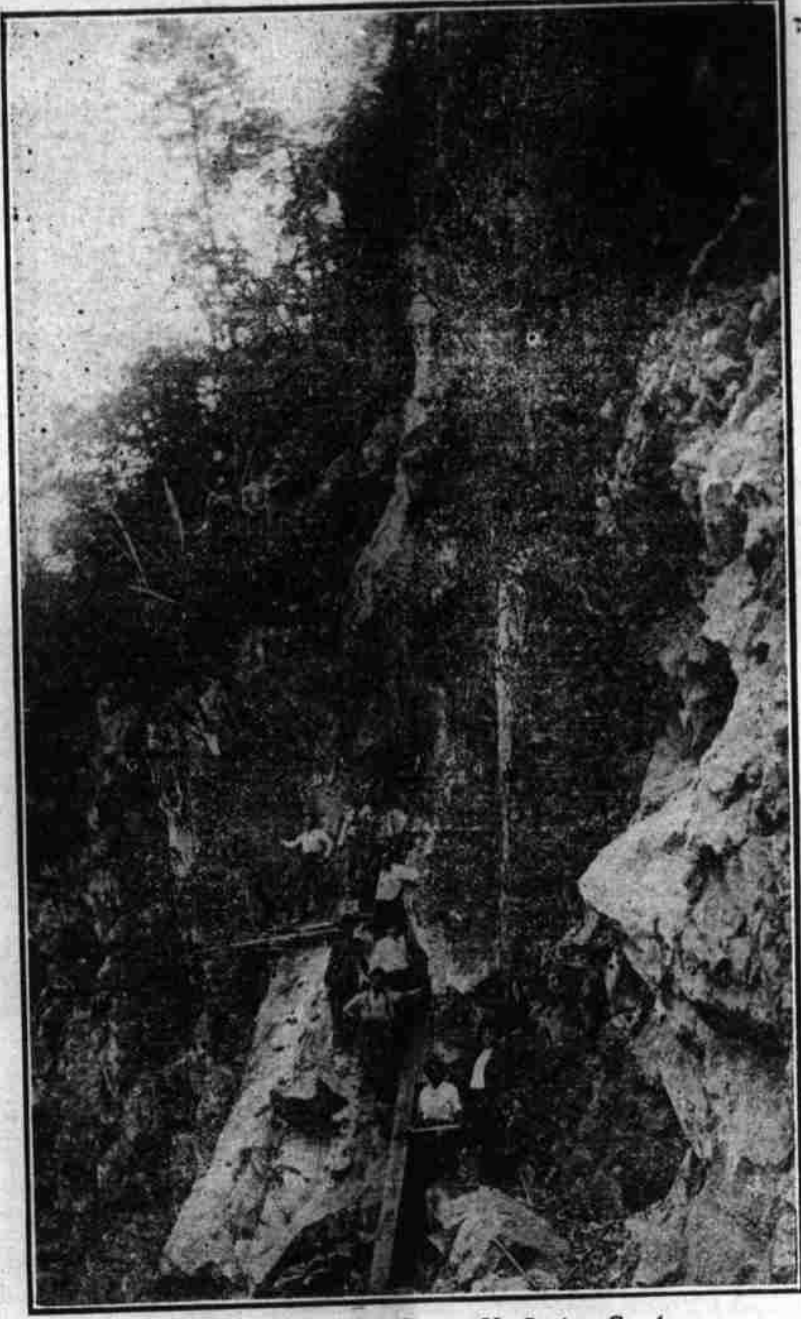
From Marshall to Walnut, to Mars Hill out Walnut Creek, from Sandy Mush, down Spring Creek, up Big Pine from the state line at Paint Rock to Hot Springs, from thence to Hurricane and Walnut Gap, from Lonesome Gap and into Laurel the pick and shovel and dynamite have cleared rock and hill and the road winds its way, making easy the task of the farmer in marketing his products. The state highway has been worked and the convicts that the state has given us have built a road that is good, and soon we will have through connection with all the points east and west.

Not all by any means of the amount of bonds sold have been used and many townships have not used them at all as yet, but enough still remains of those that have gone heaviest into the road building to place the sand upon them which will keep them from getting too muddy during the winter. Where before the horses sweated and pulled they now rest pulling. And where a lot of lumber stalled in the mud now we see teams trotting at their task.

Owner happy, teams rested, farmers satisfied, land worth more, broad highway where one can pass with ease another vehicle, and the county richer by many times the money spent on the roads in bonds.

So Madison goes on in progress, and will grow as the years pass.

Another direct result of better



When Road Was Just Begun Up Spring Creek.

roads will be the betterment of our schools. The complaint of many is that they cannot travel the roads to school. And we will improve our schools if we have better roads. Good roads and bad schoolhouses do not go together, and we cannot have good schools until we have good roads. One has its influence on the other. We would like to impress this on the mind of the reader.

The glory of France and the countries of Europe is its roads, some of which were built in the time of Caesar, and which have come to us through a thousands years. He built great roads for his soldiers to pass, and these have had their effect on the peoples of those countries.

We want these roads also, but not for the tread of armed host, but that the great army from the farm may bring to the marts as easily as possible the products of the soil which is our riches. That these may be marketed as cheaply as possible and at least cost of time and strength to the seller, and therefore cheaper to the buyer.

And our county is pushing it

give us the best possible for our money.

It is a joy now to ride toward Mars Hill toward Walnut and our heart beats with pride where before we traveled with discomfort and vexation of spirit.

The county is already feeling the impulse of a new life coming from these highways which pass as great arteries through its centers. It is necessary that these arteries should be large and well built and if we have them so, the blood of trade will course freely through them and those from the outside will be able to come in and help us and from a hermit county isolated from the tourist and the traveler who shuns us because we have no way of travel, hosts will come in to enjoy the scenic beauty for the eye, and our health giving air for the weary and the sick.

It will mean that we will be able to bring to the railroad the milk and drive our cattle easier. It means the increase of land values everywhere and we will see it in the near future.

We need not fear comparison with our neighboring counties as our system compares favorably with the best of them.

The old roads are a thing of the past. The old generation has passed and a new one has come. The manners of the past have gone, the old houses have given way to the new. The still has seen its last day, a new era has come and we are awakening to the fact and we are a part of the new Madison that is striving to take its place with other counties that have awakened to the fact that the world is moving.

Perhaps there is nothing that has so changed in the last decade as the opinion and ideas in regard to good roads. All over the country, north and south, the question of supreme importance now is the improvement of the roads. States are spending millions on their highways Congresses are held to talk over the best means to get them. Every place the farmer is to the front in advocacy of the idea. And down here in Madison, we too have felt the idea stirring, and feeling it we have started in and we did it good and heavy, \$300,000 strong and so we go marching on to greater achievements, achievements that would have stunned our forefathers but which are to be expected in this day and hour. And our vision reaches out into the future and we see the county threaded not with some main highways only, but from these go out the ramifications until every byway is a highway and

every home has its good road leading to the front door macadamized and kept, for it is the royal road to wealth and ease.

Patton Brothers General Road Builders.

Perhaps to the average person the part the contracting engineers and general contractors play in the up-building of a community is not first apparent, but we must think that a little thought on their part will show at once that more than any other body of men that they are responsible for the acquired advantages which a town and county may possess. The firm of Patton Brothers was formed in East Tennessee some ten years ago, and since that time they have constructed miles of roads which reaches the inspiring total of more than two hundred and fifty miles. Macadam roads, thousands of yards of stone and concrete walls, etc.

They were successful bidders against well-known competitors for the construction of twelve miles of graded roads in Madison County which includes 75,000 yards of excavations and they are making wonderful progress however, this wonderful progress should not be a surprise when we take into consideration that they have all the latest machinery for modern road making, and that they employ from seventy five to one hundred men and are working forty head of horses and mules.

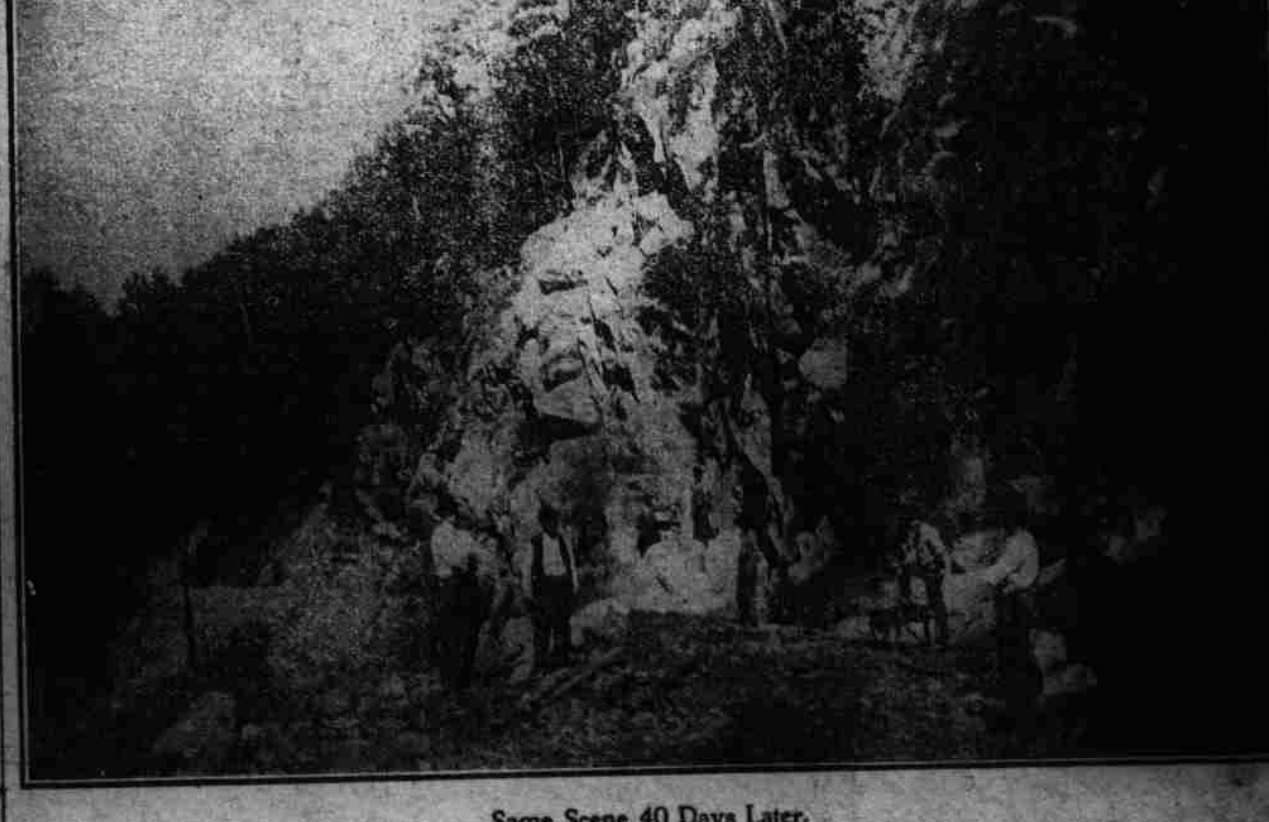
The firm is composed of Messrs W. A. and R. S. Patton. Their contract here is a very large and difficult one and is under the management of Mr. W. A. Patton, the senior member of the firm.

They are always found ready and pleased to figure on any kind of road construction, and they are equipped and prepared to bid on work in any section of the country.

Guts shown on this page illustrates the difficult road building Messrs. Patton Brothers are doing in Madison Co., near Hot Springs.



Same Scene as Above 30 Days Later.



Same Scene 40 Days Later.