

Afton Real
Material Culture Project
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Introduction

The landscape of Callaway County, Missouri is filled with material reminders of a rich past. Calwood, referred to as the "Crossroads of America", is eight miles northwest of Fulton. It is located on the northeast quarter and southeast quarter of Sec. 19, Twp. 48 N, R. 8 West. As the case with many of the small communities in Callaway County, the heart of the Calwood community has always been centered around its general stores. Today what is now Twillman Feed, located off of Highway Z at 3789 State Road JJ, was once a small one room building feed store.

Historical Background

From 1946 to 1974, two brothers, Madison Wright and Earnest (Ted) Wright owned and operated the Wright Brothers general store and feed store in Calwood, Missouri (Callaway County Historical Society). According to Terry Wright, present owner of Wright Brothers General Store, "The feed store was originally built because of the abundance of turkey farmers in the area, along with a few hog farmers".

Kenny Twillman, present owner of the feed store, stated,

"Calwood, in the 1950's, produced a lot of turkeys. Some of the turkey farmers in the area were Bob Maddox, Bob Gowin, Lamar Craighead, Norman Roberts, and Ray Maddox. Then the turkey industry turned around. At that time the turkeys were produced on the open market and then the large corporations decided to control the market. In order to produce turkeys and have a market for them you had to have a contract. Within the contract came a lot of rules and stipulations that pushed the small turkey farmers out of business. In today's business there is not a turkey produced that is not under contract."

The original block building was built in the early part of 1950. The one room feed store was a 20' x 40' structure. This original building had a concrete floor with concrete block walls, and it had a wooden truss roof with a corrugated metal covering. The feed was originally bought and sold in 100 pound burlap bags, because there was no milling done at that time. In 1961, a 70' x 40' warehouse was added to the feed store for two reasons. The first reason was because the original block building did not have a loading dock. The second reason was because the

Wright Brothers decided to expand their feed business and begin manufacturing their own feed. The warehouse has a wooden pole barn type frame, with wooden posts, the sides are corrugated metal and there is a corrugated metal gable roof. The original block building was not used for feed after the warehouse was built in 1961, because it did not have a dock (Twillman).

In 1974, Terry and B.D. Wright (Madison's sons) became owners of the Wright-Brothers general and feed store. B.D. Wright operated the general store, while Terry operated the feed store (Wright). Present owner of Wright-Brothers General Store, Terry Wright stated, "Today the feed store makes more in a day, then we did in a month".

During high school Kenny Twillman worked part-time for Terry Wright at the Feed Mill. In 1979 Kenny learned that the feed mill was for sale and pursued a partnership with his brother Ray to purchase the mill. Kenny changed the name to Twillman Feed and opened for business on April 1, 1979 (Twillman).

In 1979, when Kenny purchased the feed store, his brother Ray was more of a silent partner, enlisted for financial purposes only. Ray occasionally helped out at the feed store, but was never actually employed there. By 1980, Kenny hired his first employee, John Moore. Fern

Twillman (Kenny's mother) was his original bookkeeper; she kept the books until 1991 when the business grew to the point that it required a full time bookkeeper. Debbie Johnson was hired as a full time bookkeeper and at that time the books were all manual. Statements were sent monthly and were handwritten. The first computer was purchased in 1990 and was used solely to track charge sales (Twillman).

Additions

In 1979, when Kenny opened for business, the structures that existed were the 70' x 40' warehouse, the 20' x 40' one room block building, and three 330 bushel bins. Kenny has made many additions since 1979. In 1981, Kenny added a 4,000 bushel grinding bin, which holds the corn used for everyday feed. In 1982, Kenny purchased his first truck and diversified the business to include custom grain hauling. Kenny saw an advantage in owning his own tractor-trailers to haul his feed byproducts and over the years has continued to grow the custom hauling portion of the business. Today Twillman Feed owns and operates two trucks (Freightliner and Peterbuilt) and has two full time drivers (Twillman).

In 1983 he added a feed leg and an unloading pit behind the mill. In 1984, Kenny moved the three existing

330 bushel bins on the south end of the mill to a new location (about 6 feet from there previous location) and turned them into supplement bins. In 1984, he purchased four ingredient bins and placed them on the west side (back side) of the mill. Then in 1985, Kenny purchased the .75 acre of ground adjacent to the original parcel of land. The existing parcel of land was .69 acres. Today Twillman Feed exists on two parcels of land. In 1987, Kenny purchased a scale and his first large 40,000 bushel storage bin. In 1987, he also became a fescue buying station for Olean Seed. In 1989, Kenny purchased his second 40,000 bushel storage bin and then in 1991 he purchased a third storage bin with a 50,000 bushel capacity (Twillman).

In 1994, Kenny added overhead bins, a feed mixer, and a complete feed leg. In 2000, a 40' x 40' (1600 square foot) office/retail showroom area was added. This office/retail showroom area was the only structural addition that Twillman Feed has made and it was contracted by Monty Mosley. In 2001, Kenny purchased an 80,000 bushel storage bin. Then in 2002, Kenny installed a new complete feed leg and batch feed system. In 2003, he added a new roller/grinder, a new feed leg, a new grease tank, and purchased a 30 ton soybean meal bin. The mill continues to make improvements to keep up with the needs of today's

agriculture world. In 2005, Kenny plans on adding five additional overhead bins (Twillman).

Present Feed Store

The original Wright-Brothers one room feed store was built to make money off of the local turkey farmers (Wright). Today Twillman Feed specializes in manufacturing custom livestock feeds for local area farmers and is an ADM Alliance Nutrition Dealer and selling a variety of feed. Types of feed include: hog, cattle, sheep, chicken, dog, cat, horse, and rabbit. Although, today's business is primarily custom grind; 80 percent of today's business is hog feed, 15 percent is cattle feed, 3 percent is horse feed, and 2 percent is miscellaneous and specialty feed. The original feed store is still standing and has been used for storage over the years. Today the original building houses a roller/grinder and an animal fat tank (Twillman).

The surroundings include one house north and two to three houses west of the feed store. A little junk yard sits across State Road JJ and Wright-Brothers General Store is still South of the feed mill. As you can see from the many additions over the years, Twillman Feed has really grown. Kenny stated, "In 1979 my feed business averaged five tons of feed a day; today the business averages 100 tons per day". Kenny and his wife Lori, owners of Twillman

Feed, currently employ their two sons, one mill worker, one bookkeeper, and two truck drivers.

Works Cited

"Calwood, MO". Callaway County Historical Society.

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