

TABLE OF CONTENTS
WAYNE O. BURCHETT AND GAYLE CARNS BURCHETT COLLECTION

A ccountants Association/Tax/Insurance	2
B irth Records	
B ooks	3
C attle Operation	4
C entury Farm	
C ommunity	6
E lectricity	7
F arm Operations	8
4-H	
G enealogy	12
H obo	13
M arriage Records	
S chool R ecords	
W ills/Obituaries/Eulogies	14
O ther	16

SUMMARY
MATERIALS FOR IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY'S
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY
FROM FAMILY OF WAYNE O. BURCHETT AND GAYLE CARNS BURCHETT
GRAND RIVER, IOWA

Described by Anne Burchett Barton, Wayne and Gayle Burchett's daughter
 July 21, 2009

Accountants Association of Iowa/Tax and Insurance Business

Early in his marriage, Wayne recognized that he would need to take on various jobs to supplement his income and be able to operate the farm and cattle business that was his first love. Although he was not one to buy new farm equipment, he was driven to try new ideas that required financial investment. He was also conscientious to a fault about "making a living" for his family.

Wayne was a natural salesman, and his skills were honed by listening to Dale Carnegie tapes and studying books on selling techniques. His garb in the saddle (spurs, lariat, grimy Stetson, Western boots, and chaps) was interchangeable with a 3-piece suit and briefcase in his home office or the Kellogg or Murray offices for meetings with accounting, tax, and insurance clients.

After years of participation and leadership in the Accountants Association, Wayne became president in 1991. He also had a successful tax business, gaining recognition with state and federal colleagues as a top-notch defender of his clients in farm and small business tax audit conducted by state and IRS auditors. He built very strong relationships with various auditors and presented a number of tax seminars for his clients to keep them current on law and regulation changes.

1989 -1990 – News articles and congratulatory notes related to Wayne's election as Association President. Two of the letters are from childhood friend, Robert Conwell.¹

Date uncertain – *The Iowa Accountant*, Vol. XI, No. 6 – Congratulatory article on Wayne's certificate from the IRS for his service on the District Director's Liaison Committee. Curtis S. Jenkins, District Director of the IRS, wrote that Wayne's contribution has been a valuable asset in providing quality customer service to Iowa taxpayers.

1991 - 45th Annual Tax Seminar and Convention Program, Wayne Burchett, President.

- 1990 Tax Seminar and Convention Program (Wayne Burchett was President-Elect).
- "From the President," excerpts from Wayne's acceptance speech at the time of his selection as president of the Accountants Association of Iowa.
- January, April, May, July, August, September, November, and December editions of *The Iowa Accountant* with "From the President" articles.

*Wayne had to have heart bypass surgery in the spring, an event that severely impacted his ability to accomplish many of his goals for his presidential year. His messages in *The Iowa Accountant* reflect his heartfelt appreciation for all the good wishes he received from*

¹ See "More on the Conwell Connection" section in Farm Operations.

fellow members and for all the hard work that went on to keep the organization moving forward.

- Photo of article from the *Afton Star-Enterprise*, date unknown, “Tax Seminar Well Attended.”
- Photos of Murray and Kellogg offices.
- Sample pages of a Wayne O. Burchett Agency Ltd. notepad.
- Business card for Wayne O. Burchett Agency (see reverse side for some Burchett humor).

Birth Records

December 13, 1890 - Certificate of Orval Burchett’s Birth Registration.

September 25, 1899 - Delayed Certificate of Birth of Mary Alice Coon (wife of Orval and mother of Wanda, Wilda, Wayne and Wade).

December 25, 1920 and March 31, 1925 - Certificates of Birth of Wayne Oscar Burchett and Gayle Elaine Carns respectively.

Books

1890 – Autograph Book inscribed, “Christmas 1890 From your Sister Eliza.” This was the property of Samuel Carns, grandfather of Gayle Carns Burchett.

1901 – Marshall Burchett’s Account Book showing various customers’ records.

- Inserted in the Account Book is a letter dated May 17, 1916, to Marshall indicating his son-in-law, J. M. Spray, was not paying interest or principal on a note. (Papers in the Account Book indicate that Marshall paid the amount due and began collecting rent payments from Mr. Spray.)

1918 - “The Bride’s Cookbook, A Gift from the Merchants of Bakersfield.” Contains letter dated 1918 (Page 5) from the California Federal Food Commissioner, U.S. Food Administration. Included in the letter is the note that the recipes have been changed to “a Pre-War basis with many new and valuable additions.” 96 pages – poor condition.

1926 – Orval Burchett’s “Account Book” of the Marshall Burchett Estate.

1930’s – Diary given by Alice to her father, Aaron Coon, for Christmas. Frequent entries about weather and quotes from Bible. Aaron’s son, Myron and daughter-in-law Blanche are mentioned frequently as are Alice and another daughter, Emma. On March 18, 1935, Aaron entered the following: “Mama went to be with the lord this morning at 4:40 a.m. and God being my helper, I will meet her soon.” Aaron died at his home ten years later, after a long illness, on October 11, 1945. A number of newspaper obituaries and pages with “Family Tree” and “Births” were tucked inside the front cover of the diary (see Genealogy file). Included in the Diary box is a note written on the back of an old envelope saying “We walked up to the Church. Come after us.” The postmark on the envelope, marked to A. F. Coon, is from Murray, Iowa, May 24, 1935.

1933 – Orval's Farmer's Pocket Ledger, Compliments of John Deere Plow Company of Moline, Iowa State Fair. Poor condition. Printed material will be of most interest because book was used by Alice to enter recipes.

Estimated Early 1940's – "This Company of Ours...United Air Lines." Probably given to Wanda Burchett, daughter of Orval, at the time she began working for United out of Denver as an airline stewardess. The employee handbook is marked on the front, "For Dad to Read."

September 1942 – "The Instructor" Magazine, a publication for teachers.

Cattle Operation

April 2, 1914 – Sale bill for Marsh Burchett and Son auction. Back side of this card has list of items normally used for painting and household upkeep with what appears to be prices.

Various business cards, one with a photo on the reverse side of Wayne as a young man with a prized Hereford.

Stationery, Orval Burchett & Sons Hereford Ranch.

1952 – Pictures of cattle in album. Also Wayne with cattle truck, Cathy in front of building used for office/welding and other repair space/kitchen for cattle auctions, and Anne with one of the bulls. *All the herd bulls were gentle enough for children to walk around them.* The Hereford sign above the sliding doors on the building in the picture with Cathy was painted by Wayne's sister, Wanda. She was considered to be the best artist in the family, although Wayne and Wade took up painting in later years.

Album includes photo of Orval Burchett with, in Wayne's handwriting, "one of our show bulls." Back of photo indicates the bull was King Repeater 3rd. Date unknown, but Orval died in 1954 after a lengthy illness with cancer. *Prior to his death, the doctor amputated both legs to extend his life (a fate that would later befall Wayne as well although the cause was diabetes rather than cancer).*

1954 – Three photos of Burchett Herefords (in packet).

March 1956 – American Hereford Association Certificate of Junior Membership for Anne Burchett.

Sale Catalogs

- November 6, 1954 – catalog belonged to Wayne's daughter, Cathy, who listed the selling price of the animals.
- November 1, 1958 – another catalog with Cathy's notes. See caricature of Wayne and picture of him with his stock truck with the Burchett Hereford logo on the door.
- November 10 (year unknown) – first few pages, including pictures of Orval, Wayne, and Wade from a third sale catalog.

These sales were held at the ranch, and the entire community participated by helping sort and groom animals. The auctioneer and many buyers gathered for the auction from Iowa and surrounding states. Local church ladies served food (including lots of pie) in the large concrete block building that housed Wayne's office, storage for his truck and other vehicles, and a full kitchen.

The building later burned to the ground, but cattle records were preserved in a fireproof safe.

- October 14, 1972 – Production Sale catalog for auction held at the Leon sale barn.

December 1978 – Articles of Incorporation developed at a time that Wayne and Gayle added Wayne Christensen to the cattle operation. Christensen and his family moved to the property and Christensen became a partner in the business. (Christensen was also employed in the Burchett Accounting and Insurance/Tax business which was located in Murray, Iowa, a town about ten miles from the ranch. The Christensen-Burchett partnership was later dissolved.)

1981 – Excerpt (2 pages) from the centennial document compiled in observance of Grand River's centennial year, "Reflections." The history of the Orval Burchett & Sons Hereford Ranch is detailed in the piece.

Unknown date – Newspaper article with Wayne's picture indicating the Clarke County State Bank sponsored his participation in a week-long Cattleman's Study tour organized by the Iowa State Extension Service. The group traveled to Nebraska, Wyoming, California, and Colorado.

1989 – packet of schedule, Hereford association's breeding records, photos, and pictures of the Iowa Hereford Tour where the group was hosted for their final stop at the Oval Burchett & Sons' ranch. Wayne gave a branding demonstration which is shown in some of the pictures.

December 1989 – Page from the *American Hereford Journal* with photos and small article on the Iowa Hereford Tour.

December 4, 1989 – Wayne's written acknowledgement of how much he appreciates his horse, Beauty. This horse was probably the best he ever had for cutting and roping. Wayne didn't let anyone else ride Beauty.

July 15, 1991 – handwritten letter from Mr. Snidow of the American Hereford Association regarding a story for the *Hereford Journal* about the Burchett cattle operation. Mr. Snidow included his summary of the story for Wayne's approval. This letter mentions that they have put the belt buckle designed by Wayne in their historical room showcase.

- *Hereford Journal* article that resulted from above preparation.
- Belt buckle designed by Wayne Burchett and shared with existing and potential business associates and customers as well as family and friends. This buckle is #1 of 100 that were cast.

1991 – Three news accounts of the 100-year-old Hereford herd owned and operated by Wayne. His herd was recognized as one of two such herds in Iowa. The award was presented in Des Moines at the Iowa State Hereford Association banquet.

April 8, 1995 – Paperwork related to the purchase of two bulls by Burchett Ranch from the Wallace, Nebraska, Gibson Hereford Ranch.

April 1997 – Herd inventory, registration application, yearling and additional performance worksheet, and order form from Hereford Association. Also, a letter from American Hereford Association acknowledging a \$325,000 gift from Red Oak Hereford Farms, Inc. (unrelated to the Burchett operation but indicative of the work and commitment of Hereford breeders).

Century Farm

1976 – Copy of Iowa Department of Agriculture’s recognition of Wayne and Gayle Burchett as a family with a “Century Farm.”

Two photos of the Century Farm plaques – one at the side of the road as a part of the mailbox crafted by Wayne (with a Hereford weathervane) and one that was constructed and posted on the other side of the road in a bed of flowers.

Community

February 1925 – Agreement between trustees of churches in Hopeville and Thayer, Iowa, regarding a parsonage property in Hopeville. Both locations were a part of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Uncertain why this document was retained in the Burchett files, but both the Coon and Burchett families attended the Hopeville Methodist Church over the years.

1934 – Statement of Condition, First National Bank of Grand River, Iowa.

Approximately 1948 to 1952 – one page of photos taken at the Richland Township country school of students and their teachers. Both Wayne and his daughter Anne attended this school. It closed when Anne was going into 6th grade. *Box and Pie suppers were one of the many community activities scheduled to raise money for basic expenses like electricity and oil for the stove in the one-room building. Students learned “pieces” to recite for entertainment, and an auctioneer cajoled the crowd to spend just one nickel or dime more on a prize cake or pie. The men and boys bid on boxes decorated with colored designs or crepe paper that the women had packed with a sandwich and cookie or other goodies. Winning the bid allowed the man to “dine” with whoever prepared the box. One of Anne’s favorite memories is eating food from her box with a neighbor, Gene O’Grady, whose wife was the school teacher. He was always a favorite of all the kids because he was fun and made everything fun for others.*

About 1953 – Photo of Wayne (and daughter Cathy in the bed of the truck) with a single-prop airplane in the truck. *Wayne’s resourcefulness had no limits. When this picture was taken, he had developed a way to transport an aircraft that was upended when the pilot tried to land in a plowed field. Anne recalls watching with her classmates from the yard of the country school as the plane did a somersault in a neighbor’s field. The picture shows that the wings had to be removed in order to load and move*

the plane, but the task was accomplished. Fortunately, the pilot was unharmed – damp plowed ground in the spring of the year made a rough but rather cushioned runway.

1968-69 – Wayne’s Girls’ High School Athletic Union official’s card. He worked as a basketball official for many years, including officiating a game played by the Harlem Globetrotters. Wayne was a big basketball fan, and he played basketball and baseball himself in high school.

1981 – Photocopies from “Reflections of Grand River, Iowa, 1881-1981,” published as a Centennial record of faces and facts over 100 years.

- Pages 167-172 with stories about the Burchett families.
- Photo from inside front cover of Grand River with Wayne’s notes identifying various businesses, including the theater, dentist’s office, general store, hotel, and bank (Wayne was a bank director).
- Plat of Richland Township in Decatur County with Wayne’s marks identifying the location of the Burchett Ranch.
- Statement written by Robert Conwell², longtime Burchett friend, about his family. He indicated that after his father Luke’s death in 1973, the family farm (contiguous to the Burchett property) was purchased by Wayne Burchett.

1983 – Copy of an article in the Seymour newspaper, “Seymour Ball Team ‘Run Out of Town.’” The article apparently appeared first in the Grand River newspaper written about local baseball teams in the 1920’s. The Burchett brothers were mentioned (Wayne and Wade), and Wayne has often repeated his experiences trying to play baseball in high school against the Van Meter team whose star was Bob Feller. *Note the last paragraph in this article referring to a team of black players who were mistreated.*

Date Unknown – two small articles about the official name of the Grand River. Leonard Boswell, State Senator at the time, apparently played a role in correcting what the local residents felt was an obvious error when the IDOT identified the river running through Southern Iowa as the Thompson River.

Date Unknown – old postcard to Alice Coon (Wayne’s mother) with photo of railroad bridge over the Grand River.

Electricity

November 1948 – *Creston News Advertiser* with headline, “After Eight Years, Big Power Plant is a Reality.” Photo of Board of Directors (Orval is shown at left).

March 1951 – Annual Report, Southwestern Federated Power Cooperative, Inc., for the year of 1950.

February 1954 – Page 1 of the REA News, “In Memoriam” for Orval Burchett, upon his death.

² See “More on the Conwell Connection” section in Farm Operations.

Date Uncertain – “Rural Iowa Turns on the Lights,” by Harold Severson, with a description of activities by the Clarke Electric Cooperative (beginning on P. 67). Orval and other directors of the first Board on page 75. Also, Annual Report, “Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc., 50th Anniversary, 1939-1989.”

Orval’s granddaughter, Anne, recalls getting a coloring book and colored pencils as a souvenir when her grandfather traveled to Washington DC to advocate for Congressional assistance in establishing electrical services in the rural parts of the country.

Farm Operations

1855 – Original document giving 80 acres of land to Josiah Coon pursuant to an act of Congress that allowed land to be given for military service in the War of 1812. This was granted when Franklin Pierce was President of the U.S.

December 1863 – Certificate of deed to Josiah Coon of 40 acres of land in Clarke County. Signed by Iowa Governor Samuel Kirkwood.

December 1868 – Patent 15842, regarding A. F. Burchett’s deposit in the office of the Registrar of the State Land Office full payment for forty acres in Township 70 of Decatur County. This document is prefaced with Melvin Synhorst’s certification of the document as a true copy. **Signed by Secretary of State Synhorst December 20, 1971.**

1877 – Framed State of Iowa Patent 18045, acknowledging that Marshall and Franklin Burchett of Decatur County made payment for 76.43 acres of land in Township 70 in Decatur County.

October 15 and November 5, 1892 – notarized papers related to what appears to be South Dakota and Nebraska matters.

1912 – Photo of man (probably Orval Burchett because of note on back) in front of barn with two mules, marked “The Twins” apparently belonging to “Grandpa.”

Unknown date – old photo of house on post card mailed to Burchetts with a 1-cent stamp. Writing on front says “Our New House.” Appears to be signed by Emma Brown, Orval’s sister, who lived in Wyoming with her husband and family.

May 20, 1914 – Letter from Marshall Burchett to Collins Oil Company, Knoxville, indicating his Ford Touring car worth at least \$400 burned in the Bishop Garage in Murray, through negligence of the company and their agent. Mr. Burchett wanted his \$400.

October 12, 1933 – Road Poll Tax Receipt signed by the Clarke County Engineer for Myron Coon’s labor in Murray, Iowa, described as “Ditching - Team.”

Dates Unknown – Sale Bills for S. W. Carns.

- quitting farming and selling 9 head of livestock, 4 head of horses, 5 cows/heifers, 3 sows, and farm machinery. The list of farm machinery documents to a certain extent the age; for example, one item for sale is a 4-shovel walking cultivator.
- December 15, selling five horses, six head of cattle, and “8 tons good wild hay..”

March 4, '05 (presumably 1905) – Joint Public Sale bill showing Sam Carnes (sic) and G. Seeley as the sellers.

September 18, year unknown – another sale bill for S. W. Carns selling 93 head of horses, cattle, and hogs.

About 1948 – one page of pictures of Wayne and Orval on horses and one picture of a team of horses.

Approximately 1941 – Photo of Wayne Burchett on a horse.

Wayne is so thin in the photo that it was probably taken shortly after his near-death experience from peritonitis. His doctor was down to no alternatives when a sample of a new drug, Sulfa, was received. Dr. Stroy administered what was later understood to have been “a horse’s dose” of this new drug. Wayne’s life was saved, but he had lost so much weight and was so weak that he had to learn to walk again. He was fortunate to make a full recovery, and Wayne occasionally recounted to his family a vision during his hospitalization – he was with his father at the foot of a long stairway with women wearing long white dresses. Someone came down the stairs, asked Wayne’s name which was stated by Orval, walked back up the stairs and came back down later. At that time, the person said Wayne’s work on earth was not done. It was at that point (concomitant with the large dose of sulfa) that Wayne began to recover.

- 1973 - Picture drawn by Wayne on his 53rd birthday. He depicts his “out of body” experience.

His family often wondered if this illness contributed to Wayne’s classification as 4F when he had his military physical examination.

By not serving in the military at a time when every other young man in the neighborhood was enlisting, Wayne and his family felt a bit of scorn during the war and thereafter. After all, he appeared to be able bodied. Brother Wade was a B-29 pilot in WW II, and he received a number of accolades for his service. Wade continued to fly and own a private plane for many years. Three of his sons, Allen, Rick, and Keith, are pilots today; one of his granddaughters, Sara, is a commercial airlines pilot.

1940’s – two photos of group from community who gathered to assist May Palmer harvest corn at “the Bone farm,” on the Clarke-Decatur County line when May’s husband, Lowell, died. Women pictured were responsible, no doubt, for preparing the Noon meal for workers. See notes on back side of each of these pictures.

Late 1940’s – photo of Holstein bull. Wayne had a milking operation for several years. Unlike the Hereford bulls that could be trusted to be gentle, the Holstein bulls were unpredictable and anyone going near them was smart to exercise caution.

1949 and 1950 – Partial Release of Old Age Assistance Lien regarding real estate in Clarke County, released from being held against George and Libbie Burchett and John and Laura Woodard.

1950's – photo of farm stock truck with Hereford bull pictured on side, advertising the Orval Burchett & Sons Hereford Ranch.

August 1953 – three pictures of thrashing operation. Orval, Wayne, Gayle, and Cathy (in far left corner) are pictured.

Date Unknown – Wayne and daughter Cathy on top of Thrashing machine.

December 1953 – Newspaper clipping announcing Wayne as the winner of the Myers Motor Company Ford 6 Economy Contest. The contest involved seeing how many miles could be driven on one gallon of gas—Wayne won with 31+ miles.

September 1954 – Certificate of Title for purchase of a 1941 Ford Coupe.

August 5, 1955 – Warranty Deed from Bill Woodard et.al. to Wayne Burchett.

June 1957 - *Des Moines Register* article on harvesting bluegrass, an enterprise that the Burchetts were very involved in over several years.

June 1962 – Decatur County Treasurer's receipt for Wayne and Gayle's purchase of a Ford car for \$2,707.50.

November 1962 – Certificate of Title to a 1953 Ford, purchased from Wayne's uncle, Myron Coon.

1964 – two photos of Wayne taken at the farm where Wayne grew up. Date on pictures in May, but they were probably taken in late fall since the corn was being picked at the time. Wayne always used Ford tractors. His brother-in-law, Noel Boles, is pictured in the shot at the house with his tractor and picker.

April 1967 – Invoice from Myers Motor for the purchase of a used 1960 Ford Comet for \$300. *That vehicle ran for years, despite the demands Wayne placed on it. He jumped ditches in the cattle pasture with it. The body was so rusted that passengers wondered when they would drop out the bottom of the car.*

August 1970 – *Osceola Tribune* article with photo of Wayne and his 1923 Fordson tractor, still in use at that time. The tractor was displayed at the 1969 State Fair. Wayne donated the tractor to one of the insurance companies he worked with in his agency, IMT of Des Moines.

1973 – Sale bill for Myron and Blanche Coon's farm auction. Wayne clerked the sale of his aunt and uncle's farm. He managed Blanche's business after Myron's death and he became the executor of their estate.

1981 – two pictures of the house Wayne and Gayle moved to from the original family home on the property contiguous to this “Conwell House.” Wayne was a skilled carpenter, and he did a great deal of remodeling on the house before it could be occupied. Also, there is a picture of the country schoolhouse that remains on the property – Wayne and his daughter Anne both attended school there.

Pictures of homestead occupied by Orval and Alice Burchett and their family and later by Wayne, Gayle, Anne and Cathy Burchett.

More on the Conwell Connection

1929 – September, November, and December - Farmers State Bank in Grand River “promises to pay” from Luke Conwell who owned the property later purchased by Wayne and Gayle Burchett. Also, one document from June 1930.

March 1973 - letter from Wayne to W. R. (Robert) Conwell making an offer of \$16,150 for the Conwell farm.

1987 - “Iowa Boy” article from *Des Moines Register* about Robert Conwell, son of Luke Conwell and close friend of Wayne and Gayle.

1987 – Picture of Gayle with Robert Conwell and his son, taken at Robert’s home in Atherton, California.

May 1988 – Funeral pamphlet from Nellie Conwell’s funeral (Robert’s sister and Luke’s daughter).

1988 – Grand River Class of 1938 book and photo originating at the class’s 50th anniversary celebration.

1992 – Two pictures of Robert Conwell and Wayne, taken in Murray in front of Wayne’s office. Also, letter from Robert acknowledging Wayne and Gayle’s 50th wedding anniversary along with a copy of the invitation.

August 1985 – Wayne’s lottery ticket along with the explanation that it was one of the first 5,000 Lottery tickets given away at the Iowa State Fair. *From birth to about 1995, Wayne never missed attending a single Iowa State Fair. It was only because of heart surgery that his perfect attendance streak was finally broken.*

1990’s – Pictures at the “East Place” of Merrill Carns (brother of Gayle) with some of the horses in the pens. Merrill spent many years working at the farm for Wayne and Gayle. As a kid, he lived with them and Anne and Cathy much of the time. He and his wife, Joy, now reside in Osceola. He is a retired Indianola policeman. All his life Wayne was designing and building cattle sorting and holding pens. His friends came to tease Wayne that he was going to keep building until he had a covered walkway for himself and his livestock stretching from the ranch to Osceola (the town about 20 miles northeast of the family farm).

4-H

1930 4-H Bread Club Record Book belonging to Wanda Burchett, member of the Happy Bakers. Wanda was Wayne's sister. 4-H leader was Alice Burchett (Wayne and Wanda's mother). 8 pages, good condition.

1930 Photo of Wayne Burchett, ten years old and looking very sad, with description on the back in Wayne's handwriting – his calf was in the Grand Champion County group of Herefords at the Iowa State Fair. The same group was Reserve Champion at the St. Joe Interstate show. The 1,100-pound animal sold for \$8.75 per hundred weight. Cause for the expression on Wayne's face is unknown.

Undated newspaper picture of the Decatur County Extension Council, including Wayne Burchett who presented the program.

1956 Premium List, Decatur County 4-H and FFA Fair. Back page includes advertisement for Burchett and Overholtzer Agency, Grand River. 48 pages.

1959 4-H autograph book with notation to Cathy Burchett from mother, State 4-H Girls' Convention, wishing her "Lots of success in 4-H and everything you do!"

June 1960 Rally Day Program for Decatur County 4-H Girls. Anne Burchett was County President and Mrs. Wayne Burchett was leader of the Richland Ridge Runners Club.

December 1960 4-H Awards Night Program – Anne Burchett was Co-M.C.

Various photos of 4-H demonstrations, visits to Iowa State campus for Convention and to the State Fair, and 4-H cattle and soil projects.

Anne Burchett and Wanita Hailey represented Decatur County with their demonstration on exercise at the 1960 State Fair. They were sanctioned for wearing very modest Bermuda shorts for the demonstration which required them to lie on the floor to illustrate some of the exercises (a white ribbon was awarded, much to the embarrassment of the county extension director, Arvid Miller, their leader, Gayle Burchett, and the well-meaning 4-H'ers. In following years, the rules were modified to allow 4-H'ers to depart from the traditional 4-H uniform when appropriate.

Genealogy, Burchett Family

1815 – 1978 – Handwritten cards listing birth and death dates for members of the Coon family.

William Sanford "Sant" Burchett, 1889 – 1967. Notes written by Gayle Burchett in 1985. Sant and his brother, Mike, were "favorite uncles" of Wayne and Gayle's daughters (Anne and Cathy).

One-page copy of pictures of Burchett ancestors, Orval Burchett, and Wayne Burchett with a friend.

Two-page "Family Tree" for the family of Alice Coon Burchett.

Half-page typed writeup on the Coon Family tracing them Germany to Indiana/Virginia to Iowa. Mentions taking a claim on about 200 acres at \$1.25 an acre in Clarke County, building a log cabin, and selling the 40 acres in Indiana for \$300 in gold.

- One-page listing of Coon family members starting with Alice Coon Burchett's brother, Myron, born in 1900.
- Small paper with handwritten story of George Coon's vital statistics.

1936 – Christmas card to Mr. and Mrs. Aron (sic) Coon in Murray, Iowa, from relatives in Moscow, Kansas. Mentions old homestead in Medford. Envelope has a 3-cent stamp.

1981 Newspaper Story, probably from the Leon Journal-Reporter, "Reflections of Decatur County." Three columns, including large photo of John Crees, grandfather of Paul Crees. Paul's wife, Inez, was a granddaughter of Anderson Burchett. Anderson is pictured in the photos mentioned above (oval grouping).

OLD picture of Marshall and Sarah Burchett.

Childhood picture of Orval Burchett and Forrest Foland (the connection between these two unknown).

OLD pictures of Orval with others.

Old picture of Wayne and his siblings, Wilda, Wanda, and Wade.

Approximately 1990, colored photo of Wade and wife Vonnie Burchett, Gayle and Wayne Burchett.

Wade left the farm to fly B-29s in WW II. Not long after the war, he took a job with Herman M. Brown and eventually formed Sta-Bilt Construction Company in Harlan, Iowa – a firm now operated by his four sons and other family members.

Hobo

During the Depression, a number of men looking for work would "borrow" a ride on the railroad for transportation. People living in towns where the trains ran were often visited by hoboes who would ask for food. Some say there was a communications network among those riding the rails - a system of marking houses where people were willing to give a handout. The family of Francis and Lucille Carns (Gayle's parents) was willing to share their homemade bread or a bowl of soup. Through the Carns' generosity, they met and became friends with Harry Beetison who reigned for a time as "King of the Hoboes."

Date Unknown - 8 x 10 photo of Harry Beetison.

Late 30's – 1940's – Four newspaper articles about the Nebraskan who was certainly a happy wanderer/poet/farmer/Supreme Ruler of Hoboes. Gayle and her siblings had fond memories of the very colorful Mr. Beetison (as their mother insisted they call him).

Marriage Records

December 21, 1911 – Certificate of Marriage of Orval Burchett and Mary Alice Coon along with a book of poems, “Wedding Chimes.”

1942 - Notice from newspaper of marriage of Gayle Carns and Wayne Burchett stating, among other things, “These are two of Murray’s highly respected young people....we are wishing for them every good thing in life...” *Gayle later recounted her embarrassment to have to carry her belongings in a box to the house where she and Wayne would live for several years. Their start as a married couple was, to say the least, a very modest beginning. The two met while playing in a summer community band in Murray. He played the trombone and she played French horn.*

School Records

1925 Perfect Attendance Certificate for Wayne Burchett.

Est. 1938 – Photos of Grand River High School students.

Wayne’s 8th Grade teacher recommended that he not attend high school, but he disagreed. He walked the 7 miles one way to Grand Rive when necessary. Superintendent Barnhouse and his family provided housing for Wayne much of the time and he and Wayne became lifelong friends.

- Wayne was senior class president. His love of basketball led to a side job as a basketball referee.

Wayne and a close friend, Robert Conwell (see Conwell Connection elsewhere in this summary), organized an Alumni group in 1960 that was still in place as of 2008. Wayne was the first president of the organization. Wayne and Gayle purchased the Conwell family farm in 1971.

Grand River Alumni Books, 1894-1960 and 1894 – 1966. Each about 30 pages with class pictures, names and addresses of grads, and pictures of school buildings.

1942 – Gayle’s Diploma of High School Graduation at Murray, Iowa

Wills/Obituaries/Eulogies

November 29, 1865 – Actual letter along with typewritten copy of correspondence from 1st Lt. Bonham, 9th Iowa Cavalry, to the parents of William Coon who died in the Civil War of “Typho Mallarial Fein’s” disease. While serving in the Union Army. The letter mentions that William Coon asked him to write the letter, and apparently William was with his older brother when he died. William was known to have enlisted when he was 15 years old.

August 1874 – Will of Josiah Coon, leaving his property to Rebecca, his wife, except for two bay horses which were left to his son Ashford.

July 15, 1916 - Obituary of Iris Evelyne Coon, sister of Alice and Emma and child of Aaron and Margaret McNeal Coon. Obituary says, “On account of the nature of the disease and the laws of the

state, the neighbors were unable to render the assistance they would, had circumstances permitted...”
Unclear what her disease was – highly contagious obviously, and may have been Scarlet Fever.

1926 – Obituary of Catherine Cooley, describing her making the trip with her parents to Iowa by team and covered wagon. Her relation to Coons or Burchetts unknown.

1926 - Funeral Card for Marshall Burchett.

1926 – Obituary of Ivory Coon whose daughters were cousins of Alice. He is listed on the sheet that was found in Aaron’s diary, both the birth in 1861 and death in 1926.

October 9, 1913 - obituary of William Lawrence, at 31 years of age. Connection to family unknown.

March 1930 – Memorial Record of services for A. R. Coon, age 77.

September 1934 – Letter mailed to A. F. Coon from J. C. Coon indicating the wishes of Aaron Coon regarding land ownership and payment of expenses. Alice and her sister Emma and brother Myron are mentioned in what appears to be distribution of property upon their father’s death.

March 18, 1935 – two obituaries for Margaret Coon, mother of Alice Coon Burchett. She was 68 when she died and had ten grandchildren.

March 18, 1935 - obituary and photo of Margaret McNeal Coon, wife of Aaron.

March 1942 – obituary for George Shields, son of Catherine Coon Shields and Joseph H.C. Shields.

August 1945 – James McNeal’s obituary.

1946 – two obituaries of Aaron F. Coon, father of Alice Coon Burchett and grandfather of Wayne.

October 11, 1946 – Watts funeral service’s Memory Book with register of friends attending service for Aaron F. Coon, age 87 (father of Alice Coon Burchett).

(no date) – obituary for Marlyn Louise Coon, infant child of Myron and Blanche Coon and granddaughter of Aaron Coon.

1953 - Orval Burchett’s Will.

February 1954 – Orval’s obituary. He died at the age of 63 after a torturous battle with cancer.

November 4, 1964 – Wanda’s obituary from Glenwood Springs, CO, newspaper. Wanda was the oldest of Orval and Alice’s four children.

1971 - Eulogy, Alice Coon Burchett.

1990 - Wayne Burchett’s Will.

1991 - Funeral Card for Wayne Burchett along with obituaries.

Wayne succumbed to dementia, probably due to Alzheimer's disease. Before his death, he had both legs amputated with complications from diabetes. These two illnesses seem to be common among the farmers in Southern Iowa. Dementia is so prevalent among farmers in Southern Iowa in Wayne's generation that researchers are exploring explanations – exposure to farm chemicals used in crop management? Wayne lived at the Clearview Care Center in Mt. Ayr, Iowa, during the last few years of his life where a number of his long-time friends, including Robert Conwell, were regular visitors. Gayle was forced to sell the family farm, owned by the family over 100 years, to pay for Wayne's care.

2008 – Gayle Burchett's obituary and funeral card.

Other

1892 – 1959 – (Packaged in a tattered brown envelope addressed to A. F. Coon with a return address of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Omaha, Nebraska)

- Quit-Claim Deed to Aaron Coon dated November 22, 1891. He apparently paid 75 cents to have the record filed in Clarke County.
- December 13, 1892 – Warranty Deed to Aaron Coon. Parcel was from people in Weld County, Colorado.
- November 18, 1902 – Warranty Deed related to sale of property to the United Brethren in Christ in Clarke County, Iowa.
- September 19, 1903 – Abstract of Title listing a \$700 mortgage on property under Aaron Coon's name (poor condition).
- February 16, 1925 – Quit Claim Deed related to property in Clarke County to A. F. Coon.
- March 6, 1916 – Referees' Deed between Aaron Coon and Wm. Taylor for a price of \$2,850, more than the appraised value.
- December 1, 1927 - Warranty Deed between Royal Union Life Insurance Company and Myron L. Coon. Tax coupon for \$60.44 enclosed in deed.
- January 15, 1931 – Warranty Deed from Aaron Coon to Myron Coon. Includes notation that “As a part of the consideration for the within conveyance, it is understood and agreed that the said Myron L. Coon shall furnish care and support to both of the grantors herein during the term of their natural lives.” *As a very young girl, Anne recalls visiting her great grandfather Coon in a bedroom in the home of Myron and Blanche Coon. He had his feet amputated and was confined to bed so he probably required around-the-clock assistance in the last year or more of his life.*
- January 26, 1959 – Warranty Deed from Alice Burchett to her brother, Myron Coon.

TO: Tanya Zanish-Belcher
FROM: Anne Barton
DATE: July 22, 2009
SUBJECT: Addendum to Burchett Collection

Here are two items that I missed in my summary:

U.S. Dept. of Interior's certified copy of the patent record related to 120 acres in Decatur County Section 70 in favor of John Crow, a Private in the Virginia Militia (Captain Osborn's Company) for his service in the War of 1812. The document is dated July 1, 1859.

Mortgage document signed by Luke and Alma Conwell (parents of Robert Conwell who is referred to throughout the Burchett materials) for property in Decatur County. I didn't check the plat, but this was apparently a part of the Conwell farm where Robert Conwell grew up and where Wayne and Gayle Burchett later farmed and lived.