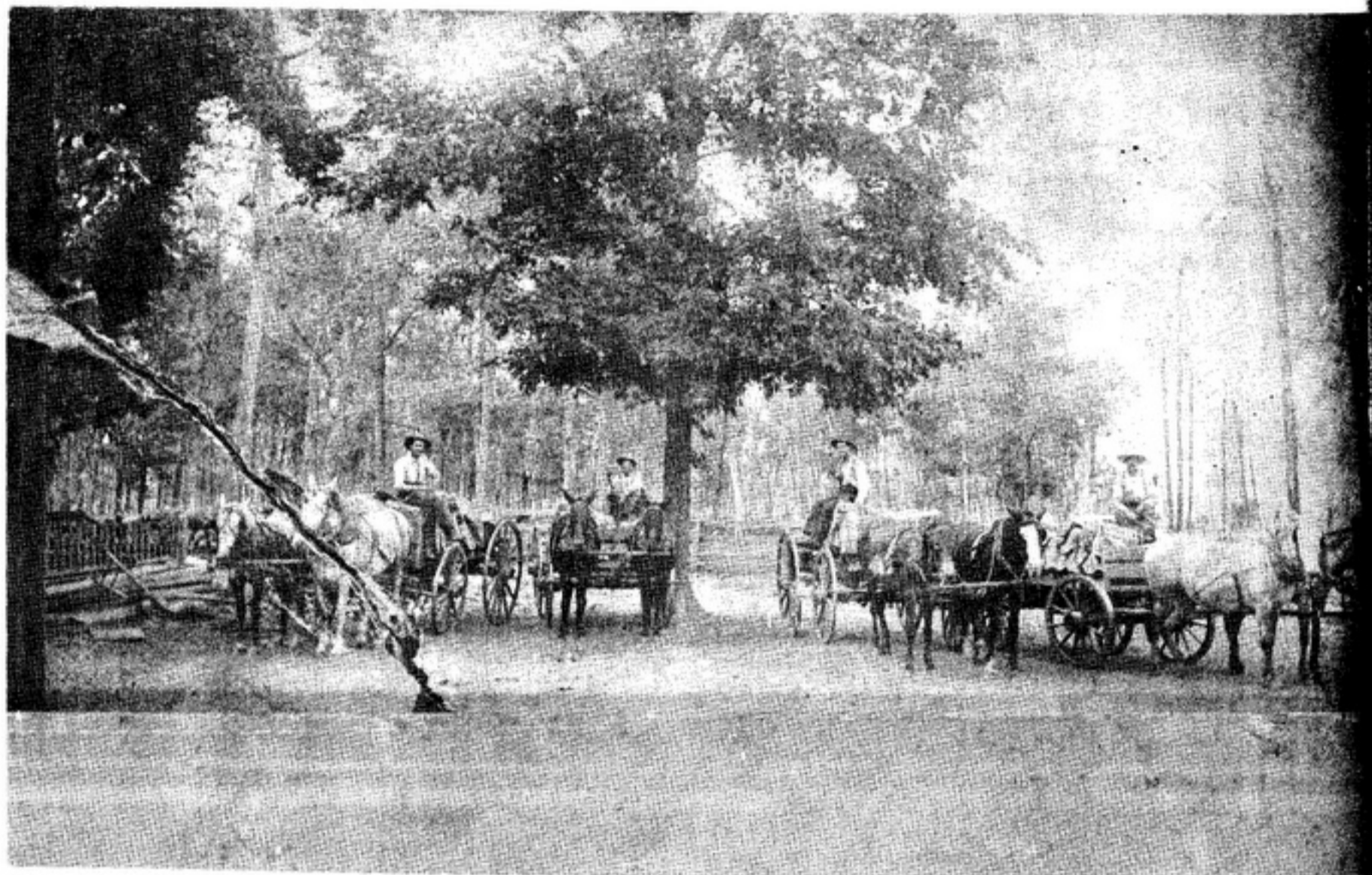


1882 - 1982 SENATH CENTENNIAL

SENATH, MISSOURI . . . 1882 - 1982



Brigance farm north of Beech Corner in 1903. Pictured are Enoch Johnson, Tom Hawkins, Jeff Bolin, Will Keen.

The Indians tell us this area was once prairie land. Trees were few, they said, and buffalo grass was as tall as a horse, marked only by animal trails to water. The Indians hunted in this land. There were few permanent Indian settlements, but the Chickasaw tribe did camp around Big Lake.

Then came the earthquakes of 1811 - 1812. This area sank three or four feet. The lowest spot in Missouri is in the St. Francis River Bottom, about four miles southwest of Cardwell. Small creeks or sloughs ran northeast to southwest; much of the land was completely covered by water in the spring. Cypress, willow and other trees and plants flourished.

Travelers crossing the Mississippi River

drove into the impenetrable swamps of Little River and would greet Grand Prairie - a sandy ridge north of Hornersville and disappearing north of Kennett - with relief. They would cross Buffalo Ditch, Pole Cat Island, Pole Cat Ditch and then they would be on HORSE ISLAND.

Horse Island is an area of Dunklin County with an elevation nine to eleven inches above the surrounding ditches and sloughs. West of Horse Island is Buffalo Island, Honey Cypress Ditch, Kennemore Ditch, the St. Francis River bottoms and Arkansas. North is Varner River, Allen Island and the St. Francis River. South is Arkansas. Names are often mispronounced or misused. Pole Cat Ditch is also called Graveyard or Sewer Ditch. The Varner River is often called Varney River.