

L. A. MILLER DIARY OF 1927

(EXCERPTED BY FRED LINDLEY)



NOTES TO READER: Mr. L. A. Miller wrote an entry in his journal for every day of the year. The dates/entries that appear below were selected and excerpted, because they reference Darrtown people, places, and events and/or portray life as it occurred during this particular year. The clarifying comments that appear in the right margin are provided on the assumption that some of Mr. Miller's terms and/or references may lose their meaning, with the passage of time. Most terms and/or references are clarified when they first appear in the collection of Mr. Miller's diaries and not addressed thereafter. Consequently, The L. A. Miller diaries are better understood, if one reads them in chronological order.

- A question mark within brackets [?] indicates that a word or phrase was illegible.
- Dots indicate that some text that preceded or followed the excerpt has been intentionally omitted.
- Content that appears in UPPER CASE font signifies commentary by the person who excerpted the diary.
- The use of "sic" within parentheses marks (sic) acknowledges a grammatical error or misspelling.

If you can offer additional clarification, please contact the Darrtown.com webmaster.

Jan. 3: ... I went to Oxford and attended stockholders' meeting of the Oxford Tel. Co. & after meeting attended to some biz.

Jan. 5: ... Andy Neanover butchered a hog this AM. I met this PM with the Stock Protection Association. About nine members present.

Jan. 8: ... Attended, Bill and I, an oyster supper given by the Pythian Sisters. Progressive Euchre, after supper.

Jan. 16: At home all day – except a trip to the barber shop for a shave this PM.

Jan. 19: ... I went up to R. Kirk Mee's and got some industrial papers sworn to. I had a good d – k [?] of Whee! Whee! Pre-Volstead dope.

Jan. 24: I went to Hamilton today and attended to some biz. for Mrs. Marguerite Lorenz. Bought 2 shirts and a union suit of underwear.

Jan. 28: ... Received some \$ from a few telephone subs. A party came in and Pd fifteen (15.00). That was unexpected.

Feb. 3: ... Jno. Phenis is cutting up the trees in block wood that we cut down yesterday around my yard "Maples." I called at Jno. Phenis' this PM and we had a game of set-back. Set Back is a game of much luck and lots of fun for both sides. The unexpected is always happening.

Comment [Office1]: Bill was Mr. Miller's grandson.

Comment [Office2]: Presumably, this is a reference to some form of alcoholic drink, because U.S. Representative Andrew J. Volstead (R-Minnesota) introduced the bill that became the 1919 law which prohibited the manufacture, transportation, and sale of beverages containing more than 0.5 percent alcohol.

Comment [Office3]: A union suit is a type of one-piece long underwear that originated as women's wear during the 19th-century United States clothing reform efforts, as an alternative to constricting garments. It soon gained popularity among men as well. The first union suit was patented in 1868.

Comment [Office4]: As reported in earlier diaries, "Set-Back" is a card card with rules similar to those of "Auction Pitch."

FOR THE NEXT TWO WEEKS, MR. MILLER COMMENTED ON THE WEATHER, COMPLETING TELEPHONE BUSINESS, INCLUDING HIS TAX REPORTS, AND CHORES AROUND THE HOUSE.

Feb. 18: ... Called at Jno. Phenis this PM. Mr. Phenis talked horses and racing, in which I am always interested. Phenis made quite a record, as a race horse driver – with no capital to back him. He developed some farm horses into winners.

Feb. 25: I went to Hamilton AM and looked after some biz. for Marguerite Lorenz, as to her tax. Also, had some dental work started by Dr. Sam Milligan. The folks came down after me this PM. Eva is improving slowly from toxemic poison & bad teeth.

Feb. 27: ... Not many people congregate in a small village on Sundays any more. The auto scatters them here and there and long distances from home. Neighbors now are miles apart. No close, local friendships, as there were 30 and 40 years ago.

Mar. 4: I got out early on Nichol line south and cut and took down 1 and ½ miles of old wire and gathered up and junked same. I feel pretty tired this PM.

Mar. 5: ... The folks took Billy to Hamilton to get a tooth filled. Mrs. Fisher helped at the Exchange this PM. I also worked some.

Mar. 8: I helped Fr. Cunningham to haul out my stable compost onto the garden this PM. We will plow it tomorrow, if nothing prevents.

Mar. 11: I went to Hamilton and got my upper plate fitted. Not a very good fit. It did not suit the dentist at all – being a difficult job due to natural teeth here and there, betwixt and between the artificial.

Mar. 22: ... We reduced the last of our maple limbs to kindling this PM. O.E. Kumler was down to estimate the wiring of K. of P. Hall. I took him over the rooms.

Mar. 23: ... We got George Francis to shoot a telephone hole for us. He did a good job. We got considerable clearance and a number of poles set.

Mar. 24: ... I cleared the right of way up to Herron farms and now as soon as we get the poles set, we will be able to string wire. We have about ½ of the poles in now. Mr. Francis came down this AM and borrowed some dynamite and 4 caps...

Mar. 29: ... Arnold's birthday. 40 years age this AM.

Apr. 8: ... We worked ½ day this week on Herron line and are now about ready to string in wire, if the weather would only settle.

Apr. 17: ... Mr. and Mrs. Fowles called this PM and took supper with us. A pleasant

Comment [Office5]: Here is a fine example of "unintended consequences." The development and proliferation of the automobile both liberated and separated community members.

Comment [Office6]: Presumably, this refers to the Nichols Road area – south of Darrtown.

Comment [Office7]: At this point in time, Mr. Miller was 64 years old.

evening with pleasant people.

Apr. 26: I left for Columbus, O. from Collinsville, O. at 1:45 bus to Eaton, O. where I met Mr. Gale and Mr. Morgan a few minutes. Took traction to Columbus, where I arrived 7:45 PM. Put up at the Southern Hotel – room \$1.50 per day.

Comment [Office8]: Railway electric traction describes the various types of locomotive and multiple units that are used on electrification systems around the world.

May 4: ... K of P met this PM. A good meeting. Lodge voted to have electric current put in and ordered the trustees to contract for same and proceed to have Hall wired.

May 9: I went to Cinti. on biz and had a fair success in the things I had in hand. Home, by bus, at 4 PM.

Comment [Office9]: Does this mean that a bus line served the village of Darrrtown in 1927? Further research needed.

May 13: ... We are transferring No. 10 line to U Gas & E. Co's poles from Jno. Miller's to Darrrtown.

May 16: ... The UG & E men are busy getting poles up and wire stretched.

Comment [Office10]: Presumably, this refers to the Union or United "Gas and Electric" company. It appears that electricity is arriving in Darrrtown and vicinity. Further research needed.

May 17: Worked on No. 10 line. Have it all up except lower end from McVickers's stone house to Pete Baker road. There being no Subs on the lower end, we have not been in any hurry in transferring the wire to U.G.E. poles. But, will do so soon.

Comment [Office11]: The McVicker family built and owned the stone house that still (2017) stands on the east side of St. Rt. 177, just north of the Nichols Road intersection.

May 20: ... Charles Lindbergh left New York at 6:51 AM in a monoplane for Paris – a Wright engine. He went alone. We hope he makes it. Sighted off Newfoundland this PM.

Comment [Office12]: Presumably, this is an abbreviation for "Subscribers" – persons who subscribed to the telephone service.

May 21: ... The UG & E are poling the town & putting up wire. I have been doing all kinds of work. Taking down poles and gathering up old wire and etc. Lindbergh reached Paris at 4 PM. 33 and ½ hours non-stop. The time at Paris was 10:21 PM. The world has gone wild over the event.

Comment [Office13]: A world event...solo flight over the Atlantic Ocean. Imagine, 33.5 hours, alone in a single engine plane. A commercial flight in 2017 from NYC to Paris takes about 6.5 hours.

May 28: ... We learned of the death of Mrs. Metta Miller Seward-Rue. One of my remaining cousins on my father's side. To be buried at West Chester, O. Services for Ohio friends at Hamilton. She died at her daughter's, at Pittsburgh, Pa.

May 29: ... Will go to Hamilton tomorrow to attend obsequies of my late cousin, Metta Miller-Seward-Rue. She had married twice. She had no children by Major Rue. Major Rue was a noted cavalry leader of the Civil War and captured Gen. Morgan and his last 500 troops in eastern Ohio.

May 30: I went to Hamilton, O. this AM and attended the obsequies of my good cousin, Mrs. Metta Miller-Seward-Rue. Harley and Mamie, her two children by Obe Seward, were there, of course. Also, her only surviving brother, Ross Miller, of Terre Haute, Ind. Ross is 74 yrs. old.

June 3: ... We made the trip to Columbus, O. with Mr. Shortle, Ben Beckly, Geo. Nichol & Robbins. Got knocked out before the Public U. Comm – on error. But, threw our forces to other parties in a joint suit for a franchise to run a bus from Hamilton, O. to

Oxford, O. The P.U.C. allowed a certificate to the corporations of each afore named cities – only.

June 5: ... Harry Miller and wife and his mother and Ross Miller of Terre Haute called. I had thought that Ross had gone home. I was glad he had not. I had a good talk with him. His bro. John died last Oct. 1926. Cancer of the stomach. He thinks of going to Arizona to end his days. A fine man, a first cousin of mine. 1st cousins are getting scarce.

June 11: Lindbergh, Chas. arrived in Wash. D.C. A great celebration of Army, Navy, and Air Service. He was entertained by Pres. Coolidge and wife. His mother, also. The world has gone wild over this remarkable youth who, alone and unexpected, crossed on a non-stop flight from New York City to Paris, France in (33 and ½ hrs) thirty-three and one-half hrs. He had to keep awake. To sleep meant death.

June 14: ... Arnold and O.E. Kumler commenced to wire the house for electric current.

June 18: ... Big time in St. Louis, Mo. today in welcoming home their hero, Charles Lindbergh. 25 yrs. of age – did what others failed to do. Six had already lost their lives in attempting the N.Y. to Paris non-stop in an airplane. He went alone.

June 20: I went to Hamilton today on a few errands. My daughter-in-law drove the car. ... I met one of my first cousins, Weller [or Wells?] Ayers of Mason, Ohio. I had not seen him for quite a long time. He had so aged and wrinkled that I would not have known him. He stopped me on the street.

June 21: ... We have some 10 poles near Exchange to haul in and then we shall have finished with an old eyesore of a line that the State of O. has been holding us up for six years on account of paved road. We gave the U.G & E. our right of way and use their poles for our circuits, which saves us a good bunch of money. As the state is now widening the road and we would have had to build a new line had we not gotten the use of the U.G & E. Our lines are now in good shape, except for a little work in spots.

June 29: ... I had a number of biz. callers – especially on wiring and fixtures of K. of P. Hall. We have a number of bidders and it is quite a job to get them straightened out.

July 8: ... I am getting bids in shape on Hall. K of P for wiring. Elmer B. Ayers came in this PM and I have them all straightened out on what they are to do and no misunderstanding should arise.

July 9: ... Dance at K of P Hall this PM. Rec'd \$4 as Sec. Hall rent from Jesse Francis.

July 10: ... I watched a ball game at the school grounds this PM. Local talent. Darrtown vs. Hamilton. 18-3 favor of Darrtown.

July 22: ... Slack times with Mfg's has (sic) struck the US this spring and summer. It has

been coming since 1920, when it hit the farmer and small town folk.

Aug. 1: At home. Electric lights are giving good satisfaction and bill to date was \$1.92, less 10% for cash = \$1.73.

Aug. 2: ... Help is scarce and the cities are crowded with the unemployed and under-fed.

Comment [Office14]: Mr. Miller's observations (today and earlier, on July 22) serve as "foreshadowing" – since the Great (financial) Depression will hit in two years – 1929.

Aug. 7: I attended ball game in last half. A very good scrub game. No gate fees – passed the hat. Small crowd. Collection, I presume was not burdensome to the collector. The general public craze on ball has decidedly subsided.

Aug. 9: ... I went to Hamilton, O. with Fred Grothaus and attended to sending out my bond for Notary Public renewal commission.

Comment [Office15]: This reaffirms that Mr. Miller was a legal notary public, as such work was reported by Mr. Miller, in previous diaries.

Aug. 10: ...Men are hauling broken stone to put coat of Tar on Hamilton & Richmond Pike, from Four Mile hill to Joe Davis crossroads, 1 mile north of Darrtown.

Aug. 24: ... I don't have much chance to get anywhere. I don't drive an auto good enough to go where traffic is heavy and we have so many wild men and women drivers on the highways.

Sept. 2: Arnold and I went up to Swamp Road and finished running wire and installed phone at Cecil Keller's.

Comment [Office16]: At this point, the location of "Swamp" Road is unknown. Perhaps it is another of Mr. Miller's nicknames.

Sept. 13: Arnold and I helped Adolph Geiser dig holes and set poles on new line into his house. We got poles set. We will stretch new wire tomorrow.

Sept. 18: I took a walk down the lower stretch of Darr's Run this AM. The late high water has done much damage... I also took a bath in a clear pool, by a sycamore tree on Darr's Run.

Sept. 21: ... Arnold was unexpectedly called away on business – having sold a radio to John Schwab, he went and installed it. People are very much excited about the Dempsey & Tunney prize fight that comes off in Chicago, Ill. tomorrow night.

Sept. 22: ... Well, the fight took place and lasted the limit of rounds allowed by Illinois law. ... The fight was awarded to Tunney by the referees.

THE MAJORITY OF MR. MILLER'S ENTRIES DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS OF SEPTEMBER DESCRIBED THE PROCESS OF SHINGLING THE MILLER HOME AND TELEPHONE COMPANY OFFICE.

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THE MAJORITY OF MR. MILLER'S ENTRIES DURING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

RELATED TO HIS EFFORTS TO COMBINE THE TELEPHONE LINES WITH THE POLES PUT IN PLACE BY THE UNITED GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY, MANAGING HIRED WORKERS, THE WEATHER, AND HARVESTING HIS GARDEN.

Oct. 29: ... I attended a football game at Oxford, O. this PM. Miami vs. Wittenberg. Score 0-25. A scald for Old Miami.

Nov. 3: ... I seem to have to work every minute of the day. And have not been in bed, before 11 PM for 40 years, unless sick. More often 12 midnight, when I retire and am now getting up at daybreak to attend switchboard and etc. and get my own and Eva's breakfast.

Nov. 12: At home all day, as is the usual thing on Sunday, except a call at the barber's and a few minutes at Jno. Phenis' this PM. Eva is getting along as well as we can expect – but, she worries at the slowness of her improvement.

Nov. 18: At home – that is where I seem to always be – since the auto came to town. No place for a horse on the roads.

Nov. 19: I went to Hamilton on the bus and transacted some business. I got back on the 4:38 PM, in time to do chores.

Comment [Office17]: This relates to the question raised in the May 9th notation above. It appears that the answer is "yes." There was a bus line/service between Darrtown and Hamilton in 1927.

Dec. 6: ... K of P trustees met this PM at my office and did quite a lot of biz that had been hanging over for some time. Bal. in Gen. fund = \$20.07; Sick fund = \$9.00

Dec. 15: 8° to 0° in places. No one out much today, except to feed stock and carry in fuel. A strong wind from West.

Dec. 16: ... I want to go to the City of Hamilton tomorrow to attend to some K of P taxes...Grandson, W. M. Miller is going with me. A pair of high top shoes is in prospect. He is now 10 years old.

Dec. 17: Grandson and I took bus to Hamilton, O. As soon as a pair of high-top shoes were secured, he was ready to take the next bus back home. I put him on the 12:35 PM. I attended to some business this PM and then remained for K of P banquet ... Home at 11:35 PM. Bill had landed O.K.

Dec. 31: ... The old year is going out with a hum and a buzz. ...
Bye, bye old year,
With your joys and sorrows,
Of which there have been many.
Famous and in-famous joys and horrors.
Dated, Nineteen Twenty Seven.

