

# 100 Years Ago

The average U. S. worker earned less than \$15.00 a week, putting in from 54 to 60 hours at his job. There was wide irregularity of employment with a national average of 5.9% unemployment.

The U. S. population reached 92 million, including 13.5 million citizens that were foreign-born. A little more than half of the population lived in cities and towns of 2,500. Fifty years earlier (1860), 79% of the population was rural. St. Louis was the fourth largest city, behind New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Los Angeles was not in the top ten.

The Boy Scouts of America was organized, following the original Boy Scouts founded by Robert S. S. Baden-Powell in England.

Evinrude Motors was founded in Milwaukee, Wisconsin by 33 year old Ole Evinrude. In 1903 he helped develop the Harley Davidson motorcycle carburetor and in 1907 Evinrude designed a 1½ horsepower outboard motor. It was the first successful engine



Blanche Scott, a student of pioneer aviator Glenn Curtiss, was the first woman in the U. S. to fly solo at Hammondsport, N. Y. Photo from Library of Congress.

for marine use. Joyce Clyde Hall, age 18, and his brother started Hallmark as a card jobbing company in Kansas City and began by distributing greeting cards. After buying their own printing plant in 1916, the company became the world's largest maker of greeting cards.

The United States reached 1,000 miles of concrete roadway. (None of these were in Pulaski

County.) There were only 144 miles of pavement in 1900.

It was quite a year of firsts in aviation. Glen M. Curtiss flew from Albany, New York to New York City in 150 minutes to break the long-distance speed record. He won a \$10,000 prize put up by Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* newspaper. The year saw many aviation records set or broken. Other aviation firsts:

- International air meet in U.S. held in Los Angeles;
- Seaplane takes off from water at Martinique, France;
- Night air flight by Claude Grahame-White in England;
- Test flight of a twin-engined airplane in France;
- Two aircraft collision in Milan, Italy;
- Blanche Scott became first woman to solo in airplane in U. S.;
- Airplane flight from deck of a ship, Norfolk, Va.

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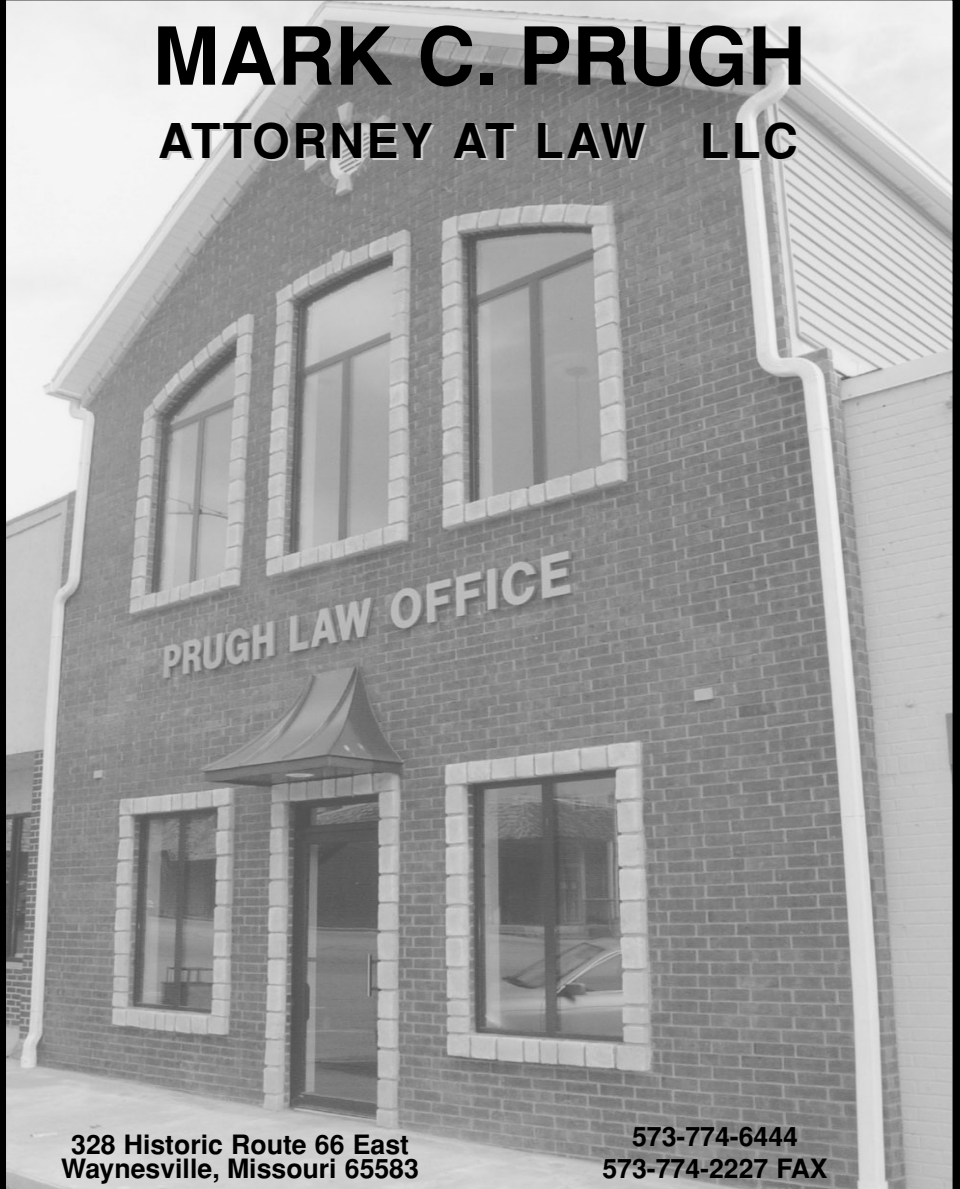


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Certainly the biggest astronomical event was the periodic appearance of Halley's Comet. The comet's elliptical orbit brings it into view from Earth every 75-76 years. Its first recorded appearance was in 240 B.C. but astronomers believe it existed for thousands of years before that. The 1910 visit was the first time that the comet was photographically recorded.

In 1705 Edmond Halley, a friend of Isaac Newton, applied Newton's newly formulated laws of gravity and motion and predicted the comet's return in 1758. The comet was last seen in 1682. Halley did not live to see the proof of his calculations. He died in 1742 but his name is uttered countless times at least every 76 years.

The flyby in 1910 was a relatively close one in astronomical terms. The Earth passed through the tail of the comet. This brought a dire prediction from at

least one astronomer that its deadly gases would annihilate every living thing on Earth. That led to frenzied and short-lived hawking of gas masks and "Comet Pills." Although that proved to be false, there may have been one casualty of the comet's return.

Missouri native son Mark



Halley's Comet "posed" for photographers for the first time in 1910. The still relatively long exposure time for photographic plates of the period account for the streaking of the stars. Library of Congress.

Twain wrote in his 1909 autobiography, "I came in with Halley's Comet in 1835. It is coming again next year, and I expect to go out with it. It will be the greatest disappointment of my life if I don't go out with Halley's Comet. The Almighty has said, no doubt: 'Now here are these two unaccountable freaks; they

came in together, they must go out together."

Twain was not disappointed. He died on April 21, 1910, a day after the comet's perihelion.

NASA was in space for the 1986 appearance. Multiple spacecrafts and probes verified that the comet's 19 mile long potato-shaped nucleus is mostly ice with a dark black crust. It will return in 2062.

Died in 1910

- Elizabeth Blackwell, first woman doctor;
- Florence Nightingale, nurse;
- Mark Twain, writer/humorist.

Born in 1910

- Joy Adamson, author of **Born Free**;
- Jacques Cousteau, oceanographer;
- Dizzy Dean, pitcher for St. Louis Cardinals;
- Bonnie Parker, of Bonnie and Clyde criminal team;
- Mother Theresa, nun.

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