

TILLEY TREASURE: A DREAM COME TRUE

"I've always wanted to do a book and in a sense **The Tilley Treasure** is a dream come true." J.B. King of Waynesville says of his recently published book, **The Tilley Treasure**.

King's book is a dream come true. After a year of writing, editing, and just generally putting things together, King came out with a 184-page book on Pulaski County history.

The Tilley Treasure centers around Pulaski County history during the Civil War period. It also involves, as the title implies, the story of the Tilley family and a treasure buried long ago.

"The documented history of the Tilley family that I was able to locate serves as a continuing saga to hold the book together. For without the Tilley family or the violence of the Civil War we would not have the story of buried treasure," King says.

His research for the book actually began back in 1968. King says he maintains a file at his house of everything that interests him. Most of the information for his book came from careful study of dozens of books on Missouri history, combined with extensive research in the National Archive files in Washington, D.C.

The Tilley Treasure began materializing after King heard a talk by Bob Priddy of the Missouri Network.

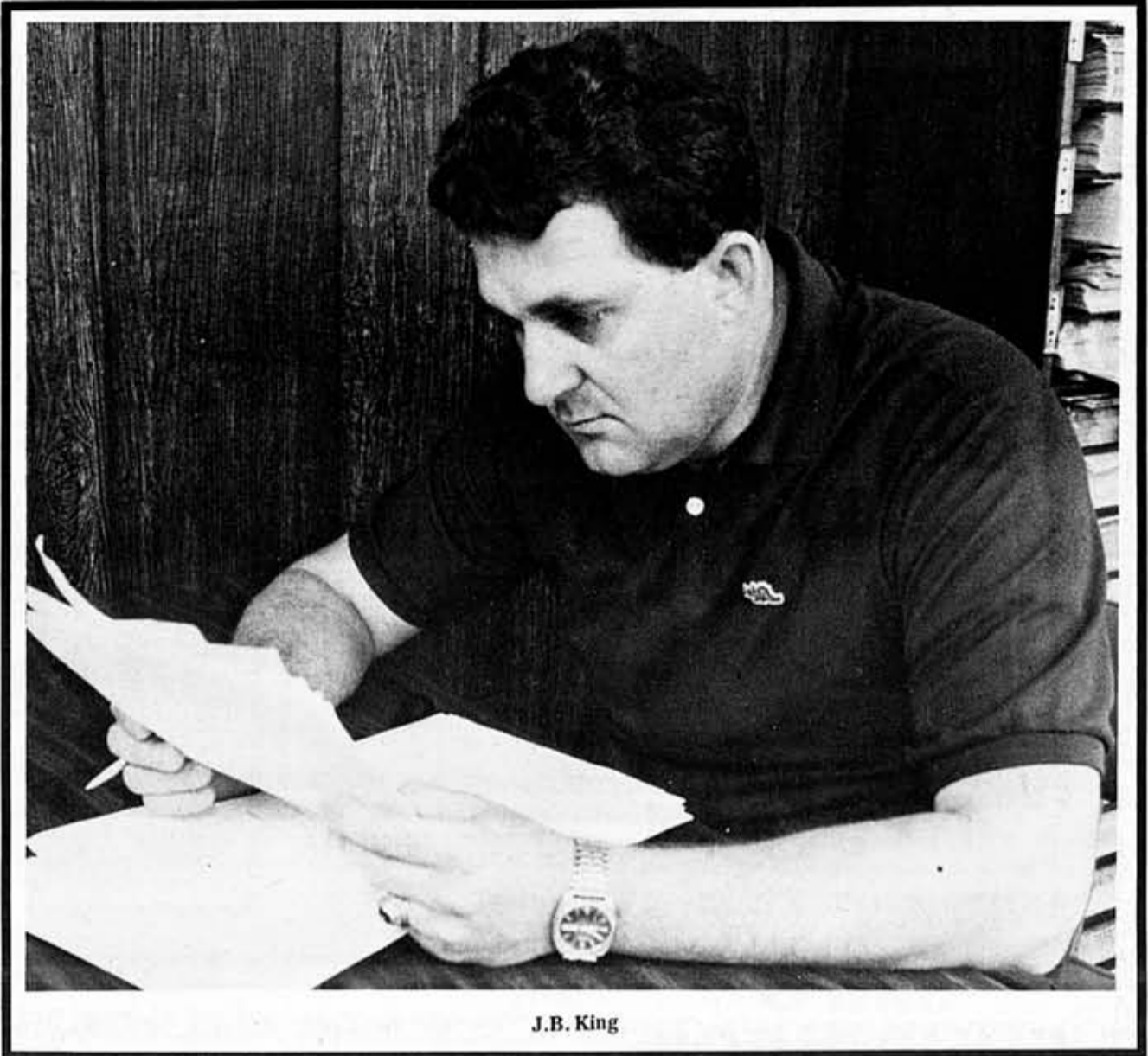
Priddy challenged members of the Pulaski County Historical Society to preserve Missouri history.

"When I listened to Bob Priddy, I realized the amount of material I had on hand was too much for magazine and newspaper form. And since I had always wanted to do a book, the time had arrived. That night I made a personal commitment to produce a book," the author said.

King says he went into high gear shortly thereafter. Once the project was underway he had to stop and fill in some gaps with more research, but he said the flow of the story was easy to maintain.

The Waynesville resident says it took approximately five-and-a-half months to actually write the book. He said the rewriting and editing took another four months. King says the actual editing continued until the book was handed to the publisher.

In his book, King talks quite extensively about a prisoner of war massacre that occurred in the area. "I've read extensively in history of Pulaski County and I had never heard a reference to this shooting incident. I believe the publication in this book and the subsequent investigation is the first time its been brought to light," King said.



J.B. King

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TREASURE (CONTINUED)

Frequently mentioned in *The Tilley Treasure* is the California House located west of Waynesville. King says, "It appears from what I can determine, the area around Colley Hollow and the California House was probably one of the largest population centers at that time. The stagecoach line followed St. Louis to Springfield road and that made it an important stop."

Batesville, Arkansas, also appears frequently in the book. King says the city was quite important to the rebel cause. "It appears Batesville was quite important as a rebel center in northern Arkansas. The Tilley family had a regular series of contacts between citizens of Batesville and people here."

King says readers will find a large number of contacts and trips to Batesville, Arkansas, in the book. The author said from reading official records it appears that some Confederates from the Pulaski County area transported horses and other materials of war to Batesville and handed them over to Confederate units around Batesville.

Another interesting chapter in the book deals with the trial of Wilson Leroy Tilley, Wilson Tilley's son.

King says, "In many of the history references about Pulaski County you will see a reference to the fact that

Wilson Tilley's son, Leroy, was 'suspected of being a bushwacker'. In the book, we have printed the record of Wilson Leroy Tilley's trial in 1865."

"Everyone is entitled to their own opinion but I personally cannot help but admire Leroy Tilley as a man who gave everything he had to the Southern cause. His only problem is that the South lost and the winners make the rules," King said.

The Tilley family has a large number of descendants in the Pulaski County area. King says besides people with the name of Tilley there are additional family lines such as Morgan, Pippin, Bradford, Hobbs, Christison and probably others.

"So far, I'm quite pleased

with the results," King said referring to his book. "There has been a steady demand."

And if that demand continues and there is enough support, King says he will write others. "Considering the amount of work, if there is not a demand for history books of this type, then I have no intention of doing that much work again."

"In my author's forward I emphasized the fact that *The Tilley Treasure* is not intended to be a complete history of the Civil War in Missouri nor the Tilley family. My intention of producing the book was to entertain people with the enjoyment of local history. In one sense of the word, I am simply acting as a storyteller," King said.

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