



Iberia's First Football Game~

By Gary Knehans

One of the first, if not the first, organized football games ever played in Iberia (and perhaps in Miller County) took place during the late autumn of 1901. The boys of the Iberia Academy were eager to test their newly acquired gridiron skills against some outside competition.

"Some of the boys are getting quite skilled in stonemasonry as well as football," reported the school newspaper, *The Academy Student*, on January 1st of the preceding year.

And so it was decided that an invitation would be sent to the Missouri School of Mines to schedule a game in Iberia on a Saturday in late November. The invitation was accepted. And, to bolster the Academy team's ability to be more competitive against the much larger school, a coach was imported from Rolla to train the boys of the Academy.

Word of the game spread like wildfire throughout Miller and surrounding counties. On the day of the game, a huge crowd of spectators engulfed Iberia to

watch the contest. Organizers said the event attracted the largest crowd ever to attend a sporting event in Miller County. Undoubtedly this was the first football game most of the spectators had ever seen.

But there was little for the many Academy fans to cheer, as the hometown boys were overwhelmed by their stronger, more experienced opponents. The Iberia Impetus judiciously avoided reporting the final score in the game.

"The boys of Iberia Academy cannot, in words, express their deep gratitude and love for Mr. Schaberg, our coach from Rolla," the Impetus stated. "Although he was with us only a week, he made a friend of every boy in the Academy, and saved us from an overwhelming defeat Saturday. Although it was bad enough, it would have been worse if it had not been for his hard week's work of training us. Mr. Schaberg is a gentleman in every sense of the word; and no matter what his lot may be, we wish him success in all his honest efforts."



Two of Iberia Academy's earliest football players, John Judy and Phillip Judy, proudly posed in their uniforms most likely in 1904 or a bit earlier. Phillip graduated from the Academy in 1905 and John followed him two years later. Photo courtesy of Jim Eads.



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IBERIA
October 1901

Iberia is the coming place,
Don't you ever doubt it,
And we wear a happy face,
Thinking much about it.
Do not worry 'bout her "biz",--
Watch her rapid movement;
Everywhere you find she is
Making some improvement;
And the tourist passing through
Comments nicely on us, too.

What's the use to fret and swear?
Every blessed minute
Beat our breasts in black despair,
Thinking we're not in it;
The Almighty knows we are
And that is sufficient,
We are beating others far
'Cause we are efficient.



A couple of Iberia boys, Frank Ferguson and John Judy, illustrated what sharply dressed young men wore around 1905 in these parts. Photo courtesy of Jim Eads.



Young Iberia ladies dressed in their Sunday finest around 1907 include front, left to right, Lennie Howard, May Sherrier and Effie Topping; and back, left to right, Lou Bond, Nora Topping and Myrtle Irwin. Bond and Irwin graduated from Iberia Academy in 1909. Their married names became Lou Eads and Myrtle Trippe. Photo courtesy of Jim Eads.



J. A. 'Alf' Eads, the founder of Eads Ford, Iberia, had a passion for airplanes as well. Here he is posing in front of his red Stinson airplane. Photo courtesy of Jim Eads of Iberia.



Young Ford Eads sat at the steering wheel of a new Ford Tractor while others posed around it for this photograph taken sometime prior to 1916 in front of Eads Ford in Iberia. The men in the picture are Happy Lovell, Emery Robertson, Everett Wilson, Luther Dickerson, Everett Malmberg, Gerald Gardner, Clarence Driver, and on the bench, Clint Condra and Ray Casey. Photo courtesy of Jim Eads.