

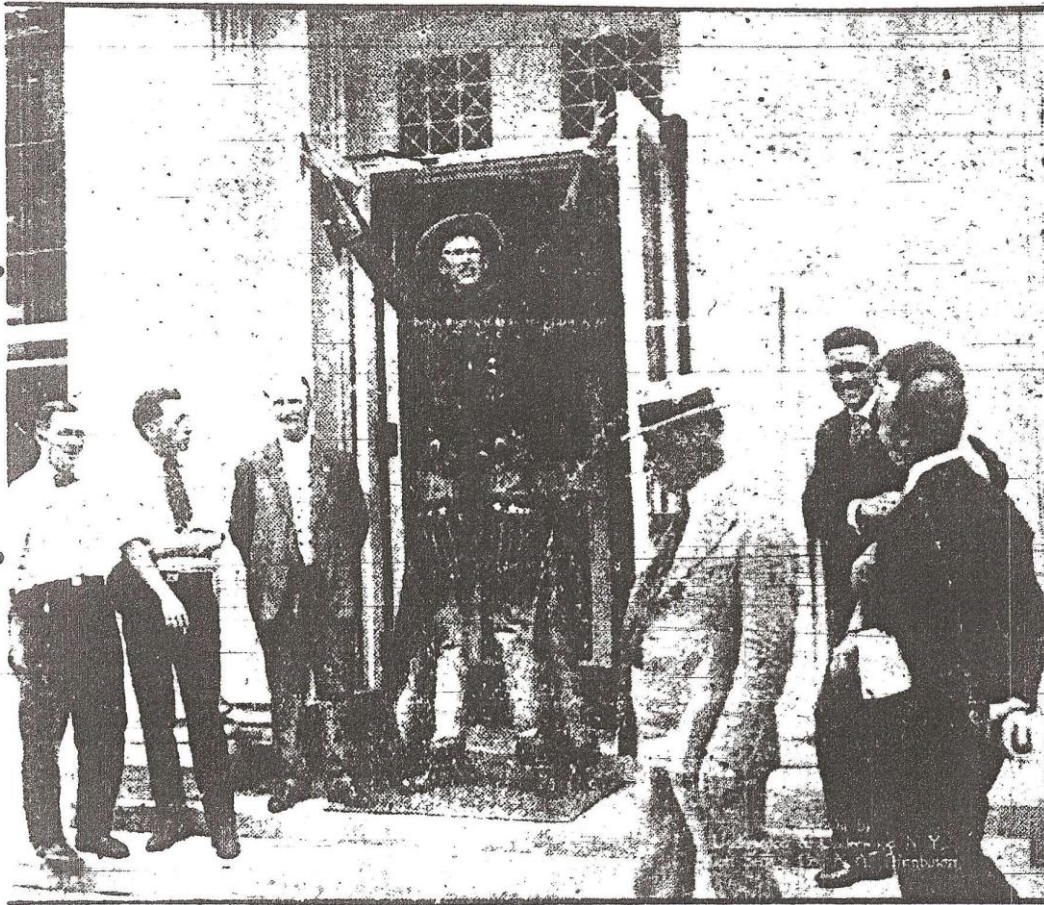
UNUSUAL VISITORS TO JEFFERSON COUNTY

MUMMY IN THE WINDOW

When the British controlled Egypt, they brought thousands of mummified bodies to England for display. Some of the bodies were even used as fuel for the early locomotives. The bodies were considered oddities rather than human remains to be respected, or at least to be used for scientific research. One mummy was brought to Mt. Vernon. The *Register* of February 3, 1896, stated: "An Egyptian mummy is on exhibit in Ward's show window on Columbus block." (Ward's business became the Mammoth Department Store in 1909.)

TALL TEXAN

PLAZA TOMORROW **MATINEE & NIGHT**



THE WORLD'S TALLEST MAN THE FAMOUS TOM THUMB MIDGETS

The January 31, 1922, *Register News* had a story titled "Young Texas Giant Makes Great Hit." At 7 feet, 6 inches in height, and appearing much taller because of his boots and cowboy hat, R. E. Madison may have been the tallest person ever in Mt. Vernon.

Madison was the owner of a show company featuring himself, animal acts, and two midg-ets. His appearance on the square brought great attention. The *Register News* story said: "Crowds followed Mr. Madison about the streets and he was an object of great interest to all classes..." The February 8, 1922, *Register News* had an ad for a show at the Plaza with "The World's Tallest Man," apparently Madison.

WHALE OF A TALE

Whales along with other large, unusual, or exotic animals have often been used in stories or money-making exhibits. But it took the development of railroads to bring such a large creature to Mt. Vernon.

The first known whale exhibit in Jefferson County took place in 1896. The November 17, 1896, *Register* stated that a "monster whale" in a 70 foot railroad car would be at Breckenridge Street near the car shops. The second time a whale was brought here was September 3 and 4, 1930, when the "famous San Clementi whale" was on exhibit at the L. & N. on South 10th Street. The next exhibit came on May 15, 1937, when a "Mammoth Marine Hippodrome" on a railroad car came to the Southern depot.