Pat Campbell Family

(builder of the Fromme-Birney Round Barn)

William D. “Pat” Campbell, son of William Campbell III, was born in Brown County, Indiana in 1874. In 1906 he came to Mullinville, Kansas after homesteading 160 acres on the “Cherokee Strip” in the Oklahoma Panhandle near Keyes, Oklahoma. A factory cabinet maker by trade, he was advised to move to the Plains area to improve an existing lung condition.

The homestead life in that area was tough and when the family came to Mullinville they were nearly broke. The only son, William Campbell V, “Little Pat”, along with his sister, Helen (mother of Henry W. Fromme of Bucklin) brought the family team and wagon along with what belongings they could carry. Mary and the two younger girls, Marie and Ruth, came to Mullinville by train.

The senior Campbell was one of the better known cabinet makers of that time and also contracted and built many fine homes and buildings throughout this area along with his son, William Campbell V. Many of these old structures still stand in excellent condition -- a tribute to their fine workmanship. Included is the present Mullinville bank building, round barn, Mullinville High School and two homes built for their respective families.

The round barn was placed on the National Register for Historic Places in 1987 and was cited for it’s unique architecture. In the National Register nomination, it was stated that the barn was built during the height of round and polygonal barn construction in the Midwest. Although a specific design source cannot be identified, it is believed that Pat Campbell was influenced by agricultural and architectural journals which published articles and specifications on these barn types from the 1890’s to 1920’s.

The senior Campbell served for many years on the Mullinville City Council. He passed away on July 4, 1946 at age 72.

“Little Pat” carried on the tradition of homebuilding and cabinet making. In 1923 he married Josephine Mills, a Mullinville school teacher, the youngest of 3 daughters of William Henry and Lucretia Mills of Bucklin, Kansas.

Daughter, Helen Campbell married Edward W. Fromme, eldest son of Henry W. and Mary Fromme, early pioneers of Kiowa County. Ed Fromme became a prominent farmer south of Mullinville. His farm was located one mile east of the round barn.

“Little Pat” was a man of integrity and honesty, he was instrumental in “snapping the backbone” of the local Ku-Klux-Klan. He and his brother-in-law, Edward Fromme, asked Ed’s brother, Mortz to join the Klan. Mortz, having no Catholic relatives or ties to the Catholic religion, easily gained membership and thus obtained the names of the local “Klan” members. As previously planned, the names were turned over to state government authorities. The threat of the state militia ended the disgraceful existence of the “Klan” which caused a serious threat to the liberty and freedom of religion in this area.

(From Kiowa County History Book, 1979.)