

Revisions
11/19/87 ✓

some errors
SAMUEL PERRY DINSMOOR
BIOGRAPHY

1843 March 8. Samuel Perry Dinsmoor was born near Coolville, Ohio. A Fundamentalist and a Populist, he was 9th generation English, 7th generation Scottish, 6th generation Irish and 4th generation French. In 1927 Dinsmoor wrote that he had a record of 23 of his ancestors whose average lifespan was over 76 years old; one had died under 50, but another had lived to 100.

Farmed.

1862 Enlisted in the Union Army. Spent three years in Company B, 11th Ohio Infantry. Fought in 18 major battles. Saw the battle of Gettysburg; saw the capture of Lee.

1866 Moved to Illinois and taught school for five terms (years)

1870 Married first wife, Frances A. ^{Barlow} ~~(Barlow)~~ Journey, on horseback, near Grafton. They had four sons and one daughter.

1888 Moved to Russell County, Kansas, settling on a farm near Lucas.

1890 Moved to Nebraska

1891 Returned to Russell County, Kansas

1905 (or 6) Retired from farming and moved to Lucas where he purchased a quarter of a block to build a home. (at the junction of Kansas State highways K-18 and K232)

1906 (or 7) Began building a stone log cabin, of native limestone (from a quarry near Lucas) cement, steel, wire, glass and various woods. Local stonemasons employed by Dinsmoor included Steve Truitt. Nicholas Albert Broska, a stonemason, helped Dinsmoor (then 64 years old) cut the stone logs for the cabin Home, which was finished in September 1907. It had 11 rooms, a bathroom, closet and hallways. The interior was finished in California redwood, pine and oak. Concrete was used for the porches, steps and decorative architecture. Dinsmoor spent the next 22 years building the Garden of Eden, a pyramidal mausoleum (40' high of native limestone) and constructing 150 concrete sculptures. The sculpture were made of concrete molded wet over chicken wire. Dinsmoor built his own generating plant for electricity. Other structures included a coal house and ash pit, a badger, owl and pigeon roost (6'sq); a coyote and eagle roost (10'sq); a cement wash house 10x12x8'; 15 cement trees 30x40'high; 14

trees 8-20' tall. There were more than 300 running feet of concrete walkways 3-6' wide.

1907-17 Dinsmoor and his first wife lived in the cabin.

1908-33 The Garden of Eden was a popular tourist attraction. The Garden contained sculptures of Adam and Eve (Dinsmoor used himself as a model for Adam) and depicted episodes from the Book of Genesis describing the downfall of man as described by Moses with Dinsmoor's own interpretations and thoughts. Other sculptures included Union soldiers and 'grafters' such as lawyers, doctors, preachers and bankers.

1909 January. Dinsmoor had the words "Cabin Home" put on the Rock Log.

1912 Dinsmoor built a 4'x7' concrete flag on a ball bearing, which was placed on a concrete tree.

1916 Dinsmoor built his concrete coffin and mausoleum.

1917 In the spring, Dinsmoor's first wife, Frances died at 78 years old. They had been married for 47 years.

1924 Spring. Dinsmoor (81) married his second wife, (who had been his housekeeper) Emilie Brozek (born January 17th, 1904 in Podfusky Czechoslovakia).

1927 Dinsmoor wrote a pamphlet, in which he stated that as of July 1, 1927, he had used 2,273 sacks of cement (more than 113 tons). Over 1,000 visitors had eaten their 'grub' in the dining hall he had constructed for their use.

Dinsmoor also stated that he had a will saying that no one but his widow, descendants and their husbands and wives would be able to go and see him in the mausoleum for less than \$1.00, so that someone could be paid to look after the place.

1928 Dinsmoor's second wife had a son (he was 85 years old).

1929 Due to failing health and eyesight, Dinsmoor was forced to stop work on the Garden.

July 21,
1932

Dinsmoor died at 89. He was placed in a coffin with a glass top which was put on top in the mausoleum on top of his first wife's.

During the Depression the stone log house, statues and mausoleum containing Dinsmoor's remains were sold for taxes.

1967 (or 68) The property was bought by J. Rex Duwe, president of the local bank, who wanted to re-open the Gardens with Wayne E. Naegele who operated a hardware store in Lucas. They cleaned and restored the property and closed the apartments which the log cabin had been turned into.

1977 April 28th, The Garden of Eden was entered on the National register of Historic Places.

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✓ Barth, Jack et al Roadside America.

see also references in National Historic Register Nomination form