

# Monarch Leader In Hardware Business

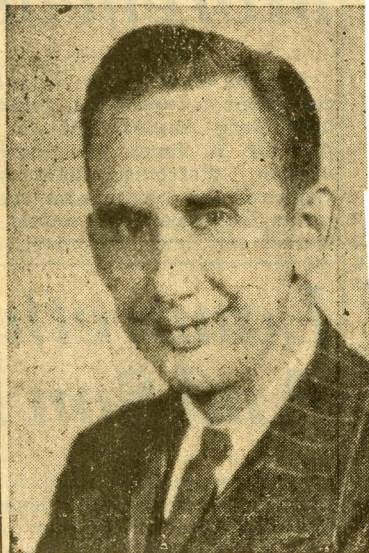


**Glennis Fraley**

A complete retail hardware company is the Monarch Supply Store located on Main Street in downtown Morehead.

The business, which will be 11 years old this fall, handles saw mill supplies, farming tools and machinery, hunting and fishing supplies, electrical appliances, building materials, plumbing and heating supplies, seed and fertilizer and housewares. In addition there is a complete mechanic shop in the rear of the store, in which all types of motors and equipment are serviced.

Owners of the business, both



**Roy Cornette**

of whom work in the store, are Roy Cornette and Glennis Fraley. Mr. Cornette, a graduate of Morehead State College, formerly taught school for five years in Rowan County and was county school superintendent for 12 years. Mr. Fraley is also a former Rowan County school teacher and for 12 years operated an IGA store here.

In 1951 Monarch moved from the room in which the business began to its present location next



# Morehead Memories (People and Places)

## Monarch Supply Store (phone 76)

By Jack D. Ellis

In 1945, at the end of World War II, when this nation's industry converted back to peace time production, two of Morehead's early entrepreneurs entered into a partnership to establish a new business in Morehead. Those two visionaries realized that with the men returning from military service, there would be a demand for land and housing as the GIs married and started their families.

They recognized also, there would soon be a need for building materials, and farm equipment, and they established a business to meet that need. Those two men were Glennis Fraley and Roy Cornette, and the business was called The Monarch Supply Store. It was, as the name implied, The Monarch of Morehead's hardware, farm, and building supplies for over 37 years.

Both men were native Rowan Countians and were successful in their own fields before starting the Monarch. Glennis, a former school teacher and owner of Fraley's IGA store, was married to Lona Cooper, and they had one son, John. Roy, a former school teacher, principal and superintendent of Rowan County Schools, was married to Elsie Hogge, and they had one daughter, Margaret. In January 1946, Roy resigned as School Superintendent and Glennis sold his IGA store. Glennis had his share of the capital needed, however, in order for Roy to raise his share, he sold his farm on Route 32 near Hickory Pointe to Bob Bishop for \$1,750. Bob still owns that farm, and he laughed as he said, "That was the best investment I ever made."

### "Thunder mugs arrive"

The Monarch Supply Store opened in September 1946, in one section of the Alf Caskey Building in downtown Morehead. (Near Arby's east parking lot.) Because of war time shortages, it was difficult at first to get the merchandise you needed for your store. Roy would take a truck to Huntington, W. Va. Wholesale Hardware Supply Company and buy just about whatever was available. He returned from Huntington on

With the addition of the line of Ford tractors and major farm implements, the Monarch established a service center and maintenance shop. It was located at the rear of the building off of Sun Street, and included spare parts, welding, tractor tire service, and tune ups. The shop manager was Danny Skaggs.

### Farmers eager for new farm equipment

In an attempt to increase the farm business, Glennis would travel throughout a five county area, talking to farmers as he demonstrated the latest in farming technology. Since there had been no new farm equipment manufactured during the War years, there was a ready market available. Glennis sold about

everything they could get, and the farm implement division of the Monarch became very successful.

### New employee Dorsey Hardin Sr. "Mr. Outside"

In January 1952, Dorsey Hardin Sr., former maintenance

it work even though the measurements said it wouldn't. Dorsey said many people use "wall stretchers" to make furniture fit, we used cabinet stretchers to make the dishwasher fit.

### Monarch became a social center

The Monarch became a central gathering place for farmers, contractors, businessmen and politicians. They would loaf, swap lies, tell stories, discuss crops, news, politics and the economy. Therefore, it became a social center for many of the men in the community. But the main Morehead social center and loafing place was at the Eagles Nest Restaurant, located a few doors down the street.

### Eagles Nest - public relation center

Many of the Morehead businessmen would meet each morning at 10 a.m. for coffee. Although Glennis Fraley seldom sat in on those sessions, Roy Cornette was always there. He said he was the public relations

Violet Hardin, one of the bookkeepers, said it was always an adventure posting the accounts at the end of the day. That was because Mr. Fraley was always very poor at remembering names, and would never ask anyone their name. He was known to charge hundreds of dollars to a customer and write the ticket up, and leave the name blank.

But he would always write some kind of identifying message in very small letters at the bottom of the ticket, e.g. "lives second house up Rock Fork," or "works as a meat cutter at Allen's IGA," or "lives on the top of Clearfield Hill." The late Mr. Elmer Anderson was a steady customer, and Glennis could never remember his name, but he would always write on the bottom of the ticket in small letters, "has only one arm." That worked well as long as they had only one one-armed customer. Even when Glennis got the correct name it was sometimes a

challenge to identify the item, e.g. on one ticket, Glennis had written "1 ZUD 2.95." The next day, Roy brought the ticket to Glennis and said, "Glennis, what's this item on the ticket?" Glennis said, "It's 1 ZUD." Roy said, "There's no such thing as a "ZUD." With that Glennis walked over to a counter and produced a product called Zesty

Unadulterated Detergent. Glennis had simply used his own shorthand and abbreviated the product. But he would never ask a customer his name.

### Some bills paid with barter system

In the early days of the Monarch, Roy and Glennis were

Continued on Page A-8



Monarch Supply Store employees and bystanders examine their new line of Ford tractors and Dearborn farm equipment in 1947. Photo courtesy of Art Stewart.

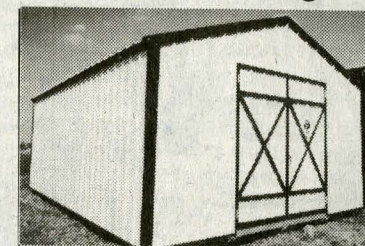
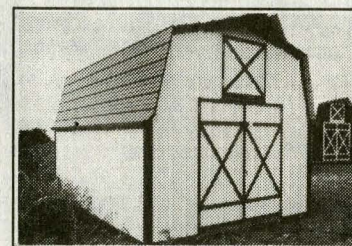
supervisor for the Rowan County Schools, went to work at the Monarch. He was called Mr. Outside and was responsible for all electrical, plumbing and remodeling work. He was also

man for the Monarch and much of his "public relations" was done at the Eagles Nest. One morning a very impressive group of local business men were having their morning coffee

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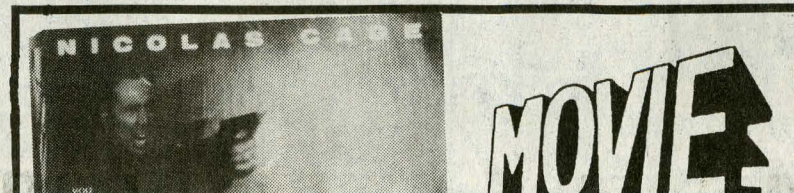
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one occasion with a truck load of "thunder mugs." For the uninitiated, those most necessary items, were also called "slop jars." They were what you used at night before there was indoor plumbing. The "thunder mugs" sold out quickly because homes with indoor plumbing were in the minority in 1946.

**Seldom heard "Sorry we don't have it"**

As the store grew, it prided itself on handling nothing but quality, top grade merchandise. All the hand tools (saws, hammers, pliers, etc.) were Bluegrass Brand manufactured by Beknap Hardware Company of Louisville. Also the growing business sold sawmill supplies, electrical appliances, (Westinghouse), lawn mowers, plumbing and heating supplies seed, fertilizers, housewares, hunting and fishing equipment. The store stocked every size, shape, and form of nuts, bolts, screws and washers. They usually had in stock whatever size screw, nut or bolt you needed. You seldom heard the phrase "Sorry we don't have it" or "We can order it for you" at the Monarch.

**Expansion from hardware to farm equipment**

In 1951, Roy and Glennis bought the old Federated Store Building next door (east) of their present site. Plans were made to increase staff, and expand their merchandise. Among those employed at the Monarch during that era included: Herb Bradley, Newt Porter, Danny Skaggs, Bud Bumgardner, Louise Black, Phyllis Black, Gene Ham, Doris Hardin Sr., Milton Tackett, Bill Messer, Herb Whitt, Verner Tackett and Violet Hardin. In the fall of 1951, the business moved in their newly remodeled quarters next door.

The new quarters provided much more display area, and the business changed to a more self-service style of merchandising. The Monarch had the first Ford tractor dealership in Rowan County after World War II. Along with the tractor dealership came a major farm implement dealership, including plows, harrows, rakes, and mowing machines. In 1948, Lon Ellis (this writer's father) bought a new Ford tractor, rake, and mowing machine. He then went up to Kenneth Lewis' garage on east Main Street and bought one of the first International String tie automatic hay bailers in Rowan County (after the War). The hay bailing business was brisk for a couple of years before there was very much competition. However, Mr. Ellis soon sold his hay bailer because it was difficult to get spare parts.

responsible for installing equipment, appliances, pumps and machines. Dorsey loved his work, and he had a keen sense of humor, and was constantly getting into difficult but humorous situations, e.g. Roscoe Pennington at Sharkey purchased a new electric pump to bring water from his farm pond into his house.

Dorsey was out in the middle of the pond as he worked diligently trying to get it installed. He suddenly yelled loudly for Mrs. Pennington to come out on the porch and said, "Don't be worried Mrs. Pennington, but I'm stuck here in the middle of the pond." She went to the field to get her husband and they had to throw Dorsey a rope and pull him out of the knee-deep mud in the pond with a tractor.

One other occasion Dorsey was installing a new pump and water lines in the home of Willie Frank Thomas on East U.S. 60. While he was under the floor their dog decided he was some kind of "varmit" and wouldn't let him out from under the floor. He had to stay there until someone came home to chain the dog.

Many years ago this writer and his wife decided to buy ourselves our first automatic dishwasher for a Christmas present. We found the one we wanted at the Monarch. However, after Dorsey came up and measured where it had to be installed, he said there's not enough room. His measurement showed the space was an inch too small for the dishwasher. I measured it, and found that to be true. But Dorsey said if I would help him he thought we could make it work. I helped him and we made

fee. Among them was Roy Cornette, President of the Kentucky Hardware Association; Bill Sample, President of the Kentucky Lumbermen's Association; Claude Clayton, President of the Kentucky Postmasters Association; and Glenn Lane, President of the Kentucky Bankers Association. Looking over the group, Bill Sample said, "Gentleman we are up to our wazoos in presidents this morning."

**"Just say charge it"**

The Monarch's business multiplied as they added more merchandise, services and employees. At one time they had 12 full time employees. It was surprising that the business was so profitable because they provided credit to almost everyone. However, contrary to all laws of sound business management they seldom ever sent out bills to customers and they never levied any finance charges on outstanding bills.

That was unheard of at that time. The Monarch customers would walk in, buy what they needed, (many times hundreds of dollars worth), sign the ticket and walk out with the merchandise. It was understood that farmers would pay when they sold their tobacco, cattle or other produce. It was also understood that contractors would pay on completion of their contract. It was further understood that regular wage earners would pay a regular payment on their account each month. But no one ever signed an agreement it was all understood and usually everyone paid as they agreed.

**Posting of accounts always an adventure**

**POOLS, POOLS, POOLS**

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**About the author**

**Dr. Jack D. Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library Director and a retired minister.**

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\$2,987

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'96 Ford Ranger - .....	\$8,987
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Glennis Fraley  
... makes sacrifice

\* \* \*

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Roy Cornette  
OWNER at MONARCH  
Supply Store in  
one of the founders  
of the Morehead  
first federal  
Savings and Loan

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39

ACCASKEY

# MONARCH SUPPLY STORE

**Ford** *Ford Farming* **HEADQUARTERS** **Dearborn**  
TRACTOR FARM EQUIPMENT

BRAMMER  
HOTEL







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TRACTOR

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EVERY HOUSE NEEDS  
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MONARCH SUPPLY STORE

The National Champion  
DEARBORN WOOD BROS. COIN FINDER

Ford

Tractor



Tom Schinner - Volcanman

Dennis Freely - owner  
v. Kelsey - Freight Bay

Collet Hardin  
Boris Hardin Sr.

Harvey Lambert

Murvel Cresley

Danny Skaggs

Bub Buzgardner

Ray Cornette - owner

Bill Messer

3  
84

Dudley Craven  
Dave Sevedon

Alfred Jones  
Noah Fugate

Lyle Tackett on tractor  
Sherman Arnett  
~~(Sherman Arnett)?~~

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Phone 606-784-7473  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
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Monarch Hardware Store  
Morehead, Ky

~~1946~~

MONARCH SUPPLY STORE,  
EMPLOYEES AND  
BYSTANDERS EXAMINE  
THEIR NEW LINE OF  
FORD TRACTORS, AND  
DEARBORN FARM  
EQUIPMENT  
1947 3cols  
50% (Photo: Art Stewart)  
99

Reduce 25%

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L. to R  
Glenn's Frealey, Owner  
? Skerwin Williams  
Lena Frealey  
Violet Hardin  
Dorsey Harding, Sr.  
Bill Messer  
? Roy Cornette  
Owner

~~John~~  
John

Pvd  
Dunbar  
Shelby

MOOREHEAD SUPPLY STORE  
EMPLOYEES 1948

Mary Beth Morris







MOREHEADS  
MONARCH SUPPLY STORE  
FORD TRACTOR AGENTS

Glenn Friley (L)

ROY CORNETTE } owners  
↓  
Glenn Friley }

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1948

L-R

Glenn Friley

~~Chester Lewis~~

~~Howell Porter~~

DORSEY HUNNOLD

BILL MESSEN

~~DAVE GARDNER~~







Oct 11, 1975

Dr. Doran presented to Ray Cornette  
an award, Past President of Alumni  
Assoc., making him a permanent member  
of the Executive Council of MSU  
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