

Henry Funk (1858-1938) was a career orchardist, apiarist, poultry man, and all around horticulturalist. Though not to be confused with the locally renowned Funk family of Funks Grove fame, the Henry Funk legacy and its impact on the agricultural prosperity of Central Illinois should not be underestimated.¹

Henry W. Funk was born on January 18, 1858 in Dry Grove Township to immigrant parents, Henry Sr. and Magdalena Funk.² Funk's parents emigrated from Germany in 1851 and resided in Dry Grove Township for almost 40 years before moving to Bloomington in 1893.³ Henry and Magdalena had six children, two of whom died in infancy.⁴

They say that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, and in terms of the Funk men, no idiom could be more apt. Henry Sr. was an award-winning farmer and producer who imbued in his son a similarly strong appreciation for reaping the fruits of one's labors—both literally and figuratively.⁵ Between his involvement in the McLean County Beekeepers' Association, the Bloomington Poultry and Pet Stock Association, the Horticultural Society of Central Illinois, and his 20-year management of Lilly Orchard in Tazewell County, Henry Funk Jr. made a career out of land stewardship in more ways than one.

The McLean County Beekeepers Association was formed on February 17, 1922 in the midst of a movement to establish beekeepers' organizations in every county in the state.⁶ At the invitation of William Brigham, assistant superintendent of McLean County schools, and C.H. Robinson of Normal, 50 beekeepers attended the first meeting with the intent to organize a county beekeepers association dedicated to promoting the production of honey and taking concerted action to control disease.⁷ It was believed that only through organization could local beekeepers, in cooperation with the state, demand proper administration of the apiary inspection law.⁸ W.R. Anderson, Brigham, and Robinson, were elected president, vice president, and secretary of the organization, respectively.⁹ Anderson, agricultural instructor at Hopedale High School, was once owner of a commercial apiary in California until it burned in a forest fire. It was Anderson's opinion that Illinois was "no place for a commercial apiary," but there was plenty of room for more bees that, with proper care, could produce a "handsome" amount of

¹ That being said, despite his expertise being more relegated to fruit orchards and bee colonies, Henry Funk had his thoughts regarding hybrid corn (a product well known by the Funks), as well. In November 1935, Funk was quoted suggesting a particular pattern of planting hybrid corn that could compensate for the usual shortage of hybrid seeds. "H.W. Funk Makes Suggestion on Seed From Hybrid Corn," *Pantagraph* (November 20, 1935). Funk's familiarity with the Funks of Funks Grove is also evidenced by his published observations pertaining to his approval of the alfalfa sled racks used on the Funk farm. *Pantagraph* (July 10, 1915).

² "H.W. Funk Orchardist, Dies at 80," *Pantagraph* (October 13, 1938).

³ "Death of Mrs. Henry Funk," *Pantagraph* (January 3, 1903).

⁴ Ibid; Henry Funk Sr. was survived by his four adult children (Henry Funk Jr. of Normal; Chris Funk of Capron, OK; Mrs. J.H. Rader of Bloomington; and Miss Mary Funk of Bloomington). "Henry Funk is Dead," *Pantagraph* (January 28, 1905).

⁵ *Pantagraph* (January 13, 1876).

⁶ "McLean County Beekeepers Organize, Saw Sweet Clover Makes Much Honey," *Pantagraph* (February 18, 1922).

⁷ "Beekeepers to Meet, May Form Association," *Pantagraph* (February 4, 1922); Ibid.

⁸ "McLean County Beekeepers Organize," *Pantagraph* (February 18, 1922). According to the Revised Statutes for the State of Illinois (1922), Illinois began regulating and requiring apiary inspections in an effort to control the spread of various diseases, including foulbrood. Foulbrood is a highly contagious disease that spreads via infected bee larvae that have ingested poisonous spores. James C. Cahill, ed. *Revised Statutes of the State of Illinois* (Chicago: Callaghan & Co., 1922); "Notes of Beekeepers," *Pantagraph* (February 21, 1923).

⁹ Ibid; "Bee-Keepers to Meet at Lilly Orchard, June 2," *Pantagraph*, May 20, 1922.

honey and contribute to greater fruit production—which was certainly in the interest of local, enterprising fruit producers.¹⁰

Formal organization of an association, however, was not the only topic of conversation that evening. In discussion of growing more sweet clover in the county, Funk—who had been in the beekeeping business for more than 20 years at this point—spoke to his early successes in beekeeping when land was cheap and there were many white clover pastures (not to mention that surface cultivators were “unknown” at the time, and flowering weeds still speckled the fields).¹¹ In the early 1880s, Funk harvested more than 15,000 pounds of honey from 75 hives annually—or approximately 200 pounds of honey per colony.¹² In his second decade of beekeeping, however, honey yields were generally low—coinciding with better drainage and greater cultivation in fields.¹³ To corroborate Funk’s assessment, numerous beekeepers shared anecdotal evidence of the increased yield of their colonies as a result of the 100 acres of sweet clover found on the Bloomington Canning Company’s land the year before. James W. Curran reported that his bees, located near Miller Park, discovered the plot and commenced flying three-miles to reach it.¹⁴ Sweet clover was said to be the most dependable source of nectar—though white clover was said to produce the finest quality honey—for its deep root system is able to secure moisture even when other plants suffer drought symptoms.¹⁵ Mr. G.H. Cale of Hamilton, IL—an expert in apiculture and acquaintance of C.P. Dadant, secretary of the Illinois State Beekeepers Association and editor of the *American Beekeeping Journal*—also made an appearance.¹⁶ Cale staged a demonstration for the group and fielded a number of questions.¹⁷

By June 1922, attendance at the first field meeting of the McLean County Beekeepers’ Association doubled that of the organizing meeting in February.¹⁸ One hundred beekeepers of McLean and Tazewell counties were welcomed regardless of membership at the June 2 meeting at Lilly Orchard, where they had the opportunity to tour Funk’s apiary and hear from the aforementioned C.P. Dadant of the Illinois State Beekeepers Association.¹⁹ The meeting was free to attend, and “ladies [were] especially invited.”²⁰ Dadant’s remarks, ‘The Past, Present, and Future of Apiculture,’ centered on addressing various apicultural myths—including that bees can damage sound fruit, that bee activity is detrimental to flowers, and that all quality honey should be uniform in color and flavor.²¹ The *Pantagraph* reported total membership in the association to be 25, with the projection that membership would double by the end of the year.²² Subsequent

¹⁰ “To Show Electric Appliance at Bee Meeting Tonight,” *Pantagraph* (February 17, 1922).

¹¹ “McLean County Beekeepers Organize,” *Bloomington-Normal City Directory* 1902, 220.

¹² Bill Kemp, “Honey bees sweetened 19th-century life,” *Pantagraph* (May 20, 2012).

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ “Beekeepers Plan to Meet at Lilly Orchard,” *Pantagraph* (July 27, 1923).

¹⁶ “McLean County Beekeepers Organize;” “Beekeepers to Meet, May Form Association;” “Bee-Keepers to Meet at Lilly Orchard, June 2,” *Pantagraph* (May 20, 1922).

¹⁷ “McLean County Beekeepers Organize.”

¹⁸ “A Hundred Beekeepers Attend First Field Meeting at Lilly Orchards,” *Pantagraph* (June 3, 1922).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ “Beekeepers to Meet, May Form Association.”

²¹ *Ibid.*; “A Hundred Beekeepers Attend First Field Meeting at Lilly Orchards.” It seems as though Dadant delivered the same, or similar, speech to the association on at least two occasions. The *Pantagraph* quotes Dadant almost word for word regarding his presentation to the Central Illinois Beekeepers’ Association, organized on August 22, 1923. “Central Illinois Beekeepers Asso. Organized Yesterday at Lilly Meet,” *Pantagraph* (August 23, 1923); “Interesting Items About Bees, Dadant,” *Pantagraph*, August 25, 1923.

²² *Ibid.*

meetings were held at various locations, including the apiary of John L. Wolcott with a presentation by E.R. Root, manufacturer of beekeeping supplies with the A.I. Root Company of Medina; at the farm bureau hall with a presentation from University of Illinois professor Geo. E. King, titled ‘How to Handle Bees in Central Illinois’; and again at Lilly Orchard—where, on August 22, 1923, a joint meeting was held between the McLean, Woodford, Logan, Tazewell, Peoria, and Woodford county beekeeper organizations with the purpose of organizing the Central Illinois Beekeepers’ Association.²³ The Central Illinois Beekeepers’ Association continued to hold its annual meeting at Lilly Orchard until at least 1925.²⁴ Funk was elected president of the McLean County Beekeepers’ Association, alongside William Stickler of Lexington (vice president) and Ruth L. Robinson of Normal (secretary) at the organization’s annual meeting on March 27, 1926.²⁵ Funk served as president of the association until April 1929.²⁶

To allude to a well-known expression, one would presume that you can’t have bees without birds—and Funk was no exception. The Bloomington Poultry and Pet Stock Association was formally organized on February 3, 1875 as a result of increased local interest and the effort of area residents to raise varieties of poultry for both profit and pleasure.²⁷ The organization was the oldest in the state—even older than the Illinois State Poultry Association, founded in 1894.²⁸ One of the most extensive poultry yards in the area at the time was the ‘Bloomington-Grove Poultry Yard,’ located approximately one-mile southeast of the city and owned by James M. Wills.²⁹ The association held its first annual exhibition in December 1892, with shows continuing into the twentieth century.

Funk was president of the association from 1901 to 1903, and oversaw the execution of the association’s tenth anniversary annual exhibition.³⁰ Following his tenure as president, Funk was elected to the board of directors of the Bloomington association in 1904.³¹ That same year, Funk entered his Barred Plymouth Rock chickens to compete in the Illinois Poultry Association’s annual poultry show, and was awarded “second on cock.”³² A December 1901 *Pantagraph* article poetically captured the essence of the annual poultry show saying, “After having exchanged your two bits with the man at the Coliseum box office and received in exchange the pasteboard open sesame to the cackle factory inside, otherwise the poultry show, the novice wishes he had rubbed the dust off his chicken vernacular and he begins to repeat as much of the barnyard nomenclature as he can remember, usually winding up with the embarrassed explanation, ‘I ought to know, but it is so long,’ etc. ‘and I don’t exactly remember’...”³³ Far

²³ “Beekeepers to Have Another Field Meet,” *Pantagraph* (July 15, 1922); “Geo. E. King to Speak to County Beekeepers,” *Pantagraph* (March 3, 1923); “Central Illinois Beekeepers Asso. Organized Yesterday at Lilly Meet.”

²⁴ “Hundred Beekeepers Have Picnic at Lilly,” *Pantagraph* (August 29, 1925); The subject of the 1925 meeting centered on disease, particularly on the prevailing spread of American foulbrood—a disease that Funk mentioned was unknown 40 years prior, but could be traced to a contaminated case of shipped-in honey that made its way north of Danvers and was “recovered” by the local bee population.

²⁵ “Beekeepers Hear How Packing Saves Stores,” *Pantagraph* (March 29, 1926).

²⁶ “Beekeepers to Meet to Hear V.G. Milum,” *Pantagraph* (April 25, 1929); “County Beekeepers Have Milum of U.I. in Round Table Talk,” *Pantagraph* (April 30, 1929).

²⁷ “Chickens, Some Account of the Growth and Progress of the Poultry Business in McLean County,” *Pantagraph* (April 17, 1875).

²⁸ “Big Poultry Show,” *Pantagraph* (December 9, 1903).

²⁹ “Chickens,” *Pantagraph* (April 17, 1875); *Bloomington-Normal City Directory 1874-75*.

³⁰ “The Poultry Show,” *Pantagraph* (December 19, 1901); “Big Poultry Show.”

³¹ “The Poultry Show, Bloomington Association Elects,” *Pantagraph*, January 8, 1904.

³² “Officers Chosen, The Illinois Poultrymen Elect,” *Pantagraph*, January 7, 1904.

³³ “The Poultry Show.”

from a novice, however, Funk likely never struggled to navigate the nuances of chicken vernacular. In addition to showing his prized Barred Plymouth Rock birds, Funk regularly advertised birds and eggs for sale in the local newspaper.³⁴ The Barred Plymouth Rock chicken is considered a strong dual-purpose breed—as they are well capable of year-round egg laying, as well as meat production.³⁵ Into the 1940s, the Barred Plymouth Rock was the most common farm chicken in the United States.³⁶ In 1907, 15 Barred Plymouth Rock eggs sold for the primo price of \$1.50 (\$39.47 in 2017 dollars).³⁷

In addition to raising prize-winning chickens, as a member and secretary (1914-1915) of the Horticultural Society of Central Illinois, Funk was an active participant in the Illinois State Horticultural Society, and a regular contributor to exhibitions relating to both organizations.³⁸ Submissions from Lilly Orchard under Funk's tutelage often secured numerous awards at the society's annual meetings and competitions.³⁹

Located in Lilly, Illinois in Mackinaw Township, just beyond the Tazewell County/McLean County border, the Lilly Orchard Company incorporated in February 1898 with a capital stock of \$11,000.⁴⁰ By November of its first year, the company's capital stock increased to \$150,000, with \$90,000 of common stock and \$60,000 of preferred stock divided into shares of \$25 each.⁴¹

Organization of the orchard began in late December 1897 by the efforts of several McLean County men, including Bert M. Kuhn, Fred S. Phoenix, and Harvey S. Watson.⁴² Though the farm was located in Tazewell County, the home office of the company was located in Bloomington to accommodate the fact that most of the officers resided in Bloomington-Normal. The first officers elect included Watson (president), Robert O. Graham (treasurer), and Cassius F. Shinkle (secretary).⁴³ Graham also served as director, and continued in that role until 1913.⁴⁴ The company was organized to grow high-grade fruits and nuts, including apples, peaches, plums, canning pears, blackberries, and cherries.⁴⁵ And, despite the "black prairie" of Central Illinois being less than conducive to the raising of fruit crops, Lilly Orchard Company managed to produce fruit that ensnared the senses—to the extent that one reporter was inspired to call into question whether it was not a "luscious and toothsome...pear rather than an apple, that tempted

³⁴ "For Sale," *Pantagraph* (January 17, 1902); "For Sale," *Pantagraph* (March 30, 1907); "For Sale," *Pantagraph* (January 4, 1908).

³⁵ Excerpt from Janet Vorwald, *The Encyclopedia of Historic and Endangered Livestock and Poultry Breeds* (Yale University Press, 2001), <https://www.motherearthnews.com/homesteading-and-livestock/raising-chickens/barred-plymouth-rock-heritage-poultry>, Date accessed August 24, 2018.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ "For Sale," *Pantagraph* (March 30, 1907); Consumer Price Index, <https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/sites/liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/files/polisci/faculty-research/sahr/inflation-conversion/pdf/cv2017.pdf>, Date accessed August 24, 2018.

³⁸ "Horticultural Meeting at Morton Tuesday," *Pantagraph* (November 16, 1914), "To Horticultural Meetings," *Pantagraph* (November 22, 1915).

³⁹ "Horticulturalists Attend Convention," *Pantagraph* (November 25, 1915); "Lilly Orchard Wins 13 Prizes," *Pantagraph* (November 30, 1917); "Wins Nine Prizes in State Horticultural Meet," *Pantagraph* (December 22, 1917); "Final Awards of Apple Premiums at State Show," *Pantagraph* (December 19, 1919).

⁴⁰ "Short Paragraphs," *Pantagraph* (February 5, 1898);

⁴¹ "Inspected Ripening Peach Crop," *Pantagraph* (September 2, 1901).

⁴² "Licensed to Incorporate," *Pantagraph* (December 18, 1897); *Bloomington-Normal City Directory 1897, 1899*.

⁴³ "Lilly Orchard Company Elects Officers," *Pantagraph* (February 2, 1908).

⁴⁴ "The Lilly Orchard Company," *Pantagraph* (October 1, 1902); "Commercial Orchardists Plan For Marketing a Large Crop," *Pantagraph* (August 12, 1920).

⁴⁵ "Lilly Orchard Company," *Pantagraph* (December 7, 1898).

the first pair.”⁴⁶ With such names as York Imperial, Duchess, Jonathan, Grimes Golden, Champion, Delicious, Gano, Black Twig, Winesap, Early Harvest, Transparent, and Red June, one would be hard-pressed to pass on a Lilly Orchard apple.⁴⁷ The notable quality of the fruit was often partially attributed to the composition of the land on which the orchard was built. The soil had a higher concentration of clay than average in this area, thus mimicking the properties of soil in southern Illinois where fruit growing was a leading industry.⁴⁸

Over the years, the Lilly Orchard Company continued to grow, as did its fruit. In August 1899, the Lilly Supply Company was established for the “jobbing” of the fruit products of the Lilly orchards.⁴⁹ The company also planned on installing an extensive addition in November of the same year, but had to forgo the plan due to lack of labor.⁵⁰ The local labor shortage, however, did not prevent the company from expanding elsewhere. In late 1899, the company purchased land in Moss Point, Jackson County, Mississippi for the purpose of establishing a pecan grove under the Lilly Orchard name.⁵¹ Watson and Graham, in particular, spent significant amounts of time traveling to and from Bloomington to manage affairs in Mississippi, as well as scouting other locations—including Florida and Alabama—for possible expansion.⁵²

Judging by numerous updates published in the *Pantagraph*, there seems to have been much local interest in the state of the pecan grove. A number of Central Illinois men were transferred south to work the land at Moss Point, including Buell Northrup, the son of C.J. Northrup, a local business owner and second elected secretary of Lilly Orchard.⁵³ For the sake of spectacle, and possibly as promotion of the family’s involvement in the business, a one-year-old pecan tree—complete with three full-grown pecans—from Lilly Orchard South was displayed in the window of C.J.’s store.⁵⁴ Despite local enthusiasm, however, pecan production was slow coming. It was not until 1912 that the pecan orchard produced a crop that neared commercial quantities, with a few hundred pounds of nuts sold that season.⁵⁵ This increase in pecan production came in conjunction with a much-needed, “unusually favorable” local season—with the apple crop being “especially satisfactory.”⁵⁶ This satisfactory apple crop was especially significant following a series of underperforming seasons and failed fruit crops that had forced the Lilly Orchard Company to reorganize as the Lilly Orchard Fruit Company two years prior in the summer of 1910.⁵⁷

⁴⁶ The soil composition of Lilly Orchard was heavy in clay deposits. Funk maintained that the timber soil was preferable for raising apples compared to the black prairie soil, but that good fruit could still be raised on the black soil; “Large Apple Crop Near Lilly,” *Pantagraph* (July 25, 1914), “Some Excellent Pears,” *Pantagraph* (October 19, 1899).

⁴⁷ “Lilly Orchard Wins 13 Prizes,” *Pantagraph* (November 30, 1917); “Rains Have Delayed Spraying at Lilly,” *Pantagraph* (April 13, 1922); “Start Picking Apples at Lilly, A Good Crop,” *Pantagraph* (July 18, 1923).

⁴⁸ “Fostered Fruit Venture,” *Pantagraph* (October 15, 1938).

⁴⁹ “Lilly Supply Company,” *Pantagraph* (September 1, 1899).

⁵⁰ “Cannot Obtain Help,” *Pantagraph* (November 11, 1899).

⁵¹ “Brief Mention” *Pantagraph* (July 4, 1900).

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ “The Lilly Orchard Company,” *Pantagraph* (October 1, 1902).

⁵⁴ “A Curiosity,” *Pantagraph* (October 18, 1901); “Home from the South,” *Pantagraph* (May 21, 1902).

⁵⁵ “Lilly Orchard Annual,” *Pantagraph* (January 25, 1912).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ “Friendly Action For a Receiver,” *Pantagraph* (May 23, 1910); “Company is Reorganized: Lilly Orchard Fruit Company to Succeed the Lilly Orchard Company in Charge of Property,” *Pantagraph* (July 19, 1910).

Though there are always mitigating factors when it comes to farming, Funk may be evidence of his own belief that “it is not always the season that makes the apples.”⁵⁸ Upon the orchard’s reorganization, Funk was made a director of the company in 1910, and was general manager by August 1912.⁵⁹ Possibly a testament to his unique apple intuition, it was soon after Funk assumed his managerial role that Lilly was awarded the prize cup in a 1912 exhibition held in conjunction with the International Apple Shippers Association meeting in Chicago.⁶⁰ Lilly exhibited 25 varieties of apples, and beat out contestants from “practically every state in the Union” to win the prize.⁶¹

By July 1914, Lilly Orchard spanned 240 acres—most of which were dedicated to apples, with shares for peaches, pears, cherries, and berries.⁶² Cover crops included hay, buckwheat, alfalfa, sweet clover, and oats.⁶³ Maintenance of these 240 acres was achieved through a scientifically scheduled system of spraying, pruning, cultivating, and pollinating. According to Funk, “There [was] no use going into the orchard business unless you [did] spray.”⁶⁴ That is, as long as you also knew what to spray for.⁶⁵ The orchards at Lilly typically received three to five sprayings in the summer while Funk was manager.⁶⁶ From horse-pulled wagons to double-barreled spray guns (supposedly “the only such spray guns in the country” at the time), the spraying process at Lilly continued to change with the times.⁶⁷ It was Funk’s opinion that “as a usual thing a good farmer is a bad orchard man, for the work of spraying [not to mention regular pruning and cultivating] comes at a time when other things are pressing.”⁶⁸ Funk, however, was a dedicated orchardist who “nursed [Lilly Orchard] like a pet child.”⁶⁹ And like a well-nursed child, Lilly thrived in comparison. Farms just one mile from Lilly boasted trees with little or no fruit, and the “only difference [was] in the care of the orchard.”⁷⁰ As Funk once said, orchardists simply had to “Let the trees talk to you.”⁷¹

By 1918, the orchard had amassed a total of 300 acres, from which it was able to market \$18,000 (roughly \$290,000 in 2017 dollars) worth of fruit the year before.⁷² The success continued into 1919, when the company sold \$9,000 worth of apples, \$4,000 of pears, harvested 2,000 pounds of pecans from the groves in Mississippi (a roughly 600% increase in harvest over the course of six years), and was able to pay dividends to both orchard and grove stockholders.⁷³ The 1920 season proved slightly more troublesome as a result of an Easter day snowstorm that

⁵⁸ “Large Apple Crop Near Lilly,” *Pantagraph* (July 25, 1914).

⁵⁹ “Friendly Action For a Receiver;” “The Lily Orchard Captures Prize Cup,” *Pantagraph* (August 10, 1912); “Prizes for Lilly Orchard,” *Pantagraph* (October 3, 1913).

⁶⁰ “The Lilly Orchard Captures Prize Cup,” *Pantagraph* (August 10, 1912).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² “Large Apple Crop Near Lilly.”

⁶³ “Lilly Orchard Co.’s Best Year,” *Pantagraph* (January 16, 1920).

⁶⁴ “Large Apple Crop Near Lilly.”

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ It seems as though the amount and frequency of spraying increased as time went on. A 1943 *Pantagraph* article reported that seven to nine applications of spray were to be made that year. “Lilly Orchard Expects Fair Apple Crop,” *Pantagraph* (April 19, 1943).

⁶⁷ “Start Picking Apples at Lilly, A Good Crop,” *Pantagraph* (July 18, 1923).

⁶⁸ “Large Apple Crop Near Lilly.”

⁶⁹ “Fostered Fruit Venture,” *Pantagraph* (October 15, 1938).

⁷⁰ “Large Apple Crop Near Lilly.”

⁷¹ “Lilly Orchard Manager Tells How Production of Fruit is Controlled,” *Pantagraph* (September 2, 1926).

⁷² “Lilly Orchard Annual,” *Pantagraph* (January 21, 1918).

⁷³ “Lilly Orchard Co.’s Best Year.”

effectively delayed the sowing of oats as a cover crop, but no damage was done to the fruit.⁷⁴ In fact, the *Pantagraph* reported that Funk and other local farmers intended to market a “large crop” that season to local buyers.⁷⁵ The desire and decision to sell locally was intentional based on “avoiding transportation difficulties and materially lessening the cost of packing”—not to mention that, according to Funk, marketing locally was a not a hard thing to do. He was confident that with “a little local advertising to tell the people when to come and a few signs along the road indicating the way to the orchard... every bushel of fruit can be sold right at the shed.”⁷⁶ Funk also regularly advertised the orchard’s produce, as well as his own goods, in the local newspaper.⁷⁷

Local marketing was also a prominent topic of discussion at the fruit marketing conference in Centralia, Illinois the following year.⁷⁸ There was shared distress among the producers present at the meeting that there were more than enough local apples grown to meet the local demand, but that apples from Maine and Michigan were being sold locally for \$1.50 per bushel (approximately \$21 in 2017 dollars).⁷⁹ There was much doubt that the growers in Maine and Michigan received any profit from the apples sold, but no one doubted that the railroads and commission men received their percentage.⁸⁰ That said, it was Funk’s opinion that, “For good sound fruit there is always a market”—particularly considering the fact that a number of varieties of local apples (including Champion, York, Gano, and Ben Davis) were selling for less than or equal to the cost of the imports.⁸¹ And, as evidenced by the specific mention of Lilly’s local production and sales in one of a number of obituaries following the popular orchardist’s death—“It is doubtful if the original investors ever received any substantial return on their money, but Lilly orchard produced thousands of bushels of first class apples, peaches, pears, and small fruits. On that account it has been an asset to residents of this section, since the fruit usually sold under the market for imported fruits”—Funk’s intent to market locally was not unappreciated.⁸²

Funk continued to manage Lilly Orchard until at least 1933, and the orchard continued to operate until the early 1950s.⁸³ Today, the land the orchard once occupied is part of the Mackinaw River State Fish and Wildlife Area, which is owned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

⁷⁴ “Snow Delays Farmers, No Damage to Fruit,” *Pantagraph* (April 5, 1920); In order to determine whether the fruit trees suffered damage, Funk indicated that, “We take the buds and either after they have had sufficient time to thaw, or have been brought into the house and warmed, we then split the bud open; if the seed germ in the center of the bud shows black, the bud is injured; if it is white there is no injury.” “Lilly Orchard Man on Freeze,” *Pantagraph* (March 29, 1921).

⁷⁵ “Commercial Orchardists Plan For Marketing A Large Crop,” *Pantagraph* (August 12, 1920).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ “Honey,” *Pantagraph* (September 8, 1886); “The City,” *Pantagraph* (September 5, 1903); “Miscellaneous For Sale,” *Pantagraph* (April 30, 1917); “Honey,” *Pantagraph* (June 27, 1922); “For Sale,” *Pantagraph* (January 17, 1902); “For Sale,” *Pantagraph* (March 30, 1907).

⁷⁸ “Fruit Growers Want Better Distribution,” *Pantagraph* (November 14, 1921).

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ “H.W. Funk Reports Lot of Good Fruit,” *Pantagraph* (September 16, 1926); “Good Things to Eat,” *Pantagraph* (October 21, 1920).

⁸² “Fostered Fruit Venture,” *Pantagraph* (October 15, 1938).

⁸³ “Full Bloom Near at Lilly Orchard,” *Pantagraph* (May 2, 1933); “Almost Like Mother Hubbard’s Cupboard,” *Pantagraph* (October 10, 1950); “Lilly Orchard,” *Pantagraph* (November 9, 1951). According to a 1954 map of Mackinaw Township, A. Lee Pray came into possession of the land formerly occupied by Lilly Orchard (until at least 1951). Pray was a fellow orchardist from outside Leroy. *Mackinaw Township [map]* (1951, 1954); “Central Illinois Fruit,” *Pantagraph* (November 1, 1939).

Profit, at least for Funk, was never the top priority. Though not a self-proclaimed Marxist, Funk had certain socialist leanings. He was a proponent of cooperative farming practices, believing that, “Agriculture has an abundance of security if farmers really co-operate to provide it...”⁸⁴ He also advocated mitigating supply and demand issues that result from surplus flooding the market by “giving it away to the starving people of China or India...if there proves to be a real surplus...why not send it to those who are hungry?”⁸⁵ But in reality, not even “food for the starving and work for idle laborers” could rectify the “moral mal-adjustment in our civilization.”⁸⁶ In the words of Funk, “Christ scourged the profiteers out of the temple; today they are omnipresent. They toil not, but spin a web for profit wherever property or the products of labor are exchanged. To a perverted acquisitive instinct, exploitation and profit have become the master passion...The machine age created new possibilities for good and evil that demand an ethical solution, or else the machine age may enslave us.”⁸⁷

Writing in the midst of the Depression, Funk commented that, “Mass production enlarged the economic field and accelerated the inherent destructive tendencies latent in our competitive system. Headless, unrestricted, competitive production for profit, regardless of human needs, led to overproduction, resulting in demoralized markets, closed factories, and unemployment, causing degradation and corruption of productive labor and resulting in financial and economic collapse. These are the *fruits* of our competitive system...”⁸⁸ All was not lost, however. Funk believed strongly in civilization’s capacity to achieve the ‘art of rational living’ by “transcend[ing] our past” and learning through “action by trial and error.”⁸⁹ Funk predicted that, as the “methods of production” became increasingly more efficient, “competition will be so fierce that it will kill itself and make way for the more humane and economic method of world contribution.”⁹⁰ That said, Funk understood that “It takes the world a long time to learn the lesson of world cooperation,” while maintaining that “We much cooperate or perish at our own prosperity.”⁹¹

As suggested, off the farm, Funk had great interest in social and political matters. Early in his career, Funk ran for tax collector for the Town of Normal in 1903, and in 1904 ran for Normal Town Council—though he was unsuccessful in both attempts.⁹² In general, Funk was not known for keeping his opinions to himself. Whether those opinions concerned bees, poultry, apples, societal welfare, or municipal matters, the *Pantagraph* was willing to publish them. In January 1920, Funk advocated for the placement of a hard road from Bloomington to Carlock to pass near Danvers.⁹³ In the summer of 1930, Funk called for residents of the Town of Normal to come together in discussion over the town’s water supply, demanding that “[the public] have facts,

⁸⁴ “Marketing Program Urged by H. W. Funk; Would Hold Surplus,” *Pantagraph* (January 22, 1930).

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ “Whose Fault Is It?” *Pantagraph* (February 9, 1931).

⁸⁷ “Topics of the Day: New World Impulse Need,” *Pantagraph* (March 6, 1932).

⁸⁸ “Topics of the Day: Who Shall Hold Wealth,” *Pantagraph* (June 18, 1933). Emphasis added.

⁸⁹ “Topics of the Day: New World Impulse Need.”

⁹⁰ “Whose Fault Is It?”

⁹¹ “Free Speech,” *Pantagraph* (June 28, 1932).

⁹² *Pantagraph* (March 28, 1903); “Separatists Won in Normal School Election,” *Pantagraph* (March 8, 1904).

⁹³ “Want Carlock Road To Go Near Danvers,” *Pantagraph* (January 27, 1920); This road exists today, partially as Illinois State Route 9. Google Maps, <https://www.google.com/maps>, Date accessed September 14, 2018.

figures and the free water trial, so that we can form an unprejudiced opinion of this important question—our water supply of the future.”⁹⁴

Funk married Bloomington-native Olga Frey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Frey, on December 2, 1892.⁹⁵ The couple had three daughters, Lela, Irene, and Ruth.⁹⁶

Henry W. Funk died at the age of 80 at Brokaw Hospital in Bloomington at 12:45 p.m. on October 13, 1938 following a weeklong illness.⁹⁷ His wife Olga preceded him in death six years prior at the age of 60, following a six-month illness.⁹⁸ At the time of his wife’s death, the couple’s three aforementioned daughters Lela, Irene, and Ruth, resided in Normal, Dwight, and Quincy, respectively.⁹⁹ Olga was an active member of the Normal Methodist Episcopal Church, and her funeral was conducted by the church’s former pastor, Arthur Cates of Moline.¹⁰⁰ Funk’s funeral was held on October 15, 1938, two days after his death, at his home at 710 N. School Street in Normal.¹⁰¹ Reverend O.B. Enselman officiated; and W.B. Eaton, Dr. B.H. Henline, Grover Logan, Bert Bradford, Clarence Orr, and George Damman served as pallbearers. For his efforts to establish a proper fruit belt in Central Illinois, Funk was described as a “worthy pioneer.”¹⁰² Funk is interred, along with his wife, at Evergreen Memorial Cemetery in Bloomington.¹⁰³

⁹⁴ “Well Forum Is Suggested,” *Pantagraph* (June 22, 1930); “Wants Water Trial,” *Pantagraph* (July 7, 1930).

⁹⁵ “H.W. Funk, Orchardist, Dies at 80,” *Pantagraph* (October 13, 1938); “Mrs. Henry W. Funk Dies at Her Home,” *Pantagraph* (November 4, 1932).

⁹⁶ “Mrs. Henry W. Funk Dies at Her Home.”

⁹⁷ “H.W. Funk, Orchardist,” *Pantagraph* (October 13, 1938).

⁹⁸ “Mrs. Henry W. Funk Dies at Her Home.”

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ “Rites Saturday,” *Pantagraph* (October 14, 1938); Bloomington-Normal City Directory 1937.

¹⁰² “Fostered Fruit Venture,” *Pantagraph* (October 15, 1938).

¹⁰³ “Funeral Notice,” *Pantagraph* (October 15, 1938).