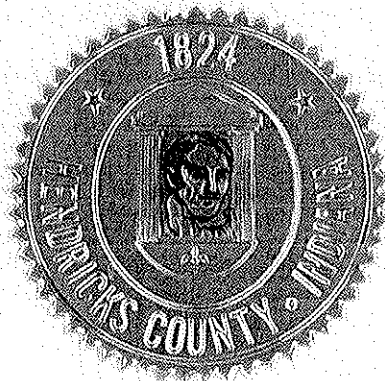


H
917.253
1498

HENDRICKS COUNTY

HISTORY BULLETIN



VOLUME VII April 1975 NUMBER II

PUBLISHED BY
THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DANVILLE, INDIANA

Indiana Collection
PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAINFIELD, INDIANA

HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

ORGANIZED 1967

Officers 1975

President

Mrs. Dessie D. Huddleston
R. R. 1
Lizton, In 46149
Tel. 994-5911

Vice President

Mr. John Miller
525 E. Main St.
Plainfield, In 46168
Tel. 839-6883

Secretary

The Misses Mabel &
Neomi Joseph
R. R. 1, Box 186
North Salem, In 46165
Tel. 539-4772

Treasurer

Mrs. Blanche Wean
249 S. Wayne St.
Danville, In 46122
Tel. 745-2573

Historian & Publicity Chairmen

Miss Jewell Bell
212 E Road 200 N
Danville, In 46122
Tel. 745-4055

Annual Dues \$3.00 Payable in October

H C H S

The Hendricks County History Bulletin is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October prior to our meeting dates. It is distributed without charge to members of the Society, to Hendricks County Public Libraries, and to Hendricks County School Libraries, as well as to a number of other libraries; individual copies \$1.00. Communications concerning back copies or individual copies should be addressed to our secretary. Dues should also be mailed to the secretary. Contributions or suggestions to The Bulletin should be mailed to the editor.

Margaret Baker, Editor
(Mrs. C. Rawleigh Baker)
387 E. Broadway
Danville, In 46122
Tel. 745-2115

H C H S

Within the span of our lifetime, we the living, and others of our generation, hold in our hands all that is of value from the past, and in those same hands we hold the hope of all that is to come. We are the living link, poised, if but for the brief span of a lifetime, in eternity, and through us will be transmitted the values of the ageless past to the timeless future.

From Inspiration for Living by Paul S. McElroy

H C H S

President's Message

Since the January meeting of the Society work has gone right ahead on its big undertaking: the establishment of a County Museum at the old jail.

The rooms at the jail were presented to us at that meeting by Mr. Lowell Franklin and accepted in the name of the Society by its President. Since then, officers of the Museum Board have been elected, and its president, Mrs. Raymond (Rita) Lieske, has been working on her committees. Her report of what has been accomplished is found elsewhere in the Bulletin. The Executive Board of the Society feel that its goal of a worthwhile museum is starting to be materialized.

Dessie Huddleston

H C H S

One of the best meetings ever was held January 12, at the Danville United Methodist Church when between 70 and 80 members gathered for a business meeting and a delightful program. Mrs. Baker presided and introduced the Rev. H. Orval Moore, pastor of the church, who gave the devotions. She then introduced the new officers and Dessie Huddleston, incoming president presided at the business session. Among other things, the organization voted to accept the rooms of the old jail, which had been offered by the county commissioners, to be used as a Hendricks County Historical Museum. Mr. Lowell Franklin, representing the commissioners, made a short talk. Mrs. Ruth Hall was in charge of the program entitled "Do You Remember?" and she, Mr. Roy Fisher and Mrs. Nellie Beagly gave a lively description of such old customs as making lye soap, huckstering, and butchering day. Other members added interesting recollections to the discussion and the afternoon proved to be most interesting. Center and Marion Township members furnished refreshments for the social hour.

H C H S

The next meeting, April 13th, will be held at the Lizton Christian Church at 2 P.M. The speaker for the afternoon will be Dr. Sherman Crayton who has entitled his talk "The Birth of THE Nation". It is sure to be one we will all enjoy, for whatever Dr. Crayton does, he does thoroughly and well. The social hour will be the responsibility of Middle, Union and Eel River townships with Mrs. Nellie Beagly chairman of the hostesses.

And for the exhibit this time, it is the suggestion of our president that you bring whatever you have that has not been identified, or, if you know, something that was used long ago and you think it will not be easily recognized. The Smithsonian has an exhibit of this sort, and if it's good enough for the Smithsonian, it is good enough for us!

H C H S

Now that the old jail is taking on new stature and new importance as work on transforming it into a museum progresses, we thought it would be appropriate to learn as much as possible about the sturdy old edifice. So we put Dorothy Templin on the trail, and we couldn't have chosen a better person. If we ever have need of a private eye, we will know where to turn, for Dorothy has spent hours sleuthing and snooping around in musty old records and newspapers, and she has come up with some most interesting facts and figures. It seems that in less than a decade, more than a hundred years ago, the County Commissioners managed to see to it that Hendricks County had not only a new Court House and new Jail, but a new County Home for the Poor as well, and with all that, they came out in the black! Now, if only the keepers of our coffens, from the federal level on down could.....oh, well, we can

dream, can't we?

Although it was the jail that we were mainly interested in at this particular time, Dorothy's research was all so interesting that we are printing it in full.

Thanks Dorothy!

THE JAIL

From the 1885 History of Hendricks County "the Jail and sheriff's residence is a building worthy of the county and its inhabitants. In its construction the comfort and health of those who were to be confined there were considered, and the best arrangement consistent with the safety of the prisoners was made for both. All prison reformers who have inspected this jail are constrained to compliment the humanity of its designs. The cost of this building was about \$30,000."

From the records of the Board of County Commissioners, "At a special term of the Board of County Commissioners held at the Court House in the Town of Danville in Hendricks County on January 30, 1865 called together by the Auditor of said County for the purpose of taking into consideration the proposition to pass an order paying a bounty to volunteers under the present call of the President of the United States. Also to make some arrangement in regard to a County Jail.

Whereupon it is ordered that the Sheriff of said County be and he is hereby authorized to use the jury room in the north side of the courthouse for a county jail until further ordered.

Ordered that the Sheriff of said County be and he is hereby ordered to sell at Public outcry to the highest bidder the old County Jail reserving all the Iron and Stone in said building to the county also to sell the old fence around said house.

Ordered that Martin Gregg be and he is hereby appointed to examine jails in other Counties and employ some architect to give a draft and estimate, the probable cost of such building and report at the March Term 1865 of this Board."

Hendricks County Union--February 9, 1865--Sale of the Old Jail.

The County Commissioners are in earnest about building a jail. In pursuance to an order of the Board, Captain Straughan sold at public sale, on Saturday last, the fencing around the lot to Colonel Shuler for \$10 and the building to R. K. Carter for \$75. Mr. Carter was the builder who erected it.

March 16, 1865--Board Meeting.

The subject of building a new jail was discussed and the Board are determined to move cautiously in the matter. They intend to move slowly but surely, believing that the interest of the county will not suffer by a dilatory movement, especially as they intend to perfect their arrangements so that when they are ready no delay will occur to speedily finish the work.

Board of County Commissioners--December Term, 1865

Ordered that Martin Gregg be and he is hereby appointed Agent for Hendricks County to prepare a plan and specifications for a new Jail for said County and contract for the burning or furnishing brick for the same, issue orders to procure necessary funds and pay all necessary expenses incurred in building same.

June 14, 1866--Board Meeting

The Board of Commissioners of Hendricks County adjourned last Saturday having finished their business. At this term the report of the Auditor was submitted from

which it appears that \$26,000 have been paid during the year to soldiers and their families, and that after paying all expenses of the county there is still a balance of \$12,000 in the treasury. This with the tax levied for this year will furnish the means to pay for the new jail.

The people should feel proud of the Board of Commissioners, that could, during the war, pay large bounties, complete one of the finest Court Houses in the State, erect a new jail and yet come out of debt and have money in the treasury. We do not think there are many counties in the state so well off financially. This year the county tax will be less than last and will continue to decrease for several years.

The following compose the Board, all good, substantial farmers and deserve to be remembered by the people, Harlan Carter, Martin Gregg, and John Robbins.

February 8, 1867

At a term "special term" of the Board of County Commissioners held at the Auditors office in the Court House in Danville in Hendricks County on the 8th day of February 1867. Called together by the Auditor of said County for the purpose of declaring the Building Erected on lots No. Four (4) and Five (5) in Block twenty eight (28) in Danville in said County: The County Jail for Hendricks County. Present; Martin Gregg and John Robbins, two of the Commissioners in and for said County of Hendricks.

Ordered that the Building Constructed and Erected on Lots No. Four (4) and Five (5) in Block No. twenty eight (28) in Danville, Hendricks County, be declared The County Jail for said County; and that the Sheriff of Said County be authorized to use said building as such till further ordered. And the Board adjourned.

John Robbins
Martin Gregg

Hendricks County Union--February 28, 1867

The County Commissioners from the Counties of Wayne and Henry have been on an official visit to our town this week for the purpose of examining our Court House and Jail with a view to building similar structures in their own Counties. Hendricks may justly be proud of her public buildings and thank her Commissioners for them.

March 14, 1867--County Commissioners

A county that can erect such stately buildings as the Court House and Jail of this county has a standing advertisement of the prosperity and enterprise of its citizens.

Board of County Commissioners--March Term 1867

Ordered that Martin Gregg, Agent of County be and he is hereby allowed \$500 for Contracting and Superintending the building of the County Jail.

A new Hendricks County Jail will be located east of the County Home between the fence and the 4-h Fairgrounds by a decision of the County Commissioners, April 3, 1872. A major cause for the decision to erect a new building is lack of space in the present jail, which is over 100 years old. (Republican--April 6, 1872)

First step toward construction of a new three-story jail in Hendricks County is taken this week with the legal advertisement seeking bids for the project. The new jail is to be constructed on county property, located between the County farm and the 4-h Fairgrounds on the south side of U.S. 36 east of Danville.

(Gazette--July 13, 1872)

Final contract for construction for Hendricks County's new jail was awarded on October 16 by the County Commissioners. Total cost of the new jail for contracts is \$749,388. However this does not include engineering fees and other associated expenses.

(Gazette--October 19, 1872)

Ground breaking ceremonies for the new Hendricks County Jail on U.S. 36 east of Danville were April 2, 1973.

The Hendricks County Commissioners and Sheriff Russell D. Carmichael will host open house at the new \$1,000,000 jail Sunday from 2-5. The jail has room for 95 prisoners compared to the 18 prisoner capacity of the present jail constructed in the 1860's at a cost of \$30,000. The first jail was built in 1826 of peeled hickory logs and was considered impregnable from without or from within its thick walls, small high windows, puncheon floors and dungeon. (Republican--July 25, 1974)

Use of the present facility at the corner of Washington and Broadway has not yet been determined by the County Board of Commissioners. Under consideration is a plan to let the County Historical Society use a portion of the old jail.

(Gazette--July 25, 1974)

The Hendricks County Museum is well on its way to being a reality. A Museum Board has been chosen and officers elected. This board meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Museum, 170 South Washington St., Danville, the former residence area of the old jail.

(Republican--March 6, 1975)

THE COURT HOUSE

Four court houses have marked the square owned by the county in Danville. The first was of peeled hickory logs and cost \$147. It was completed in time for the April term of court, 1826 to be held in it. A log jail of hickory was also built, this standing on the lot now occupied by the home of Mrs. H. B. Lingenfelter.

The second court house was of brick and was erected about 1830. There were really two buildings, the court house proper and another building, close at hand, in which some of the county offices were housed. The third court house was completed in 1862 and was counted one of the show buildings of Indiana for many years. The accumulation of records and the great increase in public business and the demands of the times were rapidly making it out of date although it appeared to be such a splendid structure that it would have probably been used many years had not disaster overtaken it.

(Republican--September 8, 1915)

The Hendricks County Ledger--June 23, 1858--New Court House

It will be seen by an advertisement in another column, to Architects and others, that Hendricks County is now fairly embarked in the enterprise of building a new Court House--and a look at the old hulk now used for that purpose, will certainly convince every sane man that the work has not been commenced prematurely. The Board of Commissioners will hold a special session in August to receive plans, etc; and one member of the Board is now absent inspecting buildings in other counties, and drafts in the hands of distinguished architects, that he may be qualified to act judiciously when the time comes. We suppose the contract will be let sometime soon after the meeting in August. A sum of about \$11,000 has already been raised towards defraying the expenses of the work.

August 18, 1858--The New Court House

The County Board, after inspecting several plans, last week, finally adopted one, presented by Isaac Hodgson, Architect of Indianapolis. We have not been able to learn the size of the building or the probable cost, but the latter will be in the neighborhood of \$40,000. The plan however is said to be a good one and makes a favorable impression upon all who have seen the draft. We understand that a larger draft, colored and so adorned otherwise as to make it presentable, will be prepared in a short time--framed and hung up in the Auditor's office where the public can see it.

October 27, 1858

The drawings of our new Court House were received at the Auditor's office last Saturday. The Specifications are also there. Sealed proposals for furnishing materials and putting up the building are to be opened and the contract awarded to the lowest responsible bidder by the County Board on the 10th day of November.

November 17, 1858--Court House Let

Pursuant to notice given by the Board of County Commissioners an extra session was held at the office of the County Auditor on Wednesday the 10th inst. to examine the bids of Builders for the contract to furnish the material and build a Court House for Hendricks County. Thirteen bids were entered which on examination were found to be as follows:

J.W.L. Matlock- - - - -	--\$43,950	McGrew & Silver- - - - -	--\$39,740
Lowe & Carlisle - - - - -	42,405	Craig & Davis - - - - -	44,500
B.V. Enos - - - - -	40,550	W.W. Irons - - - - -	48,500
D.E. Kurtz - - - - -	43,900	James Burgess - - - - -	48,000
Thomas Hyde - - - - -	41,675	Ed. Clark - - - - -	49,500
Amos Compton - - - - -	51,400	W.W. Miller & Co. - - - - -	38,744
Daniel Behymer - - - - -	43,600		

Miller & Co. it will be seen made the lowest bid and to them the contract was awarded accordingly. The Company reside in Boone and are the builders of the Court House at Lebanon--a job which is said to be a good one and entirely satisfactory to the people of the county.

They have given an approved bond for a faithful performance of their contract here and are to commence the work by the 22nd of December next.

May 18, 1859

The Architect is to be here today or tomorrow to define the precise limits of the foundation of the new Court House. We notice also that the pile of stone for the foundation walls is gradually increasing in size, and it is said the masons with their working tools will be on hand in a short time. The old Court House fence has been purchased by Esqs. Kennedy & Astley and removed; and the locust grove, the building containing the county offices, etc. are now "outside."

May 25, 1859

The excavation for the foundation of the new Court House is nearly completed, and we understand the walls will be commenced in a few days. Mr. Curry who has charge of the brick department of the Court House contract will commence burning a kiln of 150,000 next Monday.

June 22, 1859--The Brick

A portion of the brick for the walls of the new Court House have been delivered upon the ground; and persons reputed to be good judges say they are the best ever manufactured in the county.

March 14, 1860

The work on the Court House under the superintendence of Mr. Martin Gregg is progressing finely for the number of workmen employed.

August 11, 1860

The work on the Court House is progressing with undiminished vigor.

February 9, 1861--The New Court House

A number of stone masons are now employed in dressing stone for the completion of the new Court House. It is the intention of the energetic Superintendent of the building, Mr. Gregg to complete it as soon as possible.

June 23, 1864

Henry Howell & Co. has a heavy force at work removing the remains of the old County offices. This looks as if the County Board are in earnest.

November 3, 1864

Our new Sheriff is having horse racks placed around the public square, a thing very much needed.

The Republican--September 8, 1915

The erection of this Court House was commenced in the spring of 1859 with Isaac Hodgson, architect; Martin Gregg, principal superintendent; Frederick Wagonlander, superintendent of stone work; Thomas J. Bacter, superintendent of brick work; and Ephriam Colstock, principal carpenter. The corner stone was laid June 5, 1860 and the roof collapsed Tuesday night, January 9, 1912. The sealed box from the corner stone was opened in the Auditor's office November, 1912 and the cornerstone of the present Court House was laid May 29, 1913. The building was dedicated in September, 1915.

THE COUNTY HOME

Board of County Commissioners--March 19, 1867

Ordered that the Auditor of Hendricks County be and he is hereby authorized and ordered to issue to Martin Gregg County Orders in payment for the tract of land recommended by the Township Trustees and ordered by the Board of County Commissioners to be purchased of him: the amount of such orders to be limited by the number of acres ascertained to be in said tract of land by actual survey, at \$75 per acre when he shall have made to the County of Hendricks a Warranty Deed for said tract of land. The orders to be drawn payable March 1, 1868. Martin Gregg to have possession of the said tract of land until March 1, 1868, the County reserving the right to make the Brick and deliver the Material necessary for the erection of an Asylum for the Poor of the County on said tract of land prior to March 1, 1868.

Ordered that Martin Gregg be and he is hereby appointed Agent for Hendricks County to prepare a plan and Specifications for an Asylum for the Poor of the County, to contract for the Burning or furnishing Brick for the same, the delivery of all necessary funds and pay all necessary expenses incurred in building the same.

Martin Gregg
Harlen Carter
John Robbins

(Newspapers--Hendricks Ledger ends August 24, 1861; Union begins May 19, 1864)

The Hendricks County Union--March 21, 1867--Poor Farm

The County Commissioners being unable to agree upon the selection of a suitable location for the Poor Farm, called the Trustees of the respective townships together, and submitted the matter to them. Last Monday the Trustees, twelve in all, assembled and proceeded to visit, and examine the several tracts offered. They finally decided to purchase the tract of 88 acres belonging to Martin Gregg and lying South of the Rockville road, and joining the present Poor Farm, at \$75 per acre. (Deed recorded April 8, 1867--\$6618)

May 16, 1867--Commissioner

We understand that Martin Gregg, whose term expires next on the County Board, emphatically declines a renomination. He has served the county ably and faithfully for 14 years, and desires his friends not to use his name in connection with the office of County Commissioner. This is not the time perhaps to speak of the public services of Mr. Gregg, but we cannot refrain from reminding the citizens of Hendricks of the proud and honorable position the county has attained financially, and the credit her public buildings reflect upon the enterprise, intelligence and wealth of the county.

H C H S

CHURCH HYMNS TO REMEMBER

Our Pioneers Sang Them

We go to our respective churches on a Sunday and sing from various song books and hymnals and do we ever give a thought to the length of time the song has been sung? Did Peter Cartright use it in his meetings back in New Salem, Illinois when Abraham Lincoln was a young man attending a revival service? Back in 1517, Martin Luther ushered in Protestantism and wrote songs to go with it and a very ancient song of his, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," is sung today in Clay Township Methodist Churches and in all likelihood in many churches throughout our county. What religious songs did our Pilgrim Fathers sing? History tells us that the songs they used were sung by the congregation, never in solo or quartett. To carry out God's will songs had to be sung by the whole church body. These good people considered an organ "The Devil's Bagpipe" and hoped they would never see the day when one would be in a church.

The first Methodist church built near Coatesville, and on a slight rise called Pleasant Hill was broken up and church and grounds deserted when part of the congregation desired an organ to use in the services years ago.

There was a time long ago when the Friends at Hadley and Old Mill Creek had their week day and Sunday meeting with a song service unaccompanied by an organ. The day came some eighty years ago when an organ came to the church and when it was used that first Sunday more than one "Slow Quaker" looked at the floor or covered his eyes. The Primitive Baptists today have no organ in their churches.

When I was a youngster, attending the Friends' meetings at Hadley with my parents, and prior to my beginning school days, two songs were often sung that impressed me with both words and tune as no others did. One was "A Shelter In the Time of Storm." It is sung nowadays at Hadley and I sang it with a home coming crowd but a few years ago. The chorus was, "Jesus is a rock in a weary land, a weary land, O, Jesus is a rock in a weary land and a shelter in a time of storm."

The second song was a Christian battle hymn entitled, "Hold the Fort." A long time New England Quaker writes that his father was a positive thinker, a strong believer and worker and he loved, "Hold the Fort." The last verse of the song, found in an ancient Friends' song book reads as follows: "Fierce and long the battle rages, But our help is near; Onward comes our Great Commander, Cheer, my comrades, Cheer. Hold the fort for I am coming, Jesus signals still; Wave the answer back to heaven, "by Thy grace we will." It was a moving song when huge, bearded farm men and spirit moved wives and young folks sang with a will and all could read the devil's defeat.

Here might be one classification of our early songs; the hymns that were joyous and gave praise, songs heard a few times could be carried home and sung as folks went about their home work. My Mother for years sang in her home, "Is my name written there, on the page bright and fair, Tell me Jesus, My Savior, Is my name written there?" Her Mother, a Primitive Baptist sang, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand, and cast a wistful eye, On Canaan's fair and happy land where my possessions lie."

When I was a grade lad, James Hayworth, then in his early eighties, sang a song, never likely to be found today: "If you cannot give your thousands, You can spare the widow's mite, For the least we do for Jesus, will be precious in his sight. Farther on in the realms of beauty, far away on the golden shore, Pressing on in the line of duty, we shall meet to part no more."

An old time song loved by James Christy who farmed north of Hadley was this one. He often sang it as he laid aside his corn-cob pipe and pitched ears of corn to his hogs: "How tedious and tasteless the hours when, Jesus no longer I see, Sweet prospects, sweet flowers and sweet birds have all lost their sweetness to me."

As a lad sitting on a road side bank where farm men were working on the road with teams and shovels, "Antney" Kelley, a gray, bearded man in his seventies called to a man swearing at his horses, "Since swearing won't make them mind, try singing "Old Hundred" to them." He had learned the long ago song in the New Winchester or Reno Churches.

A second classification of early songs was the type to persuade the sinner to be saved. Billy Graham has his last song, "Just As I Am, without one plea." The Salvation army favorite has long been, "Are You washed in the blood of the lamb?" A poem reads, "Booth came boldly with his big, bass drum, Are you washed in the blood of the lamb." During revival meetings years ago in Hadley a favorite song to move the sinners was "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross, there a precious fountain, free to all a healing stream, flows from Calvary's mountain." Another favorite was "Lord I'm Coming Home." A Friend's minister one time asked for a lively song and Maggie Hayworth started one; "I can, I will, I do believe that Jesus saves me now." All the big, boy, sinners on the back benches helped to sing it.

Good Maggie Hayworth long ago loved to start the song that all could learn in a short time and fall readily into the tune "It's the old time religion, it's the old time religion, it's the old time religion and it's good enough for me.

"It was good for Paul and Silas, It was good for Paul and Silas, It was good for Paul and Silas and it's good enough for me." A half dozen or more verses were sung to the preachers loud, cheery "Amen!"

The third category of songs were funeral hymns. One, a very old song was, "In the Sweet Bye and Bye." This song I heard a number of times at Hadley funerals.

All these songs I have mentioned as sung in the Hadley Friends Church where I hold a birth right membership were no doubt familiar ones over all Hendricks County.

Charles Wesley wrote over 200 hymns and all these are old songs that in all likelihood Abraham Lincoln helped sing. Still used today are "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing," "Come Ye That Love the Lord" by Isaac Watts, "How Firm a Foundation", "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name", "Come Thy Fount of Every Blessing", "Jesus Lover of My Soul", "Lead Kindly Light", "Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?", "My Hope is Built", "Sweet Hour of Prayer", "Blest Be the Tie That Binds", and "Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound."

All are old time songs, written and sung in generations long ago. They were beautiful to our grandsires and grandames and they cheer us today who hear them and heed their words.

These great hymns have given thousands life and light here and around the world. They have been sung in many languages.

An aged man in a Putnam County Hospital bed a few feet from mine brought me wide awake around 3 o'clock one morning. He was singing real low, "On Christ the Solid Rock I stand all other ground is sinking sand." As badly burned as he was he recovered and as low as I was from an operation I got well. Thanks to that man's song.

Joe Davidson

H C H S

QUERY

Need information re: ancestor or descendents of Dr. Wilkins B. Brown who came from N.C. to Clay Co., In about 1836, M. Selah Wilson 1840, D. Dec. 2, 1892 in Clay Co. Could Selah be sister of Peter Wilson B. 1819 in Vir. Came to Clay Co. as young man, and daughter of Joshua Wilson who came from Vir. an old man. D. Clay Co. Need information on Richard Baker, B. Ky. 1819. Came to Clay Co. at early age. M. Elizabeth _____ about 1840. Their son Andrew Baker M. Mariah Jane Brown, Clay Co. Nov. 15, 1865. Will exchange information. Maurice D. Way, 50 N. Hobart Road, Hobart, In. 46342.

H C H S

We want to extend sympathy to Mrs. Ruth Dinsmore, who lost her mother, Mrs. Chester Parker, recently, and our sympathy goes to Mr. Parker too. Through a typographical oversight condolences to Mr. Fred Worrell and to Miss Betty Jean Weesner were omitted from our last Bulletin. Fred lost his brother through a tragic accident, and Betty Jean lost her father and business partner, Mr. Edward J. Weesner, Editor Emeritus of the Hendricks County Republican. We are sorry for the oversight.

H C H S

Those of you who missed the column written by Mrs. R. F. D., Sunday, January 26, in The Indianapolis Star will find the following interesting:

Asking a question in a column is considerably like Stevenson said of starting stones. "You sit at the top of a hill and away the stone goes, starting others" all the way downhill.

A woman I remember as being a young woman in college, with reddishbrown hair and very long eyelashes inclosing wide-a-wake eyes and a pert, intelligent interest in whatever was going on or about to, has rolled some quotable stones down hill in answer to my earlier comment about old ways of harvesting ice.

Lois Shirley Crayton, now of Danville, writes, "You remarked that possibly there is no one still living who provides that service. My husband, Sherman, wants you to know he's still breathing and that he and his father and brother-in-law cut ice from the Hadley Pond northwest of Plainfield."

(In a postscript she says he is 79 and was probably in his early teens when he cut ice and helped dig wells.)

"Near their house," Lois writes, "the Craytons had an ice house with about 8 inches of sawdust between the double walls. They cut the ice with a saw similar to a cross-cut saw, except it was shorter and had only one handle. They began cutting when the ice was 8 to 10 inches thick and made the blocks about 2 by 4 feet. They pulled them out with ice hooks. Later, when they had sold the season's supply they bought more from a large ice plant at Mooresville."

(There's a peculiar, hypnotic charm about rolling stones down a hill. You sit at the top and listen for them to crash below, and are inspired to start another one.) Lois continues: "You might not find many who helped dig wells, either, but that was another of the several services my husband's family provided to the people of Plainfield."

"Sherman's father and grandfather were well-diggers, and as a youth Sherman would ride the bucket down with a pick and shovel, load it with dirt and be hoisted out. They worked down, removing the dirt until they struck a good vein of water, then lined the walls with brick, no mortar, keeping the walls quite vertical by use of a plumb line.

"To test the air in the well for 'damps' they lowered an iron kettle, containing fire, into the well. If there were 'damps' the fire flickered, but sufficient fire would eliminate the 'damps.'" (My encyclopedia defines "chokedamps" as a "heavy, odorless, colorless gas, mostly carbon dioxide, which neither burns nor supports combustion and is more than 1½ times as heavy as air. It has caused many deaths in well-digging.")

Lois goes on imperturbably. "Sherman says the deepest well he remembers was on the Isaiah Savage farm east of Plainfield, about where the Ashley restaurant now is. It was 90 feet deep. In it they discovered 'damps' at about 80 feet."

In a final, gay, Lois-like gesture she adds, "Now isn't that a lot more than you were just dying to know about ice-harvesting and well-digging?"

No, there is one more thing I'd like to know. Those wells the Craytons dug, were any or most of the sites chosen by waterwitching?" -

Mrs. R.F.D.

H C H S

The late Mrs. Claude Walls, Danville, who for many years was Hendricks County Executive Secretary of the American Lung Association (formerly the Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association) received not long before her recent death a letter from Mr. Alfred E. Kessler, Managing Director of that organization. He enclosed a picture of the statue of William Hendricks which stands on the lawn of the Capitol Building. The letter read, in part:

"Hendricks was quite a guy and you should be proud of having your county named after him. Now that we're becoming better acquainted with the history of our component counties, the pieces are beginning to fit together. For example, the enclosed photograph shows a statue on the front of the Capitol building lawn. This photo was taken when the youngsters were going to the Julia Jameson Health Camp for Children for the second session in July of this year. A couple weeks later, Steve Powers and I went down to the Shelby County fairgrounds to put up our "Test Your Breath" exhibit and, lo and behold, there on the fairgrounds was the actual one room log cabin in which Hendricks had been born or reared as a youngster. In addition, there is a bronze plaque telling of the four or five major points in his career."

H C H S

Hendricks County Historical Museum

Mrs. Rita Lieske, president of the Museum Board of the Hendricks County Historical Society reports that progress is being made and many committees are at work with plans. In a project as big and as important as this, the wheels must turn slowly for it is a time that calls for careful thought and planning. Although the Museum is sponsored by the Society, the Commissioners and the Hendricks County Council, to be a success, it must be supported by the entire county. It is hoped that all civic and cultural organizations of the county will get behind us and give us all the moral, physical and/or financial support they can. And we want to congratulate the Board on the progress already made.

Standing Committees named to serve with the Museum Board of the Hendricks County Historical Society are:

Ways and Means; Jack Miller, chairman; Scott Hosier, Willard Eggers, Everett Weaver, one person from the Docent Committee.

Acquisition; Mildred Hosier, chairman; Darlene Lynch, Dorothy Basham, Donald and Elizabeth Shields, Roy and Frances Fisher, Blanche Wean. Acquisition of books and important papers; Thelma McCartney.

Publicity; Jewell Bell

Curatorial; Dessie Huddleston, chairman; Rita Lieske, Dorothy Kelley, Barbara Stauch, Sarah Parsons.

Maintenance; Clark Kellum, chairman. Volunteers from the Historical Society would be appreciated.

Clerical; Ruth Hall and Diana Helton, co-chairmen; Rose Marie Warren, Evelyn McKee, Ruth Dinsmore, Helen Walker.

Docent Committee will be interested ladies of the Historical Society and will serve as tour hostesses in the Museum.

By-laws; Dorothy Kelley, chairman; Dessie Huddleston, Jack Gambold, Darlene Lynch.

Here are some suggestions, but not definite guidelines, of materials wanted:

Pewter, paper weights, Indian artifacts, primitives, bottles, candlesticks, various lamps, quilts, coverlets, odd chairs, pattern glassware, cut glassware, painted bowls, plates, dishes, compotes, old copper, brass and silver. Silhouettes, paintings by Hendricks County artists, certain mirrors and quality rugs.

It is our intention that most items will eventually be exhibited on a rotating basis. Items for the Museum are to be donated for present or future display. Loaned materials will also be excepted under necessary conditions protecting both the party lending and the Museum.

It is our hope to have actual rooms displayed as a living museum to represent life in Hendricks County from the middle 1800's to the early 1900's. We are interested in acquiring furniture and accessories that would have been used in a Victorian parlor; examples would be: loveseats, chairs, tables, vases, and clocks. The bedroom furniture could be from any period from our early Hendricks County heritage. One example that should be displayed with the bedroom furniture is a washstand and wash bowl and pitcher set.

The Clerical Committee of the Museum needs a desk and a typewriter that is in good enough condition to be utilized. If you should have a desk or a typewriter that you would like to donate, please call Ruth Hall 994-5775 or Rita Lieske 745-4334.

Let's not use the Museum for our cast offs but rather for teaching youth and creating a pleasant reminder of our heritage.

Indiana Collection
PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAINFIELD, INDIANA