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# HENDRICKS COUNTY

## HISTORY BULLETIN



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AUGUST, 1979  
PUBLISHED BY  
THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
DANVILLE, INDIANA

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HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

ORGANIZED 1967

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ANNUAL DUES \$3.00 PAYABLE IN NOVEMBER

H C H S

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Margaret Baker  
(Mrs. C. Rawleigh Baker)  
9 Round Hill Road  
Danville, IN 46122  
Tel. 745-2115

H C H S

Stanley Hall once called the great sin of maturity is losing one's zest for life.

C. RAWLEIGH BAKER

August 22, 1911 - July 30, 1979

HE IS NOT DEAD

I cannot say, and I will not say  
That he is dead. He is just away.  
With a cheery smile, and a wave of the hand,  
He has wandered into an unknown land  
And left us dreaming how very fair  
It needs must be, since he lingers there.  
And you-oh, you, who the wildest yearn  
For an old-time step, and the glad return,  
Think of him faring on, as dear  
In the love of There as the love of Here.  
Think of him still as the same. I say,  
He is not dead-he is just away.

James Whitcomb Riley

This insertion is made in tribute to C. Rawleigh Baker - and in appreciation and understanding of the problems Margaret has had while preparing this bulletin.



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#### MAY MEETING

Our Society met Sunday, May 6, at the historical Salem Church. After our president, Randall Joseph, called the meeting to order, the Rev. John Parsons, pastor of the church, gave the invocation.

Following the usual business, Mr. Clark Kellum gave a financial report. Although our Society isn't in the greatest financial condition, we still have 1200 histories to be sold, and when that has been done, we will be out of indebtedness.

These books are becoming more and more valuable each year, and when they are all gone, they will be much in demand. So we all should invest in as many of them as we think our families may want in the future, and we should urge others to do the same.

Mrs. Jerry Chandler, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, discussed future money-making projects which we will hear more about later.

Mrs. Roy Pritchard gave an interesting history of the Salem Church. It dates back to 1829 when a Methodist Society was formed from which grew the church. The present building was built in 1850.

Mrs. Chandler introduced the speaker, Miss Pam Najar from the Indiana State Library who discussed "PRESERVING YOUR MEMORIES". She talked on conservation of old materials and showed slides to illustrate the work. A question and answer period followed.

The ladies of Liberty, Franklin and Guilford Townships served coffee, delicious punch and cookies in the basement where the tables were springlike with bowls of living violets in full bloom. 57 members and guests were present at this unusual meeting.

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#### AUGUST MEETING COMING UP

Have you ever wanted to hear and see senior citizens like most of yourselves bring back those song and dance acts of years gone by? Are you tired of hearing the loud rock and roll music and disco? Wouldn't it be nice to sit back and relax and clap or toe-tap to the rhythm of those old songs that you used to sing? How about watching the Charleston or someone playing a Boozaphone or a banjo? How would you like to sing-along to those favorite old hymns? Our program for August 12th will take a different approach to preserving our heritage. The theme for the day will be Fun and Frolic of Yesteryear. You are invited to sit back and enjoy the "60-Plus Group" who are a cast of men and women between the ages of 60 and 90 years of age who enjoy getting together two or three times a week and performing for shopping mall programs, hospitals and nursing homes. We are fortunate to be first to have them come to Hendricks County. The group is under the guidance of Mrs. Eddie Sparks who promises a great time for all. The program will begin promptly at 2:00 P.M. and will be followed by the business meeting and special refreshments. Don't miss it!

Place - Brownsburg High School Cafeteria

(We have been asked to use the south door)

Directions - From the main stoplight in downtown Brownsburg, go on St. Rd. 267 South to Tilden Road then East or left to the school

OR

Go East on 136 to Odell Street, turning at the Sunoco Service Station to the right or South to the school.

Hope to see you then. Ladies of Brown, Lincoln and Washington Townships will cook up something tasty, I'll betcha!

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

#### FINANCIAL REPORT OF HISTORY BOOK SALES

The History of Hendricks County, 1914-1976 is not yet history. Many copies are still alive and well in boxes just waiting to be claimed by those many residents of Hendricks County, past and present, who might, like one owner, stay up all night to read it when it first arrived. It is that exciting reading!

Although 2000 copies have been sold and in the course of time there is no doubt the time will come when they are out of print and much sought after, there is a need to sell 1000 more (the balance). You see one reason they are alive and well is because there is still a healthy debt hanging over them. The sooner it is paid, the less interest will eat up the profit which should help to support the museum.

In fact, a number of loyal and civic-minded individuals have already loaned interest free to the Book Fund or made outright gifts in order to eliminate the parasitic interest. Those persons are Dorothy Kelly, Mildred Smith, Ed and Mary Jeanette Winkleman, Roy and Frances Fisher, John C. and Ida Mae Miller, Audrey J. Martin, Ruth Dinsmore, Gene Ayres, Rawleigh and Margaret Baker, Edgar Parker, First National Bank and Trust of Plainfield, Ondah Evans, George and Vanita Hadley, Larry D. Summers of Century 21 of Brownsburg, Robert and Eloise Castetter, D. P. and Helen Daum, C. F. Roark Company, David M. and Ruth Hadley, Clark and Carolyn Kellum.

Of the \$16,000 in obligations we had on the book as of February 1, 1979 \$9000 has been loaned or donated. Can you also help by making an interest free loan to help retire this \$7000 balance?

As books are sold the money will be pro-rated to those making loans. It is hoped the debt can be retired in five years and what a good feeling to know you have helped.

Another way to help, of course, is to push sales. Do you know of families without copies and indexes? Do your children and parents all have histories with indexes? Christmas and birthdays are coming and this could be an appropriate gift.

The "books" are selling but too slowly. Let's all put our shoulders to the wheel and push from now until Christmas.

If you can help with the loan, please let Clark Kellum know.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

MUSEUM, MUSINGS

by  
Jewell Bell

For those of you who didn't get to the May meeting, and didn't hear the account of the sad fate one of our poor mannequins met, maybe you ought to be filled in. The docent led her group up the stairs with a flourish and into the master bedroom, when what did they see but a fair mannequin all in a heap! Yes she had fallen out of her chair. Turns out that a great deal of effort had been made to put her together in the first place and some of that effort had fizzled. Scotch tape to the rescue! But the night was cold and the tape didn't hold, so there was quite a let-down. They got her up and back into her chair, but she, in spite of their best efforts, still looks a little wan.

When the tulips finished blooming, petunias and snapdragons were planted to give a continuous array of bloom. They will be pretty until frost.

The museum has received a great many items over the months. Some of them include: a school geography, (1858); an advanced geography (1863); and for comic book fans, a Roger Bean comic book, Baby Grand Edition; assorted pictures; kitchen tools; a head scarf worn during WWII. An enormous collection of memorabilia came from the estate of Clifford (Click) Relander, formerly of Danville, late of Yakima, Washington. Items included a bronze sculptor head of Indian Medicine Singer, with stand, a display board, a black display cabinet, a suitcase of brown leather with straps, a Navajo Indian rug, a book entitled "Drummers and Dreamers" one of four books written by Mr. Relander, a family album beautifully bound in pale blue plush, a Bible (1881), a framed rock formation, many newspaper clippings and many photographs. There was a folder full of clippings about the Easter Pageant at Marion, Ind. There was also a clock shelf taken from a home built in 1852. And an envelope of poems by Margaret Baker, yes, our Margaret. We didn't stop until we read them all. They were darling!

Debbie Higgins, Danville, is one of our docents and likes to show visitors over the museum, but especially likes to show youngsters through the jail cells, and watch their expressions. It is a spooky experience to go through the cells, and maybe some one just might think twice about doing something that might land him behind bars. Debbie is a member of our Historical Society, a Girl Scout for almost ten years, is active in school affairs, and holds an office on the Future Homemakers of America. She likes reading, bicycling, tennis, bowling and square-dancing. She is one busy young lady!

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QUERIES

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Would like to correspond with any descendants of James S. Odell, b. N.C., 11 - 3 - 1807, d. Belleville, IN 1857. m. Anna Moore 11 - 3 - 1837. Please write E. Pauline (Odell) Largan, 12 West Ct., Lafayette, IN 47905

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Smith and "kin" ... John D. Smith, wife Delila Beckley, children, James S., John W., Roxana, Margaret S. (1850 census - Middle Twp.) James S. Smith married Mary E. "Polly" Sacre (in late 1850's) children Sarah Jane, m. John Horace Jackson - William and John 1860 Census. 1864 took William Samuel Whitley to raise (Oct,) mother Sarah Whitley died Oct. 8, 1864 in possible Center or Marion area - sister Anne (possibly Cora Anne) taken by their "kin".

Sacre - Beckley - Smith - DeWitt - Whitley - Owens - Morphey - Sigman - Wilson ... these are some of the known "kin", also John Conner and Russell. Also need information on Ransom Puckett and John Robinson in North Salem, Roachdale area. The DeWitts, Russells, etc. lived near old Biddle school. Mrs. Charles R. Long, 2721 Allen Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46203. Mrs. Long has much to share and a SASE would be helpful.

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HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

A letter from Rula D. Cash from Banning, CA, was amusing, so we'll pass along some of her remarks. After saying a few nice things about THE BULLETIN (which we liked, of course) she told of her favorite cartoon which reads, "What this country needs is more family trees that produce more lumber and not so many nuts!" She has an uncle who tells her that she is the one who keeps their family tree alive because she is the sap! In answer to your question, Rula, our four genealogists are listed on the inside of the cover of THE BULLETIN.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY !!!!!!!

Friends and neighbors gathered Saturday night, July 21, to celebrate the 94th birthday of one of our most beloved and most loyal members, Mr. Will Templin. Mr. Templin never misses a meeting of the HCHS and he contributed more interesting articles to our display table than any one else. (Incidentally, what ever happened to our display table?) He has a garden that would put the rest of us to shame and is one of the busiest people around. Congratulations to a most remarkable gentleman!

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

WITH OUR V I P'S

In two recent issues of THE HENDRICKS COUNTY FLYER, Martha McKnight, librarian at Plainfield Library, ran articles about the work two of our members have been



quietly doing for the last several years. The articles were so well written and so very interesting, that I am going to print them in their entirety, (without anyone's consent) for it would be a shame to try to condense them. Even the titles are clever! Just wish we could use pictures.

#### READ ANY GOOD CEMETERIES LATELY?

Ruth Pritchard and Grace Cox read cemeteries!

Now, we all know what reading a book means. Some of us even profess to read minds. And librarians know that "reading shelves" means looking at book spines to be sure the books are in the correct order on the shelves.

But READING a cemetery?

One balmy spring day recently I went with Ruth (who comes from Belleville) and Grace (who is a Danville resident) to find out how they read cemeteries. When I asked Ruth if I could take a picture of them for a story, my idea was that we would slip over to the nearest cemetery for a couple of minutes. But these two ladies don't do things by halves!

We set out in Ruth's car, heading west towards Belleville, and then south on the narrow, winding county roads. As she drove, Ruth kept up a running commentary on the houses we were passing.

"So-and-so lives in that home over on the hill. They bought it from Such-and-such. Do you remember them, Grace?"

And Grace would usually nod assent, sometimes confirming that she had taught one of the family during her 35 years of teaching business subjects in the area's high schools.

"Why do you read cemeteries?" I asked from the back seat.

"Many of the cemeteries don't have registers, or they were incomplete," Ruth explained. She added that her goal is to read all the cemeteries in Hendricks County, and she and Grace had been working together on this project since 1974. "I did the Salem cemetery in 1963," she recalled.

Ruth and Grace hope to complete an accurate listing of everyone who has been buried in the county, making this information available to the county libraries where genealogists and local historians can find it. Willard Heiss, in his regular Saturday column "Ancestoritis" in the Indianapolis News, points out that cemetery inscriptions are one of the few sources for birth and death dates before 1900.

Ruth explained that we were going to the Center Valley Cemetery where she serves on the Board of Directors. Friends of hers would be sitting there that afternoon.

"Sitting?" I puzzled. Why would anyone sit in a cemetery?

"Our cemetery depends largely on contributions for its maintenance," was her reply. So for several days preceding Decoration Day volunteers take turns at the cemetery to accept gifts of money.

When we reached the cemetery, which is set on a gentle rise bordering the road, Ruth turned into the grounds and parked her car. She went over to explain our visit to the "sitters." Then she and Grace unloaded their working equipment from the car's trunk. Out came a two-wheeled grocery cart and a clipboard. They did not remove the rakes and spade; these tools are often necessary when they work in cemeteries that are no longer maintained as carefully as the Center Valley one.

We set off between the graves, Ruth pointing out her favorite headstones as she led the way. Grace followed, dressed in her working slacks and a bib apron, pulling the cart behind her. I brought up the rear with the library Polaroid camera.

The Center Valley cemetery is a familiar one for Ruth. She read it years ago, and many of her husband's family have been buried there. She proudly pointed out the massive Indiana limestone marker set by the roadside. "We got that from Bedford," she told us. On one side is carved the name of the cemetery, and on the other is the information that here was the site of the Regular Baptist Church.

This was originally the church graveyard, "though there were some Methodists buried here, too," she observed. Now it is a community cemetery.

The two ladies paused often to admire the artistry of some of the monuments. "Do you think these grape leaves would show up in a photo?" asked Ruth hopefully, and they did, as well as the symbols that told us that William G Duncan, in whose memory the stone was erected, belonged to the Masons and Oddfellows. Ruth pointed out other unusual features, like the carved sheaf of wheat atop one marker, and another stone which had a top resembling a steep, gabled roof.

As Ruth Pritchard, Grace Cox and I continued to explore the Center Valley cemetery, we stopped beside a small white marker belonging to a girl who had lived only 18 brief years. Near the bottom of the stone were carved a couple of lines of what appeared to be verse. We all bent closer to try to decipher the words.

Grace pulled out a huge chunk of blue chalk and methodically rubbed it across the stone. The words appeared slightly more distinct. Then she worked with a chalk eraser and a block of styrofoam to clear away the fungus which had dulled the inscription. Finally we were confident we could make out the words:

"Her spirit smiles from that bright shore  
And softly whispers weep no more."

The blue chalk washes off with the first rain, but the ladies have had to explain to inquiring police officers more than once that they are not vandals painting tombstones!

Grace slipped a card under the clamp of her clipboard and transcribed in pencil all the information from the stone: the name, dates of birth and death, and the verse we had just read.

On another gravestone Grace noted what she thought was the name of a dealer. Out came the blue chalk again, and soon the words "Nichols and Whitson, Gosport" became legible. Here was another bit of information that might prove of interest to someone reconstructing the history of the area.

In one row we came on a fallen marker with a particularly clear representation of a weeping willow, or "tree of life," which was a favorite decoration in the late

1800's. Ruth and Grace pried the heavy stone loose and propped it up for another photograph.

Grace recalled one abandoned cemetery where they spied the tip of a marker buried by the work of groundhogs. She and some friends laboriously dug away the earth until they had uncovered a slab five feet long, and it took five people to lift it up. When they turned it over to read the inscription, they discovered.... nothing at all!

On the way back to the library, Grace handed me a stack of neatly typewritten sheets which represented the culmination of their labors on the Danville East cemetery. Here they had identified by numbered rows each grave with names, dates, and sometimes an additional phrase of description. They had collected 1,072 inscriptions in all. The Plainfield Public Library has copies of each of the lists the two ladies have compiled. Their accuracy can be trusted, because Grace and Ruth have made final "proofreading" trips to the cemeteries.

They have also indexed the lists so researchers do not need to pore over them page by page. If they are looking for a specific person, they can go directly to the index and look up the name there. Still another part of their labor has been to reproduce township maps locating every know graveyard. The genealogists who turn to us for help have much to be grateful for the labors of these two delightful and enterprising ladies.

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#### SALEM SESQUICENTENNIAL

The Belleville Bible Church which now meets in the Salem Church, will celebrate the Sesquicentennial of the founding of the historic Methodist Church August 19 with an all-day, old fashioned get-to-gether.

The morning service will be at 10:00 A.M. with Jerry Day, pastor of the Berean Bible Church of Columbus, IN, as the speaker. At noon, 12:30, a basket dinner will be held with a tent in the yard to handle the crowd and for maybe a little protection in case the weather man does not co-operate. The afternoon program will feature the well known singing group, THE GOSPEL SERVICE. At 6:00 a good old rousing song fest will be held.

Mr. John O. Parsons of Belleville, is pastor of the church, and he and his congregation deserve the gratitude of heritage-minded folk for recognizing the significance of this milestone. We hope the occasion will be enthusiastically supported.

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#### MUSEUM FEATURED

The Plainfield Library will feature the Hendricks County Historical Museum during the next two months. Their displays are always so professionally and artfully arranged, it will be worth a trip there just to learn what has been accomplished (without money) by our Museum Board in just a few years. Our thanks to the Plainfield Library.

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The Society was shocked and saddened with the recent death of the Rev. James Shockley. He has served the Hendricks County area greatly for many years as pastor, teacher, counsellor and friend of all. He was president of HCHS in 1976 and his accomplishments and contributions for good are too numerous to ennumerate. The Society extends deepest sympathy to his wife, Alma, and his family. These words of Whittier's are comforting at a time such as this:

Alas for him who never sees  
The stars shine through his cypress trees,  
.....  
Who has not learned, in hours of faith,  
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,  
That Life is ever lord of Death,  
And Love can never lose its own!

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ROSES IN DECEMBER

One of the most delightful experiences I have had recently is discovering ROSES IN DECEMBER, a book crammed full of love and nostalgia and written by Clara Reitzel. The fact that she wrote it for her family, with never a thought that any one else might be interested in it, makes it even more precious.

The title comes from the beautiful phrase, "God gives us memories that we may have roses in December." It consists of a series of little vignettes, each titled I REMEMBER and they are dated from the house in which she was born in 1899 almost up to the present.

A sampling of titles includes I REMEMBER THRESHING DAY, I REMEMBER THE FIRST TELEPHONE, I REMEMBER THE FIRST AUTOMOBILE RIDE, I REMEMBER MAY BASKETS, I REMEMBER COLLEGE DAYS AT I.U. AND THE PURDUE - I.U. FOOTBALL GAMES, and the list could go on and on.

The book includes pictures and a 1903 advertisement for buggies. The "XX Flyer", \$ 38.50 F.O.B. Chicago, from (where else?) Montgomery Ward and Co., Chicago.

To make the book more unusual, more valuable and more praiseworthy, Ruth Pritchard has very carefully and thoroughly indexed it with this inscription: "This index has been done in appreciation of Clara's beautiful word pictures on these pages of the past and to express thanks to her for sharing her memories."

How can I choose one sample of her stories over another? Maybe the way some people choose a passage from the Bible .... close your eyes, and open the book.

Since paper and printing cost money (which is what the HCHS has the least of), here is a short and charming portrait of the past, which is just a hint of the many, many more included in this labor of love:

I REMEMBER THE ASH BARRELS

The ashes from the various stoves in our house were cleaned out each day and emptied into wooden barrels. There were five or more of these barrels on a wooden

platform in the chicken lot. When Spring came, water was poured over the ashes to leach them. This water was drained off through a hole at the bottom of the barrel. This was lye water, and used with all the grease, scraps of meat, bacon rinds and such to make soap. The lye water and grease were boiled over an open fire in a large black iron kettle and had to be stirred all the time. It usually took all day to make soap, which was thick, yellowish and a jelly-like liquid. It was called "soft soap". Sometimes it would boil down thick enough to pour into wooden boxes, and after curing or drying a while could be cut into bars. When it needed to be used, the soap was shaved off in thin pieces that would dissolve in water easier. The lye made the colors fade in the wash, but that was the only soap we had at the time. We used bought soap for dishwashing and there was always IVORY "99 and 44/100% pure" for toilet soap. The men used tar soap to get the grime off their hands.

It is really sad that we can't include more of the fascinating remembrances this time, but, the good Lord willing, and the inflationary price of paper and postage doesn't go too berserk, we will try to include a few more of these tasty morsels to you next time.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

TO OUR PRESIDENT

As we all know, our president, Randall Joseph, is a very quiet, unassuming but a most capable man. I always consult him to see if he has a "message" for the BULLETIN. He is a man who, when he has nothing to say, says nothing. How I wish he were in the White House! (Please don't call me partisan for I doubt that we always agree politically.)

But he has had important things to do recently. His 9 year old grandson is with them (his father was tragically killed in the Pacific) and they have been fishin'. They have more fishin' to do as well as other things, but I can assure you that Randall is on top of HCHS and knows what is going on.

God Bless You, Randall and Virginia, with that little red haired grandson, and don't let HCHS interfere with those priceless moments. They pass too fast! You and Virginia have the blessings of all the HCHS in your enjoyment of your precious grandson!!!!!!

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

WELCOME !!!

The following names have been added to our membership list recently:

Michael L. Potter, Danville, R R  
Mr. and Mrs. George H. Cook, Amarillo, Texas  
E. Pauline Largen, Lafayette, IN  
Mr. and Mrs. John Parsons, Belleville, IN  
Mr. Howard S. Wood, Danville, R R

We welcome all of you and hope you will enjoy keeping in touch with us, if not by attending our meetings (after all, Texas is a pretty far piece) at least through THE BULLETIN. Incidentally, maybe Mr. Wood could persuade his son, Stan, the Weather Man, to smile on us, especially on our meeting days.

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CENTURY OLD CLIPPINGS

Most of these items have been selected at random from various issues of the 1866 HENDRICKS COUNTY UNION. Some are of importance, some are rather frivolous, but we hope they will bring some enjoyment to our readers. Grace Cox gets the credit or blame, as the case may be!

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A lady, speaking of the gathering of lawyers to dedicate a new court house, said she supposed they had gone to view ground where they must shortly lie. (The Ed's apologies to our old time lawyers.)

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LOOK OUT ROUGHS ... Work on our new County Jail, though just commencing, stands a chance of speedy completion; and as the "County Dads" are sanguine of having design-one imprenetrable, and un-come-out-able to all evil doers, it would be advisable for all "bad cusses", if any there be, to get out of town as soon as possible.

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SWISS BELL RINGERS ... The world renowned Peak family, considered one of the finest singing troupes, excelling the famous Hutchison family, propose giving a concert here on next Monday evening, the 21st inst. at the Missionary Baptist Church. This will be a rare treat for our citizens.

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ENTERTAINMENT ... Mr. Bonham will give a public entertainment in the Chapel of the Danville Academy on next Tuesday eve, consisting of recitations, choice songs with guitar accompaniments, select readings, etc. Mr. Bonham is a fine elocutionist and a good singer, and will give an entertainment worthy of patronage.

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YEARLY MEETING ... The Friends Yearly Meeting convenes at Plainfield on the 13th inst. Sunday and Wednesday will be public days.

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Public Exam of Teachers for license on the fourth Saturday this month, September 22 in Danville commencing at 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  A.M. A. J. Johnson, County Examiner.

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A WIFE'S RIGHTS ... "Wife," said the married man, looking for his bootjack after she was in bed. "I have a place for all things and you ought to know it by this time." "Yes," replied she, "I ought to know where you keep your late hours, but I don't."

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS



Hendricks County Historical Society Publications

The History of Hendricks County

1914-1976

John R. McDowell, editor

White Arts Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

October 1976

640 pages

Price - \$25.00 + \$1.00 Sales Tax

Complete Index of the History of Hendricks County

John R. McDowell, editor

Ruth Dorrell, index

with assistance of Carolyn Kellum and others

Starken Printing Co., Plainfield, Indiana

December, 1977

Price - \$2.00 + Sales Tax

Hendricks County Program Indiana Sesquicentennial

Written by Sesquicentennial Committee Members

1816-1966

Price - \$1.00

Hendricks County Sesquicentennial Pageant Program

Produced and Directed by Charles Robert Epstein

Honoring Our Heritage in Hendricks

Ruth Mitchell Pritchard

1974

43 pages

Price - \$2.00

Other Historical Merchandise

Notepaper of Central Normal College

Key Four, Fort Wayne, Indiana - printer

Price - \$1.65 per package (10 notes)

Hendricks County Plates

Price - \$2.00

Order from

Hendricks County Historical Society

Box 128

Danville, Indiana 46122

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

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