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HENDRICKS COUNTY

HISTORY BULLETIN



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THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DANVILLE, INDIANA

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H C H S

The Hendricks County Historical Bulletin is published quarterly in February, May, August and November. It is distributed without charge to members of the Society and to Hendricks County School Libraries. Individual copies of \$1.00. Communications concerning back copies or individual copies should be addressed to our secretary. Contributions or suggestions to The Bulletin should be mailed to the editor.

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H C H S

I live in constant endeavor to fence against the infirmities of ill health and other evils of life by mirth; being firmly persuaded that every time a man smiles, ... but much more so, when he laughs, that it adds something to this Fragment of Life.

Laurence Sterne

Greetings from our President

Space ship COLUMBIA has made another trip beyond the atmosphere. Wouldn't that announcement have startled our forefathers if it had been made at the birth of our country, 106 years ago!

As the hatred and strife, war and destruction, sickness, suffering and starvation throughout the world is made so real to us in our living rooms via T V, I sometimes wonder if we here, in our own beloved country, in our own Hendricks County, appreciate our great blessings. As one cruises about on the highways and byways of our county, one cannot help but be impressed with the richness and abundance, the health and happiness, and the love and good will with which we are all surrounded. How can we help but say with William Herschell, "Ain't God good to Indiana? Ain't He fellers? Ain't He though?"

Among our many freedoms ... freedoms that many people in the world do not enjoy ... is the freedom to go where we want to, when we want to. Let's exercise that freedom August 1st, our next meeting. Hope to see you there.

Maynard

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

MAY MEETING

Fifty-three members and guests gathered at the Brownsburg Public Library, May 2, to see and enjoy the beauty, the newness, the comfort and the many modern features of this spacious facility. Billy Jo Hoffman and Mrs. Pearson of the library staff were gracious hostesses, explaining the many functions of the library and answering questions. Following the meeting, we were free to browse and inspect.

The meeting opened with devotions by Margaret Hufford. Dorothy Kelly introduced a group of young people from Avon known as the Little Hoosiers. They gave an interesting program telling of their various activities, their experiences in making an Indiana flag and decorating the Museum one Christmas. Two of the boys gave a skit about Avon history. We congratulate the Little Hoosiers and hope they will come back.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of two members, the late Beulah Muston and Joe Davidson. The committee working on the history of the Danville Square reported and it was decided, as a new project, to work up the histories of schools in Hendricks County. Maxine Cox and Grace Cox are indexing the records of the Hendricks County Sesquicentennial and the book on the cemetery project will be at the next meeting.

Following the meeting refreshments were served by the ladies of Lincoln and Brown Townships.

AUGUST MEETING

A MEETING OF THE OLYMPIAN LYCEUM will be held, August 1st at the Pittsboro United Methodist Church and all members of the HCHS are invited. You will be delighted to see such names on the program as Elnora Hadley, Mabel Hadley, Willus Collins, Verlin Moon, Pearl Hadley, Olin Hadley, Orien Hadley, Lawrence Hadley, Ozro Hadley, Jesse Hardwick, Elwood Kennedy, Frances Bray, Alva Shirley, Florence Nicholson and Wilson Shaw and Mary Carter. Lois Crayton flatly refuses to reveal any more about the program, so come and see for yourself. August 1st, at 2:00 P.M.

MUSEUM MUSINGS

First off we must compliment the Hendricks County Garden Club for the flower bed at the museum. You did it again, gals! There is a profusion of marigolds, coleus, geraniums, and maybe some we overlooked, all gorgeous.

We've had scout troops visit us and individuals of all ages. For some, seeing the items in the museum is a new experience. Simply remarkable, almost unbelievable how mankind got along without electricity! Well, its been a long time since those days. Lots of people today don't know the thrill of turning on the lights for the first time. To some, lighting a lamp would be fascinating. One didn't need to belong to an exercise club even if one were available. What with the chopping wood, beating rugs, and doing everything else that we flip a switch for now, it was a relief to stop for a while. Then older visitors can talk at length about each thing they see. Why, they'd helped their parents use them many a time. Just sit back and listen to the stories. We have, and they are interesting, and oft times funny. The memories come out from all over. Yes, and sometimes we'll get a new name for something we thought already had a name! "Yes, that's what that is! Why my grand-daddy used one of them things for years, and that's what he called it." Well, usually grand-daddy's word was considered RIGHT.

We recently received a family album with all the pictures identified. How wonderful! We've had so many pictures brought in that aren't identified. There is a churn, made of wood, in a five gallon size, that operates with a crank instead of a dasher. More like the little glass churns of later years. Another item that caught this writer's eye was the book of minutes of an old threshing ring dated back to the early years of this century. For those familiar with the procedures of old-time threshing, this would certainly bring back a lot of memories. We've got a picture to back it all up right here in the museum.

In the gift shop is a wall hanging done in needlepoint entitled "Remembered Times, Familiar Faces". Subjects included were the old school house, country church, country store, and the farm house. That takes us back to when communities were smaller, and transportation was slower. The horse and buggy, and shank's pony took care of that. The church, where most everyone went, some regularly, some not so often, brought neighbors closer together. Community news was exchanged. They rejoiced with one neighbor's good fortune, and grieved with another when bad luck struck, and tried to do what they could to help. The store made a good loafing place for some. The stories grew more mellow with each telling. News was swapped there too. The school was a place of learning. Not just "books", but life. No one dared to pull any funny stuff because news traveled fast and got home before the culprit did. The farm house in the picture shows three stories! There were lots of big families, but how did the mother negotiate all those flights so many times a day! Surely she got "rheumatiz" some where along the line.

Yes, communities were smaller, folks were largely farmers. They most usually all knew one another. Now, it's different. In lots of instances families don't know their next door neighbors. They go for miles to associate with friends. Their church is often not very close. Schools are consolidated and many parents have likely never been in their child's school. Homes, more and more are on one floor. Not that there's anything wrong with that. The store today is a super-market where one rushes in and out and very seldom sees many one knows.

Jewell

The students also had a muzzle loading and pistol demonstration by Richard Tuttle. They joined together for a square dance.

The scene shifted to nearby Arbuckle Acres Park for an old-fashioned pioneer lunch prepared by 4th grade mothers under the direction of Mrs. Mary Kay Devlin. The day was completed with pioneer games under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Tuttle.

This article appeared in the
Hendricks County Flyer
Wednesday, June 16, 1982

HC HS HC HS HC HS HC HS HC HS

REMEMBER WHEN

- Lamp oil sold for 11 cents a gallon?
- Gasoline pumps rang on every gallon?
- Six bars of soap sold for 23 cents?
- You could buy three dozen eggs for a quarter?
- Girls wore middy blouses with sailor collars and box pleated skirts?
- The first permanent waves were done by long electric wires under a big metal hood?
- Most drug stores sold ice cream as a side line?
- Radio fans became excited when they picked up a station other than KDKA - Pittsburg?
- The "Golden Girl", with her abbreviated costume, caused a sensation at the opening of the Purdue football season?
- Mail was delivered twice daily?
- A lantern was hung on the side of the buggy for night driving?
- The doctor made house calls?
- You could go sliding down the newly threshed hay stack?
- The pleasurable car ride somehow always incurred a flat tire?
- The Saturday night bath was taken in a tub behind the heating stove?
- Cream was skimmed from the top of a crock of milk for making butter?
- And remember how butter was made? And the taste of new butter on a cracker?
- The living room rug was on the clothes line for its annual beating?
- Grandma never had to baby-sit?

HC HS HC HS HC HS HC HS HC HS

Indiana Collection
PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAINFIELD, INDIANA

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

COLLEGE DAYS RECALLED BY RETURNING STUDENTS

More than 200 graduates and former students of Central Normal College and Canterbury College returned to Danville Saturday for another reunion of the two colleges ... the last of which closed its doors in 1951. The day long program ended at the Danville Friends Church, where former college president, Virgil Hunt, presented a tribute to the late Bertha Watts, former CNC English teacher. The church was filled to capacity.

The following article appeared in THE CAMPUS CRIER which was published after the reunion:

TO A LIVING MEMORY

Why have a Reunion for a College which has not been in existence since 1951? Generally a reunion is a time of planning for the future and raising funds for improvements or scholarships!

None of that happens at the Reunion of former students and alumni of the Central Normal - Canterbury College. But it is so wonderful to bridge the gap between former days.

The group has certainly made its contribution to the education programs. Tributes are given to those who are now retiring. At one time approximately one-third of the teachers of Indiana had attended CNC.

Politically CNC has rendered a service. Governors, congressmen and county leaders have made a lasting contribution.

But probably best of all has been the answers to question about the next generation of the CNC-Canterbury prodigy. "They are doing things locally, nationwide, and world wide."

We could philosophize about the history that we have all given to this generation - a sense of right vs. wrong, of responsibility and willingness to work. These were definitely fundamental traits of those students who gathered at CNC without much money but with an aim to make a real contribution.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

STUDENTS LEARN HISTORY FIRST HAND

Bib overalls, neckerchiefs, long dresses, and bonnets were much in evidence as the fourth grade of St. Malachy School finished their year-long study of Indiana History, with a day of "pioneer activities".

The various activities and events, which filled a full school day's schedule, were planned by teachers Mrs. Beth Lewis and Mrs. Mary Ann Holt with help of classroom parents.

The day began in the classrooms with making horn books for the "loud school", a spelling bee, and craft activities such as dipping candles and making pioneer balls which were used later in the day for pioneer games.

The grave is west of Ind. 267 and south of I-74. It is on the crest of a steep hill overlooking White Lick Creek. The grave is practically impossible to find by someone unfamiliar with the area.

Mrs. Coffman, a retired teacher, said, "Winston loves doing this. He feels few would remember Jonathan Ward."

As the shot echoed through the trees and smoke blew skyward, Coffman looked at the grave and reflected; "I wonder if any of his relatives are buried around here. I heard there are several Indian graves."

The stone, bearing the simple words, Jonathan Ward, U.S. Soldier, Rev. War, is worn by decades of weather.

Memorial Day was established in 1868 after the Civil War. The few surviving Revolutionary War veterans and the dead of American wars were honored that year.

Jonathan Ward may have been missed that year.

But Winston and Mary Coffman made sure he wasn't Monday.

This article written by William E. Anderson
Star Staff Reporter appeared in
The Indianapolis Star Newspaper

Footnote:

A member of our Society, Mary Ward, of Pittsboro, married into the Ward family who are distant descendants of Jonathan Ward.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

CLARK KELLUM'S MEMORY KEPT FRESH

Exerpts from the June 2 HENDRICKS COUNTY FLYER:

"The combined gifts of 67 individuals and three organizations in memory of the late Clark Kellum have made possible a large microfilming project at the Plainfield Public Library.

"The indexing of the newspapers, a task that has been undertaken by Betty Bartley, with help from other staff members and volunteer typist, Ursula Lamb, will vastly ease the finding of information in the paper and increase their usage. The card index and the newspapers on microfilm are just two more services that make the Historical Collection a uniquely valuable feature of the library.

"The Clark Kellum memorial gifts have paid for the microfilming of 14 bound volumes of Plainfield newspapers dating from 1886 to 1945. The microfilms are now stored in the Historical Room of the Library where patrons may view them on the library's microfilm readers."

What an appropriate memorial to a man who loved the Plainfield Library and gave so much time and effort in its behalf. It was truly a labor of love.

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NOTICE

The committee working on the history of the businesses on the Square in Danville needs photographs of the buildings and businesses. Anyone having such photos may contact Betty Bartley at the Danville Public Library (745-2604) to arrange for copying.

Another death of interest to many members was that of Mrs. Esta Saltee of Pittsboro. Esta will be remembered as the organist of the Pittsboro Christian Church where, at our 1980 August meeting, she entertained us with a delightful organ concert. She had furnished music at one other of our meetings and she will be greatly missed by the Pittsboro community. She will be remembered by many of our members as a gracious and wonderfully talented lady.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

SIMPLE RITE TRIMS GRAVE OF VETERAN
OF U.S.' FIRST WAR

Brownsburg, IN - The nation paused Monday to honor its war dead who fought to keep the United States free.

A Brownsburg couple paused to honor a war veteran who fought to make the United States free.

There were no parades, bands or declarations by politicians as Winston Coffman, 64, and his wife, Mary, both dressed in colonial clothing, visited the grave of Revolutionary War veteran Jonathan Ward.

They had to trudge nearly a mile through mud and high weeds, across a creek and up a small hill to the nearly hidden 140-year-old grave.

It was a trip Coffman has made hundreds of times. It was the ninth trip on Memorial Day to remember the veteran of the country's first war.

The American Legion had placed a small American flag on the grave at Coffman's request. Girl Scouts had placed a fence around the grave several years ago. Coffman and his wife have tried to keep the small site clear of growth.

Nature was ahead of them this year.

Mary Coffman, clad in a bluish quilted, calico, ankle-length dress and a bonnet to match, bent to straighten the flag and pull away ground cover.

Her husband, with a beaver hat perched on his head, reached into his horn pouch for a pellet and then squeezed gunpowder from his "possible" bag. The rifle loaded, he pushed the powder and pellet deep into the barrel. Then with his homemade musket poised, he fired one shot over the grave.

"God knows, people may think I'm crazy for doing this, but I feel good about it. My wife does too and I hope this is continued by my son after I'm gone."

As a youngster, Coffman's grandfather often visited with Jonathan Ward. Ward died in approximately 1840, about a quarter of a century after Indiana became a state.

Martin Van Buren was concluding a term as President of the United States and a former Indiana Territory governor, William Henry Harrison, would take office the following March.

When Ward settled in the late 1780s after service in the American Revolution, the area was part of the Virginia Territory and inhabited by Indians.

Coffman's grandfather remembered and passed it on to his son. Coffman heard it from his father. As a child, he visited the grave site while playing near White Lick Creek.

Meeting, etc. etc. But I must add that this group was high class in all respects. Of course I fell for Ozella from our very first meeting and I was kept so busy looking after her and trying to keep other young men from stealing her away from me that there is little else for me to write about, but by hard work and much scheming and lots of head work I did finally persuade her to marry me on November 24, 1887. The Rev. David Hadley tied the knot and he did a good job for it has not even slipped in 62 years.

On the farm at Mill Creek we had two fish Ponds. During the summer they were used as swimming pools. About 3 nights a week Elmer Stanley and Will Dickerson would come down and we would spend about 2 hours in the water, go home and how we would sleep!

About the year 1878, as near as I can recall now, there was a "split" or division in the Quaker Church. One side was composed of the younger or more "Progressive" (as we would call them today) members, who were in favor of singing in church, discarding the old time Quaker garb, also the plain language. The older members opposed these changes -- they were called "Old Foggies". Considerable ill feeling was the result. The "Progressives" fell heir to most of the church property, so the "Old Foggies" were compelled to build new churches for worship. (Let me say here that in my opinion the "Old Foggies" were the Back bone of the church. They were men and women whose honesty and integrity could not be questioned.) Father & Mother, while their sympathy was largely with the Foggies did not go along with them. But Uncle Al Furnas did. There were quite a number of the members of our meeting at Mill Creek who withdrew and built a meeting house and school house about 3/4 of a mile north of our farm. It was called "Sorghum Chapple" the right name was "Mill Creek Meeting". It got its name "Sorghum Chapple" because it was near a Sorghum Mill on Uncle Al Furnas' farm.

The school house would seat about 30 pupils. Teachers were imported from Philadelphia, PA., and other Eastern schools. They were high class and well educated. The first teacher was a Sarah Hallack, a niece of Gen. Hallack. I did not attend the school while she was the teacher, but I did attend later. My favorite teacher was a Rachel Hall from Philadelphia. We got along fine. I liked her very much, she was a good instructor. The school was conducted along the old fashion Quaker lines and believe me the teachers held to the line, too. Many of the pupils wore coats with no collars, the girls were not allowed to wear gay colored dresses. On one occasion one of the girls wore a sort of wine colored jacket to school and the teacher made her remove it. It was a sort of a boarding school, the Dormatory would house 8 or 10 pupils. There were several pupils attending from quite a distance. I now look back with no little pride on the scholars there as nearly all of them grew up to be some of our best citizens. Both the church and the school have long since been abandoned.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

IN REMEMBRANCE

Another member dropped from our ranks with the recent death of Leon Day Pritchard, a brother of Roy Pritchard of Belleville. Leon lived in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he died, but he had always thought of the communities of Belleville - Salem - Center Valley in Liberty Township as "home base". The service was in Cincinnati and interment in the Center Valley Cemetery, south of Belleville.

His work had taken him far and wide but his thoughts often turned to scenes of his childhood, so he naturally was an enthusiastic member of H C H S, he was an avid reader of THE BULLETIN. To Roy and Ruth we extend our deepest sympathy.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

AN "ORPHAN TRAIN" STOPS AT DANVILLE

A notice appeared in the April 24, 1890 issue of the Hendricks County Republican stating that Mr. G. T. Green, of the Children's Home, Cincinnati, Ohio, would be bring a group of children to Danville for placement on Tuesday, April 29. If the weather was good, they would be at the platform in the Court House yard; otherwise they would be at the home of Capt. J. G. Miles. Those interested were to contact E. G. Hogate or B. Frank Howell for details.

According to the May 1, 1890 issue of the same paper, the following children were placed: baby girl with O. H. Barnhill; girl 11 years with Eli Maston, Amo; boy 12 years with John W. Tinder and brother 6 years with J. M. Heatt; boy 10 years with H. W. Wilson, Maplewood; boy 13 years with Mrs. Mary Huron, Avon; boy 7 years with James W. Smith, Tilden.

On May 20, Mr. Green returned with another part of boys and girls. He placed the children as follows: girl of 7 with R. T. Jones, Belleville; girl of 7 with Nathaniel Benson, Parke county; boy of 10 with John Dunbar; boy of 3 with Perry Porter; boy of 12 with Granville Spicklemire; boy of 10 with T. M. Shofner; boy of 6 with F. M. White; boy of 7 with Edward Ray.

Mr. Green stated that he "may come again but cannot say positively". A search through the remaining issues of 1890 found no further mention of his return.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

MEMORIES OF MILL CREEK

(The following is taken from a book recently donated to the Indiana Room of the Danville Public Library by Dr. I. Lester Furnas. The article was written by his father, Miles Julian Furnas.)

As stated before, I was 16 years old when we moved to the Dover-Mill Creek neighborhood (ca. 1882). It was strictly a Quaker neighborhood, the Church was known as the "Mill Creek Friends Church". There was quite a large membership and it was outstanding as for its musical talent. I never before had heard such good singing. There was a man living in the neighborhood by the name of Will Shirley and it seemed to me at that time that he knew all that there was to be known about music. He was a good farmer but he found time to teach singing schools and the young people attended. Ozella, Orlando and Orien (Hadley) were in my opinion his three best pupils, altho Ozro was good. All of Ozella's brother and sisters were good singers and the young people often went to Father Hadley's place to hear them sing. They had a fine Quartet right in the family. The Quartet was in demand to sing almost every picnic or other meetings. Ozella was a very good Alto singer. There were quite a large group of young people in the neighborhood. I will name a few of them: Elmer Stanley, Cal. Dickerson, Will Dickerson, Will Shaw, Allie Wilson, Thos. Nickelson, Orlando Hadley, Ozella Hadley, Anna Dill, Eva Dickerson, Elva Carter, Betty Williams, the Hodson Girls, Minnie & Eva Marshall & Lizzie, Nan Bringle, Jim Rodgers.

We had many oyster suppers, ice cream suppers, taffy pullings and parties, our favorite place to meet was at Al Carters. I will not go into details any farther as Ozella is going to write her memoirs and I will let her tell about the "Ghost Hunt", Hickory nut hunting, trip to the Cave in Putnam County, Yearly

HENDRICKS COUNTY HOME CEMETERY (Cont.)

HOPSON, MARY M.	9 JUL 1919
HUNT, CANTLEY W.	17 JAN 1921
JOHNSON, HOMER	19 FEB 1912
JONES, WILLIAM	18 DEC 1915
LAWRENCE, JOHN	1 JAN 1918
McDANIEL, LIZZIE	4 FEB 1925
McOWEN, WILLIAM	12 NOV 1910
MENDENHALL, TEMPLE	30 JAN 1937
MILLINGER, JACOB	3 NOV 1929
MORPHEW, ROBERT	29 FEB 1920
MORPHEW, SARAH	26 JUN 1900
PATRICK, JULIA MAY	12 MAY 1946
PATRICK, LAVENDER	17 SEP 1902
PELK, WILLIAM C.	27 AUG 1937
PFAFF, ELIJAH	25 NOV 1909
POORE, DAVID	20 JAN 1910
QUAKENBUSH, MARY	14 MAY 1909
ROBERS, DOROTHY E.	24 SEP 1901
ROGERS, RUPERT	5 OCT 1901
RUTLEDGE, ELIJAH H.	8 JUN 1936
SECRET, BUCK	28 JUN 1923
SMITH, MARY	21 DEC 1914
SPURLING, JAMES	25 DEC 1901
SWEAT, FRANK	5 JUN 1935
TORTONMENT, ALONZO	17 FEB 1937
TROUBLES, CORA	7 NOV 1906
TROWBRIDGE, LOUIS	3 MAR 1912
TUBBS, JAMES	23 APR 1901
UNDERWOOD, WILLIAM	11 DEC 1929
WHITE, THOMAS	2 MAY 1911
WILLIAMS, LOU	14 FEB 1922
WOOD, CAROLINE	25 APR 1907
WOOD, JAMES	1 DEC 1906
(?) FRED	21 DEC 1910
UNKNOWN MALE INFANT	15 MAY 1914
UNIDENTIFIED NEGRO MALE	25 MAY 1911
UNKNOWN MALE KILLED ON RR	6 JAN 1911

AND 16 UNKNOWN PERSONS WERE DISINTERRED FROM THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HOME CEMETERY AND REINTERRED HERE IN MAY, 1982.

Calvin Fletcher wrote that Almira had requested that "Ann & a little Matlock girl to have her things & wished to be buried in a white shroud."

Page 361 Wed. Dec. 31, 1851

I wind up the year with gratitude to God for mercies & wonderful works to the childrin of men ---- many very good men have died ---- S. W. Morris --- Dr. Wiley, president of Bloomington College ---- Aaron Johnson ---- Wm. L. Matlock of Danv Danville who had a most sterling wise mother who never gave bad advise, who always saw things clear as to his good was fatally misled by false affection for the youngest son John who was an indulged spoiled child. W. L. had acquired some 30,000 \$ when his mother urged him to take the young profligate into partnership. Had it been any other person she would have seen clear the impropriety --- This profligate broke & ruined the wordly concerns of W. L. He struggled 10 or 15 years to recover from the loss.

Contributed by Ruth Pritchard

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

(Editor's note ... In the name of progress, a four lane highway from Avon to Danville, the Indiana State Highway acquired land behind the Hendricks County Home, the site of an old cemetery. The bodies there were removed and reinterred in the Danville South Cemetery. We thank Betty Bartley, Historical Librarian at the Danville Public Library, for this information and the following two articles.)

The following inscriptions are from the monument recently placed in the Danville South Cemetery:

HENDRICKS COUNTY HOME CEMETERY

ALBERTSON, PHOEBE	23 JUN 1907
BARKER, JEMIMA	13 SEP 1915
BERRY, LUCINDA	15 DEC 1915
BERRY, WILLIAM B.	5 FEB 1910
BROCK, WILLIAM	6 FEB 1904
BUIS, WILLIAM C.	20 SEP 1945
COX, FRED	5 MAY 1919
CRANK, HOMER	15 NOV 1910
CUMMINGS, INFANT	9 JUL 1908
EAKERS, WILLIAM	7 OCT 1901
ERSKINE, JOHN	22 JUN 1907
GIVENS, HARRY J.	20 AUG 1906
HALL, MARY	6 JAN 1935
HATTON, MELVINA	13 APR 1916
HEDGES, JANE	23 JUL 1901
HENSON, WILLIAM	13 JUN 1911
HOCKETT, ISAAC	16 JUN 1913

The Historical Collection is open to the public:

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: Noon - 5 p. m.

The last Saturday of the month from 9 a. m. to noon and 1-5 p. m.

Other times by appointment

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

CORRECTION

In the MAY BULLETIN there were two errors. In the report of the February meeting, we said Cassie Sworn was a graduate of Plainfield High School's first graduating class, but it was Edgar Sworn's father Carey who was among the first graduates. And we referred to Edgar Sworn as "Ed", a nick name he never used. We are sorry for the mistake.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

MORE NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF
CALVIN FLETCHER

These notes are from Volumn N of the diary.

Page 81 Saturday 10th Dec, 1848

This is a wet gloomy day. I have not been very well. Anne Wood, who has lived with us a year or two left on the persuasion of her mother and as I cannot do with out help will get Almira Thompson who has been left here by W. L. Matlock to (in) the Lunatick hospital as she is partially insane. I shall try and keep her. I hope it may not be presumption in me to consider it one of the indications of providence that I am to keep her. --- Foot note adds that Almyra Thompson was listed as a member of C.F.'s household in the 1850 census. She was born in South Carolina and in 1850 was fifteen years old.

Page 148 November 17, 1849, Saturday

On my return our bank thronged with customers - Jas. White of White Walner & Co., Philadelphia; Bill Matlock, Mathias Floyd & others were in. All arranging for hogs tho they are low selling (fat hogs) at 150 (1.50) gross weight.

Page 165 Jan. 14, 1850 Monday

-----Went to the bank found all right there. -----Ambrose White came up to settle some matter with Bill Matlock & C. Our discounts are some \$609,000 & we cannot go much farther.

Pages 211 - 212 - 213 - 214 Starting Tuesday Aug. 20, 1850.

This long entry describes the Cholera Epidemic of 1850 in Indianapolis from the Fletcher household. Calvin Fletcher names some who died. He tells in more detail of the efforts to save Almire Thompson from death of this disease. He also wrote how "God in his providence sent her to me in the winter of 1849 when she was on her road to be put on a steamboat for a small crime which she committed in consequence of a slight lunacy caused by sickness -- soon after I so fortunately found her & took her from Wm. L. Matlock the cholera broke out on nearly every steamboat on the river. I had often congratulated myself being in the way through the goodness of God to save her from that scourge."

We have Susan Carter, Historical Librarian at the Plainfield Public Library to thank for the following informative article:

Family and local history buffs will be pleased to learn of some important research tools recently acquired by the Plainfield Public Library's Guilford Township Historical Collection with gifts donated by two loyal friends.

A five-volume set of "United States Local Histories in the Library of Congress: A Bibliography," and a three-volume set of "Genealogies in the Library of Congress: A Bibliography," were purchased with funds given by Chase M. Smith, a Plainfield native now residing in California. These impressive publications list the thousands of local histories and family genealogies, published and unpublished, which have been deposited at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and which are available there for researchers' use.

Anyone who has started to reconstruct a family tree soon finds that he or she has embarked upon a lengthy and complicated task that may become a lifetime passion. The enterprise entails months and even years of patient, often tedious, searching in courthouses, churches and libraries. Any previous research in the same or related families is invaluable but extremely hard to locate.

Americans have been compiling genealogies at least since the first one known to be printed in 1771, according to Willard Reiss of the Indiana Historical Society. Similarly, local histories have proliferated, studded with valuable nuggets of information about individuals and events. Since most of these materials were privately printed in limited editions, or often not printed at all but simply compiled as manuscripts or typescripts, their very existence is exceedingly difficult for the genealogist to discover. That is why these volumes listing the thousands of family and local histories in the Library of Congress are of such value to genealogists.

Many family histories never get to the Library of Congress, but are scattered around the nation's libraries. Marion Kaminkow, compiler of the "Genealogies in the Library of Congress," also searched 45 other institutions, including Indiana's own Fort Wayne and Allen County Public Library, to produce "A Complement to the Genealogies in the Library of Congress." This book was also purchased by the Plainfield Public Library with a gift from the Gerald R. Christl family of Plainfield in memory of Adeline Bauch Christl who died this past December.

These nine large volumes provide a useful starting point for family history researchers, according to Historical Librarian Susan Carter. They can readily ascertain if something has been compiled on their antecedents, and if so, where it is located.

The donors of these bibliographies have made a significant and enduring contribution to the community. Chase M. Smith, who was born near Plainfield and was graduated from its high school in 1910, retired to California after a career in the insurance business in the Chicago area. He has maintained ties with Plainfield, and was honored as Alumnus of the Year in 1980.

Gerald Christl has used the Plainfield Public Library's local history collection and other services extensively in his own genealogy searches.

from:
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