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# HENDRICKS COUNTY

## HISTORY BULLETIN



VOLUME XVII NUMBER II

May 1986

PUBLISHED BY

THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DANVILLE, INDIANA

HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

ORGANIZED 1967

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1120 Stafford Road  
Plainfield, IN 46168  
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Tel. 839-6602

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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 \$2.00. 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.

Margaret Baker  
(Mrs. C. Rawleigh Baker)

9 Round Hill Road  
Danville, IN 46122  
Tel. 745-2115

HISTORIANS EXPLAIN THE PAST AND ECONOMISTS PREDICT THE FUTRE.  
THUS, ONLY THE PRESENT IS CONFUSING.

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Greetings from the President:

I hope that by the time the May meeting rolls around the weather will be somewhat improved. I know that April showers bring May flowers, but what does April snow bring?

An update and list of corrections for our membership list appears in this issue. Please let us know if there are any further corrections needed. Hopefully, the only thing we will need to add to the next Bulletin is the names of more new members!

The program for our May meeting should be an educational experience for all of us. Many of us did not develop our interest in local history until we were out of school. Imagine how much these third graders will have learned by the time they are grown. Lorrie Bohlen is to be commended for sparking an interest in her pupils that can become a lifetime of learning.

See you at the meeting!

Betty

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#### THE MAY MEETING

The May Meeting of the Hendricks County Historical Society will be held Sunday, May 4, 1986, at 2 P.M., at the Avon United Methodist Church. The Church is located just west of Avon. Members driving from either direction will have to take "New U.S. 36" to get to the church. Access to the church driveway across old U.S. 36 is provided. We hope to have a sign posted at the turn-off.

The topic of the Meeting is "Avon Community--Yesterday and Today", as taught to the third-graders at Avon Upper Elementary. The following article was provided by Lorrie Bohlen, who helped to organize the course and will be the speaker at our meeting, along with five of her pupils.

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#### AVON HISTORY PRESENTATION

The Avon Schools are teaching the history of their community in the third grade of the Avon Upper Elementary. A booklet was printed for the students that highlights the timeline of the Avon community. Subjects that are included are the first Indians, the National Road, Haunted Bridge, the Interurban, and a brief history of the Avon Schools and its community.

A slide presentation was compiled that shows some of the present day sights in Avon, as well as those places that have historical significance. In addition to the slides are two paintings that have been donated to the school system. The subjects of the paintings are the Avon school built in 1884 and a picture of an interurban which was a common sight in the Avon Community from 1907 to 1930.

The highlight of the history unit this school year has been the making of an Avon Time-line Quilt. Each student chose his or her own topic and illustrated it. Using fabric crayons, their print was ironed onto a fabric square. The squares

were put in order of historical significance which explains why it is called a time-line quilt.

Five of the students and Mrs. Bohlen will be presenting the program at our meeting. Also on display will be the paintings by Mrs. Bohlen and the Avon Time-line Quilt.

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#### FEBRUARY MEETING

Approximately 50 members and guests registered for the February meeting held at the Savings and Loan Building, Danville. Following devotions by Margaret Baker, Betty Bartley, our new president conducted the business meeting. In her talk about the Museum, Dorothy Kelley reported work on the upper floor would start soon. This was definitely OLD business, for she has been working on that project for months. Libbe Hughes reported on the progress of sales of the PRAIRIE FARMER 1920 DIRECTORY. We also have reprints and resizing of the 1878 HENDRICKS COUNTY ATLAS.

Our speaker was Mr. Jay Small of Indianapolis who gave a most interesting talk on HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL BOOKS, PAPERS AND POST CARDS and his display of rare books and picture post cards of Hendricks County were memory joggers for the older citizens and a curiosity for the younger ones.

Following the program, the ladies of Center Township served refreshments and with that the HCCHS got off to a fine start for the year.

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#### HCCHS NEW MEMBERS AS OF APRIL 1986

Doris Anderson  
R. 1, Box 93  
Wyaconda, MO 63474

Michael B. & Maralee H. Edmondson  
R. R. 2, Box 416  
Clayton, IN 46118

John H. Battershell  
502 East Road 200 South  
Danville, IN 46122

Dr. William A. Edwards, M.D.  
33 Ginseng Trail  
Danville, IN 46122

Lorrie Bohlen  
164 South 450 East Rd.  
Danville, IN 46122

Mrs. Ruth E. Gibbs  
1947 Avon Rd.  
Plainfield, IN 46168

Robert A. Brown  
P. O. Box 46  
Prairie Creek, IN 47869

William H. Gibbs  
6216 Alamo St.  
Springfield, VA 22150

Mrs. Vernadine G. Collins  
1800 5th Ave.  
Grinnell, IA 50112

Fred K. Hahn  
11124 S. Bremer Rd.  
Canby, OR 97013

Jack C. Cooper  
3256 South Six Points Rd.  
Indianapolis, IN 46231

Bernice Jones  
12 Fairfield  
Brownsburg, IN 46112

NEW MEMBERS (CONTINUED)

Jeff Martin  
360 Urban St.  
Danville, IN 46122

Jewell N. Thompson  
R. R. 3, Box 24  
Danville, IN 46122

Carole Ruse  
5510 E. 700 N.  
Brownsburg, IN 46112

Mark E. Thompson  
One E. Scott #1703  
Chicago, IL 60610

Stanley M. Shartle  
R. R. 1, Box 33  
Stilesville, IN 46180

Dean & Mary Thurnall  
P. O. Box 85  
Danville, IN 46122

Marcia Smith  
3213 Patton Dr.  
Indianapolis, IN 46224

(The following names should have been indicated as  
charter members (\*) on the previous list:

Gene Ayres  
Mr. & Mrs. Lester English  
Ruth Hall  
Claire Sellars  
Ina Shaw  
O. S. Stamper

(The following names were unintentionally omitted from  
the previous list--our apologies to these members.)

Michael H. O'Haver  
37 S. Bear Lake Rd.  
N. Muskegan, MI 49445

Mary Lois Stratton  
P. O. Box 41  
Clayton, IN 46118

Robert E. Reading  
P. O. Box 62  
Jamestown, IN 46147

\*Leona Stuart  
190 W. Columbia  
Danville, IN 46122

Geraldine Scott  
1 Fairlane East  
Danville, IN 46122

Connie Williams (Mrs. Harold)  
8612 W. 10th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46234

(The following errors in addresses were found in the  
previous list)

Mozella Alexander  
Lizton, IN 46149

Donna Black  
21632 East Highbluff Rd.  
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Kathryn Ramp  
R. 1, Box 150A  
Pittsboro, IN 46167

(We have had one change of address since the last list)

Rodney & Amanda Page  
c/o Louise Page  
Craigue Hill Road  
Springfield, VT 05156

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(This article on the rise and demise of the interurban was written by Lorrie Bohlen for use in her community study booklet.)

By 1902 the long-distance transmission of power was so much improved that electric railway service was extending longer distances. Soon the equipment was both heavier and faster. A major investment boom in the interurban industry came in the same years in which many bankers were turning deaf ears to the financial requests of W. C. Durant and Henry Ford.

Between 1901 and 1908 more than 9,000 miles of interurban lines were built in the country and hundreds of individual local companies were dreaming of construction routes which would steal local passenger traffic away from the railroads. Some lines carried baggage, mail, express, and freight.

William Merritt, a farmer all his life, remembers the interurbans crossing the tracks in Avon. "They sped along at a 65 mile an hour clip and its warning horn was not as loud as a train."

The greater frequency of service, and often a higher average speed, gave the electric interurban a real advantage over much of the local passenger or branch line railroad service. Since the interurbans had a faster rate of acceleration it was easier for them to have more frequent scheduled stops than was true of the steam railroad. The top year for electric interurban mileage was 1916 when 15,580 miles were in operation.

Two-thirds of the total mileage was located in the 6 northern and eastern states of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and New York. Ohio, with 2,798 miles of route, was easily first in interurban mileage. Although a poor second with 1,825 miles, Indiana boasted a network which made it the most thoroughly covered of any state. More than 20 different companies gave service to every corner of Indiana, with thirteen different routes radiating out of Indianapolis. All Hoosier towns of over 5,000 people were served by the interurban except for three-Bloomington, Madison, and Vincennes.

By World War I the automobile was taking away some business, although a few brave prophets still refused to take the automobile seriously. The pioneer Hoosier interurban promoter, Charles L. Henry, saw the car as a passing fad and in a 1916 speech claimed: "The fad feature of automobile riding will gradually wear off, and the time will soon be here when a very large part of the people will cease to think of automobile rides..."

Increasing private auto use and new intercity bus routes in the twenties definitely caused higher operating ratios and frequent deficits for many interurban companies. More than 4,000 miles of line were abandoned by 1929, and another 5,000 miles had been given up by 1934. One interurban line in Indiana in the depression thirties was reduced to paying its workers partly with fare tokens.

The lines that passed through Danville was abandoned on October 31, 1930. It was part of the Terre-Haute, Indianapolis, and Eastern Traction Company, which was bought by the Public Service Company of Indiana on May 26, 1931. A map is enclosed showing the abandonment of the interurban lines with this company.

By the interurban as such was dead. The passenger traffic which the interurban for a few years had taken over from the steam railroads had in turn been largely lost to the private automobile. Lines and interurban cars were scrapped and are rarely seen except in museums or remodeled versions which are used for tourists to reminisce over the "good old days".

Information for this part of the article is taken from the book, Life and Decline of the American Railroad by John Stover. "The New Competition" p. 130-133. (1970)

Oxford University Press, New York.

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(The following history of Avon was taken from an article in the December 30, 1897 issue of the Republican. It was written by the Avon correspondent, whose initials were 'S.T.H'.)

#### AVON

#### AN INTERESTING HISTORY OF THE CAPITAL OF WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

...The first settlement here was about the year 1830. A settlement soon sprang up and in 1833 Absalom Payne...was appointed postmaster of Hampton post office with a weekly mail carried horseback along the Rockville road. In a few years, Mr. Payne tired of the empty honor, and the office passed to Dr. Malone...and a little later to W. T. Ross.... Mr. Ross soon became tired of the office, and no one else wanting to be bothered with it, it was allowed to die and Hampton was no more.

In 1852 O. J. Huron, newly married and living in a cabin adjoining Wesley chapel church yard, was persuaded to accept a commission as postmaster of White Lick P.O. Just three months satisfied Mr. Huron and White Lick died and was buried by Hampton. That left us without either town or post office.

Along in the fifties J. M. Smoot began making visits here as a pack peddler. Soon he added a horse and wagon and came weekly, and after a time, about 1858, leased ground and built a small room in the corner of J. H. Ross' yard. Ross was a strong Republican, and it was not long until Smoot moved his store to Democratic ground on Uncle John Dickerson's land on the opposite corner. Wishing to buy a lot, and failing to find one for sale at the east side, he sought elsewhere, and Nov. 1, 1862, R. J. Barker deeded him a half acre one mile west. The following winter he moved his store on log sleds to his own lot where it still stands, the little ware room adjoining R. M. Bartley's store.

In '68 a few of our citizens sent a petition to Washington for a post office, but the petition was headed by Mr. Smoot, and the department did the rest. Mr. Bartley was appointed to preside over an office with the picturesque name "Smootsdell", and under a commission dated April 28, 1868 opened a third post office. D. S. Barker carried the mail twice a week on horseback from Plainfield for twelve dollars a year. The name, Smootsdell, clung, until the I. & St. L. railroad was completed about '70 when the company established a flag station at the water tank a half mile west and named it Avon.

It was not long until the post office followed suit and the name Smootsdell was laid away along side Hampton and White Lick. Soon after the railroad was built the Barker brothers put a small store at the crossing of the Plainfield road and followed by building a station and store combined. The company put in a telegraph office and Avon boomed.

But soon the telegraph office was moved three-fourths of a mile east, and in a little while the station followed and trains stopped in the middle of a farm for passengers, and patrons carried trunks down the track till they got tired, then changed hands and carried again. They complained, they grumbled, and finally they begged that the station be returned to the west side. The people won, and for years the station and the telegraph office were almost a mile apart. In '91 private citizens bought a little yellow dwelling house and moved it to the crossing a mile east of the station and the company moved its telegraph office into this building. The old look of sadness came to the west-siders' face. The company saw the look and smiled, then moved their station to the yellow dwelling also, where it remained till three years ago when with a generous help from the east side citizens, the present neat structure was erected, almost the first expense of the company for its patrons here.

...The first school was organized very soon after the first settlement, and soon a frame school house always known as "Center", was built by volunteers from among its patrons...(it) was used until '58 when the district had grown until there were about ninety children enumerated. In that year Clark Blair, who was township trustee, made the wisest educational move yet made by erecting a two-story building and establishing a graded school. This building with all its contents was totally destroyed by fire on the night of January 3, 1884, but during that season was rebuilt just as before by trustee J. A. Winnings....

Of the first settlers so far as we can learn, only two survive, G. W. Merritt, seventy-six years old, who was a boy in his teens working in Sigurson's nursery, and who still lives here.... The other is Mrs. Katharine Huron, eighty-two years old, who was married here to B. A. Huron Dec. 10, 1935....

In a history of our neighborhood very many memories crowd forward, but space forbids further mention in this already long article, and we forebear.

S.T.H.

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#### MUSEUM MUSINGS for the May, 1986 Bulletin

The museum was like the rest of the population. It didn't get the chance to complain about the long, cold winter. The snow-drifts didn't cause very much trouble, very long anyway.

We had quite a bit of company including three cub scout packs. We also had people doing research, and some who came to visit.

We received considerable memorabilia during the winter. Included were record books, gavel from quite a collection. There were pictures, books, photo albums, and record albums.

The flower bed is making its Spring debut. Some of the earliest Spring flowers flowers made quite a display during an earlier warm spell. The tulips are starting



to bloom now. The flower bed is the project of the Hendricks County Garden Club and it will be a showy spot all summer.

Our pretty dishes!

Thin translucent, fragil china, it speaks of a gentler day. Sturdier stuff was used for every-day, the same as now. Every-day china was sturdy, but it always had a pretty pattern. One can imagine when mother called: "Supper's ready!" Everyone dropped what he was doing. All took their places at the table and the ritual of eating began. No one grabbed something, stuffed it into his mouth and mumbled as he went out the door; "Gotta run--got a meeting, see ya later!" None of that! They didn't eat in shifts. That time hadn't come.

Can't we just see the ladies all done up for the afternoon all set for some gentle conversation? Maybe a--heaven forbid--juicy bit of gossip? A pleasant afternoon was looked forward to. The tea and cake was served in that fragile china.

Care of the dishes was something else. One couldn't just gather up the cups and stow them in the trash! No! The china was washed and dried, carefully!

Ah, sterefoam! Saves a lot of work, we'll all agree, but how about the manners that seemed to be called for with a china tea cup? The former goes along with our busy, busy world today. Hurry, hurry!

Jewell

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#### AARON HART

Who was Aaron Hart and what part is his in the History of Hendricks County? In a roster book of Hendricks County volunteers of the Civil War we find him listed in the Center Township section. This book is a part of the military display in our County Museum, in Danville.

During the early part of 1985, Nellie Maish who lives in Indianapolis, presented the museum with 22 original letters written during the Civil War. Twenty letters are from Aaron Hart to his wife Margaret and two are from her to him.

Every letter from Aaron began - "My dear wife it is with great pleasure that I take my pen in hand to let you know how we are getting along."

Aaron Hart served as a cook. He mailed letters from Camp Shanks (near Indianapolis); Pulaski, Tenn.; Washington Hospital in Memphis, Tenn.; Vicksburg, Miss.; a camp near Nashville, Tenn.; and a camp near Waterloo, Ala.

The fact that we may see these letters, read these letters, actually touch them is amazing for they have been through a fire. The edges are burned and in some there is a charred piece missing altogether

We can only speculate as to the reason for the scorched condition. Were they in a house fire, yet retrieved? Did someone start to destroy them, have second thoughts-- and retrieve them?

Again amazing--these precious letters were stolen from the museum in August 1985. The Danville police retrieved and returned them to us in November 1985.

I had taken my notes for this story shortly after we first received them. While they were missing I gave up ever telling you about them.

How can I explain my thoughts and feelings as I read each letter? (A letter is private between two people.) We get close. We get acquainted. We intrude. I felt I was on sacred ground. Who was I to be there as Aaron addressed his wife as my dear companion? The letters meant so much as I live and breathe Hendricks County history and as I read novel after novel from the Civil War era, and pour over maps & histories. Needless to say I touched these letters lovingly and they mean much to me.

The stationery is often interesting. Some is stamped Indiana soldiers provided by Indiana Sanitary Commission.

In a letter from Vicksburg, Aaron asks for postage stamps. He talks about the calf and chickens and says he hopes to be home to help eat them.

From the hospital he wrote that it would be good to be back with the Regiment as he was very tired of soup. Also that rebel deserters were coming in every day. "They say the Confederacy is about played out and that they can't hold out much longer."

From a camp near Waterloo, Ala. dated Jan. 13, 1865, he says he has been in the saddle 30 days and had to swim the Elk River in Jan. "The water was very cold but it was a military nedesisty and I got mity tired of riding. My horse give out at Sifrass Creek and I captured a three year old colt. Old soldiers say this has been one of the hardest campaigns of the war."

Vicksburg, Apr. 18, 1865. "We got the most news last night that we have got since the war it was the murder of Lincoln and Seward (Seward misinformation) it has cast a gloom over this army all of the flags are at half mast and all of the bells in the city are tolling. Gen. Banks made a speech and several others and they pass reselotions that all of the soldiers should wear mourning for 30 days and all of the houses are hung in mourning."

"Want to know if you are making my garden or not and if they people are building a gravel road to Clayton or not.

"Well I can't write much more feel so bad after the death of father Abraham.

Yours truly and  
afectionate husband"

Now we can feel that Aaron Hart, from Danville, has stepped right out of the pages of Hendricks County History and shared with us, in a way, become a part of us.

Mary Ann Moore  
Docent at Museum  
From Brownsburg

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INFORMATION NEEDED ON WASHINGTON TWP. ORPHANAGE

Susan Carter of the Plainfield Public Library's local history section is seeking information on the Pentecostal Bands of the World and the orphanage they operated on Six Points Road in Washington Township, north of U.S. 40.

The property was purchased on February 20, 1904 from William Mattern and was sold on October 17, 1911. In the intervening years, it is understood that there were several buildings in addition to two houses which were used for the orphanage. A church/school, barn and heating plant were also located on the 80 acre tract.

Those listed as Trustees for the Pentecostal Bands of the World in 1904 were: Thomas B. Nelson, Flora B. Nelson, George E. Bula, Celia Elias, Dora Merryman, Stella Bare and Otto Nater. It is thought that the group went west to Missouri after 1911.

Anyone who has information on the church, orphanage, or who might have resided at the orphanage is urged to contact Susan Carter in care of the Plainfield Public Library, 1120 Stafford Road, Plainfield, IN 46168 or call (317) 839-6602. Any help will be much appreciated.

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TO: Hendricks County History Bulletin  
FROM: Susan M. Carter, Historical Librarian

Official groundbreaking for the Plainfield Public Library's new addition of 14,400 square feet took place on Sunday, April 13. The additional space will bring the library facility to a total of 23,700 square feet.

Approximately 2,000 square feet of the addition is dedicated to the Guilford Township Historical Collection, the library's reference collection of local history materials. Currently housed in a room of about 315 square feet, the GTHC will move into the northeast corner of the addition. There will be a public reading area for researchers, a separate materials storage room for preservation and security, a workroom for processing materials, and office space.

The added space will allow better accessibility to books, maps and papers, many of which currently are stored in other parts of the building. Probably most important to local history researchers is the increased seating and table space which has dwindled as more materials have been added to the collection.

Completion of the addition is slated for August of this year. At that time work will begin on the renovation of the original building. The Indianapolis firm of Pecsok, Jelliffe, Randall & Nice estimates a project completion date of October 1986.

Total cost for the addition and renovation is \$1,728,104. The majority of this amount is from general obligation bonds of \$1,335,000 and the balance from a Library Services and Construction Act Title II Grant, the PPL Library Improvement Reserve Fund and interest from project monies.

Watch for further information concerning the dedication and grand opening of

the new library facility. The library trustees and staff hope you will all share that great day with us when it comes!

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#### QUERY

Info about Jeremiah and Jemima (Stacy) Culbertson. Children David R. & George, b. in Vir.; Emily Jane, b. Tenn.; Vashti & Tazwell, b. Ky.; Nancy, Agnes, Mary birthplace unknown. David R. Culbertson M. Mary Elizabeth Chadd in H. Co., IN on 14 June 1847. Any info about Culbertson or Chadds would be appreciated.

Joan Cunningham  
9 Hedge Row Drive  
Olney, IL 62450

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#### ANOTHER GHOST TOWN NOTE

by Ruth Mitchell Pritchard

The Hendricks County Flyer advertised a public auction for April 10, 1986, at R. R. 3, Box 362, Clayton, Indiana, located 9 miles west of Plainfield (or 4 miles east of Stilesville) on U.S. 40 to County Road 200 W, then south to the first house on the left. Owners were Wayne and Maxine Clawson. Items listed definitely indicate times along U.S. 40 in the nineteen-eighties.

Wonder what would have been advertised for such a sale ninety-nine years ago when the Clawson name first came to Jacktown.

The first Clawson purchase of real estate at Jacktown was March 23, 1887 from James and Jamima Crawford for one hundred twenty dollars (\$120.00). This was one and one-half acres. More ground was later purchased.

A post office was established there in October of 1888.

A Spanish American War soldier, Charles Clawson, went into military service from this place.

The Clawson family operated a general store and huckster wagon. Gasoline was sold and short order lunches were provided by Charles and Nancy Clawson to motorists on the National Road.

There was a blacksmith shop and other stores but the Clawson name was of the longest duration at Jacktown.

Eugene Clawson, owner of the Clawson House in Clayton, was of this Clawson family.

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A LITTLE OLD BRIDGE WHERE  
PRITCHARD BRAVED THE WAVES

by Ruth Mitchell Pritchard

A small 1916 bridge east of the Salem Church meeting house has recently been removed. That modern (for 1916) concrete span was on a road which was a part of an angling pioneer roadway. The building of that bridge was a part of a road improvement program for better transportation of pupils to consolidated schools replacing district schools.

The stream under that bridge was the North Branch of McCracken Creek. We Frank Mitchell kids knew the small waterway as "OUR Branch". After all, it meandered northward through our farm. It afforded countless hours of pleasure as we explored every foot of its course.

We Mitchell kids considered the bridge to be Will and Emma Cook's bridge since it was only a few rods east and a little south of their house.

We Mitchell kids annually inspected martins' nest building under Will and Emma's bridge. The birds never seemed to mind the visits from the interested spectators. They just proceeded according to the Creator's plan for their existence.

Memories of those hours and carefree years bring to mind Samuel Woodworth's poem, "The Old Oaken Bucket"-----

How dear to my heart are the  
    scenes of my childhood  
When fond recollections present  
    them to view  
The orchard, the meadow, the  
    deep tangled wildwood  
And every loved spot that my  
    infancy knew.

The bridge faithfully served in times of ordinary water flow and also in times of flash floods.

One such high water time was in the fall of 1926. Roy Pritchard and his date, Ruth Mitchell, had been to a mid-week movie. All the way home from Plainfield they witnessed the heaviest downpour either could ever remember.

As we neared the Mitchell home Roy said, "Now the rain will let up about the time we get to the house." Sure enough, it did and we made a dash up the walk to the house.

This was one time when Roy should have tarried for a few minutes. "Date hours" were different in those years from today's regulations (or lack of them) and we knew the rules. Besides Roy must leave for work early the next morning.

Taking advantage of the lull between showers, Roy confidently drove away homeward bound. He did not get very far. He descended the Stanley Hill and found water a foot deep (maybe more) between the foot of the hill and the bridge. The trouble was with the much deeper water west of the bridge. The car simply stalled.

Roy looked the situation over and decided to bail out and go for help. He took off shoes and socks. He rolled his trouser legs as high as possible. He

stepped out of the car into water much much deeper than he had expected and headed for the Will Cook house.

The first knock brought Will to the kitchen door (our usual entrance).

Roy said, "Will, my car is stalled in the high water this side of the bridge. Will you pull it out with one of your horses?"

Will replied, "NO! I won't. The horses are in the pasture and I am not going to go after them!"

Roy said, "All right" and barefoot Roy hurried on down the road. (What a picture that must have been for those times--only it was dark and no observers present anyway.) Roy never said whether he walked or ran on that gravel road that night. He went on by the Salem Church down through the hollow south of the church, up over another rise, on through another hollow--up to the Sumner Mitchell place.

Lee Mitchell responded to his good friend's plea for help, in the affirmative. Lee and Roy got one of the work horses up and harnessed it for pulling. Both boys mounted and were on the way to the stranded automobile.

Whether they had a flashlight or a kerosene lantern, it was immediately evident when they arrived that there was no water around that car.

Lee said, "Roy, I don't know about you!"

Roy said in a rather perplexed way, "Really, there was water all around--way up high when I left."

Lee and Roy hitched the horse to the car. Lee rode the horse and Roy steered the car. When they arrived at the Pritchard place, Roy said, "I wonder what would happen if I stepped on the starter?"

He did and that 1925 Overland coupe started right away. Lee had a big question all over his face at that, Roy lifted the hood of the car. Debris from the high water left on the motor block, supported Roy's story.

Lee had shown that he was indeed a friend in need. They had many laughs over the high-water ordeal.

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In response to the suggestion in our last BULLETIN that it would be fun to collect excerpts from old autograph books, Mary Ann Moore sent these. They are taken from Earl Craven's Autograph Book 1889-1892. It was given to the Museum by Harriet Craven 2/25/86.

And still my love  
Will never fail  
And still the pussy  
Has a tail.  
Odessa Ferree Miller

Love many, trust few  
Always paddle your own canoe.  
Abbie

May your life be long and happy  
May your troubles be but few  
May your friends be just as many  
As the sparkling drops of dew.  
Saura Frame

When this you see, remember me  
And take a little catnip tea.  
Nova Clark

May you live long, and have good times  
And marry a girl that has the dimes.  
John Henderson

As sure as comes your wedding day  
A broom to you I'll send  
In sunshine use the brushy end  
In storms the other end.  
Laura Cook

May your virtues ever shine  
Like the blossoms on a pumpkin vine.  
Celia Hadley

May you ever have the pleasant and sunny disposition which you now possess; and become a good and useful man.

A true friend and teacher  
A. Bertha Wiley  
Danville, IN Jan. 4, 1889

Lucille Stamper sent these copies from an autograph book of 1936 by students of Pittsboro Schools:

The higher the mountain  
The cooler the breeze,  
The younger the couple  
The tighter the squeeze.

The thing that goes the farthest  
In making life worth while  
That costs the least and does the most  
Is just a pleasant smile.

When you get married and have twins  
Don't come to me for safety pins.

Yours till the COUNTRY GENTLEMAN climbs  
the SATURDAY EVENING POST to see the  
LADIES HOME JOURNAL.

In your chain of friendship  
Consider me a link.

When the golden sun is setting  
And this path no more you trod  
May your name be ever written  
In the Autograph of God.

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#### DEATH RECORDS FOUND RATHER UNINFORMATIVE

STATE personnel, photographing old vital statistics records for more compact storage, recently discovered the following causes of death:

- "Went to bed feeling well, but woke up dead."
- "Died suddenly. Nothing serious."
- "Don't know cause. Died without the aid of a physician."
- "Blow on the head with an ax. Contributory cause: another man's wife."
- "Had never been fatally ill before."

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(This article appeared in the December, 1945, issue of THE DANVILLE GAZETTE)

#### Local Bank Honors War Prisoner's Check

When the First National Bank officials of Danville become puzzled--that's NEWS. Because men and women trained to look after the financial welfare of the community seldom are at a loss for an answer. But even W. F. Franklin, president of the leading financial institution of the county had a few bad moments.

The situation on was a by-product of the war.

A check came in. It was not an orthodox check. It was written on a small sheet of ordinary paper. It was a small piece of paper because the maker did not have a big supply at his disposal.

Few people know that if one has funds in a bank he can write a withdrawal on a shingle and if the banker recognizes the signature he will honor it. Checks of this kind never come in.

So the officers of the First National Bank went into a huddle when they received a small sheet of paper which purported to be a check. It was for ten dollars. It bore the signature of Merrill D. Vaughan. It was undated. All banks are forbidden by custom and by law to inform anyone about the personal deposits of an individual--Federal authorities excepted.

The hustling reporter, however, gathered that the drawer of the check had no money on deposit. Good bankers, on receiving a check of this sort hasten over to the sheriff.

But the First National Bank honored it!

The check was written by Durwood Vaughan, son of County Superintendent Jewell Vaughan, to help out a buddy.

The check is endorsed Morris J. Roy, of whom the bank never heard.

The pay-off is that both men were prisoners in a German prison camp, after being shot down while doing their bit to bring victory to the United States forces.

Roy needed some funds and Vaughan knew his Hendricks county. So he wrote a check to help his friend--knowing that people back home would understand the circumstances. He is now back home, and is just an ordinary person when one meets him on the street. But he has lived more stories than the imagination of fiction writers can conjure.

The conservative First National Bank honored the check of the imprisoned boy. It should get a medal from Congress, or whoever it is that gives honor to whom honor is due.

The story is badly told--but if you hold that prison-written check in your hand you will have an understanding of the fact that those who have been chosen to take the risks for a nation have explicit confidence that those they are protecting will not let them down.

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#### IN SYMPATHY

Our Society mourns the loss of another member, Jack Johnson, who passed away recently. Jack was sort of a walking history concerning Danville and the people of this vicinity. It had been suggested that he do an interview, but he seemed a bit uncomfortable with the idea, so many interesting stories have been lost. We extend our sympathy to his wife, Carrie, and the family.

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