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# HENDRICKS COUNTY

## HISTORY BULLETIN



VOLUME XI NUMBER IV

NOVEMBER 1980  
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THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
DANVILLE, INDIANA

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ORGANIZED 1967

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H C H S

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H C H S

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT .....

Men who do not cherish memories,  
Who do not revere their heritage,  
are little more than barbarians;  
memory civilizes us.

... Robert Lancaster, professor of political science,  
University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee.

Greetings:

This is a letter to you. Since our program for this meeting has to do with the history of the postal service it came to my mind that letters have been very important as a method of communication in the past. Even yet, don't you just love to get a letter from a far away friend or relative? This isn't half so satisfying as a carefully printed three sentence letter on lined primary paper from a little grandchild ending with "I love you grandma".

In this age of Bell Telephone's slogan of "Reach out and touch" combined with our laziness and affluent pocketbooks it is so easy just to reach out and dial, then to hear a cheerful voice that we love to hear, but please don't let us forget to write a letter now and then. What if St. Paul had never written a letter?

Marian Worrell

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

AUGUST MEETING

The Pittsboro Christian Church was the scene of our August meeting with 55 members and guests present. Our president, Marian Worrell, opened the meeting with a poem by Helen Steiner Rice. Frances Fisher, a life-time member of the host church, gave us a few interesting facts about the early church and used the 103rd Psalm for our devotions.

After the usual business was transacted, Mr. Maynard Nolan, program chairman, discussed early music and musical instruments, mentioning the harpsichord as the most popular instrument in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Bible mentions the harp and the organ. The musical program which followed was delightful with Esta Sallee playing several numbers on the organ and the singing group, the Art Lomas Singers, entertaining us with varied selections. Just another splended meeting of the HCHS. If you are missing these meetings, you are the loser!

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

NOVEMBER MEETING

PLEASE NOTICE THE EARLY MEETING.....November 2, 1980

Our next meeting promises to be one of the most interesting yet. We will meet in the beautiful Corinth Church north of Brownsburg (take SR 236 north from Brownsburg and watch for the sign). The ladies of Brown, Lincoln and Washington Townships promise us luscious refreshments for the social hour, but the program will be one of great interest. Harold Templin is digging up all kinds of interesting facts about the postal service even long before the pony express was a modern miracle. He doesn't plan to have a question and answer session, but if he would, I would have asked him how mail was delivered when the only written messages were carved in stone. I'll bet there were a lot of bad backs then!

DON'T FORGET THE DISPLAY TABLE!!!!!!!

The display table is one of the most engrossing parts of our meetings and this meeting has all kinds of possibilities. If you aren't a stamp collector, hunt

up all your philatelist friends and beg, borrow or steal their collections (or, better still bring them and their stamp collection for the display table). Besides that, we all have old letters, old postcards and any thing relating to the delivery of mail.

LET'S KEEP THE DISPLAY TABLE GOING!!!!!!!!!!

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

NOVEMBER IS DUES PAYING MONTH

What do you do  
When dues are due?

Do you .....

- Deliberate?
- Meditate?
- Cogitate?
- Hesitate?
- Vegitate?
- Procrastinate?

OR DO YOU SIT RIGHT DOWN AND WRITE A HUGE CHECK FOR \$3.00 AND SEND TO

Mrs. Clarence Bray  
R. R. 1  
Pittsboro, Indiana 46167

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

At our last meeting, Marian Worrell presented a check for \$25 to the Society. I feel, as your editor, that a complete explanation is in order.

When I received her GREETINGS contribution for the August Bulletin, I realized I had a good article ..... in fact, an excellent article which deserved a greater readership than our organization of 200 plus members. So, without consulting her, I sent it to the Editor of the INDIANAPOLIS STAR MAGAZINE. Then I proceeded to forget it. But when a letter from the STAR arrived in my box, addressed to Marian but at my address, I realized I was in trouble! What happens when you use some one else's material without their permission? What happens when you open some one else's mail? I consulted with Max Lee, our postmaster and former president of HCHS.

The answer was brief and devastating: "99 years!"

"99 years!" Did you ever think about it? I must get my house in order. I must rewrite my will, but after 99 years there won't be much left to bequest and bequeath! How can I ever leave my loved ones?

But finally sanity returned. I opened the letter, a check fell out, so I could confess to Marian and we could gloat together.

Isn't it great to have a president who writes so well that her talent is recognized by such illuminaries as the editors of the INDIANAPOLIS STAR?

THE MORAL OF THIS STORY ..... It just proves that the HCHS has many talented members. Without them, there would be no BULLETIN. So if you have something of interest for us, please send it to us. Without your contributions, there would be no BULLETIN.

Now, since I have rambled this much, I will use a bit more space to pay tribute to those who have helped so much through all these years. I hesitate to mention names, for I am sure I will overlook some one. Yet I think you all should know that Mary Jeanette Winkleman who served so ably as our president for two terms, who has always been active on the Museum Board and has always had the interest of the HCHS at heart, has since the beginning addressed the envelopes when mailing time comes ... no small task. The number of hours she has contributed to this organization probably far out number most. Others who have been so faithful through... can it be 11 years? After all, our first publication came out in 1969.....are Jewell Bell who buys the twine and ties up the numerous bundles, lugs them to the post office and sees them on their way. Other dependable members who come when they can are Ruth Pritchard (who almost always can come), Grace Cox, Maxine Cox, Virginia Joseph and the Joseph sisters, Ruth Rogers, Pearl Edmonson, Mary Bell, Dorothy Templin, Audrey Martin, Leona Stuart and Elizabeth Bryant. (If a name has been missed, let me know and I will mention next time.)

I well remember two winters ago when almost every one was immobilized with the snow and ice. Some how Grace Cox and I managed to get the unassembled bulletins from Blanche's office to our home. There Grace and I worked all day assembling, stapling, and stuffing in envelopes bulletins that I wondered how many people would read. We were fortified with hot Home made soup and corn bread but when we arrived at the post office, another challenge met us. The snow at the curb was almost as high as we were and had been ice encrusted, but somehow we managed to scale over and get the bulletins in the mail. We also got home without any broken bones! When my dear, sweet patient hubby asked, "Why ..... Margaret, why?" I couldn't come up with a good answer.

If you enjoy our bulletin, let us know (and send your dues). WE enjoy doing it. It would be nice to know others enjoy it, too.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

(Editor's note: Our meeting is a week early this month. I must thank Mary Bray for alerting me ..... where upon I pushed the panic button. I had to have help ... and fast, so I called Frances Fisher and twisted her arm. She didn't have any thing prepared, but she hurriedly wrote the following article and sent it to me with apologies! No apologies necessary, Frances, and thanks to a beautiful, dependable friend.)

#### THESPIANS OF BYGONE DAYS

While Readin', Writin' and 'Rithmetic were the basics of education a generation ago, it was of great importance to learn proper diction, good clear enunciation, and expressive dramatic emphasis. No one operated on those premises more faithfully than my mother, Nelle Dillon Weaver, who had been privileged to attend Central Normal College in the early 1890's and had been enrolled in the Elocution Classes under Miss Ida V. Dorsey of the Philadelphia School of Art. The popular theory was "If something is going to be said, let it be well said."

From childhood, I remember many aspiring students coming to our home for coaching by my mother who delighted in helping them and proudly rejoicing at their success in oratorical contests.

Home talent plays and skits were popular and greatly enjoyed by an "entertainment hungry" audience. There was seldom an admission fee, but free will offerings were sufficient to pay expenses.

"An Old Maids Convention", given by a group of twenty five women was a hilarious comedy depicting the joys and sorrows of the single life. The term, "Old Maid" could be Greek to young people today who know all about "career girls", business executives and are well informed about E R A. But about 1904 and 1905, an old maid was an ever present help in time of need, but a certain scorn was attached to one who never married.

One of the leading characters was a suffragette in tailored clothes and be-spectacled who created a sensation by her boldness. All the dear women who took part in that production have long since joined the innumerable caravan.

In searching old programs the name of Sallie Pratt was prominent. She was once the telephone operator and worked as a clerk in Weaver Brothers store. Although her name never appeared in neon lights, she could be called the Marie Dressler of our town.

Another production in which many in our town participated was an Abe Martin Wedding, created in 1913 because the school needed a piano. Abe Martin, decked out as Kin Hubbard, prescribed, got his daughter, Fawney, married off amid much merriment. Old time tunes were played on a borrowed organ by Sallie Watts, the town musician, as the guests were ushered to their seats on the state by Hugh J. Woody whose fine sense of humor and ability to keep perfect step made him a well loved figure in Pittsboro.

A few of the members of Pittsboro Christian Church may recall the earnest efforts which went into the purchase of a stained glass window for the church. As quite often happens, the task of raising the money to pay for this beautiful addition developed upon the women who rallied to the cause with enthusiasm. The first entertainment was a huge success with people coming from far and near to crowd into our church. Never was such a variety of talent displayed. A group of beautiful women in Grecian robes enacted pantomimes to sacred songs, MY FAITH LOOKS UP TO THEE, LEAD KINDLY LIGHT, JESUS, SAVIOR, PILOT ME. Tableau, with red or green lights, transformed the girls into living statues and brought the audience to its feet.

A popular doctor, Charles McClintock, was a sweet singer and very community minded. One of his favorites was something new; a musical monologue when he recited to a dying child, "Little Joe". Needless to say, the good doctor could hardly refrain from laughing at "Little Joe's" antics as he posed as the sick child.

Patriotic numbers were always anticipated for the Civil War was still vivid in the memories of folks and there were always "old soldiers" present to whom honor and respect were paid. One of the most appealing numbers was entitled MUSIC ON THE RAPAHANOCK involving a chorus and reader. Northern and Southern troops were encamped on opposite sides of the Rappahanock River and engaged in a singing match of their own songs until finally they all joined their voices in a final number, HOME, SWEET HOME. These were days when home and country could evoke tears in the most sophisticated.

From this entertainment the sum of \$35 was made, a small beginning to be added to by various projects in making a reality of a dream for a thing of beauty "which was to shed a mellow glow of multi-colored lights on all who enter the church portals."

Today a spacious new church stands on the site of the old one which had been erected in 1873, twice remodeled and remained a stronghold of the faith until 1979, the 125th year of its founding.

Into the new church went the old stained glass window with its still beautiful colors and mellow light, a symbol of appreciation for that which is old, respect for that which is loved, a challenge for that which is new. The original window has been divided. The side panels have been placed in the west entrance as a welcome to all who enter there. The main beautiful arch was placed behind the baptistry in the narthex, as a significant symbol of our brotherhood and a reminder of the dedication of those who preceded us.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

#### THE STILESVILLE METHODIST CHURCH

Abraham Lincoln once stated that "The Methodist Church has sent more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals and more prayers to Heaven for the preservation of the Union than any other denomination.

A check of Hendricks County churches for that period shows that eighteen of the fifty churches in ten denominations were Methodists.

The Stilesville Methodist Society was one of these. It was organized in the eighteen forties and met in the school house for a while.

The frame church was built about 1850 and cost \$1600. It would seat two hundred people. The school gymnasium now occupies that site.

The Stilesville church was sometimes in the Bloomington District and sometimes in the Indianapolis District of Indiana Conference.

Some other churches on the same circuit with Stilesville were Belleville, Bethesda, Cherry Grove, Lake Valley and Salem.

Among early members were; Isaac Smart, William Cline, John Clark, John Richardson, James Borders, Joseph Bishop, Edward Jackson, Elisha McAninch and their wives.

Names of some of the pastors are; James Williams, Joseph Woods, Jonathan F. Woodruff, Elias Gaskins, Miles Woods, W. W. Puett, Albert Fletcher Bridges, William McGinnis, Asa Beck, John V. R. Miller, Byrum Carter, Dayton Harvey, James B. Hamilton, George Edward Wynn, James Blake Likely, M. C. McKown, A. L. Duncan, J. K. Ake, Eli P. F. Wells, George F. McNaughton, E. L. Butler, William Francis Russell, John Warren Hanger, William E. Hinshaw, James H. Frost, J. H. Lewis, George C. Sprague, Samuel H. Caylor, Arthur Brinklow, Homer Wright, Charles W. Anderson, Lorenzo D. Dodd, Harrison Guy Ramsey, Raymond Houk and A. N. Elrod.

This church property was sold to the Franklin Township trustee and used for school purposes a few years before it was removed to make room for the gymnasium.

The bell from the belfry and the pews were moved to the Cherry Grove Church at this time.

Some paragraphs from a paper prepared by John Warren Hanger provide interesting notes on some members of his Stilesville congregation.

## "MY CONTACT WITH HENDRICKS COUNTY"

By Rev. John Warren Hanger

At Stilesville was Uncle Elihue Coble and his sons, Willie, Jim, Lee, and a daughter, Laura. Uncle Elihue was a one-armed old Civil War soldier, who usually said instead of "good-bye", or "so long"----"Trust in the Lord and keep your powder dry." Years later I was called back to a funeral with burial at Stilesville. Someone came to the cemetery to tell me that Uncle Elihue was dying and wanted me to come to see him. I found him breathing his last. I had a few words with him, prayed with him, and said, "Well, Brother Coble, trust in the Lord and keep your powder dry". The old man smiled as he closed his eyes for the last time. In Stilesville was Everett Roberts, who operated a private bank and seemed to be making money. He accepted good naturedly the nickname "Brickey", which his townsmen had good naturedly given to him. He had bought from a super salesman a metal brick plugged with pure gold. According to the salesman he was about to get caught with it and would take something less than \$1000 for it. He was using it to keep his bank door from swinging with the breeze. I found in Stilesville: Delph Humes, Gales Robertson, a Mr. Fincher, a leader in the GORB Baptist Church, Phil. Cree, the 600 pound fat man who travelled with a circus, and many conspicuous and well known men and women. In this vicinity I found a most unusual and interesting farmer, Joe Hollingsworth. He was a local preacher in the Methodist Church, highly respected for his sincerity and character and widely known for his ability to express himself so that no one would fail to understand what he was trying to say and yet in most unexpected language. I was invited to his home one time for a birthday dinner in his honor. He had two married daughters whose husbands I had never met. When his sons-in-law arrived, in whom he delighted as much as they delighted in him, he proudly brought them in and introduced them to me. He followed the introduction with "The Devil owed Joe Hollingsworth a debt and he paid him off in sons-in-law that were Democrats and Campbellites". The happy father-in-law was an ardent Methodist and a Republican.

The old National Road which is now U.S. 40 runs east and west across Indiana coinciding with Washington Street in Indianapolis. In this vicinity its only pavement was two or four inches of loose dry gravel. The local news media had spread the information that on a certain day a horseless carriage would come west from Indianapolis. People came from north and south to the National Road. On foot, horseback, in buggies and families in two horse wagons. They brought their lunches along and took the day off to see the horseless carriage go by. Just where or why the horseless carriage gave up the struggle with the loose gravel they never knew. It never passed.

Telephones were beginning to come in this section of Hendricks County. There was a Farmer's Exchange. One line with which I was familiar, had thirty-two phones on the one line. Little wall phones, each with a dry cell battery in it and a crank on the side to ring the number with. A short and a long, two longs and a short, etc. The wire zig-zagged on its way from a tree to a snag of a broken tree to a tall fence post or a poor excuse for a pole. When the phone rang, everyone who was in the house went to the phone to learn whose old cat had kittens or whose old hen had hatched her brood or whose cow had a calf. With fifteen or twenty receivers off the hook no one could ring. There was not battery power enough. There was on this line, a tall, sociable, North Carolinian who wore a broad-brimmed hat. He was an auctioneer, and would rather talk than eat. It was common talk that during all of his spare time, he sat with a hearing device strapped to his ear. No one needed to ring him; but just say "Hello Harrison", and he would answer.



About thirty years after I came as a student pastor to Belleville, Cherry Grove, and Stilesville, my son, John Howard Hanger, was in DePauw and was assigned for his first conference appointment, as the student pastor at Belleville, Salem, and Cherry Grove. Here at Salem, he became pastor of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Pritchard. (Mrs. Pritchard is now the capable secretary of the Hendricks County Historical Society.) I was more interested in his success on this charge than I was in my own success there thirty years previous. I became a warm friend of Fred and May Franklin, Mr. and Mrs. Blunk, and many others on the charge, and strengthened the friendships of thirty years before.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

#### CONGRATULATIONS!

If my addition is correct, October 22nd marked the 63rd anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Davidson. And if I am still thinking straight, it was also Joe's birthday. So this is a good time to send them love, appreciation and best wishes from our entire society. Joe Davidson has long been one of the best and most faithful contributors to the bulletin and to our programs. The tales he told and the songs he sang kept young and old entranced, and Mrs. Davidson has been a great force in church, community and Historical Society endeavors. Thanks to two wonderful people.

Congratulations are also in order to Mrs. Eloise Castetter who, after 15 years of employment at the Indiana Boys School, has retired. A reception honoring her was held at the administration building of the Boys School October 23rd. Now, isn't it nice that both she and her hubby will be more free to work with us in the HCHS! (That was kind of sneaky, wasn't it?)

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

#### MUSEUM NEWS

Word is getting around that the museum is another place to go for genealogy research. Several people have recently visited in search of family information. We have the files from the Danville Public Library Indiana Room. They were brought over when the remodeling work was started on the library. Cemetery information is available as well as a variety of other subjects. The cemetery information will be incorporated into a huge album with each township having its own page and information. Names and locations of cemeteries will be shown.

Thirty five docents from the Indiana State Museum visited us recently. We were very pleased.

Of the several models seen by visitors, two decided to speak up. The one in the hall, and the one in the parlor sort of got tired of their wool dresses. Yes Wool! One hundred percent of the stuff! The word "blend" applied to other things, and "Polly Esther" was a proper name, not a fabric when those dresses were worn. The day was hot--one of our hottest of the summer. They approached Dorothy Kelley and wondered how about a change. The dresses they wore were lovely, they said, but let's be honest, they scratch! It just happened that a little while before, two white cotton dresses lavishly trimmed with hand-made lace had been received. The gals got their change. It helped too! Not another word out of them.

We received a large number of phonograph records. All classics, including some opera, and all 78 rpm. Just the other day we had a Victrola loaned to us.

Our collection of books is enormous. The dates on some of them goes way back. It is safe to estimate that some dates read early 1700's.

The museum had a booth during Brownsburg's Old Fashioned Festival (BOFF), sponsored by Hendricks County Bank and Trust, Brownsburg, and a booth at the Plainfield Friends Annual Church Mouse Sale.

The craft shop is always an eye-catcher. There is a new supply of corn-cob faces. Quilt fanciers might just want to drool over the four lucious quilts that came in recently. They are hand quilted, almost queen size, and reasonably priced too!

We were open both days during Swap 'n Shop days and had many visitors both days. A stand was set up on the lawn for a rummage sale, but the weather had to act up. Turned cold and there was the wind-chill factor too, so the sale wasn't continued the second day. Mrs. Marcia Mussman of Danville demonstrated weaving on the loom seen in the Primitives Room.

The Neighborhood squirrel learned that the Shingle Oak, set out by the D.A.R. wasn't big enough yet to climb satisfactorily.

The flower bed on the lawn is still beautiful and is making a brave last ditch stand against Jack Frost. Thanks again, Hendricks County Garden Club for all that beauty!

Jewell

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

from Recollections by George L. Leak b. 1846 d. 1920

Written about 1919 or 1920

As My Grandfather Buzzard<sup>1</sup> lived less than a mile from us, over on the Indianapolis and Crawfordsville State Road, which was then the only public highway near us, I with two older brothers<sup>2</sup> would often go over there. There especially in the fall of the year, we could see many emigrants in covered wagons moving west on this road. And many travelers on horseback that carried the old fashioned saddle bags. Some of the covered wagons were drawn by oxen. These travelers would camp along and near the road at night. I have a recollection of where one of these emigrants with his family camped for the night, near the Lambert farm or what is now the Swain farm. They had made a fire against a dead tree. During the night and while the family was all asleep, the fire burned the tree down and it fell across the wagon tung and killed one of the horses. The tree fell so close to the family that were asleep on the ground, that it pulled a bunch of hair from the wife and mother. The man had to find another horse to take them on their journey. He came to my father and procured a little old bay horse that was grazing on the commons, or maybe the woods. He got his wagon repaired at my Grandfather's blacksmith shop and continued his trip to Iowa.

1. David Buzzard who lived where the ox yoke farm is today.
2. Henry B. Leak b. 1842 and Franklin Blair Leak b. 1843

Great quantities of the beautiful wild or Passenger Pigeons (which are now extinct) would fly in great droves and light in the woods, seeking food. But permit me to say, that not until after the Civil War was the slaughter of this beautiful bird great from the simple fact that the hunters were not well equipped with good shot guns. The last covey of the beautiful birds that I have any recollection of used in the woods on my farm near Lizton in the early spring of 1888. The last reliable report of anyone of these wild birds having been seen was one lone bird having lit in a pine tree in Henry B. Leak's yard in March 1894. (This is across from the Methodist Cemetery where James M. Hall now lives.)

Ruth Hall, Lizton