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HENDRICKS COUNTY

HISTORY BULLETIN



VOLUME XII NUMBER IV
NOVEMBER 1981
PUBLISHED BY
THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DANVILLE, INDIANA

HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

ORGANIZED 1967

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ANNUAL DUES \$3.00 PAYABLE IN NOVEMBER

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

"The seasons play on a moving scene ... each with their poetry and music, each with an act of high drama. But autumn, with its transforming fires in the woods and hills, can burn away the low thoughts and renew the human spirit. It should be savored every precious hour and allowed to lift us as high as we can go."

Harvey Jacobs
Editor of THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE.....

Last month I lost an old friend. Like all friends this one was kind at times, then at others it cast sharp barbs at those who crossed its path.

Out of what seemed like a harmless summer thunderstorm a bolt of powerful electricity struck and split one of the old cedar trees in my front yard. Those old trees were set there by a little eight year old girl ninety six years ago and they have watched four generations of the families' children step gingerly across the front yard. Did you ever walk barefoot under a cedar tree?

However, they were beautiful when they were younger and they provided shade for the front porch and homes for many birds so they continued to stand year after year. Even as far back as 1898, when Fletcher Franklin was doing some surveying, one of these trees was used as a measuring point from which a cornerstone was located only a few years ago.

However, age was taking its toll and the question was simply, "When will they have to go?" Only sentiment had allowed them to stand this long--because they are no longer pretty. Then along came that bolt from heaven and the whole issue is settled. It will have to go leaving only a vacant spot and a lot of memories.

Marian Worrell, President

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

Plainfield Friends Meeting was the scene of our August meeting with 46 members and guests present. The usual business was dispensed with during which the treasurer reported a balance of \$313.11.

Dorothy Kelley gave a splendid report on the museum telling of a number of recent visitors. She told of plans for a booth at BOFF festivities at Brownsburg early in September and a display being prepared for the State Heritage Day in Indianapolis September 19th. There is still a need for volunteers at the museum. Marian Worrell, president, appointed Ed Winkleman, Randall Joseph and Clark Kellum on the nominating committee.

WELL DRILLING was the subject of a talk by George Merritt of Brownsburg. He spoke of the impact of the glasier upon the soils of Hendricks County and he had a display of various rocks. He discussed well drilling, the construction of wells, and he gave a demonstration of water-witching. It was a fascinating and instructive program.

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NOVEMBER MEETING

Our November meeting will be held as early in the month as possible...on the very first day! It will take place at the Belleville United Methodist Church which is two blocks north of the stop and go sign. Maynard Nolan, chairman of the program committee tells us that the program will be given by Bobby Thomas (Mrs. Frank) of Hendricks County who will tell us of some of her experiences when she served as Indiana's Home-maker of the Year (1980). She was given this honor by

the Indiana Farm Bureau. She and a group of other farm wives will present an amusing skit. Refreshments will be served by the ladies of Franklin, Clay and Liberty Townships. We all hope the glorious weather lasts so we can have a great crowd.

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CLAYTON CEMETERY RECORDS.

The work done by the ladies of the Clayton Progressive Club on the Clayton Cemetery Records has been placed in the Clayton Public Library. The work is available for the public to examine during regular library hours which are 1 - 4 in the summer time and 1 - 5 during school session, Monday thru Friday.

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MUSINGS AT THE MUSEUM

The museum participated in Hoosier Heritage Day festival at the Indiana State Museum. Our booth consisted of a collection of dolls. The one sought by the newspapers was the rag doll that made the journey to Kansas and back by covered wagon.

The museum participated in BOFF days at Brownsburg recently. Our booth was provided through the courtesy of Hendricks County Bank and Trust of Brownsburg.

We received a doll-house, and a general store with living quarters above, furnished entirely in miniature. If one wants to see how life was in the era around the middle 1880's all they would have to do is visit the museum. It is complete right down to the last broom straw. The collection belonged to the late Margaret Redding, who took great pride in assembling it. It was presented to the museum in her memory by her husband, Robert Redding. The fronts of both displays have been covered by plexiglas to keep out dust. There is a large peg board, also a gift of Mr. Redding, that is used to display small household and other articles. People are quite attracted to it, and do a lot of guessing on the articles, some of which are not in use today, so it is quite a puzzle. "What's this?" and "What's that?" is heard often as people see the board.

A beautiful crocheted bedspread, a recent acquisition, graces the bed in the adult bedroom.

Our models all have new winter dresses, and they look quite elegant.

We were open both days of "Swap, 'n' Shop". Over 100 persons attended on Saturday, and a big crowd was there on Sunday. It was a pleasure to see so many. We don't know whether the sign uptown directing people to the museum with the promise of free coffee had anything to do with our big crowd or not but it could have helped. The weather cooperated for a change. That's a switch! Remember last year? For those of you who don't know, we froze out! Kathi Kelley made personalized refrigerator decorations at a table placed near the sidewalk and sold several. Anyone who forgot what his name was could look on the refrigerator and find out.

While shuffling some papers on the museum desk, we ran on to a recipe for liniment that would be interesting to wave under a pharmacist's nose and get an

opinion. Goes something like this: "One pint apple vineger; turpentine; camphor; eggs, 4 to the quart; 3 cents worth of Salamoniac; makes one quart." Said to be good for rheumatism. Bet it would be hot enough!

How did lots of us spend the hot summer evenings this past summer? First, likely we griped! Next, turned up the air conditioner, or got into the direct path of the fan. Or could be we went out and sat in the porch swing until the mosquitoes ran us in. If all else failed, we hunted up a swimming-pool only to find out that almost everyone had the same idea! Went home, grumbling, and turned the television on. Didn't like what was on much, but what else was there to do?

Back in a more leisurely time--not necessarily cooler, there wasn't the T.V., radio, or any of the like. Well, what did they do for fun? While browsing around the museum we came up with a likely solution. The minstrel show! This program we found was dated August 7, 1909, and had the title of "Minstrel Carnival of the Brownsburg Boys". Most were local people. Some had come in from other towns but with horse and buggy transportation, that was a long trip. Some of the cast included: Mr. Walker, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Lingeman, Mr. Smith, Mr. Herdrich, Mr. Stonebraker, Mr. Reynierson, Miss Betth Johnson, Miss Elizabeth McDonald, Ione and Josephine Demarcus. Another program dated August 19, 1905 had the following "Band Minstrel Personnel": Owen Hollett, "Prong" Lingeman, C.L. Hunt, Maurice Stonebraker, F.B. Hopkins, A. Walker, G. Fitch, F. Hughes, R. Harmon, C. Watts, W. Cook, C. Hunt, J. Wills, C. Prebster, N. Rogers. Those were the days! The museum has a collapsible tall hat and one of a pair of bones--a must at a minstrel show.

The cast had a lot of fun preparing the show, and the audience looked forward to getting all dressed up in their best to see it. It wasn't a casual time as it would be today. It was an event! And events were few and far between so there wasn't any of that "I don't wanna go!", "Aw, do I have to?", and "Dumb stuff!" Most young people probably primped for quite a while because "someone" might be there and one must look one's best. So, with the aid of assorted fans, the heat was forgotten for one night.

There is music at the museum. All one needs to do is activate it. Looking around at the parlor we see a snare drum that belonged to a man who had once played in John Philip Sousa's band. Right next to it is a pump organ. It is an instrument that graced many parlors of yesteryear. Lots of them came with plush covered stools, and the pedals were covered with carpeting. Elegant! A little later on came an instrument called the piolian, a cross between the organ and piano. There is one on the south wall of the parlor. It has five pedals. The ones on either side are pumped to get the sound. The faster the player pumps, the more volume is produced. Lots of guests thought it was a piano. It does look like one, but there the resemblance ends. On top of the piolian is a wind instrument that is the forerunner of the oboe. In the primitives room stands a melodian. A beautiful little instrument that also graced many parlors. It too, has to be pumped. When one took music lessons there had to be a way to carry the music. There is a leather roll that was used by two generations. Then for those of us who are "all thumbs" when it comes to performing, there is the Victrola, also called "talking machine". Many hours could be pleasantly spent listening to records. Someone has to be around the machine constantly to keep it wound. It isn't like the modern record player that is plugged in, turned on, and takes care of itself.

There are some who probably wonder what was done for entertainment during the deep dark ages before television. Well, it wasn't all that bad. Folks made their own entertainment and didn't have to "import" any. It was a satisfaction to be able to perform, and an honor to be asked. Folks felt free to participate and didn't get "shushed up" either. Seems like now that some use a musical program as a background to visit among themselves and don't pay any attention to what is being performed, unless the performer wears flashy costumes and makes the audience afraid they'll miss something if they don't pay attention. The custom of "sitting 'til bedtime" was popular then too. Families would just sit and visit, play cards, or maybe enjoy popping corn. They had a good time.

Noticed during the week-end that the flower bed at the museum is ready for its winter nap. The annuals were all cleaned off after what the frost did to them. It wouldn't be surprising if the Hendricks County Garden Club isn't thinking about what it will plant there next year. It will come up with something and it will be pretty.

Jewell

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

Some Brief Notes On The
Belleville United Methodist Church

The first Methodist preaching in Liberty Township was early in 1829 by Joseph Tarkington at the home of Edmund Cooper where the Terre Haute Trail crossed Mud Creek. From this service and subsequent preaching by John Mercer at Joshua Marshall's cabin, a Society of Methodists was organized in June of 1829. These members and their families worshiped at Marshall's until their log church was completed in August 1829. This was the Salem meeting house and it stood where the present Salem church is located.

This was the only Methodist Society in the area and Methodists for several miles around worshiped here for some time. However, the fantastic spread of Methodism coupled with increasing population in the newly platted village of "Belville", suggested the organization of a society here. Belleville Methodists worshiped at first in the thirty by forty foot frame meeting house belonging to the Regular Baptists in the south west part of Belleville.

Philip May, the preacher in charge at that time of the Mooresville Circuit, purchased nine lots in square three in Belleville, for two hundred dollars from Joseph Hiatt. This transaction was dated May 7, 1836.

On November 12, 1835, Philip May deeded to the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church of "Belville" the north half of lots five and six in square three in the original town of "Belville". This was a part of the property purchased from Joseph Hiatt and for this ground Philip May received five hundred dollars. Preacher then was Asa Beck.

At an election on April 22, 1837 in the town of Springfield (later Springtown), trustees were elected to receive and hold a deed to lot nine in square three in Belville for the benefit of traveling preachers sent to the Mooresville circuit from time to time. The preacher in charge at that meeting was Israel G. Lewis.

On July 28, 1837, Philip May, then of Madison County, Indiana, deeded to the trustees of the M. E. Church parsonage of the Mooresville Circuit, Indiana Conference, for the sum of twenty-five dollars, lot nine in square three in the town of Belville, Indiana.

In 1858 a brick church was erected on the north half of lots five and six in square three. That brick church served until 1923 when it was replaced by the present structure dedicated in 1924 under the pastorate of Rev. Arthur Palmer.

According to Conference Minutes, one hundred nine pastors have ministered to the Belleville congregation in the years since that 1835 property purchase. Currently the pastor is Rev. Jewel E. Dewees. He and Mrs. Dewees reside in the Methodist parsonage on west Main Street in Monrovia. The Belleville church is on the Monrovia charge.

The Belleville United Methodist Church is easy to find. It is two blocks north of Belleville's only traffic signal.

Ruth M. Pritchard
Belleville, Indiana

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

This letter was written by Susanna Elizabeth Phillips, daughter of Samuel and Rachel Newman Phillips, during the Civil War. It was loaned to the Danville Public Library for copying by Janet Woodrum of Lizton.

Feb. 14th, 1864

Respected friend,

I take up my pen to write you a few lines to let you know how I and the rest of our folks are getting along. Father is very sick today. The rest of the family are all well with the exception of bad colds., oh yes I like to a forgotton to tell you that I got so excited yesterday that I poured some hot watter in my shoes and the consequence is that my feet is both blistered bad but they are not serious. We have got one of the prettiest little boys here you ever saw. He is eleven weeks old tomorrow. I guess his name will be Elsworth. Things have turned around right smart since you was here. Jake Phillips is married bad luck to you. Milton Hadley is teaching school at Beechwood (?) this winter they have had the niger question up pretty high again, I don't go so I have no hand in the work Jonathan is at home today he is so fat you would hardly know him. the boys from this section all got home except John T. Tincher he died at Knoxville Tenn but I don't know whether we will keep them here very long or not, if they all go off again I am going to give up and be an old maid, don't you think that will be a good idea anyhow

Sallie has growed and fattened this winter, the fattest kind she is nearly as large as I am I guess I have written about all that I can think of tell Sarah I hant forgot the soap suds yet but the soap suds that I had yesterday was a lettle to hot I dont see why you dont come and see us some time I have looked for you a good many times since you was here please answer this if you think it is worthy of notice give my best respect to all the girls, yours with respect

Susanna E. Phillips

Abbie Coffin address Springtown Indiana

This notice about the Horace Greeley Masten diary was published in the Hendricks County Flyer a few weeks back.

The dictionary defines a diary as a "register of daily events or transactions ...a book for personal notes or memoranda, or for details of experiences or observations."

From 1912 to 1926, Horace G. Masten, a farmer living near Amo, kept a diary. His purpose at the time was probably personal--as a farmer, he needed to keep track of stock and expenses. As a resident of the area, he was interested in local people and events. What started out as a personal record now provides us with a picture of those times and the people of that era.

Notations concerning farming make up a majority of the entries. A detailed description is given of his horses. Frank, for instance, had a small scar on his left front foot 2 inches above the hoof, and held his tail slightly to the right. He records his expenses in planting crops, and in raising and marketing hogs. Hog cholera, or "swine plague" was prevalent. Several types of serum and vaccine were used by veterinarians, but losses still occurred. Between September 6th and 13th, 1925, Masten lost 73 hogs, even though he had spent \$108 for vaccinations.

Other events of local and national interest appear: a horse show at Amo; the laying of the cornerstone for the new Court House at Danville; a "materializing seance" he attended at Chesterfield, Indiana; the sinking of the Lusitania; the remodelling of the Amo Methodist Church; the Declaration of War against Germany.

On April 12, 1919, Masten became ill with the flu. (This was during the Influenza Epidemic that followed World War I.) From that date until May 18, 1919, his wife, Mary kept the diary. She recorded his treatment and recovery, as well as the names of the neighbors who helped with the farm work during his illness.

In the back of the diary, Masten recorded information on the history of the Masten and Reitzel families of Hendricks County.

Betty Bartley, Historical Librarian at the Danville Public Library, has photocopied this diary, and has it available in the Indiana Room for circulation. Since there is a wealth of genealogical information in the birth and death entries, a second copy will be kept at all times in the reference section of the Indiana Room.

Query for the Bulletin

Any information on Tandy Scott 1810-1875 - parents, brothers, sisters, and descendants

Any information on Amy Arnell Scott 1807-1865 - parents, brothers, sisters, and descendants

Any information on Hannah Arminda (Aminda) Knighten 1837-1913 - parents, brothers, sisters, and descendants

Query for the Bulletin (Continued)

Any information on Mary Elizabeth _____ Knighten White 1809-1896
parents, brothers, sisters and descendants.

all of the above from Ina H. Roney, 722 S. Van Buren, Sullivan, IL 61951

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NEWS FROM THE INDIANA ROOM

Good news! A new microfilm reader has been ordered for the Indiana Room of the Danville Public Library. No more holding your head at a 45 degree angle to read census records! Hopefully, the machine will be delivered by the time this Bulletin is published. It will be located in the Indiana Room for the convenience of our patrons. In addition to the Hendricks County census records (1850 thru 1900), we now have the 1850 and 1880 census for Putnam County available on microfilm. The latter was recently presented to the Library by Floy Underwood Modesitt in memory of Mamie Phillips Campbell. We will be glad to order any other census records for our patrons on interlibrary loan from the National Archives.

Other additions to our reference section include the WPA indexes for births, deaths, and marriages in Hendricks County (up to 1920); "Ancestors and Descendants of Francis Marion and Louetta (Wise) Hawley" compiled by William R. and Jane Walterhouse Hawley; "Genealogical Sources from the Indiana Magazine of History" by Dorothy Riker. We now have the complete set of Heiss' Quaker Records, including the index.

We welcome any suggestions from Historical Society members on books or services they would like to have added to the Indiana Room.

Betty Bartley
Historical Librarian

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

This clipping was turned in by Ruth Pritchard, but her sharp eyes spied an error. 1923 could not have been the 100th anniversary of the Belleville School because, says Ruth, "Belleville was not even platted until 1829. The date for Belleville's first school was reported to be 1833."

Republican July 1922

SECOND ANNUAL REUNION
AT OLD BELLEVILLE TOWN

Old Belleville again welcomed her wandering sons and daughters, Sunday, and the home-coming was pronounced even a greater success than that of last year. Plans are already in the making for next year. There is a tradition that 1923 is the 100th anniversary of the first school at Belleville. Historians will ascertain if this is true and if so, the celebration of this event will be included in the year's program.

The exercises were held in the Methodist church yard and two long tables were no more than sufficient for the dinner that was spread. In the afternoon, the formal program was given, Conrad Dillon presiding. The Belleville orchestra

scattered good music throughout the hour. There was a reading by Marion Franklin, a duet by the Minett sisters, a solo by Mrs. Mabel Rushton, a violin solo by Master John Taylor, a talk by Mrs. Samuel M. Ralston, a reading by Carl Martin, address by Prof. C. O. Mayes, of Richmond; one by Jesse D. Hamrick, of Indianapolis, and also by Dr. A. M. Strong, Cale White and Joe Morgan, the latter of Indianapolis. Mr. Morgan made an impressive talk, showing what can be done in free America. In 1882 he lived in Belleville and his parents were so poor that Joe went to school wearing one shoe and one boot. He picked the boot up in an alley in Belleville. Mr. Morgan is now an enterprising business man of Indianapolis and owns a farm near Joppa.

With the addition of J. W. Noel as vice president, the former officers were continued. John C. Taylor was appointed chairman of the program committee with authority to select his assistants. A circuit picture of the gathering was taken.

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John R. McDowell

Many of us who worked on THE HISTORY OF HENDRICKS COUNTY were greatly saddened to learn of the death of John R. McDowell who edited our book. We worked closely with Mr. McDowell and were constantly amazed as the ease with which he assumed what seemed to us an herculean undertaking. Time after time he took home great stacks of manuscripts which he edited in his spare time. He was actually "moonlighting" since he had a full time job as assistant Sunday editor of the INDIANAPOLIS STAR as well as feature writer and reporter. Had it not been for John R. McDowell there might not have been our HISTORY OF HENDRICKS COUNTY.

He died suddenly September 15th and we extend to his family our sincere sympathy.

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WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE

I wish I could find words to say all the things that are in my heart. I wish I could tell you how touched I was with the beautiful messages of love and cheer and encouragement I received while on my summer "vacation". I wish I could thank my faithful helpers who rallied 'round and put out the last Bulletin... Marian Worrell, Ruth Pritchard, Grace Cox, Mary Jeanette Winkleman, Frances Fisher, Jewell Bell, Blanche Wean and that beautiful, efficient typist, Barbara Singleton. After reading that BULLETIN, I decided you don't need an editor!

I cherish you all and I pray that God will make His face to shine upon you and give you peace, both now and forevermore.

Margaret Baker

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NEWS OF OUR V. I. P.

I hope no one missed the lovely picture of Dorothy Kelley, director of the Museum, which appeared in the September 11th INDIANAPOLIS NEWS. She is shown holding the cloth doll made for Luemma Allen in 1870 before her family journeyed to Kansas in a covered wagon. I quote in part the article written by Kathleen Van Nuys:

DAUGHTER RECALLS PIONEER

Clara Reitzel never got to play with the cloth doll her mother took as a child to Kansas in a covered wagon in 1870.

"It was always put away. No one ever played with it while I was growing up," said the rural Stilesville resident. She has given the doll to the Hendricks County Museum, housed in the 1885 courthouse and jail in Danville.

In its original costume, the doll will be displayed at Hoosier Heritage Day, Sept. 19, in the Indiana State Historical Society section of the daylong event at the Indiana State Museum, 202 N. Alabama.

It will be among 10 dolls representative of a collection in the Hendricks County Museum.

Mrs. Reitzel said her mother, Luemma Allen, was 6 years old when her father decided to rent his farm and travel to Kansas and look for another one.

"But he didn't find a farm any better than the one he had right here, so they came back," she said.

"My grandfather built a cover for the wagon bed, and the family left for Kansas in August," she said, recalling the story told to her many times. "He drove a team of horses.

"The family stopped overnight in many places, cooking their own food, according to a record of the journey," she said. "They lived in a house for one year in Kansas before returning.

"Mother had an older brother, Edgar, about 10, who made a cradle for the doll. The doll is of original material, but its face may have been repainted," she said.

Mrs. Reitzel, whose father was Newton Richardson, said that the family of her late husband, Albert, also settled early in the area. They came to Hazelwood in the 1830s.

Dorothy Kelley, director of the Hendricks County Museum, said a 4-inch china doll in the collection has moving eyes and legs. Baby dolls, a clown, a black boy and Queen Louise china doll with blonde hair are among the unusual ones being displayed. Doll furniture, a trunk, dishes and a restored carriage complete the exhibit.

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A recent clipping from THE REPUBLICAN brings good news.

LITTLE HOOSIERS

Avon Little Hoosiers, a division of the Indiana Junior Historical Society, is organizing for this school year. This year's membership includes 43 in Grade 4 and 21 in Grade five at Avon Upper Elementary. The group meets about once a month, during recess. Mrs. Judy Bobb is the faculty sponsor. Activities include guest speakers, field trips, or special projects.

We welcome these young historians and we assure them that our Society will do every thing we can to help make them real history buffs!

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SPRING FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

No longer stands the Meeting House
Where once the Quakers slow
Would sit in silent worship
A hundred years ago.

The Meeting House was moved away,
A church was built in town;
The graveyard lies neglected
The stones are fallen down.

The yucca takes possession
The ground hogs burrow deep
The myrtle spreads a blanket
Where young and old now sleep.

The briars, weeds and bushes
Are growing rank and wild
The cedars rustle sadly
Where rests a little child.

The dates on stones bear witness
To hardships, sickness, and pain;
Young mothers, little children,
Young men, so long have lain.

A few more hardy than the rest
Lived on to a ripe old age;
The sum of what they did for us
Is written on history's page.

Oh, what we owe these brave ones!
We reap the crop they've sown
They gave their lives and labor
To clear the lands we own.

Ida Logue

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

In connection with the following letter, this clipping from an old paper is appropriate.

In Danville Paper 1854

Third Session Belleville Academy

9-25-1854

12-22-1854

Course of Study

Tuition

Primary

\$3.25

Junior

\$5.20

Senior

\$7.80

Jarred R. Woodfill A.B. - Math, Nat Science

Robert S. Reese A.M. - Prof. of Languages

Jarred R. Woodfill at this time owned the Belleville lots on which now (1980) Roy Pritchards' house stands.

April 28th, 1861

Brother John,

After stating that we are enjoying good health, and have fine prospect for a wheat and Rye crop I will state that the War Panic is incredible. Gentry County is becoming depopulated. About twenty families have moved to Iowa within the past ten days. The Huggins neighborhood, which is about 7 miles north of Island Creek, is evacuated. The North E. Methodist are denied the privilege of worshipping God under their own "vine and fig tree", consequently they are migrating North.

To make a short story of a great deal of trouble, all the citizens here who have consciencious scruples against fighting for the Confederate states after Missouri shall seceed, are taking time by the forelock, and severing their connection with the Commonwealth. Some give away their property, others leave real estate unsold.

All kinds of business is checked. There is literally no money in N. W. Missouri. The farmer goes to his plow without courage, the mechanic to his shop with reluctance.

Secession is the prevailing sentiment here. There are many Union men here who love the stars and stipes as their own lives, but for the safety of themselves and families, they say nothing. The liberties of free speech are proscribed here. All I have got is here and I intend to stay with it at all hazards. They may kill me, but they can't drive me away.

I have never needed 800 dols worse since I have been to the state. I shall have to sacrificize property most awfully if I don't get some soon.

I have been looking for the balance due me from father Irons (?) but it has not come yet but I hope it will soon.

In about ten days we have 400 dols due us but I have no idea that we will get 50.

I have made a good deal of money since I have been here but I am mighty hard up now. I hope the war will end in a few days and the troubled waters will subside.

Let me hear from you soon.

Yours Respectively,

J. R. Woodfill

AN EDITORIAL

Sometimes, in delving into the past, we come up with stories that do not always portray our ancestors in the most flattering light. Occasionally we have printed some of these stories but with the hope that they will, in no way, cause any embarrassment to the decendants, if any are living at this time.

There is nothing malevelont about this. Any honest historian knows that our past was not all perfect. There was evil going on then, as there is today. A few ... well, many ... oh, well, all our ancestors made mistakes, just as you and I are making them today, and will continue to make them until the day we die. But

trying to forget, ignore or gloss over their shortcomings is not giving a true picture of the past. We could learn a great deal from past mistakes.

On this trend of thought, let me quote one of my favorite writers, the late Harold Blake Walker: "Tradition is a covenant between father and sons, a mutual pledge of allegiance to what conscience, under God, regards as true and just. Tradition is a responsible continuance of the struggle for the highest ideals and aspirations of our history, a continuance re-affirmation of our loyalty to the noblest and best of our inheritance.

"In the present cultural climate, it is altogether too easy to neglect history and tradition and discard the past as irrelevant. Unfortunately, 'all that is past is prologue' and we forget it to our peril. We cannot understand the present and march on to a better future without learning from both the mistakes and the wisdom of those who went before us."

That says, more succinctly than your humble Editor could, what the HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, and its bulletin, are all about.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

We were distressed to hear of Clark Kellum's serious illness and we all join in prayers that he will soon be improved. Clark is very important to countless people, and organizations and worthy endeavors, and we miss him greatly when he is not participating as he has done for so many years. To Clark and Carolyn, we quote I Thessalonians - "May your spirit and body and soul be kept sound."

I doubt that she will want you to know this, but Blanche Wean took a short vacation in HCH for tests, but knowing Blanche as we do, you may look for her back at her desk soon. At least that is our hope and prayer.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS

This is another selection from Clara Reitzel's collection which she titled ROSES IN DECEMBER. She compiled it in 1974, and it is full of delightful vignettes.

TELEPHONES

Alva left home when I was two or three years old. He worked for the telephone company. This was when phones were first installed in the farmers homes. When he came home, and Mary had a date and maybe some other young folks came in on a Sunday afternoon, they, the boys, would amuse themselves trying to climb the poles with Alva's climbers with the spikes. When our telephone was installed, what a marvel to be able to call our neighbors. One neighbor had a gramophone-- the original record player or phonograph, with the cylinder records and a large morning glory shaped horn. They would call several of their friends, then play the records for all to hear. We had "party lines" then, maybe 10 or more on the same line. One, especially popular, was "the Preacher and the Bear". Alva worked for various telephone companies for several years. About 1912 he began working for Western Union Telegraph and stayed with them until his retirement.

I was only four years old when our telephone was installed. When the men were installing it, I picked up a funny looking tube that they had been using. I squeezed it and out spurted a funny-looking brown salve. That was my first time to see a squeeze tube like toothpaste and so many other things come in at present.

HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS HCHS