

H
977.253
#498

HENDRICKS COUNTY

HISTORY BULLETIN



VOLUME III

October, 1972

NUMBER IV

PUBLISHED BY

THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DANVILLE, INDIANA

Indiana Collection
PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAINFIELD, INDIANA

From the President

Your Executive Committee has been wrestling with a few problems which we will discuss at our meeting October 8th.

The first, stated simply, is that our \$2.00 yearly dues do not cover the expense of publishing four bulletins per year. Cost of mailing has increased, and cost of materials and labor will not decrease, we are reasonably sure, so we are faced with the decision either to raise the dues or to decrease the number of times we publish the bulletin.

We have also discussed the pros and cons of incorporating the Society. We have talked to the County Commissioners, as reported in the last bulletin, about the possibility of using some of the rooms of the old jail for an Historical Museum, and it is the thinking of some that we will be better able to ask for help from the Commissioners and the County Council if we are incorporated. We have consulted with an attorney and we will have more to report at our meeting.

Please think these things over so we can come to decisions without consuming too much time. We have always tried to keep the business meetings to a minimum, giving us more time for the excellent programs we have had. We hope this will be no exception.

Since this is my last message as your president, may I thank you again for the privilege of serving in this capacity. I felt so inadequate at first, but I soon learned that, with so much wonderful help, all I had to do was to delegate the work to others and then sit back and take credit for our accomplishments! Well, it wasn't quite that easy, but it has been an inspiring and gratifying experience.

I have learned much this year, but the nicest little tid-bit of knowledge that I have stored in the back of my noodle is that the members of the Hendricks County Historical Society are the greatest!

Thank you all!

Margaret Baker
(Mrs. C. Rawleigh Baker)
President

WHERE IS WHITE LICK CHURCH?

White Lick Presbyterian Church, organized in 1851, is a typical little Church in the Wildwood located in one of the loveliest spots in Hendricks County. Nestled in a grove of trees on the banks of White Lick Creek, the church house in which we will meet, October 8, was built in 1881.

Perhaps the easiest way to get there would be to take Road 267 to Road 200 N, turn west and follow this road until you cross the creek and come to a T. Turn right (north) and follow the winding creek road which will lead you to the church. Another easy way to get there from the west is to take 10th street Road east from Danville to the T, which will be at the creek. Turn north (left) on the same winding creek road and you'll soon be there.

All members of our Society will be interested to know that the ladies of the White Lick Church are holding their annual Fall Festival, Saturday, the 7th. This is an all day affair, starting at 10:00 A.M. It includes a Country Store, baked goods sale, fancy work, an antique exhibit, cake walk, and entertainment throughout the day by various musical groups. A special concert will be given at 4 o'clock by Jack Boswell and the Country Swingers. A door prize will be awarded every hour and food will be served from noon through the supper hour.

This is a most extraordinary event, and since the ladies of the church may have to work until the wee small hours of the morning to get the church cleaned and ready for our meeting the next day, I hope every member of our Society will attend and support this delightful project of the White Lick Church.

YOU'LL SEE IT, COME OCTOBER 8

The White Lick Presbyterian Church, familiarly known as "The Little Church in the Wildwood," was organized by the Rev. B.F. Cole of Cincinnati in 1851 with twelve charter members. It has served the community for more than one hundred twenty years. During the first six years, meetings were held in the homes of its members.

In 1857 a frame building was erected on the site of the present church, and in 1881 the structure which is in use today was built. In 1958 the educational annex was built. Since then the sanctuary has been redecorated and the pulpit moved from the north to the south side.

The Rev. H.S. Dickerson served as pastor for more than forty years, beginning in 1857. The present pastor is the Rev. Bruce Brown.

Mr. Floyd Hufford, Brownsburg, will preside at the meeting. The Rev. Bruce Brown, will give the invocation and the benediction. Mr. John Oliver, an authority on the Civil War and a past president (1971) of the Civil War Round Table of Indianapolis will be the speaker. His subject will be "Hendricks County in the Civil War". Mrs. Winkleman, program chairman, asks members to bring Civil War relics with any interesting information on these articles. The ladies of Lincoln Township will be in charge of the social hour. All members of the White Lick Church are invited to attend.

PITTSBORO HOSTS JULY MEETING

The young folks had a big part in an interesting and delightful program of the Society held at the Pittsboro Methodist Church on July 9. As an opener, Martha Hill, the talented teenager granddaughter of the first presidents of the Society (Roy and Frances Fisher) played a violin solo that brought enthusiastic applause

HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 Danville, Indiana
 STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS
 October 1, 1971--August 13, 1972

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Dues Received | | \$ 362 60 |
| Less: | | |
| Membership Expenses: | | |
| Postage | \$ 159 46 | |
| Bulletin Cost | \$ 430 93 | |
| Sale of Bulletins | <u>16 00</u> | 414 93 |
| Expense of Meetings | 5 00 | |
| Stationery & Office Supplies | 55 04 | |
| Junior Historical Society | <u>60 00</u> | <u>694 43</u> |
| Excess of Disbursements over Receipts | | \$ (331 83) |
| Other Receipts: | | |
| Gifts | \$ 1 005 00 | |
| Sale of CNC Note Paper | <u>63 25</u> | <u>1 068 25</u> |
| Difference | | \$ 736 42 |
| Cash in Bank 10/1/71 | | <u>756 80</u> |
| | | <u>\$ 1 493 22</u> |
| Cash in Bank 8/13/72 | \$ 493 22 | |
| Certificate of Deposit | <u>1 000 00</u> | <u>\$ 1 493 22</u> |

and favorable comment. She was accompanied by her mother, Marilyn Fisher Hill.

Lisa DeVore of Plainfield reported on an architectural survey of two counties in each of three states (Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky) in which she participated under the sponsorship of the society. Young people of Junior Historical Societies cooperated in the project, which was based in Carmi, Illinois. They toured the six counties looking for and learning to identify types of architecture, such as Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic, Italianate, France-American, Neo-Jacobean, and Romanesque. It made you wonder how many you could find of each in Hendricks County, and just where.

Leonard Fleener introduced the topic of "Hendricks County Authors" by explaining the basis of inclusions and exclusions in the list published in the July issue of this bulletin.

Mabel Davidson gave an informative talk on the life and writings of one of the best known of Hendricks County authors: Mabel Leigh Hunt, who grew up in Coatesville, (daughter of Dr. Tillman Hunt and Amanda Harvey Hunt) and later lived in Plainfield for several years. Miss Hunt wrote many, many stories for 8 to 12 year olds, as well as novels and biographies for older children. With degrees from DePauw University and Western Reserve, she was a children's librarian for ten years. Some of her best known books are The Little Girl with Seven Names, Tomorrow Will Be Bright, Cupola House, Johnny Appleseed, and Indiana in the Civil War.

Forty-one members and nineteen guests signed the register and munched those luscious cookies for which the Pittsboro ladies are famous.

Ever hear of these

HOOSIERS OF HENDRICKS?

Mrs. Marion Van Gordon (529 E. 11th St. #J. Upland, CA, 91786) wants information on her great grandfather, James Lackie (er ey), who was born in Ireland or Ohio and died on Feb. 2 or 12, 1861, and her great grandmother, Mary or Matilda Kirby Lackie (er ey), who was born in Pennsylvania and lived and died in Hendricks County. (d. 1885)

Mrs. J.B. Nelson would like any information concerning the father, mother, brothers, and/or sisters of: William Alexander Baton Trammel, B. ca 1802, where? d. 4/15/1897, where? m. 6/21/1827, where? His cousin. . . Cynthia Alexander, b. 9/15/1803 in North Carolina; d. 3/3/1879, where? She was the daughter of William Alexander and Elizabeth Parks and granddaughter of revolutionary war veteran (Ensign in 2nd N.C. Battalion) William Alexander and Margaret Ireland. Caroline Trammel, b. 1840, Kosciusko Co., Ind; d. 1925, Jasper Co. Iowa; m. John William Weston 9/6/1860, was a daughter of William Alexander Baton Trammel and Cynthia Alexander Trammel. Mrs. Nelson is interested in any Trammel (Tramel) genealogical data, especially between 1750-1850, and would be glad to exchange data with other interested persons.

Virginia Woody, (Douglas Kansas), is searching for the name of the mother of Miller Woody, who lived in Plainfield and was married to Margaret Lacy, Sept. 1858. "Was it Ruth Woody Hadley (b. 10/20/1822 in North Carolina and buried in Hendricks Co. by her husband, William Hadley?")

EARLY DAYS IN AND AROUND THE COURT HOUSE

Mrs. Josephine Wright scanned early issues of Hendricks County papers and found numerous facts and tidbits about the Court House:

The first court was held in the log cabin of William Ballard at the southeast edge of Belleville on August 25, 1824.

From a "primitive history of Hendricks County" dated August 11, 1864, we learn that Danville was located in a forest and that timber was cleared for the public square by David Matlock for \$19.75. The contract for building the Court House was let to David Matlock for \$138.50. It was 24' by 20', of hewed logs, one story high, with clapboard roof and puncheon floor. Elsewhere the cost of this Court House was recorded as \$147.50. The Court House and the jail were ready for occupancy on April 17, 1826, when the first court was held there. The land on which the Court House was built was donated by David Bales, David Matlock, Robert Wilson, James Downard, and Mr. Wood.

In 1831 the Court House was enclosed with brick at the price of \$6,190.00.

July, 1854. Rev. Curry will preach in the Court House.

April, 1857. The sheriff is busily fixing up the Court House fence and otherwise beautifying the grounds around the ancient time-worn dilapidated old building. City Hendricks County hasn't got better buildings. These are a disgrace.

June 23, 1858. \$11,000 has been raised for a new Court House. One look at the old hulk will convince everyone a new one is needed.

Aug. 18, 1858. The County Board after inspecting several plans last week adopted one by Isaac Hodgson, architect of Indianapolis. The plan is a good one and makes a favorable impression. Cost, \$40,000. A colored draft will be in the auditor's office to see.

Nov. 4, 1858. Bids were let for the Court House. Miller & Son were lowest, \$38,744.00, and got the contract. The old Court House will be removed soon after next Spring term of Circuit Court.

April 27, 1859. The remains of the old Court House will soon be entirely off the square.

May 18, 1859. The Court House fence has been removed. The locust grove and the buildings with the county offices are now outside.

Jan. 18, 1860. Miller & Co., Court House contractors, have financial difficulties and stopped work in December. They have abandoned the work. It is now in the hands of the County Commissioners.

March 11, 1860. The work on the Court House under the superintendence of Mr. Martin Gregg is progressing fine for the number of workmen.

August 11, 1860. The first story of the Court House is up and iron joists laid on.

Aug. 26, 1860. The work on the Court House is progressing with indiminished vigor.

Feb. 8, 1861. The Court House will be completed as soon as possible.

Feb. 9, 1861. Stone masons are employed dressing stone for the completion of the Court House.

Aug. 21, 1861. Next Monday the fall term of the Hendricks Circuit Court commences and clerks and lawyers all complain of a dearth of causes.

July 7, 1864. Fourth of July celebration held in a grove near town. Many speeches....afterwards all came to the Court House to attend a concert given by the Ladies Soldier Aid Society. \$50 was cleared.

March 16, 1865. Sheriff Straughn has been for several days cleaning up the Court House and surrounding grounds. The Captain is an inveterate enemy of filth and has the Court House always ready for visitors.

- March 30, 1865. Hitching posts have been put up on two sides of the Court House. Better than hitching to the fence. The Sheriff has put out shrubbery and trees around the Court House. Anyone who wishes to contribute bring a tree.
- April 20, 1871. Samuel Hawkins has performed a public favor in removing a pile of wood which has been such an eyesore from the Court House yard. He also locks the doors in order to keep out the vicious boys. Now if the commission will give us an iron fence, put a clock in the tower, put steps at the doors, and have the outside walls of the building washed it will add wonderfully to the appearance of the building.
- May 25, 1871. Deputy Hawkins has been wasting more nails on the old horse eaten board fence that disgraces the Court House yard. Shall we get the Commissioners to put up an iron fence?
- July 13, 1871. The Court House pump has been exhausted two days within a week.
A batch of clothes pins are doing the gymnastic and contortion business in the Court House yard. Exhibitions each day. No charge.
- July 20, 1871. The daring youths who gave free exhibitions in gymnastics in the Court House yard rehearse now in a stable loft. One of the performers "cutting a pigeon's wing" fell out of the loft and broke his arm.
- Nov. 2, 1871. The November term of Circuit Court begins the second Monday of this month. A full docket is reported to occupy the whole term of three weeks.
- April 18, 1872. Latches have been put on the Court House yard gates.
- May 8, 1873. The new iron fence around the Court House is a thing of beauty. We hope the next improvement will be a town clock.
- May 29, 1873. A view from the Court House tower at this season affords one of the pleasantest scenes and shows the surroundings of our pleasant town.

AN ORDERLY YOUNG MAN

(George Allen was a farmer in the Center Valley community, an area which at that time was a part of Morgan County. At the age of seventeen he set up a "cash book" in which he recorded all sums received and paid out. The first volume covered the period September 25, 1853, through 1865. Two later volumes covered the period 1866 through 1877, when he apparently discontinued keeping such records.

The entries given here were for October of each year from the first volume, plus a few from August and December, 1857, in order to include entries related to his marriage to Mary Weesner on August 22, 1857, and the building of a house.

Mrs. Clara Richardson Reitzel, whose mother was a daughter of George Allen, has prepared this material for us.)

GEORGE ALLEN'S CASH BOOK

Wherein to keep all accounts of money received and paid out. To be divided into seven parts:

First: to contain all amounts of money received.

Second: to contain all accounts of money paid out for books, periodicals, etc.

Third: to contain all accounts of money paid out for cloth, clothing, etc.

Fourth: to contain all accounts for money paid out for tools, etc.

Fifth: to contain all accounts of money paid out for postage on letters; papers, etc. (collected on delivery)

Sixth: Miscellaneous accounts

Seventh: Whole amount received and paid out quarterly.

Part First

September 25th, 1853

| | | | |
|------|-----------|---|-------|
| | Oct. 5 | Received of C.C. Elliot & Co. for Irish potatoes | .75 |
| | 5 | Received of T.W. Sliff for sweet potatoes | 3.50 |
| | 14th | Received of T. Anderson for 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ days work | 1.70 |
| 1854 | Oct. 2nd | Received of C. Weesner for use of \$5 for 7 months | .17 |
| | 16th | Received of ... McCollum for 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ bushels of corn | 5.08 |
| | 21st | Received of Wm. Allen for a hat | 1.50 |
| | | balance for a saddle | 2.50 |
| 1855 | Oct. 4th | Received of J. Carsby for saw logs | 2.00 |
| | 6th | Received of T. Hadley for part on 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ acres of corn | 26.00 |
| | 25th | Received of . . . Morgan for one load of stove wood | 1.00 |
| | 30th | Received of I. Doan for bottle of medicine | .67 |
| | | Received of J. Weesner for 1 days work | .75 |
| 1856 | Oct. 2nd | Received of John Weesner for a pamphlet | .05 |
| | 14th | Received of W.D. Bray balance for making rails | 8.90 |
| | 24th | Received of J. Weesner for 1 days work | .75 |
| | 28th | Received of E. Allen part for a watch | 2.50 |
| 1857 | Oct. 27th | Received of R. Hall for a quart of Mollasses | .15 |
| 1859 | Oct. 4th | Received of Wm. Weesner for a stew kettle | 1.25 |
| | 25th | Received of G. Gregory 50 cabbages | 1.00 |
| 1860 | Oct. 6th | Received of a huckster for $\frac{1}{4}$ bu. of corn | .10 |
| | | for 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ doz eggs @ .05 | .37 |
| | 2nd | Received of John Miles & Co for 8 $\frac{4}{5}$ bu wheat at \$1.00 | 8.80 |
| | 10th | Received of John Miles & Co. for 19 $\frac{9}{60}$ bu wheat at \$1.00.. | 19.15 |
| | 11th | Received of Calvin Ferre part on a mutton sheep | 2.00 |
| | 25 | Balance on a mutton sheep | .50 |
| | 25 | Received of B.F. Tuttle for 12 $\frac{50}{60}$ bu wheat @ 1.02 | 13.09 |
| | 25 | Received of . . . Bradshaw for 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ bu. sweet potatoes @ .50 | .85 |
| | | for 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ doz eggs @ .10 | .45 |
| | 27 | Received of R. Hall for 6 b. apples $\frac{1}{4}$ 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ ¢ | 1.00 |
| 1861 | Oct 4 | Received of J.W. Craven for 8 bu Clover seed | 1.18 |
| | 28 | Received of for a sheepskin | .29 |
| 1862 | 10/30 | Received of sundry persons in Indianapolis for 36 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. turkey @ 06 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 2.30 |
| | | 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs butter @ .19 | 1.80 |
| | | 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ bu sweet potatoes @ .60 | 2.70 |
| | | $\frac{1}{2}$ bu onions | .20 |
| | | rags | .10 |
| | | Received of I. Allen's estate for money loaned for coffin (for a brother who died at Crab Orchard, Ky. while serving in the Union Army) | 30.00 |
| 1863 | 10/5 | Received of J.B. Albertson for 7 lbs butter | .40 |
| | 10/20 | Received of Ohio Woolen Factory Co. for 29 lbs wool $\frac{1}{4}$.65 | 18.85 |
| | | Received for sweet potatoes and rags | .65 |
| 1864 | 10/10 | Received of S. Hammer for 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ bu. apples | 3.60 |
| | | for rags | .15 |
| | 10/15 | Received of . . . Turner for 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ bu sweet potatoes | 2.60 |
| | 10/19 | Received of B. Scotten part on sheep pasture | 7.00 |
| 10 | 10/24 | Received of Capital Mills, Indianapolis for 21 $\frac{15}{60}$ bu wheat @ 1.60 | 34.00 |

| | | | |
|------|-------|--|-------|
| 1865 | 10/9 | Received of for 3 3/4 bu sweet potatoes @ 1.25 | 4.67 |
| | | Received of A.S. Wells & Co for 11 27/60 bu wheat @ 1.35 | 15.35 |
| | 10/15 | Received of J Miller for 2 sheep skins | 1.00 |
| | | Received of Jane Marley Balance for a Bible | 2.50 |
| | 10/23 | Received of Washington Larrimore for 3 yr old bay horse | 97.50 |
| | 10/25 | Received of C. Weesner for vinegar | .25 |
| | 10/30 | Received of J. Ballard for 7 yds flannel | 7.35 |

Part Second

Account of money paid out for Books, Papers, etc. Sept 25th AD 1853

| | | | |
|------|----------|---|------------|
| | Oct. 4th | Paid to Fowler and Wells for the Science of Swimming | .12 |
| | 7th | Paid to D.G. Worth for Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin for Map of Indiana | .60 .10 |
| 1854 | Oct 2nd | Paid to G.M. Mc Co for L . . of L B . . . | .20 |
| | 4th | Paid to A.G. Barnes & Co for Hamilton's Physiology | .75 |
| | 5th | Paid to J.W. Thompson & Co. for Olmsteads Large Phylosophy | 2.00 |
| | 25th | Paid to S.H. Johnson for Olmsteads Compendium Philosophy | 1.00 |
| | 30th | Paid to J.M. Hadley for Draper's Chemistry for Webster's Speller and definer | .85 .15 |
| 1855 | Oct 12th | Paid to R. Sears for U.S. History | 2.50 |
| | 23rd | Paid to Fowler and Wells for Life Illustrated - 1 yr | 1.50 |
| 1856 | Oct. 16 | Paid to Fowler and Wells for Sexual Diseases | 1.25 |
| | 31st | Paid to S.H. Johnson for Butters Grammer | .40 |
| 1857 | Oct 7th | Paid to John Weesner Advice to Married Couples | .20 |
| 1858 | | Total for books, magazines etc. | 5.58 |
| 1859 | | Total for 1 paper, Indiana State Journal | 1.00 |
| 1860 | | Total for 2 papers, Indiana State Journal American Agriculturist | 2.00 |
| 1861 | | Total | 4.75 |

1852-1865 books and magazines bought were mostly concerning the Bible and Methodist class books.

Part Third

Account of money paid out for Clothing etc.

| | | | |
|------|-----------|---|---------------------------|
| 1854 | Oct. 6th | Paid to Hadley & Co. for a hat | 1.50 |
| 1855 | Oct. 30th | Paid to B. Mendenhall for a coat | 6.00 |
| 1856 | Oct. 21st | Paid to Hadley & Co. for a neck stock | .45 |
| 1857 | Oct. 3rd | Paid to Hadley & Co. for a pair of shoes | 1.44 |
| | 17th | Paid to Mendenhall & Thompson for 1 pr boots 1 pair of gloves 1 pair shoes | 3.90 .45 1.45 |
| | Oct. 26 | Paid to H. Hadley & Co. for to boot in changing shoes | .10 |
| | 21st | Paid to Mendenhall & Thompson for 3 yds calico for 1 doz. buttons | .37 .10 |
| 1860 | Oct 2nd | Paid toBurger for 1 pr boots | 3.90 |
| | 18th | Paid toAllen for 5 yds factory .09 | .45 |
| | 25th | Paid to Krause & Wittenberg for 2 yds cotton flannel @ 12 1/2 4 yds woolen goods .40 2 napkins 3 1/2 yds drilling 12 1/2 | .25 1.60 .15 .43 |
| 1861 | 10/12 | Paid to Martin Hinshaw for 1 pr shoes | 1.60 |
| | 10/30 | Paid to W.H. Glenss & Co. for 2 1/2 yds blue muslin 2 1/2 yds factory | .65 .67 |

| | | | |
|------|-------|---|-------|
| 1863 | 10/20 | Paid to different persons in Indianapolis for | |
| | | 3 yds factory @39 | 1.17 |
| | | 3/4 yds delaine | .49 |
| | | 1/2 yd flannel | .30 |
| | | 1 pr boots | 4.50 |
| | | 1 pr shoes | 1.75 |
| | | 1 infant hood | .60 |
| | | hat | 3.50 |
| | | overcoat | 10.00 |
| | 10/31 | Paid to S. Hadley & Co. for 1/4 yd flannel | .17 |
| 1864 | 10/11 | Paid to sundry persons in Monrovia for 2/3 yd factory | |
| | | .50, tape 10, gloves 35 | .95 |
| | 10/15 | Paid to Wm. Carmichael balance for goods | .90 |
| | 10/15 | Paid to . . . Burger for 1 pr boots | 6.50 |
| | 10/19 | Paid to S Hadley & Co. for 1 1/2 yds silk 2.25; 1 1/2 yds | |
| | | ribbon 38 | 2.63 |
| 1865 | 10/1 | Paid to . . . for 2 2/3 yds cloth 4.15, 5 yds factory | 6.30 |
| | | 2.15, gloves .40, small shoes 1.30, 3/4 yds delaine 65 | 2.35 |
| | 10/16 | Paid to J.B. Ballard for 2 yds braid | .20 |

Part Fourth

Account of money paid out for tools etc.

| | | | |
|------|--------|--|------|
| 1856 | Oct 7 | Paid to A. Hadley & Co. for 7 augur handles | .40 |
| | 23 | Paid to John W. Weesner for a pack plane stock | .50 |
| 1857 | Oct 3 | Paid to Lew Pierce for making a fire shovel | 1.00 |
| | | for making an iron wedge | .50 |
| | Oct 11 | Paid to B. Portage of 1 handsaw 2.50, 1 hatchet .75, | |
| | | 1 sand shovel 1.00, 1 handsaw file .05 | 4.30 |

Part Fifth

Part Fifth, covering postage accounts, consisted of a total of 22 entries for October 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, and 1861. Nearly all were to business firms, several of which were to publishers of periodicals. All but five were for .03.

PART SIXTH MISCELLANEOUS ACCOUNTS

| | | | |
|------|---------|--|--------|
| 1853 | Oct 3 | Paid to Wm. Allen for work | .20 |
| | 6 | Paid to . . Belar for one nights lodging | .10 |
| | 19 | Paid to M. Lindley, Sec. Morgan Co. Fair | .15 |
| 1854 | Oct. 4 | Paid to I. Allen for work | .15 |
| | 15 | Paid to B. Young for 1 paper tacks | .10 |
| | 23 | Paid to Hadley & Co. for 1 quire writing paper | .20 |
| 1855 | Oct. 20 | Paid to D.G. Worth for repairing a watch | 2.00 |
| | | a watch key | .05 |
| | | Paid to Loveall Jones & Co. for . . . | .25 |
| | | Paid to I. Dean for borrowed money | 1.25 |
| 1856 | Oct. 8 | Paid to . . . for a pie | .10 |
| | 31 | Paid to S.H. Johnson for two star candles | .10 |
| 1857 | Aug. 10 | Paid to J.R. Scott per O.Z.A. for marriage license | 1.00 |
| | 10 | Paid to Z. Allen for going after marriage license | .50 |
| | 22 | Paid to S. S. D. Bray, J.P. for marriage fee | 1.00 |
| | 22 | Paid to Z. Allen for a hack ride . . marriage | 1.00 |
| | 24 | Paid to Richard Hall part for 100 acres of land | 300.00 |
| | Oct. 30 | Paid to Jesse Gwin for 1 bu. lime | .25 |
| | | part for 2400 bricks | 5.00 |
| | Dec. 26 | Paid balance on bricks | 7.00 |

| | | | |
|------|---------|--|-------|
| | | Paid to Nathan Wheeler for building a chimney | 5.00 |
| 1860 | Oct. 9 | Paid to Joshua Ballard for car ticket to Indianapolis | .60 |
| | 9 | Paid to Josiah Weesner for borrowed money | 1.00 |
| | 12 | for part on land | 15.00 |
| 1861 | Oct 25 | Paid to toll keepers national Road | .48 |
| | 29 | Paid to T.C., Morgan County Tax for 1860 (road tax, .32) | 3.33 |
| | 30 | Paid to a pedlar for table oilcloth .75, breast pin .50 | 1.25 |
| 1862 | Oct. 20 | Paid for rocking chair | .90 |
| 1863 | Oct. 11 | Paid to M.E. Church for support of ministry | 1.00 |
| | 21 | Paid to toll keepers on National Road | .05 |
| | 28 | Paid to . . . Beich for magic lantern show | .20 |
| 1864 | Oct. 1 | Paid to Dr. Ragan for 2 prescriptions for Edgar | 1.00 |
| | | Paid to Wm. Henley for mowing 6 acres grass | 6.00 |
| | 19 | Paid to I. Hawkins for making 2 bl. cider | .65 |
| | 22 | Paid towards clearing Monroe Twp of the draft | 10.00 |
| | 24 | Paid as toll on gravel road | .42 |
| | | Paid to M. H. & L. gravel road toll | .59 |
| | 31 | Paid to M.E. Church support of ministry | 2.50 |

THE NICHOLSON SORGHUM MILL

by

Rosaleen Nicholson,
 who gratefully acknowledges the assistance
 of Cyrus Nicholson and Elizabeth Bryant

Would you know sorghum cane if you saw it growing in a field? A member of the grass family, it grows in stalks or canes to a height of six to eight feet. It bears some resemblance to a field of corn, except that the stalks terminate in "heads" or clusters of small seeds instead of tassels. The leaves or blades are knocked off while the plants are still standing. Only the canes are taken to the mill.

And what is the sorghum plant good for? The seeds are used as stock feed, especially pigs and poultry. Other parts are utilized by industry in making such products as wallboard. The sweet fodder is especially relished by cattle; and the sweet juice mixed with corn fodder makes yummy ensilage.

However, most of the sorghum cane grown in Hendricks County in the past hundred years has been made into molasses. When other sweets were much less available, our fathers and grandfathers had hot biscuits, butter, (not margarine), and sorghum molasses almost every morning of the year for breakfast. Some large families laid in a year's supply by the barrel, not the gallon. Maybe that's why they got along so well without commercial vitamins and minerals.

The story of the Nicholson Sorghum Mill really began at a point on the west side of 125W (now the Vestal Rodney farm) about one quarter of a mile south of 200 S. To older residents 125W is still the Sorghum Mill Road, just as the simple white frame house with Alva Campbell's name on the mail box is remembered as Sorghum Chapel, the meeting place of Conservative Friends. The road and the meeting house both got their monikers from their location near the Sorghum Mill. It was at the original location of the mill that the young man "Charlie" (Charles B.) Nicholson learned the skills required in the making of good sorghum.

Not long after Charlie and Delia Rogers were married, Charlie decided to go into business for himself. He first bought three acres of land on the east side

of Sorghum Mill Road from Henry Rogers as a home and mill site. He also bought the mill and equipment from his previous employer and moved it to the new location about a mile and a half south of where it had been. Later he bought seven more acres from Henry Rogers, and still later he acquired a farm on the west side of the road just a bit north of the ten acres.

You'd never think of the well kept, modernized present house on the home and mill site as other than one of the many bungalows built in the 1910 to 1925 period. But this one has its own story. It was first the Summit Grove Friends Meeting house, and it stood across the road on the Carter farm. The records of the Mill Creek Friends Meeting reveal that it authorized the establishment of the Summit Grove Meeting there in 1873, but because of dissension the meeting continued active "only a short period."

Charlie Nicholson bought the building from the Meeting and either he or members of the Meeting moved it across the road to become his and Delia's home, later to be expanded and modernized. Two versions of the moving are given in the records of the Mill Creek Meeting. One says that the building was moved at night; one says it wasn't. We wonder: Were there two factions in the Meeting, one of which favored the sale and one which opposed it? Or was it moved at night because there would be less likelihood of inconveniencing others using the road? Or did someone make up the story?

However, the mid-1880's found Charlie and Delia established on the east side of 125W raising their family, with sorghum-making a family enterprise. Three daughters (Florence, Ruth, and Edith) and one son, Cyrus, were born. Cyrus, the youngest, was born on the last day of sorghum making for that year (October 18, 1891). To celebrate, the workers on leaving the mill tied the steam whistle down so that it would blow continuously . . . and it did, until Charlie released the whistle.

Although sorghum-making was essentially a family affair, extra help was required during the busy season. This might be only a few days or up to twenty or twenty-five days, usually from about September 10 to October 15 or 20, depending on the growing weather and the kind of cane planted.

Custom work was done for cane growers from all over the county and from surrounding counties as well. They came from Martinsville, Paragon, Jamestown, New Ross, North Salem, and Lizton, Greencastle, and many other places. Horse-drawn wagons (trucks later) were lined up down the road for as much as a quarter of a mile in both directions waiting to unload their cane onto fence rails to keep it off the ground. Each customer's cane was numbered and the juice was measured so that each batch equaled a given amount in gallons of molasses. Customers either brought their own containers or bought gallon buckets from the Nicholsons for their sorghum.

There was a charge of .15 to .40 per gallon for processing the cane to the finished product. Approximately twenty gallons of cane juice would make one gallon of finished sorghum. In later years a small amount of corn syrup was added to prevent crystallization.

The Nicholson sorghum was always processed by steam, first with wood as fuel and later with coal. One of the early steam engines used had wooden wheels. The cane was passed through heavy rollers (not ground) to press out the juice. The juice was then put through several processes of boiling, skimming, evaporation, filtration, and purification.

In the late 1800's and early 1900's the mill was used to make maple syrup in the spring and sorghum molasses in the fall. Cyrus remembers that as a small boy his Dad made cider for customers, using the same engine to grind the apples as was used in operating the rollers. At peak they produced 20 barrels of cider per day. Customers brought barrels and jugs to contain their own cider. Copper pans and coils were used to boil cider down to one-fourth its original bulk. Almost everyone made their own apple butter in those days, and they thought it couldn't be

first class unless it was made with boiled cider. One advantage was that it would keep almost indefinitely in the cellar without being canned.

Charlie's son Cyrus learned all about sorghum making as he grew up and shared in the work. After Charlie and Delia died in 1923, having been struck by a train in Amo, Cyrus assumed full responsibility for sorghum making. He rebuilt and remodeled the mill in 1932, having a new stationary boiler built which increased the capacity of the mill to 175 to 200 gallons of sorghum per day. In one peak year during the World War II 15,000 gallons of sorghum were produced. The selling prices of sorghum ranged from 25¢ in the early days to \$2.75 per gallon in 1955.

The time book shows the pay schedule through the last years:

| | Daily Wage | | Daily Wage | |
|--------|------------|--------------|------------|----------------|
| 1920's | \$1.00) | 10, 11, 12 | 1942 | \$4.00 |
| 1932 | 1.50) | hrs. per day | 1945 | 6.00) |
| 1934 | 2.00 | | 1950 | 8.00) 8 hrs |
| 1936 | 2.50 | | 1954 | 10.00) per day |
| 1937 | 3.00 | | | |

One fall when help was very badly needed, Cyrus asked and received permission to hire two or three boys at a time from the Indiana Boys' School at Plainfield. He was responsible for their transportation to and from the school and the noon meal. The boys' pay was withheld by the school authorities and given to them when they were discharged.

In 1955 the Sorghum Mill was closed because of lack of help. Cyrus and his wife, Mary knew the art and skill required to make good sorghum. Their three boys, Richard, Chester, and Robert, grew up helping in the mill and learning its workings. They remember most of the extra helpers that were necessary for its success, but especially Alva Campbell as the coal and steam engine operator and Stanley Hadley, who ran the engine and fired the boiler. Another reason for closing the mill was that very few people continued raising the cane.

The nearest sorghum mill now is at Baker's Corner near Sheridan. There is another at Ray's Crossing northeast of Shelbyville. One of the tourist attractions at Rockville's Covered Wagon Fall Festival is the sorghum offered for sale.

You don't find sorghum on the shelves of just any supermarket today. The jar in my kitchen cabinet held 30 oz., not two, three or five gallons, and it cost \$1.09. It does make good gingerbread, or cookies, or crackerjack. Want to try these Nicholson family recipes?

Gingerbread

1 cup sorghum
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shortening
 1 cup boiling water
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour sifted with
 2 teaspoons soda
 2 eggs
 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cloves
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

This makes a soft batter.
 Bake at 350° till done.

Sorghum Cookies

2 cups sorghum
 1 cup shortening
 2 eggs
 Spices if desired
 1 teaspoon soda
 2 teaspoons baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 4 cups flour
 Add enough additional
 flour so that you can
 make small balls in the
 hand. Place on baking
 sheet. Press down with
 fork. Bake till done.

Crackerjack

1 gallon popped corn
 Bring to a boil:
 1 cup sorghum
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
 2 tablespoons butter
 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
 Then add 1 teaspoon soda,
 mix well, and pour over
 the popcorn. Make into
 balls or press into a pan.

