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HENDRICKS COUNTY

HISTORY BULLETIN



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October, 1974
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THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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ORGANIZED 1967

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H C H S

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Mrs. Sherman Crayton

H C H S

"A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we came from or what we have been about."

Woodrow Wilson

H C H S

"Do not pray for eash lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. The the doing of your work will be no miracle; but you will be the miracle. And every day you will wonder at yourself, at the richness of life which has come to you by the grace of God."

Bishop Phillips Brooks

H C H S

H C H S

July 14, 1974

Our July meeting was held in the beautiful new Mill Creek Elementary School at Clayton. After the meeting was called to order, we got off to a rousing start by singing "Happy Birthday" to Will Templin and to our president, Floyd Hufford.

The Rev. Rebecca Bunton, pastor of the Stilesville Christian Church, gave the devotions, and after various and sundry business matters were dispensed with, Miss Ruth Gregory introduced the program, the subject of which was "The Old Fashioned School". Speakers were Mrs. Frances Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Davidson, Mr. Clarence Edmonson, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Jones and Mr. Leonard Fleenor. They described the one room schools, and recalled many aspects of school equipment and school programs. It was a delightful afternoon, and the ladies of Clay, Franklin, and Liberty Townships, with Mrs. Sherman Crayton as chairman, served refreshments which we enjoyed while browsing around the interesting relics on the display table.

H C H S

October 13 - Connor Prairie

Jack Gambold, chairman of the October meeting, announces that a bus will be leaving Eaton Hall parking lot promptly at 1:00 Sunday afternoon, October 13 for a trip to Connor Prairie Farm, near Noblesville. A visit to this historic settlement is a fascinating experience, so we hope to have a good crowd. Bus fare will be approximately \$1.75, plus admission to the farm. We need a good crowd to make it worth while, so if you plan to go, please notify Jack Gambold, R. R. 2, Coatesville, In. 46121 - tel. 386-7240; Jewell Bell, 212 E Road 200 N., tel. 745-4055, Danville, 46122, or Floyd Hufford, Brownsburg, 33 W. College, tel. 852-4161. Following the trip, a short business meeting will be held at the Shelter House for the purpose of electing officers and discussing prospects for a museum in the old jail. Let's make this last meeting a big one. (Reservations should be in not later than Friday, the 11th).

H C H S

This is the last Bulletin of the year, and some "thank yous" are past due. It takes much work to put out a little magazine of this type, and it wouldn't ever get done without a lot of help. First, the Publication Committee has been so helpful, and I have to go on record as saying that I just love my two "faithfuls"...Zona Walker and Joe Davidson. We are three kindred spirits in that we all love to talk and to write. They, however, have such a rich store of knowledge combined with the happy faculty of being able to tell it or write it "like it was" in a refreshing and delightfully interesting style. Ruth Pritchard keeps me supplied with much information, and until this year, she assumed the back-breaking job of putting the seals on the covers, addressing and stuffing the envelopes and mailing! No one person should ever have to do all that, so this year, Mary Jeannette Winkleman takes care of the covers and all that licking and addressing! Then the Committee without a name assembles. Oh, we can think of many names for it...we could be the Giggle Gals or the Staple and Stuff Committee...anyway we gather in Blanche's upstairs bed and ironing room combination and assemble and staple and stuff. The membership on this committee is honorary and varies, but it usually consists of Mary Bell, Jewell Bell, Dorothy Templin, Mary Jeanette and the Ed. (whenever she can make it). Occasionally we honor other members by asking them to assist, but very few people ever get beyond the sacred portals of that bed-and ironing-room door! And, really, we could not function without the ironing board! Then, occasionally, we con Harold Templin into carrying all the bulletins to the post office.

Jewell Bell has done a tremendous job as publicity chairman. Her notices go throughout Marion, Hamilton, Boone, Putnam, and Morgan Counties, and, of course all papers in Hendricks County, as well as our radio station, WJMK. So Jewell Bell is a big factor in our public relations department, and we can give her much credit for the excellent attendance we have had at our meetings.

To all these and to many more, the Editor says "Thanks" for helping to make the Bulletin what it is.

H C H S

The following colored-with-age clipping from the Indianapolis News...undatedshowed up from nowhere, and is presented herewith:

Interesting Relics Found in an Old Corner Stone

Scraps of Paper Give History of Long Ago Events in Hendricks County....

The Campbell Family

(Special to The Indianapolis News)

Danville, Ind. Nov. 13. - The box that has been in the corner stone of the old court house, which was laid June 5, 1860, was opened by the county commissioners when the old building was wrecked. The contents are in good condition, though slightly musty. Many items were dropped in the box at the last minute. Some were scraps of paper with a name and address. There were bibles, papers, programs, pictures, coins, a full set of Masonic jewels, a list of the singers forming the choir which sang at the corner stone laying, almanacs, biographies, and cards. A small bottle of fall wheat was deposited by Martin Gregg, one of the county commissioners, and to all appearances it is as good as the day it was placed in the bottle.

A slip of paper contained a short history of L. M. Campbell, at that time one of the leading attorneys of this part of the country. This says: "Leander M. Campbell, born February 12, 1833, in Lewis, Kentucky; married, September 20, 1855, to Matilda Hammond. At this time they have two children, Cora Belle, born August 10, 1856, and Louis Davis, born February 22, 1859. Now residing three fourths of a mile southeast of this courthouse, on the road to Plainfield, in a brick dwelling. Forest trees all around the house." Mr. Campbell is now dead, but Cora Belle, mentioned in the note, is now Mrs. Cora Campbell Barrett, a society and club woman of Indianapolis.

One relic is a small "form" of type containing the names of printers on the "Danville Ledger", who were J. N. Vestal, T. O. Thompson, William P. Gregg, George Gregg, William Irvin, J. M. Matlock. A copy of the "Ledger", dated July 13, was also in the box. Henry L. Dickerson, then pastor of the Presbyterian Church, deposited a confession of faith and a Holy Bible, and Jacob K. Moore had deposited a copy of the doctrines and principles of the M. E. Church.

H C H S

THE GARDENS OF YESTER YEAR

Seventy-five or eighty years ago most folks in Hendricks County were farmers. There was a minority who farmed on a big scale and boasted of their acreage, crops and numerous types of fine live stock but most folks over the county tilled eighty and a hundred acres while fewer yet were content to earn a living on forty to sixty

acres and less. Every township had its families who could never own a farm and rented land or labored for a man who had empty houses and out-buildings on more or less scattered farm land. On practically every farm was a garden plot; some large, some small, but strange to relate while all had gardens there were very few interested and dedicated gardeners. The old time garden, was too often the step-child on the farm and its weedy, ragged looks in July and early fall was enough proof.

When grandfather had prepared the garden ready for planting, he, like those about him was done for the season with the patch and the sole interest lay in the fields to be plowed and planted in crops. Most early gardening was left to the farm wife and children and if vegetables got to the table through the summer season it was up to them to do the tending and bring to the kitchen for preparation.

The chief garden crops of yesteryear were potatoes, both Irish and sweet, tomatoes, cabbage, beans of many kinds, peas, parsnips, lettuce, onions and radishes. The last named were often planted in a bed spaded up before the garden was made ready.

I never knew of anyone planting a carrot but a very few men would undertake a strawberry patch. One man in Clay Township named Silas Clark would put out more than an acre and sell berries over the county for miles around.

Commercial fertilizers were unknown and the garden in early spring usually received a load or more of barn yard manure and it was often the horse variety. Nothing could have been scattered over a piece of ground that would produce more weeds per square inch than this particular fertilizer. Weeds sprouted and had to start ahead of beans and other vegetables and they were to be fought with hoe and plow until harvest time. Too often the weeds won.

The old time garden was often kept fairly clean until mid-July and then mother and her less interested helpers gave up the patch as a hopeless job. Weeds and grass, aided by rains brought a rank vegetation that proved beyond control. Wife and children tramped down grass and weeds to find tomatoes and onions or early "spuds"; and when a heavy dew was on it was like wading a stream to navigate the garden patch.

There were reasonable excuses for weedy gardens. Women folks in days gone by had their tasks for the days ahead as same as the men. Granny did her house work well; milked three or four cows twice each day took care of the milk and churned the butter. She looked after a half dozen sitting hens, gathered the eggs each day, fed hens, a hundred or more hungry chickens and turkeys and carried water to them. She made the lye soap for the wash day and other uses. On wash days she often took grand dad's ax to chop old fence rails into the right length to go under her kettle. She had a loom and when not too busy wove rag carpet or rugs. Often, if no children were about she went to the field twice each work day to carry fresh water in a jug to the plowman and maybe take a sandwich or slab of pie.

I well recall a morning when grandma tucked up her dress knee high and entered her wet and weedy garden near the barn. In a few minutes she came out with a lot of speed for her bare feet had connected with the cold, squirming body of a huge black snake that had taken shelter in the weed grown patch. It was time for grandpa to sythe down the weeds.

Here and there over the county one could find a real gardner, a dedicated one; an old uncle or grand dad who tended the patch from April to September and kept it as "clean as a pin". When his straight rows had been cultivated he took his garden rake and walking backwards smoothed the plowed earth and left the garden with never a human track showing. When he was ready to dig the old time Mechanic or Peachblow

potatoes there was never a weed to be mowed. His garden was near perfection.

It was seldom that the old time garden ever grew sweet corn. When the family wanted roasting ears, some member went to the corn field and plucked the required number for the meal. It was good enough for the farm members and even the preacher when he came.

In late July a farmer was fortunate who had a moist piece of ground along a creek where he could sow turnips and before cold weather he could pull large, sweet and tender ones from the rich soil. Times were when one had such favorable ground for melons and cucumbers. I recall going with a neighbor and a son my age to a patch of cucumbers and when our search was ended a washing tub was heaped with the green fruit of many sizes. Later they were sorted and sold to house wives in the neighboring towns of New Winchester, Hadley and Amo. I have seen scores of huge watermelons, half hidden in grass over two or three acres of rich, low land. To pull one from the vine on a chilly morning prior to the coming of Jack Frost could be a happy experience. Insert a knife into its middle and the rind would pop and a crack would show the red goodness beneath. The heart of such a melon would be deliciously cold, sweet as sugar and the juice that ran down one's chin and dripped over his shirt got but little attention. One just ate and ate and laid everything else aside. As one thinks back he has hopes that such things may be lived over in heaven.

The word "garden" makes me think of my grandma Nancy Harris and she and I are in bare feet. We stop in the potato patch and I watch her "gravel" a pan full of new potatoes to cook on top of beans or peas for dinner. The tender grace of that time long gone brings many happy thoughts.

Joe Davidson

H C H S

Copied from News Paper Clipping about 1935
by Ruth Pritchard

Scholarship issued in 1854 will admit University Heights Brothers to De Pauw

Contents of Scholarship

No. 457 - Know all men by these presents that John Miller of the county of Hendrix and the state of Indiana, has by the payment of One Hundred Dollars, into the treasury of the Indiana Asbury University, purchased a perpetual scholarship in said University containing provisions and limitations as follows.

1. One scholar at a time may be kept forever free from Tuition fees in any of the classes of the Academical or Literary Department of the University, in such studies as are or may be essential to graduation.
2. The scholarship shall not be assignable or transferable.
3. Only one student, during the same session, can, under any circumstances, be kept on said scholarship.
4. During the life of the purchaser, no student (except as specified below) can receive tuition on said scholarship, unless he be the purchaser himself or his son or his grandson.
5. After the death of the purchaser, the right of tuition for himself, his son or grandson shall descent in perpetuity to such descendant or other persons, as may be specified in the Will of the purchaser; and the right shall descent from generation to generation, by Will, and not otherwise.
6. Should the purchaser die intestate, then the right of personal tuition shall descend to any or all of his sons, or grandsons, who may claim such tuitions, one at a time in succession.

7. It is further agreed, as a modification of the above articles, that the purchaser aforesaid, shall have the additional right of keeping in the institution as aforesaid any young man whom he may select to educate, and who shall bring with him a certificate from said purchaser, that he is sent by him without any compensation, received or expected from the student or his friends; provided also that but one student at a time shall be received on said scholarship.

8. Nothing in the above is to be construed as giving any right, to any student, to remain in the instutuion, who is guilty of immorality or disobedience to the rules and regulations of the University, as established from time to time, by the Trustees or Faculty of the University.

In Testimony whereof, The Trustees of the said University have issued to the said John Miller this scholarship signed by the president and secretary of said and dated this twenty-second day of June A.D. 1854.

I. P. Southard, Secretary
John Cowgill, President

Burke Miller, grandson of John was living in University Heights at 4020 Bowman Avenue when he found this Scholarship and was interviewed by Claude A. Mahoney. Burke & brother Hugh E. Miller had worked their way through school.

President of De Pauw, G. Bromley Oxnam stated that the scholarship "was as valid as the day it was issued".

H C H S

FROM OUT OF THE PAST

North Salem's One Bid To Fame
It Levied No Taxes in 1922

Old newspaper clippings, and legal records can yield a world of information as well as hours of recreation and fun. The following story is gleaned from a conglomerations of facts welded together by clippings and memories of our senior citizens.

It is the story of North Salem's one bid to fame. It made the city dailies. The town at the time suddenly galloped into the limelight by announcing to the world that it was a taxless town.

The Indianapolis papers carried the story in a countrywide sweep and it was learned by a "nosey reporter" in the county auditor's office.

Called upon by the county auditor to make its report of tax assessments, the blanks were returned with the word "none" written with flourishes and many "where-as's" across the page.

The auditor promptly called the town clerk at North Salem and demanded "what the heck" and, "dispense with the levity".

The official explained "we are not going to levy and tax this year, because we have enough left over from last year".

And now the news was out. And that was when William Herschell, staff correspondent for the Indianapolis News, came to visit North Salem.

"And that was the week that was."

Apparently North Salem didn't crave the National reputation of being a taxless town. Leading citizens said, and here we quote Mr. Herschell, "that to the rest of the world, this was a slow burg, and that it was not a spender or municipal improvements".

It might look good on paper but what if a stranger would come into town and see that chuckhole up by the Christian Church, a chuckhole into which a prominent citizen wrecked his automobile some time back. His right front wheel was wrecked and he said words that can't be printed about a town board that would not spend a little money on the streets.

And then right on the heels of the wreck came the announcement by the old town board that no tax assessment would be made for North Salem for the year 1922.

Somebody spread the word and again we quote Mr. Herschell that, "a certain member of the board wouldn't improve the street in front of the Christian Church because he "jes natchurllly" didn't like the Christian Church".

Now the battle was on. North Salem had a town meeting and a citizen's ticket was placed in the field, one that favored making a tax levy for 1922 in order to get money for just and proper improvements. The new ticket was elected with a "burst of approval", and this is also a quote.

The result: W. C. Dickey, Joseph H. Fleece and Dr. C. M. Trotter were named on the ticket. The battle cry was "Get out the vote", and never let it be said that North Salem is lacking on that score.

Another thing--North Salem had never had a marshal. It was said that the new board favored one of those he-badged individuals into the town's life. The town was as peaceful as a June Day most of the time and a marshal's job would be a picnic.

But above all else that chuckhole up by the Christian Church must be filled. A. O. Wright, the town clerk, when asked about the failure to make a levy for 1922 said the town board said they didn't need it. Now that was all good, if it wasn't for that chuckhole up in front of the Christian Church. The warfare continued from foxhole to foxhole.

Most of the streets were well-cared for but again others had not yet known modern improvement. One of the latter was the street that passed the Christian Church, which stands on a hill in the western part of town and that was the hill that wrecked the automobile of one of the brethren.

So if the old town board had improved the hill street that leads to the Christian Church, North Salem would not have made the front page as a taxless town. And if the town board had not been so thrifty that it didn't need money so quoting Mr. Herschell again, the old town board "literally chuckholed itself into oblivion".

So no wonder on election day North Salem voted to be taxed. Apparently the townsfolk like to pay taxes that will improve the town and make it grow.

North Salem was laid out in 1835 and has been the center of an active farming community ever since. But it did not really get into the national spotlight until newspapers of the country heard the story of "North Salem To Make No Tax Levy for 1922".

But now North Salem was taken from the gallery of the immortals and returned to a humble place among those who say:

"Well, here it is again---time to pay taxes. Looks like a fellow never gets anything ahead."

H C H S

Out of the Past

"The Old Brick," at the corner of Pearl Street, S. R. 236, and Broadway in North Salem received the death knell on Saturday, August 24, when Tommy Goode and his two sons and Ray Larmer and Buddy Clements, with wrecking equipment, dismantled it with the ease of professionals.

It was the oldest business landmark in North Salem. It was constructed in 1856. All these years the "Old Brick" stood a mute evidence of a task well done. The south wall and part of the west wall was removed about 35 years ago because of a fire hazard.

When Capt. Will Neff of Ladoga was asked, at the age of 95 years, "Can you tell us anything about the Old Brick at North Salem?" his face brightened and he immediately replied, "I made all the brick by hand that is in that old building".

Here is the story. When a lad of 17 or 18 years, his father, John Neff, took the contract to build a two story brick building for Jacob Fleece and George A. Given for the sum of \$1000.

John Neff owned the farm northwest of town, known now, as the Grafton Trair's farm. The bricks for the building were made and burned on the farm. The brick kiln stood across the road west of the residence. To the son, William, fell the task of molding the brick. The lime for the mortar was hauled by ox team from a kiln at Stilesville.

John Robbins, who lived south of North Salem, was foreman of the brick layers. James David Walker, his son-in-law, was one of the carpenters and built the cornice around the building. Burdine Harris, grandfather of Belle Hennon, North Salem was a carpenter who worked on the job.

An unusual bit of family history is interwoven with the bricks and boards of the old landmark. John Robbins supervised and helped lay the bricks. His son-in-law, James David Walker, was one of the carpenters. Oliver M. Walker, son of James David assisted with the carpenter work. When the interior of the building was remodeled for a postoffice, Treat W. Walker assisted his father Oliver M. with the carpenter work. Thus, a four generation family knew the "Old Brick".

During its life span, it has served the younger generation as a skating rink in the 80's. A generation used the upper floor for dancing. There they do-se-do-ed until the clock struck twelve. They also played host for surrounding towns for ball-room dancing. Mayme Conover Trotter and Ott O'Rear are remembered as winners in the "light fantastic".

The "Old Brick" was originally built for a community and general store and anything wanted could be purchased at "Fleece and Given" and it has memories that "bless and burn".

The site will be used as a location for the new North Salem Post Office. A parking lot will be made on the site of the dwelling which is also being dismantled adjourning the Old Brick site.

Zona Walker, North Salem, In

Do You Think Your Taxes are High?

Mrs. Charles G. Miles, R. R. Danville, handed us this tax receipt, dated Nov. 28, 1846:

Received of Charles Clark, Two dollars and eleven cents in full of State and County Tax for the years 1845 and 46 on \$300, personal property, with the penalty and interest.

Signed:

James S. Odell, Treasurer of H. County

H C H S

Death claimed one of our members, Mrs. Gladys Bolin of Indianapolis, and to her family we extend sympathy. We also share the grief of the following who have suffered bereavement: Ida Mae Miller's mother, Mrs. Lola Good, passed away on the day of our last meeting, July 14; charter member Lena McDonald lost a grandson; Mary Canganelli's brother, Charles E. Swain, passed away, and Doris Ward Hubble and Bessie Ward Hardin lost their brother, Kenneth Eugene Ward.

H C H S

Welcome to the Fold

New members we have added to the rolls since our last publication are Geraldine Drorbaugh, Walter Edmondson, The Rev. and Mrs. James Shockley, Mrs. Keith Brock, Mary Ellen Bunn, Maxine Dale and Mrs. Earnestine Blair Wallace. We hope you will enjoy our meetings and help if you are asked, for we do need people willing to do their share.

H C H S

QUERY:

Desire information and parentage of John Hooton (Hooten) and wife, Susan (Susannah) _____, both born (where?) Kentucky. Children: born (where?) Indiana, 1832-1850, Thomas J.; John W.; Levi Frank; William R.; Benjamin A.; James M.; Sarah F.; Martin G.; Susan E. Family in Madison County, Iowa, in 1850 and 1860 census.

Mrs. Sam Henderson
R. #2, 770 S. River Drive
Heyburn, Idaho 83336

H C H S

From the President.....

It is time to elect new officers, so the next meeting will be my last as your president. No doubt it has been a busy year with all the activity of the Sesquicentennial and the planning for our new home.

1974 has really been a great year for Hendricks County Historical Society. Our membership has increased and the interest at all the meetings has never been better. The best thing of all has been the privilege of knowing and working with so many nice people over the county.

It would seem to me that this is only the beginning. As we grow and work together, our Society will be the means of uniting all the people of Hendricks County.

In closing, I want to thank all of you for your co-operation and able assistance on committees. To our new President, you may suspect that you are getting into a lot of work and problems; however, they will all be small when you find that all the members are so willing and capable in helping you.

Would it be asking too much to expect to have 100 new members in 1975?

Sincerely,

Floyd B. Hufford

H C H S

Three Performances of 1974 Pageant Presented

Representative players from all parts of Hendricks County dramatized the story of Hendricks County on the evenings of August 2 and 3 and 9th. Rain prevented the fourth production on August 10.

The history with its historical incidents was outlined by Amos Shelton. The history was told in five episodes as worked out by Mrs. Roy Fisher, Mrs. Lester English, Mrs. Robert Castetter, Mrs. Randall Joseph, Miss Mary Joseph, Mrs. Peggy Kennedy, Mrs. I. E. Lewis, Mr. Archie Rinehart, Mrs. Rawleigh Baker, and Mrs. Margary Clay.

The cast numbered over 200 persons from all parts of the county depicting the early scenes of the Indians and the pioneers down through the age of the underground railroad, the coming of Central Normal College, the Plainfield Boys School, Cartersburg Springs era, the famous baseball team, the interurban down to the present day with the modern Hendricks County hospital, school consolidations and the challenge of the future.

This production was given in the Danville Ellis Park. Mr. Charles Epstein was director. He was assisted by Mr. Bill Karnowsky and Mr. Karl Illg. Karen Hayes Bailey was the choreographer and Mike Riggs was director of music. Mrs. Blanche Wean was Pageant Chairman.

H C H S

(In a recent issue of The Bulletin, we used an article about Big Sam Thompson, Hendricks County's claim to fame in baseball. Two of our members, Mr. and Mrs. Jewell Thompson of Danville, attended the ceremonies when Big Sam was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Since this is an honor that comes to only a few, I asked them to write of their experiences. Ed.)

On the morning of August 12, 1974 a crowd of about 10,000 people gathered in front of the National Baseball Library at the Baseball Hall of Fame in the little village of Cooperstown, N. Y. The occasion which brought these people together was the induction of six men into the Baseball Hall of Fame. We were fortunate in that we were guests of the Baseball Hall of Fame and had seats in front of the stand in the first row. Those who were not guests had been standing for hours waiting for the induction. Other Thompson's there, also as guests, Mrs. Maurice Thompson and her son David from Salinas, Calif., her other son, his wife and 2 sons of New York, Mr. and Mrs. Ansel Wallace of Sheridan, Ind., Mr. and Mrs. Albert Thompson of Brazil, South America, their son Fred and his family of Detroit. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Thompson of Shelbyville, with their two sons and wives, and of course, the two of us from Danville.

The induction ceremony was quite impressive. On the stand were 12 to 15 microphones and on either side were members of the Hall of Fame and those being inducted. In front of the stand were the TV cameras, magazine photographers, and the enormous crowd. The ceremony began with the singing of the Star Spangled Banner, without accompaniment, by all the people. Then followed a speech by the mayor of Coopers-town and introduction of the Distinguished Guests, which included Grove, Gehring, Terry, Lyons, Cronin, Feller, Rice, Stengel, Ruffing, Waner, Medwick, Campanella, Musial, Haines, Satchel Paige, Leonard, Irvin, Kelly, Spahn and others such as Mrs. Babe Ruth and Mrs. Lou Gehrig.

Bowie Kuhn, Commissioner of Baseball, presented the plaques to the newly inducted members, which were James Bell, James Bottomley, John Conlan, Edward "Whitey" Ford, Mickey Mantle and Samuel Thompson. James Bottomley and Samuel Thompson received their plaques post humously.

After the ceremony all of the Thompson family were told to go inside to have their picture taken beside the plaque of Sam which will hang in the Baseball Hall of Fame. When the photographer came to take the picture, his mouth dropped, for there were twenty-two of us, the largest group of any of the new inductees. Following this was a huge feast at the Otesaga Hotel. We all ate enough to last a week.

While there, we were given a small ribbon & badge to wear which gave us special privileges. I realized none of us deserved the honor given us, for all of us just happened to have been born, or married into, the Thompson family. Sam and his wife did not have any children. It was a once-in-a-lifetime occasion, and it does not happen in very many lives.

The papers give some of Sam's records which he made while playing ball, but some of the more interesting things are never mentioned.

For example, everyone knows Hank Aaron recently surpassed Babe Ruth's old home run record. But you never see who held the record prior to Babe Ruth. It was none other than Sam Thompson, who held it for almost a quarter of a century. Why it does not come out, I do not know, unless someone would not like to answer a lot of questions. For there would be quite a few.

For Sam's record was 128 home runs, while Ruth's and Aaron's were over 700. There are several reasons for this wide spread in their records. First, during Sam's days they played with a ball which is now referred to as a "Dead Ball". It was made differently. Our present ball has a cork center, then a thick layer of rubber over the cork and then the string windings. This gives the ball a lot of bounce and can be hit harder and farther than the Dead Ball. Also, in Sam's days, the pitcher stood $10\frac{1}{2}$ ft. closer to the batter than at present. I believe if today we should use the dead ball and the pitcher stood $10\frac{1}{2}$ ft. closer to the batter, many of our present players would be making records in the strike-out column instead of hits and home runs. (Sam struck out only 226 times in his 15 years in the major leagues) Another item to consider, is the length of playing season. Now it begins in early spring and lasts until cold weather. The more games you play, the more times you are at bat which increases your chances for more hits and home runs. Also, in the old days, the players were discouraged from trying to hit home runs. It was thought it took a lot of the excitement from the game for all they had to do was hit the ball over the fence and then trot around the bases. The crowds liked the hit and run play and sacrifice flies.

So, if some young student could feed into a computer the differences between the game in the old days and at present, I believe he would find Sam at a par with Ruth and Aaron. Perhaps it has been done, I don't know.

Contributed by Mr. and Mrs. Jewell Thompson

Congratulations to Ruth Hall!

My Indiana Magazine of History just arrived and lo and behold! about half of it consists of an article written by Don Alan Hall and Ruth A. Hall. The article entitled "The Plaque of New Elizabeth" is most interesting and well researched. It is complete with a map of Lixton and numerous pictures. We are very proud that a member of our publication committee has gained such recognition. If you don't belong to the Indiana Historical Society, you must find a copy of this September issue.

H C H S

Just as we were going to press, the following article appeared in the Plainfield Messenger, September 23, 1974. This is certainly good news for H C H S, but we must all bear in mind that such an endeavor will involve much work, and we will need the co-operation of every member of the Society as well as many other Hendricks County people.

Old Jail Becomes Museum New Home

The Hendricks county commissioners have, according to commissioner Lowell Franklin decided to donate the living quarters of the old county jail here to the Hendricks County Historical Society for use as a county museum.

"That's where it's supposed to go," Franklin said Friday morning. "We took a tour of the old jail last week and decided to put the welfare and juvenile department in where the radio operator used to be, and the museum in the old living quarters."

Franklin explained that the remaining part of the old jail will probably be used for office space.

"The living quarters appear to be in good shape," the commissioner recalled. The only thing that appears needed in the living quarters is a new roof. The old slate roof will probably, unfortunately, have to be replaced, because it leaks so bad.

Franklin said that the commissioners just recently had a man out at the old jail to estimate the cost of a new shingle roof, "but we haven't heard from him yet.

"As soon as we receive an estimate, approve it, and complete the project, the society will be able to move into the living quarters. If they get it before the first of the year we're flying, but it could possibly be completed before then," the commissioner said.

Scott Hosier, Jr., general chairman of the Hendricks County Sesquicentennial committee, explained that plans have already been made to give the historical society the money left over from the Sesquicentennial events, "and, especially from the sales of the 1974 history books which are currently being prepared," Hosier said.

He explained that about \$10,000 has been ear-marked for the museum, most of which will be spent for equipment.

"There are some things which are stored here and there, which could be used by the museum committee. But right now there is no place in the county where things can be donated and adequately displayed.

"We've already lost several things which have been donated by county residents to other county museums, or the state museum because of the lack of one of our own. We should be able to keep things at home where they belong," Hosier said.

The general chairman explained that the historical society has been considering a county museum for several years, but the vacancy in the old jail just happened to coincide with their plans.

After the museum has been established, Hosier said, it'll be up to public subscription, "whether or not it is successful. If the county residents don't support it, then there is no sense in maintaining it."

Hosier indicated that the only thing the county has nearest to a museum is the veterans' room in the courthouse. "There are half-a-dozen Civil War relics being stored there, and only a few of them are on display."

The 1974 history book, Hosier emphasized, will be the main source of money for the museum. He explained that every current county resident is urged to submit a complete family biography.

The biographies can be mailed to - The Hendricks County Historical Society, P. O. 128, Denville 46122, or call Mrs. Phyllis Urban, 852-8306, or Miss Grace Cox, 745-2552 for further information.

Families don't have to buy the book to have their biographies included. The book which is specifically designed to outlast any book, is expected to cost \$25.

"The paper, ink, and binding is specially designed by the Virginia State Archives. They are specially designed not to show any sign of age or deterioration," Hosier said.

Mrs. Raleigh Baker, a committee member, explained that the historical group is expected to meet Oct. 1 to further discuss the museum. "We're all really excited about the possibility," she said.

Members of the committee are Floyd Hufford, president; Mrs. Blanche Wean, Mrs. Ed Winkleman, Sherman Crayton, Clark Kellum, Mrs. Francis English, Mrs. Bessie Huddleston and Mrs. Baker.

H C H S

As we will ring down the curtain on our Sesquicentennial year we each should ask ourselves, "Did I do my part toward making our Sesquicentennial Year a success, or did I sit back and let it pass me by?" Few people, in their life span, are privileged to take part in two sesquicentennial celebrations ... Indiana's and Hendricks County's....and in two more years, a bi-centennial. If you feel that you have missed something....and you did if you didn't pitch in and help....then new challenges are coming up with maybe a museum in our future and another historical event soon. So next time, let's all get in on the fun. Don't let life pass you by!

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