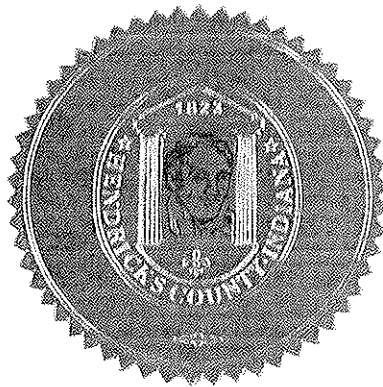


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# HENDRICKS COUNTY

## HISTORY BULLETIN



VOLUME II

NUMBER 1

October 1971

PUBLISHED BY

THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DANVILLE, INDIANA

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## FORMATION OF THE HENDRICKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Periodically, people must have a refresher course in history - whether local, state, or national. This year, 1971, Hoosiers are observing the sesquicentennial of our capital city, Indianapolis. Five years ago, our county was involved in a co-ordinated effort to make Hendricks County's commemoration of Indiana's 150th birthday a never-to-be-forgotten occasion. Many most interesting projects - exhibits of antiques, historical sketches of townships, a pioneer festival, climaxed by a grand parade kept many committees busy during the year of 1966. So much interest was created during this endeavor in the history of Hendricks County, that it seemed a shame to let that enthusiasm die at the close of the Sesquicentennial celebration.

Much discussion, exchanging of ideas, and planning, resulted in a called meeting of all interested persons at the Chapel of the Indiana Boys' School at Plainfield, July 13, 1967. Mr. Max Lee, chairman of the Hendricks County Sesquicentennial Committee, should be credited with calling the meeting, and under the co-chairmanship of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Fisher of Middle Township, the formal organization was completed.

Mr. Hubert Hawkins, Director of the Indiana Historical Society, was present to answer questions, and to assist in our organization.

Officers elected at that first meeting were, Mr. Frank Litherland, president; Mrs. Hazel Felknor, vice president; Mrs. Mildred Smith, secretary; Mrs. Blanche Wean, treasurer; and Miss Ina Shaw, historian.

A committee composed of Mrs. Mildred Smith, Mr. Clark Kellum, and Mr. James Shockley drew up a constitution which presents the purpose of the Society as follows:

1. To collect and to preserve materials of the local history of Hendricks County.
2. To promote the study of history in Hendricks County.
3. To locate and to mark historical sites within the county as far as is possible.
4. To preserve county and state history and biography.
5. To stimulate public interest in the vital and historical facts of Hendricks County.

Everyone who is interested in the history of Hendricks County is urged to become a member for the annual fee of \$2.00 (two dollars).

The idea of an historical society is not a new one, for in the same way that the present one is an outgrowth of the State Sesquicentennial observance, of 1966, so the first Hendricks County Historical Society was organized in 1923 as an outgrowth of this County's centennial celebration in 1923. At that time, many items of historical interest were displayed in a room in the Court House, and later removed to the basement. (Note: See Betsy Hoge's article in this issue.)

The present society is preserving records, clippings, school programs and small articles in the Danville Public Library under the direction of Miss Ina Shaw and her committee.

We are ardent boosters of our county Historical Society, for we believe that knowledge of history, like charity, begins at home. Though most of us are privileged to travel near and far, we cannot overlook the beginnings of local history that took place in our small town streets, our rural schools, our simple churches, and in our own back yards and fields.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Fisher, Middle Township

### HISTORICAL SOCIETIES IN HENDRICKS COUNTY

In the summer of 1971, Hendricks County has four active chapters of historical societies: The Guilford Township Historical Society, The Hendricks County Historical Society, The Junior Historical Society of Brownsburg Senior High School and the Junior Historical Society of Brownsburg Junior High School.

Mr. Jerry Hankins, head of the Social Science Department of Plainfield Senior High School, and Mr. Kermit Davis, United States history teacher and head football coach of the same school, are making plans to organize a Junior Historical Society during this ensuing year.

Junior Historical Societies, which are now nation wide, were started in Indiana in the 1930's. In Indiana, today, we have over 100 chapters with a total membership which numbers between 7,500 to 8,000 members. Mr. Hubert H. Hawkins, Director of the Indiana Historical Society, emphasizes that any thing which will stimulate young peoples' interest in historical values is most worth while. What a fine thing it would be if we had a Junior Historical Society in each of our Hendricks County schools!

Mrs. Frances English

### OLD HENDRICKS LOSS WAS CORN HUSKERS GAIN

To Iowa goes the distinction of the oldest trooper and the only over age regiment to serve for the North during the War between the States. However Hendricks County can claim a small part of this recognition through a man whose historical and descriptive nature is truly one of the unique soldiers to serve either side during the great conflict.

Curtis King, a lineal descendant of Pochantas, was born in Culpepper County, Virginia in 1793, the son of a Revolutionary War Veteran. Married at nineteen, he emigrated to Ohio in 1815 residing there until the late 1820's when he removed to Hendricks County, Indiana, purchasing property in Danville on May 29, 1829. During the next five years he was actively engaged in obtaining real estate in Danville and Center Township. Parcelling out many lots in Danville, he evidently did considerable work in this field as well as being actively engaged in farming. He owned two farms: one 80 acres just east of the present road 250 East in Section 25 bordering the Middle Township line. The other farm was at the Southeast edge of Danville along White Lick Creek in Section 10.

When selling these lots and parcels of land, Hannah King, wife, signed by an "X" on all instruments through August 31, 1838, and in October, 1841, Curtis made his mark alone, indicating her death during this period. In November 1840, Curtis married Matilda Sharp of Hendricks County. Her parentage has been untraceable.

Leaving Hendricks County in the early 1840's, the family lived a short time in Hancock County until moving to Wapello County, Iowa where he farmed until he felt his affairs and family welfare were in order for him to answer President Lincoln's call for volunteers. At the great age of 80 years, Pvt. King was mustered into Company H of the 37th Iowa Infantry on November 9, 1862, to serve three years.

As previously mentioned the 37th Iowa "Greybeard" Regiment was unique in itself, being comprised of men over 45 years old, and containing 145 men 65 years old and older. Iowa was the only state to form such a Regiment receiving authorization from Secretary of War Stanton upon the promise that they would be used only for guard duty. However, the unit did see action on July 5, 1864 when some 50 troopers engaged a band of Confederate guerrillas resulting in the death of two enlisted men.

Private King's enlistment into the Army of the Mississippi was not easy since he was blind in one eye. Two or three companies refused him entrance until at last he was successful with Company H. Upon his discharge for disability on March 19, 1863, he was described as one of the most efficient men of the Regiment; a stalwart figure standing six foot two inches in height, dark complexion, blue eyes, and grey hair.

Curtis King, emigrant, father patriot, veteran, died at Muscatine, Iowa, the same year of his discharge at the age of 81, but, of him the half has yet been told. At death he was the father of 21 children, the youngest only 15 months at his death. Mr. King could neither read nor write but had such retentive powers that he claimed to be able to repeat every word of the Bible from Genesis to the end of Revelation through the help of a daughter who read to him from the Scriptures.

History of the Colonies and this young Republic was a familiar subject to Mr. King as he remembered Jefferson, Randolph and the Adamses. He saw Washington often and recalled that he never saw him smile.

Mr. King never took a dose of medicine from a doctor nor did he allow any of his family to do so while under his care, he being what was called a root doctor. His death was at an early age for his family, as his mother lived to the great age of 103 and one grandfather to 105 years.

Also Curtis's answer to his ideas of the result of the war and its probable quick ending, that was voiced by many Northern observers popular at the time of his enlistment, was a much better appraisal than most. He remarked, "Well, I think the longest pole will knock the persimmon, it may take a long time; but the North has got the most men and the most money, and it's bound to come out first best in the end". He continued "--if the young men will do as I intend to do, the rebellion will be put down, for I am in for the War, or as long as I last."

History also records that Curtis King was, from his youth, a Democrat of the old Jackson school. History does not record that this last fact could have been Mr. King's reason for leaving Hendricks County and it's one-sided Republican majority--thereby giving us only a fleeting glimpse of one of the North's great but unsung patriots of the Rebellion.

Mr. Jack Gambold

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## COURT HOUSE RECORDS

In the spring of 1965 the mess of public records in the basement of the Hendricks County Court House began to worry a number of county citizens and public officials. For many, many years - perhaps since the Courthouse was built - the semi-active county records from various offices in the Courthouse had been piled, dumped and scattered into various corners of the basement. Many of the hundreds of boxes of documents and papers had gotten wet, many had spilled; and all were covered with a thick layer of coal dust.

The Hendricks County Records Commission, authorized to decide which records should be destroyed and which should be saved, secured an appropriation from the Hendricks County Council to find out what was in the Courthouse basement. According to the Indiana Statutes, the County Records Commission first reviews the list of records and decides what is no longer needed; then the unneeded documents are given to the local historical society which reviews them, saves what they want, and passes the rest to the State Historical Society. After they decide what they want to keep, the remainder is finally destroyed. The members of the Commission elected Judge Richard Groover as their chairman and found me, an unemployed college student, to supervise the sorting, cleaning, and listing of the papers in the basement.

In July of that summer we began to work in the basement. However, we quickly realized that I and the two volunteers from the County Historical Society would need several years to move the heavy boxes, sort and clean their contents, and put them in order. Thus, we recruited more "volunteers" from among the inmates languishing in the county jail. They were of the opinion that anything would be better than staying in jail all the time. Dressed as some sort of bandits to protect ourselves from breathing dust, we began pushing and pulling boxes all over the basement, making a worse mess than we began with. And one by one officials from the county offices came down and checked the records from their respective offices and told us what to throw away and what to save. After a few days, one of the jail inmates decided that staying in jail was better, after all, than working there. In a few weeks, though, Mrs. Ruth Pritchard and Mr. Harry Spears of the Hendricks County Historical Society, Mr. Woody Singleton of the Hendricks County Jail, and I finished the project. We made a list of the records and a map of the basement showing where to find them, and gave it to the County Clerk, Mr. Jack Gambold.

After our work in the basement, Mrs. Pritchard and Mr. Spear with other members of the Hendricks County Historical Society have continued sorting through the older documents no longer needed by the Courthouse officials. They have found various interesting deeds and even some papers signed by Abraham Lincoln. Mr. Singleton was soon released from the Hendricks County Jail with his sentence shortened for good behavior. I returned to Butler University to complete a Bachelor's Degree, then went to Indiana University for a Master's in library science. With a fellowship from the National Library of Medicine, I continued graduate work at the University of Tennessee Medical School. Two years ago I was invited to the University of Puerto Rico Medical School where I am now assistant to the director in a research institute. As an extra project I am collaborating on a children's book about Puerto Rico.

Now that the dust has settled and some time has passed, I have a warm feeling when I think of the interest and cooperation of everyone concerned; especially the very-hard-working basement crew. All of us were very pleased to have Mr. Willard Heiss, Chairman of Genealogy Section of the Indiana Historical Society, comment that the records in the Hendricks County Courthouse are the best organized and most retrievable of any he has seen in the state.

Elizabeth J. Hoge

## JUNIOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Last year at the State History Convention I was told that I had been selected to help on an architectural survey of the Lincoln Heritage Trail.

The purpose of the survey was to acquaint young people with a different type of history - the history of a home. Three states were involved; Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. Students from all three states participated in the 10 day tour.

Our objective was to decide if the home could have been standing when Lincoln was alive and then to inquire from the owner such information as the builder, original owner, style, and interesting features.

Stops were made in Elizabethtown, Kentucky; Dale and Vincennes, Indiana; and Charleston and Springfield, Illinois.

From this tour, I brought back the idea to our club that we should do an architectural survey of the older homes in Brownsburg. We started work on it last summer and acquired information on 20 homes in the vicinity. Pictures were taken and sheets were filled in and sent to the State Historical Society.

I also chaired a committee on cemeteries. We typed the inscriptions found on the tombstones for records which are kept by the State Library.

This May, because of the interest I had shown in the State Historical Society and the local chapter for the past two years I received a plaque designating me as the Outstanding Senior High History Club Member for the State of Indiana.

Cindy Hewlett

## IF OLD HOUSES COULD TALK

"You can't tell where you are going if you can't tell where you have been," reiterates the old man as he squeaks his chair in a more comfortable angle.

If old houses could only talk! You know the kind that often fetch the remark, "Look at that old house and don't you wish it could talk!"

At the end of a grass and a weed covered road, or at the end of a narrow lane, almost hidden by farm weeds of all kinds. These will be horse weeds, rag weeds and iron weeds. These old houses are in every county and could tell stories of love, laughter, war and peace. They could tell stories of back-breaking toil, hoe-downs and religious experiences that could bring tears to the eyes of the listeners. Every old place like that could tell a long rambling tale, if it would only speak.

But it seems to say, "Go way and leave me to tumble into ruin, to be destroyed by fire or to be torn down." "Go Way! I belong to another time; money could no longer restore me. Some day you will return and I shall no longer be here."

Now, this is the purpose of the Hendricks County Historical Society. These must not go away until these stories are in the archives.

In our minds we can hear a staid, plainly dressed Quaker, who settled

in South Hendricks in the Whitelick community saying, "Thoe who tooteth not his own horn, gets his own horn not tooteth." So if the Society does too much bragging it can be passed off by saying, "Listen, to what the old houses can tell us."

It is a certainty if these old houses could talk they would sing in unison and make the rafters rings with "God Bless America" and "Abide With Me".

If several old houses could talk, they would tell us the secrets of the Knights of the Golden Circle whose meetings were always known by loyal union soldiers. History has it that the standards of integrity, sobriety, and observance of the laws were brought to a community by these old houses. The greatest regret in leaving these small oases of peace and tranquility was that these old houses have been allowed to decay beyond repair.

The need of church houses was felt long before a settlement could supply the need. The settlers would overcome this obstacle as they did any other obstacle that they faced. They met in the homes when a circuit rider on horseback came to the settlement. Elder Tommy Lockhart and Elder Joseph Tarkington held many a meeting in these old houses.

There is the old brick Joe Rennard house three and one-half miles west of Plainfield that could tell us of the wagon trains moving along the Old National Road, on their treks to wide open spaces. It could tell of the camping ground where the weary travelers could spend a night resting their beasts of burden and their own sore muscles. They could tell of the men when they reached the fertile land further away. The innkeepers of these old houses made a tidy sum for the comforts they dispersed.

The old house on the Bunton homestead could tell us about the ghost town on the Marion township line where fine walnut trees furnished lumber to supply a casket factory, and also about the six foundations that could tell us who lived, loved and worshiped in the lovely valley.

The beautiful old brick house on S.R. 75, south of North Salem, built by Edmond Hadley five generations ago. What weird episodes occurred there! It was there that Edmond Hadley, 53 years of age, died suddenly of a heart attack on May 30, Memorial Day (it was called Decoration Day then). Mr. and Mrs. William Dean purchased the farm and on Memorial Day Mrs. Dean died of a sudden heart attack. The next owner was Virgil Osborn. Within a few years, on Memorial Day, Osborn died suddenly of a heart attack.

If the old house of a Danville tinsmith named Jones could talk, it would tell us how an itinerat worker could somehow bore a hole in a china pitcher and insert an iron handle with only hand tools.

If an old barn could talk in Eel River Township, that talk would be about when war clouds developed into the War between the States. The barn, now owned by Victor Carpenter, is on the Pres Pennington farm. This is called the "Mule barn" because Pennington was in the market for mules, badly needed, both in the North and South. Buyers and sellers came from far and near. Pres Pennington knew a good thing when he saw it. So he built the largest barn in the county in which to hold the mules, which were delivered by man power. A drove was taken to the Ohio River for the government. Then disaster struck when they reached their destination; there stood Confederate Gen. John Morgan, who forthwith confiscated the entire remuda.

No explanation was given. No satisfactory answer ever came to light.



If these old houses could talk, volumes could be written that might change history.

Mrs. Zona Walker

### GUILFORD TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Miss Mary Maxwell of Plainfield graciously provided the following information regarding the Guilford Township Historical Society.

A small group of interested persons met in the basement of the Plainfield Library to consider the formation of an historical society, November 13, 1962, with Mr. Clark Kellum presiding. Mr. Hubert H. Hawkins, Secretary of the Indiana Historical Society, spoke to the group, outlining the basis and background for such a local organization and stated there were no particular rules and regulations. He emphasized that projects and programs must be of community interest and that success depended on the degree of enjoyment and satisfaction which meetings would afford, since many organizations now compete for the time of every one and each individual will select those vital or of interest to him.

After discussing membership, dues, time of meetings and name of the organization, those present agreed the second Tuesday of January would be time of the next meeting and Guilford Township Historical Society was chosen for a name. It was decided that membership not be limited to residents of the township, but that it was advisable to confine the area to be considered and perhaps move to other and larger community divisions later.

Mr. Ira Pomeroy moved that an election be held and that committees be appointed. The result of the election was:

President: Mr. Clark Kellum

Secretary-Treasurer: Miss Mary Maxwell

Two committees were appointed as follows:

Program: Miriam Atkinson

Paul Hardin

Ira Pomeroy

Constitution & By-laws:

Joe Lease

Ruth Newlin

Horace Hadley

The meeting then adjourned. Those present:

Ruth Newlin, Miriam Atkinson, Mary M. Maxwell, Joe Lease, Clark Kellum, Horace Hadley, I.J. Pomeroy, Paul Hardin, and Fred Osborn.

Those serving as subsequent officers are:

President: Clark Kellum and Jack Miller

Vice-President: C. V. Edmondson, Paul Hardin and C.J. Sellars

Secretary: Mary M. Maxwell, Olive Charles, and Mary Wimsett

Treasurer: Horace Hadley, Walter Henley, Clark Kellum

Historian: Harry Spear, Ruth Pritchard

### TRANSPORTATION TID-BITS

Sir Herbert von Herckmer, a German of many talents - one being that of an artist - once painted a nude draped over the radiator of a car. This was in 1905. He was attempting to depict the marriage of man to the auto.

And today, as we admit our dependence on and our worship of the automobile, we must admit that he possessed extraordinary vision!

Indiana and Indianapolis once played the greatest part in the development of the auto. We who collect antique autos feel the love that Sir Herbert expressed. We are devoted to our Hoosier Heritage ... our Hoosier pioneering and development of the auto. To us, many fine cars are an expression of fine art, with the designers as the artists. We study cars as an artist studies paintings, and we can identify the designer by the lines of the car. Each designer had distinct patterns just as each artist has always had his own distinct style.

At the fall Hendricks County Historical Meeting of 1970, we formed the Hendricks County Historical Auto Association. I am sorry to report that we have accomplished very little this first year. Yet we have a start.

The lack of activities in Hendricks County does not mean a lack of interest in antique auto collecting. On the contrary, there are so many events for the old car buffs that owners find it difficult to find time to attend all events. At a later date, we will list the Hendricks County Antique Car Collectors.

Frank Litherland

#### HOOSIERS OF HENDRICKS

ALBRIGHT, Richard, 1660 Bette St., Merced, Calif. 95340  
desrs info on offspring of Edw. and Clara (Legg)  
Flathers who died near Danville in 1840s. Same for  
their son-in-law Wm. Jeffers (1773-1847) of Hendricks  
County.

BACON, Mrs. Gerald Rt. 2 Box 1030 Roseburg, Or. 97470  
Need parents and descendants of Reed W. Dodd (son of  
John P. Dodd and Sarah Dickerson) and Irene Montgomery  
(dau. of James and Martha Hiatt Montgomery) from  
Virginia.

FLOHR-SVENDSEN, Mrs. C., Fazenda Tres Barras, Barra Bonita  
Sao Paulo, Brazil, desrs b., par. & fam. of James  
Armstrong Kerns, b. 1838 & w. Martha Kennedy, M.  
Indiana 4 nov. 1852. Left for Oregon then or in 1853.

HAMMILL, Mrs. K. C., 1905 NE 77th Ave., Portland, Or., 97213  
Wishes evidence the parents of William Ballard whose  
will was recorded in Hendricks Co., Ind. 1824 were  
Thomas Ballard and Elizabeth Hardwick.

JOHNSON, Mrs. Wm. H., 540 W. First, Larned, Kans 67550  
desrs info on parents, brothers and sisters, Joseph  
Frank Johnson B. Surry Co., NC 1851. Tradition he  
had sister Rosé, Bro John. Desrs correspondence  
with descendents, relatives.

McGRAW, Mrs. A. B., 1507 Church St., Columbia, Miss. 39429  
desrs info burial place William & Nancy Simmons Pierson  
d. between 1857-1880 Marion Twp, Hendricks Co. Also  
burial place grandson Augustus Pierson same time period.

PENNINGTON, Mrs. Betty L., 6059 Emery St., Riverside, Calif.  
92509 desrs corresp. on the anc and/or desc of the  
Joshua Kennedy, Richard Guillams, Sr. and Isaac  
Pennington families of Hendricks Co. Data to exchange,  
will answer all letters.

WYNES, MILDRED CHAMBERS, 10 2nd ave. E, Dr. Smith's Apts.  
Albia Ia. 52531  
desire info Riley Haworth (Hayworth) b. 1803 N.C. d.  
1895 Appanoose Co. Unionville Ia., wife Percilla Chambers  
b. 1861 Ind. m. N.C., Ind. before 1860.

CASH, MRS. RULA, 5667 W. Ramsey Banning Ca. 92220  
Need data on John D. Bryant (or O'Bryant) mar. Mary  
Foxworthy, lived Boone Co. area 1851-1865; want  
parents, bros, sisters of John; need births, deaths,  
marriages and will exchange data on Bryant, Foxworthy  
and Risk surnames.

WAY, MRS. MAURICE D., 50 N. Hobart Rd., Hobart Ind. 46342  
Malinda Bohannon m. Jas. Havilloh Finley Shelbyville Ky.  
8 July 1831. Moved to Hend. Co. where Eliza Jane Finley  
was b. She m. Adam Reitzel. Need proof Malinda daugh.  
John Bohannon & Polly Sacre of Shelbyville, Ky.

Cover: Our new cover design is the result of the combined efforts of Mr.  
Larry McKee, formerly of Coatesville, and our talented and hard working  
secretary, Mrs. Ruth Pritchard.

#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we round out 1971 with this publication, it is with the hope that  
we can publish quarterly editions of The Hendricks County History Bulletin  
in 1972 ... one before each meeting. By so doing, the Bulletin will then  
serve as a reminder of the impending meeting. In order to accomplish this,  
we will need help of every member. Your comments and suggestions are  
solicited concerning this and future issues.

Our new feature, "Hoosiers of Hendricks", is open to all members for  
questions or remarks. Our only rules are that the message be limited to  
50 words, exclusive of the member's name and address, and there must be a  
definite tie to Hendricks County. Future deadlines for this column will  
be six weeks in advance of the meeting date.

As this year draws to a close, I would like to thank every one who  
planned and brought to us three interesting meetings with excellent prospects  
for the fourth. It has been a good year with many new and interesting members  
joining our ranks.

John Gambold, Jr.

#### DIRECTIONS FOR REACHING SALEM CHURCH

South on Ind. 39 1½ miles South of Belleville; East (left) on Road 750S  
to end; South (right) on 375E. to end; turn left a short distance to Church.

OCTOBER IS DUES - PAYING - MONTH

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