

LAKE COUNTY CENTENARIANS.

BY P. W. BALL,

Historical Secretary of the Old Settler and Historical Association of Lake County.

AMONG our early settlers, our true pioneers, there were two who lived more than one hundred years. One of these was Peter Surprise, born of French parentage in a province of Lower Canada, February 24, 1794. In 1834 or 1835 (this date is not quite certain), following a party of French neighbors who settled near the present Momence, in Illinois, he made his settlement in what became Lake county. He was naturalized August 10, 1837, by Solon Robinson, then county clerk, and died in this county August 27, 1903, having lived 109 years and six months, or having lived through nearly seven years of the eighteenth, through all of the wonderful nineteenth century, and through two full years of the twentieth century. He had in all fourteen children, three born in Canada. Seven of these were living at the time of their father's death. There were also living twenty-two grandchildren and forty great-grandchildren.

Our other centenarian was Mrs. Valona Cutler, a daughter of Richard Church, who came to what became known as Prairie West in 1836, having a family of six sons and four daughters. Mrs. Cutler was born in 1805, the day and month not on our record. She was the mother of six children. About 1855 the Cutler family left Lake county. They became citizens of Illinois, where, in February, 1906, Mrs. Cutler died, having lived more than one hundred years. Although not residing many years in the county, she was for a time an active, prominent and influential Lake county pioneer, and so we claim her as one of our centenarians.