

Notes Concerning Brookville, Ind., a Century Ago*

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Charities

IT IS my purpose to speak of Brookville as it was a hundred years ago. What I am to say is from reminiscences of my grandfather, Amos Butler, and the notes of my father, William W. Butler, of Hadley D. Johnson and others of the older inhabitants. It is my belief that they are substantially correct, though there may be some discrepancies.

My grandfather, Amos Butler, a native of Chester county, Pennsylvania, was the first settler of Brookville. He came to its site in 1803 or 1804. The latter year he located and entered the land east of Franklin street and north of the section line running through Dr. Berry's office. His cabin was built about 100 yards northeast of the Hermitage. The site of it has been washed away. His nearest neighbors were the Templetons north toward Templeton's creek. He built the first grist mill about where Speer's flour mill stood and above it a short distance a saw mill. He brought his mill irons and mill stones from Cincinnati on pack horses. Several persons came with him to assist in the work, among whom was David Stoops with whom he lived. He was the father of Robert Stoops, Sr., who was the grandfather of Harry M. Stoops. David is said to have been the father of twenty-three children.

Wild animals were plentiful. My grandfather used to sleep in the mill. His companion was a little dog. Often the wolves would come about the mill and keep them awake. Many times he tried to shoot them but did not know that he ever succeeded. There were many Indians around at that time.

Amos Butler and Jesse B. Thomas, afterward United States Senator from Illinois, and author of the Missouri Compromise,

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together entered the quarter section on which they laid out the original plat of Brookville. It was surveyed by Solomon Manwaring in 1808. Manwaring married Jennie Hanna who was a daughter of old General Robert Hanna.

My grandfather married Mary Wallace of Pennsylvania. In the spring of 1810 they came down the Ohio in a keel boat to Lawrenceburg. They made the trip to Brookville on horseback by way of the site of Harrison, Ohio, arriving March 10, 1810. The next day my father, William Wallace Butler was born in the cabin near the mill. Hannah Moore, the grandmother of Bolivar Templeton, officiated at the birth. Hadley D. Johnson once told me that he understood he was born in 1812 in the same cabin.

My grandfather built three other houses in Brookville. The next was on the high ground back of I. M. Bridgeman's residence. Another was west of that toward the Blooming-grove road. The third was the old brick house with stone kitchen which some of the older citizens will remember near the old Connersville road, where William Smiester's stable now stands. From there he moved to Hanover, Indiana, in 1818. My father as he grew older came back to Brookville from time to time to look after his father's interests and finally returned to make it his home in 1834.

Within a few years after Amos Butler settled here many other settlers came. Among them were the following: Isaac Fuller, Thomas Herndon, Squire Mewhinney, Andrew Jackson, Samuel Goodwin, William H. Eads, John Vincent, John Test, William Martin, Reuben Lines, Ely Adams, Benjamin McCarty, Mr. Dailey, father of Rev. William M. Dailey, James Knight, Thomas Williams, Rev. William Tyner, Benjamin Childers, Abraham Huddleston, — Spangler, Jacob Laforge, — Hartman, — Stringer, Jacob Hetrick, Rev. DeWeese, and Spencer Wylie.

The first graveyard was located in the northeastern part of town where the creamery was built. A brother of my grandmother, Nathaniel Wallace, was buried there. Roswell G. Tubbs' was the only grave there which had a dressed gravestone with his name on it. When burying began in the graveyard at the Lutheran church it ceased at the old site. Samuel

Goodwin and Mr. Symmes bought the lots for the second burying ground. In it are buried many of Brookville's first settlers and others prominent in the early history of the town. These include Gen. Eli Long, John T. McKinney, wife and child of John Henderson afterward United States Senator from Mississippi, the McCleerys, Ben Sed Noble. Few know that there is buried James M. Clayton, brother of John M. Clayton, once United States Senator from Delaware.

The church now there was erected by the Methodist Episcopal denomination and was the first meeting house built in Brookville.

My father said the first school he remembered was taught by Solomon Allen in a two-story frame house about the site of the home of the late R. P. C. Barwick. There was also a school in the old John W. Keeley residence about 1819. Later the old M.E. class rooms, now torn down, were used. My father-in-law, William Reynolds, went to school there in the early forties to Joseph Ryman. Squire St. John taught there a year or two before. A small brick school house used later stood back of where Frank Masters' store is.

One experience I shall always remember was a visit to our home by Hadley D. Johnson in January, 1893. He was commissioned by the State of Utah to carry its official vote for Grover Cleveland for president to Washington and on his return trip stopped with us. I was able to get an agreed statement from him and my father about much of the early history of Brookville. The following notes will give some idea of Brookville about 1820.

James Knight built the "Old Yellow Tavern." He took the contract of building the first courthouse but died before it was completed. His widow sent to Frederick, Maryland, for her brother, William McCleery, to complete the work. That he did and later married Knight's daughter by his first wife.

Andrew Wallace, father of Governor David Wallace, governor of Indiana and grandfather of General Lew Wallace was an early hotel keeper. David Wallace lived in a brick house on the lot north of the present Catholic parsonage. There his son, General Lew Wallace, soldier, author and governor of New Mexico, was born. Major William Beeks, Mrs. Butler's grand-

father, afterward lived in the same house which I remember well. Another member of the Wallace family and former resident of Brookville was William Henson Wallace who, I think, was at one time governor of Idaho.

Gen. James Noble, United States Senator from Indiana, lived in a frame house on the adjoining lot south. It was long used as the Catholic parsonage and was later moved one square west to make room for the present house of the priest and is still in existence. His brother, Noah, became governor of Indiana. Another brother, Lazarus, was in charge of the United States land office at Brookville. He died at Squire Mounts' at Metamore, while engaged in moving that office to Indianapolis. He was succeeded by Robert Hanna who later became United States Senator from Indiana. Martha Noble married Richard Tyner.

Another house in that part of town then standing was the old brick house where John L. Case lived when I was a boy. That was occupied by a family named Herndon. This is the same house in which Dr. George Berry and Dr. John Hughes afterward dissected the body of a well known citizen when they were "reading medicine" and on account of which they became voluntary exiles for a time.

John Test, Lew Wallace's maternal grandfather, lived on the site of the old Carmichael house where Mrs. Loper now lives. The large cedar trees that stood in the southeastern corner of the yard when I was a boy were said to have been planted by Lew Wallace's mother. In that same house at other times lived Hadley D. Johnson's father, and Ben Noble.

Abraham Hammond, later governor of Indiana, lived with his father, Squire Nathaniel Hammond. John Henderson was a shoemaker who acquired his education while working at his bench. He afterward moved to Mississippi and was elected to the United States Senate. Sampson Powers, brother of Hiram Powers, the sculptor, had a store just north of the Valley House before 1831. He was the postmaster. He married the daughter of Enoch McCarty.

Stephen S. Harding, later Governor of Utah, lived with his relative, Dr. Davis, in the residence afterward the home of the late Dr. George Berry. Dr. Oliver lived not far from the

present jail. He was the foster father of Oliver H. Glisson who became rear admiral in the United States navy. Richard Tyner lived in the Tappen house until he built the one in which John Roberts and A. M. Tucker afterward resided. At that time the big store was kept by William H. Eads. He "broke up" about 1824. Richard Tyner clerked for Eads and succeeded him in business. Eads was the brother of Thomas Eads the father of James B. Eads, the engineer. Tyner was the father of James N. Tyner, postmaster general of the United States. The old half-house in the east bottom was probably erected by Robert Breckenridge. It was once used for the land office and was a bank about 1820. There were six or seven banks at Brookville at one time. The old State Bank according to my father's recollection stood on the site of the southern part of the Valley House.

Gen. Robert Hanna built Dr. George Berry's residence in 1816. It was probably the first house built in Amos Butler's plat. Dr. Berry with his wife, Ann Wright Berry, went to housekeeping there. They made it their home for over fifty years and both died there.

At that time the population reached its lowest ebb. Dr. Rufus Haymond took a census of the town. Hadley D. Johnson's recollection of this was that it showed a population of 250.

About 1826 or 1827 the total amount of cash taken in by four general stores in one day was 31 $\frac{1}{4}$ cents. These stores were conducted by Richard Tyner, George T. Noble, Abner McCarty and Nathan D. Gallion. At that time there was very little money in circulation and the credit system prevailed.

Brookville is to be complimented for the increasing interest in local history. The Historical Society is a fine thing and should receive encouragement and substantial support. The old landmarks are rapidly passing. How many of them will remain at the next centennial? I would suggest that permanent markers be placed at the historic spots. This should be done while it is possible. These landmarks are among the most valuable assets this community has.