

Historical News

The annual meeting of the Indiana Historical Society, on December 30, was marked by the resignation of Judge D. W. Howe, who has been president of the society for twenty years, but who withdrew on account of failing health. The resignation was accepted with regret, and a testimonial resolution as to his services adopted. Officers for the ensuing year were elected as follows: President, Chas. W. Moores; first vice-president, J. A. Woodburn; second vice-president, W. E. English; third vice-president, Harlow Lindley; treasurer, Chas. E. Coffin; recording secretary, J. P. Dunn; corresponding secretary, F. B. Wynn; executive committee, John H. Holliday, Logan Esarey, Mrs. Frank Athon Morrison, Lee Burns, and Eliza Gordon Browning.

The society decided to make one meeting of the Indiana Historical Conference next December a public meeting of the Indiana Historical Society. Harlow Lindley and Lucy M. Elliott were appointed to prepare the program. Resolutions asking the legislature to make provisions for preserving the battle flags of Indiana troops in the Spanish-American and World wars were adopted. Dr. Wynn, Mrs. Morrison and Miss Elliott were appointed a committee to prepare plans for securing the cooperation of all societies interested in Indiana history, and report to the executive committee.

The second annual conference on Indiana state history held in Indianapolis December 10-11, 1920, under the auspices of the Society of Indiana Pioneers was marked by a number of interesting papers. The three main topics, considered at some length, were: Historical team-work; Patriotic and war history; and The centennial spirit. Dr. Benjamin F. Shambaugh of the Iowa State Historical Society was the speaker for the two evening programs. The proceedings of the conference will be printed in full by the Indiana Historical Commission, and distributed to all interested persons.

The public speaking classes of the Ft. Wayne extension center of Indiana University gave a Revue of the history

of Ft. Wayne at the Ft. Wayne high school auditorium, January 26 and 27. The revue was in the form of an oral pageant of the growth of Ft. Wayne from 1614 [?] to the present time. The program was in two parts: Part one, beginning with the prologue the Spirit of History (Columbia) retrospective and prophetic of the entire history of Ft. Wayne, and ending with the passing of the Indians in 1818; part two, beginning with the prologue the Spirit of History (Indiana) covering the period of history from 1819 to 1854, and ending with a resume of the establishment and growth of civic and social institutions. Ross V. Lockridge, director of the employment and welfare department of the Wayne knitting mills, had general supervision of the Revue, ably assisted by a cast composed of citizens of Ft. Wayne.

A meeting of the Southwestern Indiana Historical Society was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George S. Clifford, Evansville, Indiana, on the evening of January 31st. Kate Milner Rabb of Indianapolis gave an enjoyable talk on The Romance of Indiana History. Many members were present from the eight counties represented in the society. The next meeting of the Southwestern Historical Society will be held in Perry county, when Lafayette Springs will be dedicated by a program in the form of a pageant under the supervision of Thomas James de la Hunt of Cannelton, Indiana.

Columbus, Indiana, will celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the naming of the town some time in the late spring or summer. The county seat was first named Tiptona. The county was organized January 8, 1821, and it has been suggested that the county and city celebrations be held at the same time. George Pence of the State Board of Accounts has been asked to prepare an historical address.

At a meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Science, division of anthropology, in Chicago last December, it was stated that almost nothing was known of Indiana archaeology. Since that meeting George R. Fox, director of the Edward K. Warren Foundation, at Three Oaks, Michigan, has been making an investigation of what has been done in Indiana. He finds that beginning in 1869, a survey

was made county by county, by the state geologists. He is very enthusiastic about the results of his investigation and says that the state has no reason to be ashamed of what has been accomplished. These archaeological remains have been located in part, at least. Now it is for the people of Indiana to see that more publicity is given to their archaeological treasures and that these remains are saved. A real state museum with adequate quarters would attract thousands and thousands of such relics.

George Andrew Gordon, the only surviving member who assisted in drafting the Indiana state constitution of 1850, now living in Eureka, Kansas, was duly honored by the General Assembly of Indiana on his one hundredth birthday, January 22, 1921. Following is a copy of the resolution sent to him on this occasion:

Whereas, George Andrew Gordon now a resident of Eureka, Kansas, is the only surviving member of the Indiana constitutional convention of 1850, having been elected from a district composed of Howard and Cass counties, and

Whereas, Mr. Gordon will be 100 years of age Saturday, January 22, 1921, having been born in Warren county, Ohio, afterward residing in Sullivan and Howard counties, Indiana, obtaining a higher education at Wabash college, and

Whereas, his 100th birthday is to be celebrated at a family gathering in Eureka, Kansas, Saturday, January 22nd, be it *Resolved* by the senate, the house of representatives concurring, that the 72nd General Assembly of Indiana, which was elected under the constitution Mr. Gordon helped to establish, congratulate Mr. Gordon on his public service and on his long and useful life, and be it further

Resolved, that the secretary of state be directed to send a certified copy of these resolutions to Mr. Gordon, and that the secretary of the senate send a telegram immediately upon concurrence of the house in these resolutions to Mr. Gordon notifying him of the action taken.

During the annual meeting of the Indiana library association held jointly with the Indiana library trustees association, in Indianapolis, November 10-12, 1920, one of the features of the program from the historian's point of view, were the talks given at the Indiana Dinner. Jacob P. Dunn responded to the toast, Early Indiana Authors; Kate Milner Rabb, Old Township and McClure Libraries; Paul V. Ha-

worth, *Roughing It in the Northwest*; William Herschell, *Original Poems and Yarns*, and Max Ehrman, *Madness of Romance*.

The Indiana Historical Society is entering upon a statewide drive this year to increase its membership. A survey of three or four leading state historical societies in the middle west shows the following records for membership: Missouri, 1,248; Wisconsin, 1,042; Minnesota upwards of 600; Michigan, over 1,000. At present the membership of the Indiana Historical Society is fewer than 150. A membership committee consisting of Charles W. Moores, Harlow Lindley and Lucy M. Elliott, has been appointed to conduct the drive during the year 1921.

An editorial in the Indianapolis *Sunday Star*, January 23, 1921, on the Corydon pageant, by Kate Milner Rabb, has aroused statewide interest in the subject of historical pageants.

Under the direction of the Indiana Historical commission more than fifty of the ninety-two counties in the state have collected and compiled a history showing the part played by their respective counties in the World war. Several of the counties have already published their histories in book form, among them being: Clay, Delaware, Fountain, Fulton, Howard, Jefferson, Parke, Pike, Ripley, Switzerland, and Tipton. The manuscript reports for several others have been prepared, and other volumes will appear in the near future.

The historical committee of Tennessee is now engaged in one of the most extensive campaigns ever undertaken by the state to collect, calendar, and publish all available documents relating to the history of Tennessee. On January 29, 1920, a mass meeting was held at the Commercial club in Nashville, attended by the governor, members of the supreme court, members of the legislature, state officials and representative and professional citizens, at which time a movement was launched calling for a survey of the entire state of Tennessee. Six committees were appointed to collect and prepare material on the following subjects: Early history, Indian and pioneer, Mexican and Civil war history, Reconstruction

and commercial history, Political, social and industrial history, Literary and educational history, World war, civil and military history. The 1919 session of the Tennessee legislature appropriated \$2,200,000 for a memorial hall and historical library in which to house the records of Tennessee and to perpetuate the memory of her hero dead. Governor Roberts announced that the necessary funds would be available for carrying on this great work, and pronounced it the most important work ever undertaken in Tennessee.

Of all the historic Lincoln spots the least known is that area where Lincoln lived from his seventh to his twenty-first years. The people of southern Indiana are urging Governor McCray to reroute the proposed state highway from Evansville to French Lick so it will pass through Lincoln City, through the old Thomas Lincoln farm, past the home site of the Lincolns, past the grave of Lincoln's mother, and all the other Lincoln landmarks. If this is done, a real Lincoln Home Trail is built, then the automobile tourist passing that way may see, as he comes from the east, the monument marking the hearthstone site in the Lincoln one-room cabin home, and as he drives southwestward he will pass along the land Lincoln cleared and plowed. He will come next to the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial park, in the center of which is the monument erected by Lincoln lovers to the memory of Lincoln's mother, who died when he was ten years old.

It seems strange, but Indiana has one of the most beautiful small parks in America there, with fine roads all through it, and no way to get to the entrance other than over a dirt road impassable over half the year. Passing by the park one comes to Little Pigeon church, primitive Baptist. The original church was built 100 years ago; Thomas Lincoln helped build it, out of roughly-hewn logs. This was the first church Lincoln attended; his father was one of the officers. Long after the Lincolns moved to Illinois the building was moved toward the road 100 feet, and the logs were boarded over on the outside, the inside then being plastered. Inside are rough board benches, a home-made pulpit, with kitchen chairs for the preacher. Immediately back of this church is the grave of Lincoln's sister, Sarah Lincoln Grigsby.

Then, following the trail that Lincoln trod, one comes to Gentryville, the village nearest the Lincoln farm a century ago. It was there Lincoln went to do odd jobs for townspeople, and to read a Louisville newspaper, the only paper coming into all that part of the country. [?] It was in the Gentryville store that Lincoln did his first debating, arguments swapped round the stove. There he first became noted as a story teller. On farther is Boonville, where Lincoln found the first [?] law books he read, and which gave him the foundation for a legal career. To the south, in Rockport, he borrowed other law

books, and there, [?] too, he embarked upon his river expeditions to New Orleans, for a Gentryville merchant. It was over that same trail from the Lincoln farm to Gentryville that the Lincoln family drove their ox-teams, carrying all their worldly goods into Illinois.—*Indianapolis News*, February 2, 1921.

Mrs. Caroline Dale Owen Snedeker, the granddaughter of David Dale Owen and the author of *Seth Wey, a Romance of the New Harmony Community*, gave an address on New Harmony before the Contemporary club of Indianapolis, December 9.

The Henry County historical society held its thirty-fourth semi-annual meeting at Newcastle, November 18. About sixty members were present. Resolutions were adopted at the meeting recommending that the birthplace of Wilbur Wright, the co-inventor of the aeroplane, be bought, if it could be secured at a reasonable price. If the five-acre homestead cannot be bought at a fair price, it was recommended that a memorial be erected at Newcastle.

The Washington County historical society met at Salem November 27, 1920. A number of new relics were added to its collection which is growing to be of considerable size. It was planned to hold regular monthly meetings in the future.

Miss Margaret C. Norton who has finished calendaring the collection of Tipton manuscripts in the Indiana state library has accepted a position with the state historical society of Missouri.

At the 43rd annual meeting of the Indiana Republican Editorial Association, held in Indianapolis, January 27 and 28, 1921, M. W. Pershing, of Tipton, one of the surviving charter members of the association, read a paper giving the history of the organization, covering a period of more than forty years. He mentioned the names of editors and newspapers of the long ago, among whom were men that became famous in newspaper work in Indiana and the country at large. The historical feature of the paper was so well received that the association ordered the address be published in booklet form.

Two articles of unusual interest appeared in the Indianapolis *News* of December 4, 1920, and December 25, 1920. Both articles, written by Jacob P. Dunn, gave a brief history of the two Indiana inventors who have not been generally known. One is Thomas Jackson Rodman, inventor of the Rodman gun, and of modern cannon powder. The other character mentioned was George W. Stockman, inventor of the process of summer meat packing, and artificial cooling.

Ten Indiana counties were organized by the legislature in 1821. Six of these will have the opportunity to observe their centennials on the exact date of their anniversaries; the others might celebrate the year, if not the exact date. The counties and dates of organizing acts are as follows: Union, Jan. 5, 1821; Greene, Jan. 5, 1821; Bartholomew, Jan. 8, 1821; Parke, Jan. 9, 1821; Morgan, Dec. 31, 1821; Decatur, Dec. 31, 1821; Rush, Dec. 31, 1821; Marion, Dec. 31, 1821; Putnam, Dec. 31, 1821; and Henry, Dec. 31, 1821.