

Historical News

The spring meeting of the Southwestern Indiana Historical society was held in Cannelton, the county seat of Perry county, Tuesday, May 24, 1921. The meeting was pronounced the most successful that has been held since the organization of the historical society in the "Pocket" counties. A special car was chartered for the visiting delegates, and more than sixty persons wearing banners inscribed, "Lafayette, We Are Here", enjoyed the hospitality of the Cannelton people. Thomas de la Hunt, the historian of Perry county, was chairman of the committee on arrangements, and had enlisted the united support of the people of Cannelton for entertaining the visitors. Immediately upon arrival at Cannelton the guests were taken in automobiles to the Lafayette springs, where a brief talk was made by Mr. de la Hunt, announcing the plan of donating the old spring and the grounds surrounding it to the state of Indiana as a memorial to the thirty-seven men from Perry county who lost their lives while in service during the World war.

The party was then taken to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Odell at Sunny Crest, three miles up the Ohio river, where lunch was served by the Women's Travel club of Cannelton. Following the luncheon the visitors returned to the city where a brief program was given in the high school auditorium. An episode of the centennial pageant, depicting the brief visit of Lafayette in Cannelton in 1825, following the accidental landing of the steamer "*Mechanic*", was presented by some high school students. A paper on the "Life of George Ewing" was read by Jennie Latimer Clark. A talk on Indiana war records was made by John W. Oliver, director of the Indiana Historical commission.

Following the program the visitors were taken to the home of Mr. De la Hunt at Virginia Place, where tea was served. At five o'clock the visitors departed for their homes after having enjoyed one of the most pleasant historic meetings

that has been held in southern Indiana. The fall meeting of the Southwestern Indiana Historical society will be held at Rockport sometime in September.

The centennial anniversary of the organization of the Little Flock Baptist church, located five miles north of Sullivan, Indiana, was celebrated with an all-day service and basket dinner, May 29. Thousands of people attended, some coming from Nebraska, and many from Illinois, and Indiana. Seven of the former ministers were in attendance and one of them, Stephen K. Fuson of Rockville, who is eighty years of age, preached a sermon.

The founders of the church were Tyre Harris, Susannah Harris, John Hodges, Polly Morgan, Mary Hill, Elizabeth Anderson, Robert Anderson, Betsy Morgan, Sarah Eldridge, and Patience Cummins. The meetings of the church were held first in a log school house which stood in the southeast corner of the cemetery. A log church was built in 1826. In 1856 a frame building was erected, and in 1871, the present building was constructed. All of the church records have been preserved. They show that more than a thousand persons have been members of the church, and that from 1827 to the present the church has had thirty ministers.

The *Literary Digest* of April 30, 1921, gives an account of the inventor of the first motion picture machine and his first show. The inventor was C. Francis Jenkins of Richmond, Indiana, and he held his first show in that city in a jewelry store in 1894. At that time, Mr. Jenkins was a clerk in the treasury department at Washington and had gone to his home in Richmond for his vacation. He was unable to make a commercial success of his invention and it is said that he sold his interest in it for \$2,500. The machine which projected the picture is on exhibition at the national museum in Washington and is said to be the forerunner of all present-day projectors.

It is planned to place a bronze tablet on the jewelry store in Richmond, indicating that the first motion picture machine gave an exhibition in that store June 6, 1894.

Mr. Jenkins is still living in Washington and recently invented the Discrola, a machine that will reproduce motion

pictures from a disc similar to that used on a phonograph. It is expected this machine can be used in the home like the phonograph.

The conspicuous rôle which the Quakers have played in the development of Indiana was commemorated at Richmond, Indiana, August 15, 1921, by a centennial celebration of the establishment of their first Yearly meeting in the state, which was organized in 1821. A forenoon program consisting of greetings from other Yearly meetings, an address by Harlow Lindley, of Earlham college, on "A Century of Quakerism in Indiana", and an address by Rufus M. Jones, of Haverford college, Pennsylvania, on "Quakerism of the Future" was carried out, and in the afternoon a pageant was presented depicting the principal activities in which Friends have been directly concerned. Since about one-third of the Quakers in America live in Indiana, and the members of this church have taken a prominent part in the political, religious, educational, business, and moral development of the Hoosier state, this celebration carries with it an unusual interest. It is planned to publish a history giving a full account of Quakerism in the state as part of the year's activities.

Indiana's list of authors has an addition in Richard Otto Johnson, A.M., late superintendent of the Indiana state school for the deaf. As chairman of a committee appointed for the purpose by the Conference of Superintendents and Principals of American Schools for the Deaf, Mr. Johnson has prepared a report of 260 pages on "Standardization, Efficiency and Heredity" in the education of the deaf, which is already received by educators as a standard in a comparatively unoccupied field. It not only presents a full and scientific explanation of the causes of deafness, and a discussion of practical education of the deaf, but also gives ideas for teaching that can be profitably considered by all teachers.

The book is evidently worthy of the flattering letters and press notices it is calling forth, and is a notable addition to Indiana's scientific literary product. Mr. Johnson has long been known as a contributor to educational periodicals, but this is his first venture in book form.

George R. Wilson, who has contributed many historical articles of great value to Indiana history, has recently brought forth an interesting life of George H. Proffit, one of the famous men of Indiana during the period of the thirties and forties. Few men in southwestern Indiana played a more prominent part in Indiana history during the decade from about 1836-46 than did George H. Proffit. As a member of the state legislature, a representative in congress, as political advisor to President Tyler, and as ambassador to Brazil, Proffit filled an unique position in Indiana and national politics. Mr. Wilson has rendered a distinct service to the cause of local Indiana history by his generosity in having a copy of this pamphlet placed in every school in Pike county. Mr. Crow, editor of the *Petersburg Press* generously offered his services in preparing this pamphlet for publication.

The Lake County Old Settlers historical society held an interesting meeting August 27, at Crown Point, at which time a marker was dedicated to Solon Robinson, the first inhabitant and founder of Lake county. The society has adopted a definite plan of erecting small concrete markers to a half dozen or more of the earliest settlers in Lake county, and a committee is at work formulating definite plans for the erection of these markers.

The Indianapolis *Star* June 19, 1921, carried an interesting historical article from the pen of Thomas J. de la Hunt of Cannelton, telling how the first invasion of Indiana by southern troops during the month of May, 1863, was cut short by an Indianapolis man, John W. Minor. The invasion was led by Capt. Thomas H. Hines of the Ninth Kentucky cavalry, C.S.A. Captain Hines' forces disguised as union troops were making headway through southern Indiana and had reached Paoli, the county seat of Orange county, before they were discovered to be enemy forces. Mr. Minor, who was then a lad in his early "teens", and who had been commanded by Captain Hines at the point of a pistol to provide a saddle for the invading captain was responsible for sending forth the information that the forces were from the Confederate States, and thereby enabled the forces of the state government to

assemble a sufficient guard to drive the invaders back to the Ohio river where they were captured.

The Washington county historical society recently celebrated the establishment of its new quarters in a room in the county court house in Salem, which has been fitted up in an attractive manner. The historical collections and relics of the society have now been installed in the new home, and the county society bids fair to continue its leadership in promoting the study of local and county history.

Spencer county dedicated its new court house at Rockport June 1, 1921. Plans for the erection of a life-size statue of Abraham Lincoln have been definitely started, and funds are being raised for this purpose. The fact that Lincoln spent the formative period of his life in Spencer county warrants the belief on the part of the citizens of that county, that his memory should thus be honored.

The celebration of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of churches and schools in Indiana calls for more than passing notice in an historical magazine. One of the famous old churches of Wayne county, the Christian church at Bethel, celebrated its hundredth birthday July 31. The church minutes show that a total of 1,046 members have been enrolled during the century. The old church erected in August, 1821, was of hewn logs, the building was thirty by forty feet, and the funds were raised by subscription. The first pastor was John M. Foster.

Every few days the attention of the public is called to the great loss that Indiana is suffering by not having an adequate state museum in which to house the many historical relics of the state. Only recently the will of the late W. A. Jones, a wealthy Chicago foundry man, but who still claimed Laporte county, Indiana, as his home, disclosed that his famous collection of fire arms and antiques, numbering more than seven hundred pieces, and collected from all parts of the world, reported as the largest in the United States, and valued at over ten thousand dollars, is to be given to the city of Laporte, provided that the city establishes a suitable place for the housing of this collection. In the event that the city does

not take advantage of this gift within a year, the relics are to be bequeathed to the Field museum in Chicago. If Indiana only had an adequate state museum, this collection as well as scores of others would not be leaving our borders.

The Henry County historical society recently took action toward marking the graves of the Revolutionary soldiers buried within the county. According to the records, the following nine Revolutionary soldiers were buried in Henry county: Richard Conway, Andrew Ice, Jacob Winner, John Lee, William Wilson, Thomas Hilman, John McDonald, Ebenezer Harper, and Joel Simmons. It is believed that one or two other Revolutionary soldiers may have been buried in Henry county, and the committee appointed to designate and mark the graves will make an effort to find their resting place.

That Hoosiers generally are playing a prominent part in the national politics was recently disclosed by an examination of the *Congressional Directory* of the 67th congress. This shows that eight native Hoosiers are representing other states than Indiana in the present congress. Following is the list: William N. Vaile, born in Kokomo, Indiana, now representing the First Colorado district; Burton L. French, born near Delphi, Indiana, now representing the First Idaho district; Charles F. Ogden, born in Charlestown, Indiana, now representing the First Kentucky district; Joseph W. Fordney, born in Blackford county, Indiana, now representing the Eighth Michigan district; Henry F. Lawrence, born in Decatur county, Indiana, now representing the Third Missouri district; John F. Miller, born in St. Joseph county, Indiana, now representing the First Washington district; Lindley H. Hadley, born near Sylvania, Indiana, now representing the Second Washington district; John Williams Summers, born in Valeene, Indiana, now representing the Fourth Washington district. Several other members of congress have lived temporarily within the state's borders. Two members of the President's cabinet are natives of Indiana, and a third lived in Indiana for several years.

The Indianapolis *News* of May 14, 1921, carried an interesting article from Jacob P. Dunn reciting the career of Gen.

Henry D. Washburn, soldier-explorer, and a noted figure in our national history. It was under General Washburn's command that the first official exploration of the headwaters of the Yellowstone was made in the summer of 1870. With a military escort of a half dozen men, he succeeded in reaching the headwaters in September, and after making a thorough investigation submitted the reports to congress. General Washburn was instrumental in arousing interest that later led to congressional action in making the land about the Yellowstone a National park. General Washburn did not live to see his ambition realized, since he died January 26, 1871, at Clinton, Indiana, while enroute across the country to Washington. Mount Washburn stands as a noble monument to this Hoosier explorer.

Miss Charity Dye, well known educator, teacher, and student of Indiana history, died July 21, 1921, at the Methodist hospital, Indianapolis. Born in Mason county, Kentucky, October, 1849, she moved to Indianapolis in 1873. She immediately identified herself with educational, social, civic, and club life of the city, and became a real leader in the affairs of the city. As a teacher and student of Indiana history, a writer of pageants and a lecturer for the cause of women's rights, she became a recognized state leader. As a member of the Indiana Historical commission she devoted her time and services unstintingly during the state's centennial in 1916, and did much to arouse an interest in the study and appreciation of pioneer history. She conceived the idea of establishing a monument in memory of the pioneer mothers of Indiana, a task to which she devoted all of her strength during the last days of her life.

The Historical commission announces the completion of the Gold Star Volume, the first of the State War History series. The volume contains the names, photographs, and a brief biographical sketch of the 3,354 men and 15 nurses from Indiana who lost their lives while in service during the World war. The book comprises 750 pages, is handsomely bound in imitation leather with the letters GOLD STAR HONOR ROLL set on a raised dye, and in gold leaf. One copy of the volume

has been awarded, as a gift of the state, to every family in the state who lost a son or daughter while in service. Also one copy has been placed in each of the public libraries, and in the college and normal school libraries in the state.

A Tipton County historical society has been organized by the members of the State historical society in that county. Tipton county was the second county in the state to furnish its quota in the membership drive being made by the State historical society for one thousand members by December 11, 1921, admission day. Mrs. Sam Matthews was elected president, Ebert Allison, secretary, and Mrs. L. M. Reagan, treasurer. Meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of each month. This is the only county historical society in the state whose members are also members of the state society.

May 11, the Indianapolis *Star* published the following:

"An Indianapolis lady recently made the interesting discovery that the surname 'Hoosier' is not uncommon in at least one part of the country, namely in and about Salem, South Carolina. The discovery was made through an acquaintance who casually remarked that she had relatives of the name. 'Do you mean,' inquired the amazed Hoosier lady, 'that it is a real family name?' 'Yes, indeed,' was the reply. 'It belongs to an old family, and there is a tribe that lays claim to it.'"

Doubting the statement, I learned the source of authority, and on inquiry there, was informed that the original informant had not stated that she had "relatives" of that name, but that she "had met a lady of that name"; and the location was not Salem, South Carolina, but Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Further, the original informant had been asked whether her acquaintance spelled her name "Hoosier," and had answered that she did not know, but supposed so. A letter to the postmaster of Winston-Salem disclosed that he knew of no people named "Hoosier"; and he added: "I have inquired of some of the old family of Hauser in this city, and they state that they do not know of any Hoosiers in this part of the country. The majority of the Hausers pronounce their name Hooser; a few pronounce it Howzer. The correct spelling is Hauser." This is the second case that has come to my notice of actual corruption of a name pronounced Hooser to the pronunciation

of Hoosier; and prolonged search has failed to reveal anybody actually named Hoosier.

J. P. DUNN.

Whitewater valley was selected for the annual pilgrimage in June, of the Society of Indiana Pioneers, with Connersville as the starting point, and Brookville as the objective. The pilgrimage was planned by William H. Insley of Indianapolis, and was one of the most successful yet taken by the society from the viewpoint of historic interest and scenic beauty. At Connersville the pioneers were met at the station by members of the Rotary club, whose guests they were to be. The Rotarians had planned a motorcade through the streets and along the old Indian trails leading out of the city. Each member of the party was supplied with a pamphlet *Historic Connersville* written by J. L. Heineman, and each car contained a man or woman who knew the past history of Connersville as well as the story of its modern progress. Historic points of interest were marked by placards and passed in quick succession. One of the interesting features was the drive along the White water canal. Numerous bridges mark its course through the city, and at one place a spillway added a musical note to the quiet stillness of the onward flowing waters. The site of the barge basin suggested scenes of great activity in the early history of the canal, and the home of Capt. Gayle Ford recalled a moment of great historical interest when under his guidance the first boat "The Patriot" arrived at Connersville in 1845. Through the courtesy of Misses Cresler and Sumner the pioneers were entertained evening and night at Elmhurst college. Dinner was served in the small but artistic dining-room of the historic mansion, after which the pioneers assembled on the spacious lawn to enjoy the program which had been prepared. Speeches were made by E. P. Hawkins, and J. L. Heineman, who spoke on the history of Fayette county, both of Connersville, and Amos Butler of Indianapolis, representing the pioneers. A sketch of the life of John Conner was read by a great-granddaughter, Mrs. C. V. Thompson of Indianapolis. The story of the building of Elmhurst by Oliver H. Smith, and subsequent history down to the present day occu-

pants as told by Miss Kate Heron of Connersville, gave the historical setting necessary to clothe the old home with romance and mystery, and made it indeed Elmhurst, the Beautiful. Leaving Elmhurst the next morning, the motorcade wended its way toward Brookville over the old Connersville road which gives a view of both rivers and glimpses of Brookville from above at the same time. Three Pines, the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Shirk, was thrown open to the pioneers during their stay in Brookville. Historic points of interest, too numerous to mention in detail, were visited both morning and afternoon. Two historic churches were visited—Big Cedar church, the history of which was given by J. C. Shirk, and Little Cedar church, organized in 1806 and erected in 1812, the story of which was told by Harry M. Stoops. A dinner was served at the Methodist Episcopal church by the Ladies' aid society, and another program given, consisting of speeches, music and song. A visit to the Hermitage, the home of J. Otis Adams, one of Indiana's well known artists, and the privilege of visiting his exhibit of paintings, was one of the pleasures of the day. It was here that the pioneers began to say good-bye and started on the return journey, some returning to Indianapolis by motor, while others returned to Connersville and again had the privilege of being entertained at Elmhurst.

Forty years ago in August, 1881, an attempt was made to organize a Ripley County historical society at Versailles. The pioneer meeting was in charge of George W. Lane of Dearborn county, and Governor S. S. Harding, territorial governor of Utah under Lincoln's administration, of Ripley county. This attempt failed because of lack of interest. A Ripley county paper speaks of that failure as "greatly to be regretted that they did not complete the organization, because the entire history of Ripley county was written in the memories of these men."

July 14, this year, another attempt was made to organize a local historical society which promises to be more successful than the first. Invitations were sent to all those who were thought to be interested in the preservation of local history.

A representative number of citizens gathered at the courthouse in Versailles, many of them descendants of the early settlers, and perfected an organization. Joseph Hassmer was elected president, Dailey McCoy, recorder of Ripley County, vice-president, Mrs. Clare Jones, librarian at Osgood, secretary, and Mrs. Minnie Wycoff of Batesville, treasurer. An executive committee, consisting of one man or woman in each township, was appointed, and these in turn selected a committee of two in each township as a membership committee, such additions to the society before September 1 to be charter members. Meetings are to be held in each township throughout the year.

Ripley county is wide-awake and working, and has to its credit the following record: A county war history, written by Mrs. Minnie Wycoff, and published by the aid of a guarantee of its public-spirited citizens; complete Gold Star records of the boys who made the supreme sacrifice; complete military records, with picture for each boy who went into the service from Ripley county; a local historical society, with a constructive program; and a movement under way for the acquirement of a state park within its borders. All of which goes to prove that much can be accomplished by a wide-awake citizenship which takes as its motto "It Can Be Done."

June 1, Carroll and Cass counties united in making an historical survey of the old Indian trails and points of interest along the Wabash and Erie canal from Delphi to Logansport. The survey was planned by Ben F. Stuart of Carroll county, assisted by J. C. Odell, the newspapers of both counties, and the chamber of commerce at Logansport. The survey began at the courthouse in Delphi, J. C. Odell giving the history of the places visited between Delphi and Carrollton. At the Carrollton bridge Hoover Jones told how the canal boats crossed the river at this point in the days of the Wabash and Erie canal. The historian from Carrollton to Georgetown was Ben F. Stuart. At noon the party gathered at the site of the old trading post near Lockport where a basket dinner was served. When the county line was reached between Carroll and Cass counties, Rufus Magee of Logansport became the historian

for Cass county, and the party drove toward Logansport along the beautiful river road. Many places of historic interest were visited, for which this county is famous, among them the home of Judge Biddle at Logansport. The country club entertained the party at its home near the city, and at 6:30 a dinner was served by the chamber of commerce. The program was in charge of the local historical society, with William T. Wilson as chairman. Speeches were made by members of the chamber of commerce, the local historical society, Harlow Lindley, secretary, Indiana Historical commission, and Mrs. Kate Milner Rabb, author of *A Tour Through Indiana in 1840* and the Hoosier Listening Post. A musical program of old-time melodies, arranged by Caroline McNitt, added much to the enjoyment of the evening. Much interest was aroused in the two counties by this survey, a noteworthy result being shown in the series of articles published by the *Delphi Citizen-Times*, and the Logansport *Pharos-Tribune*, and the increase in membership in the State Historical society.