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Eleutherian Institute

A SKETCH OF A UNIQUE STEP IN THE EDUCATIONAL HISTORY OF INDIANA

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Ten miles north-west of the city of Madison, Jefferson county, Indiana, is located the village of Lancaster. It is picturesquely situated both beneath and upon the hills, at the place where two streams meet, Middlefork and Big creek. More than sixty years ago this little village of Lancaster was the scene of what was up to that time the most unique step ever taken in the educational history and progress of Indiana. That step was the founding of a school, having in view both common and higher learning, and open alike to both white and negro races. Lancaster and vicinity had previous to that time been the center of a considerable anti-slavery sentiment, which had taken shape in the formation in 1839 of the "Neil's Creek Anti-Slavery Society," the records of which are now deposited in the Indiana State Library. The Neil's Creek neighborhood was some three miles west of Lancaster. It is probable that James Nelson, who with his brother Daniel, had emigrated from Vermont to Jefferson county about the year 1820, was the leading spirit in the organization of this society. Its records are interesting as showing the trend of anti-slavery sentiment in that early day, and the considerable number of members that were willing to incur the odium of entering upon an aggressive anti-slavery agitation. The first settlers of Jefferson county were largely from Kentucky and

Virginia, and while not exactly pro-slavery in sentiment, were inclined to view with disapproval any agitation of the slavery question. However, there was a fair proportion of New England people among these early settlers, and such were generally anti-slavery in sentiment. The fugitive slave, therefore, who crossed the Ohio river by the help of such masters of transportation as Rev. Chapman Harris, of Madison, a colored preacher and blacksmith, and "Jim" Hackney, of Hanover, himself a half breed Indian and negro, found numerous friends in Jefferson county. Whether such fugitive's course northward was by way of Lancaster, among the Nelsons the Hoyts and the Tibbettses, or by way of Monroe church among the Elliotts and the Baxters, or by way of Canaan, among other abolitionists, daylight of the next morning after the arrival of such runaway slave upon free soil, usually found him safely hid in some abolition barn loft in Jennings or Ripley county. Here he was for the time being secure from molestation from Wright Rea or slave catchers of his class. An abolition Baptist church had been formed at Lancaster which afterwards became the College Hill Baptist church. By reason of its known anti-slavery sentiment this church could not at first affiliate with the Madison Baptist Association, but united with an association of anti-slavery Baptist churches in northern Ohio. About the beginning of the Civil war, however, it was admitted to membership in the Madison association. The existence of this church and the reasons heretofore given made Lancaster seem a fit place to establish a school where educational privileges would be open to the negro. The idea of such an institution was first conceived in the mind of Rev. Thomas Craven, of Oxford, Ohio, who had visited Lancaster and preached to the abolition church. Mr. Craven was a Pennsylvanian by birth, a soldier of the war of 1812, and a pioneer teacher and Baptist minister of eastern Indiana, while the state was yet a territory. He completed a classical course of study at Miami university when past fifty years of age. After the year 1854 he made his home at Lancaster, or College Hill, as it was sometimes afterwards called, until his death in 1860.

The institution began its work in 1849, and it was named "Eleutherian Institute" from the Greek word "eleutheros"

because the school was to be dedicated to the idea of freedom and equality. It was incorporated soon after its establishment. Rev. John G. Craven, a son of Thomas Craven, was the first teacher in the school, and he was soon joined by Prof. John C. Thompson, of South Salem, Ohio, a son-in-law of Thomas Craven. The patronage of the school not being sufficient at its beginning to support two teachers, Professor Thompson, the father of the writer of this sketch, returned to Ohio after one year's service. As early as the year 1850 the pro-slavery sentiment of the community surrounding the young institution began to view with much disapproval the founding of a school where educational privileges were open to the negro. The boldest spirits among those of pro-slavery sentiment became incensed at the very audacity of a scheme for an abolition college in their midst. As an outgrowth of this sentiment the incendiary's torch was appealed to, and in the year 1850 three houses were burned, which it was supposed would be occupied by persons of negro blood while attending the school. Two of these houses were burned just as they were being completed. They were located about a quarter of a mile south-east of where the institute buildings stand, and were built by a Mississippi planter named Brown. Brown had married a wife with a tinge of negro blood, bought land near Lancaster and proceeded to improve it, with the intention of living there, while his children by this marriage could be educated. The other house that was burned was located on the east bank of Middlefork creek, a short distance north of where that stream is now spanned by an iron bridge. The site of the burned house has for many years been overgrown with trees. These acts of incendiarism had no influence whatever in deterring the founders of the school from their purpose. Some two years afterwards, when the black laws of Indiana had become in force, the law attempted to lay its mailed hand upon the institution. A prosecution was begun against Prof. John G. Craven and James Nelson, who, with his good wife "Aunt Lucy," kept the dormitory. They were charged with harboring negroes, and encouraging negroes to come into Indiana, "contrary to the statutes in such cases made and provided." The accused abolitionists went to Madison to answer the charge, expecting to be put upon their trial,

and withal somewhat hopeful that they might be permitted to spend at least a brief season in the Jefferson county jail. They by no means regarded martyrdom as a thing to be dreaded, and believed they were being persecuted for righteousness' sake. Through the influence of Judge Stephen C. Stevens, their counsel, then a prominent member of the Madison bar, himself an abolitionist and a warm friend of the school, the accused were permitted to go upon their own recognizance, and the cases were never afterwards pressed for trial. It may be said that after this time no serious persecution was again attempted against those connected with the institution. Even before the breaking out of the Civil war the community almost regardless of political sentiment recognized that the institution was of great benefit in their midst, and many who at first opposed afterwards became patrons of the school.

Thomas Craven donated the land upon which the buildings were erected. By means of his own and other contributions enough funds were secured to erect two substantial buildings, one for a chapel and school rooms, the other a dormitory. These buildings are built of rough limestone, which was quarried in the immediate vicinity. The dormitory was two stories in height, contained fifteen rooms, and was completed in 1850. The institute building was three stories in height, contained seven rooms besides the chapel and was completed in 1856. This building is surmounted by a tower or cupola from the top of which a very picturesque view of the surrounding country may be had, including a glimpse of the town of Dupont, four miles to the north. Thomas Craven was himself the most generous of all donors to the institution; for in addition to his gifts of land and money, he freely devoted his time to the solicitation of funds and students for the institution, traveling throughout south-eastern Indiana and south-western Ohio. During the year 1858, in company with Mr. E. K. Tibbetts, a student of the institution, he traveled as far east as Boston, Mass., soliciting aid for the school, but with only a moderate degree of success. Before his death he made a conditional donation of \$1,000 to the institution, which was to be payable when certain debts of the school were discharged. After his death the executor of his estate contested the payment of this subscription, on the ground that

the condition had not been complied with. The matter was submitted to arbitration, and decided in favor of the institution, this being the only litigation, so far as I am aware, in which the school was ever involved. The institution never had an endowment, and as its teachers had to depend upon the tuition fees of students for compensation, whatever high thinking such teachers did, had to rest upon a basis of very plain living. They could have suggested from their own practical experience a solution of the vexed problem of the present day, the high cost of living.

Prof. John G. Craven was the principal of the institution from its beginning to the autumn of 1861, when he removed to Minnesota. It was during his principalship of the school that negro pupils attended. The patronage of negro students was never large, owing in part to the menace of the black laws of Indiana, but more especially, I think, to the well nigh universal lack among free negroes of that time of the means whereby an education could be secured. Most prominent among the negro pupils of the institution was Moses Broyles, for many years a leader among the negroes of Indiana in educational and religious advancement. He came to Lancaster in the early fifties, having been born a slave in Kentucky, but having been allowed to purchase his freedom after arriving at years of manhood. Tradition says that Broyles was bashful and diffident when he first appeared at the school, and that when he would attempt to recite or speak in debate he would be seized with coughing and choking spells. By degrees he overcame these faults, and became a forceful and eloquent speaker. Broyles was a genuine Moses, in fact as well as in name, to the negro Baptists of Indiana; and in the opinion of Dr. W. T. Stott, former president of Franklin college, the Eleutherian Institute would amply justify its existence and its cost, if it had educated no other pupil than Moses Broyles. A few other colored pupils progressed to the point of fitness for teaching in common schools, but by far the greater number of negro pupils pursued learning no further than the elementary principles represented by the three Rs. Pupils of negro blood came from as far south as New Orleans and Jackson, Mississippi, but the greater part were from Kentucky.

If the traditions of the school may be relied upon, some of

the best blood of the south was represented at College Hill. Two young women named Lucy and Georgiana Jefferson were pupils there for a time. Their father was one of the first negro residents of Indianapolis, had been a slave of Thomas Jefferson, and in abolition circles was reputed to be the natural son, by a slave mother, of the great author of the Declaration of Independence. Professor Craven once told me that he did not doubt the truth of this tradition respecting Jefferson's parentage. I do not vouch for the truth of the tradition. I merely assert that such a tradition was current respecting these two young women. Theodore Johnson, a colored pupil from Kentucky, was reputed to be the natural son of Col. Richard M. Johnson, once vice president of the United States. He remained a pupil until the outbreak of the Civil war, when he enlisted in the union army and died in the military service. Johnson always claimed that he was a son of Col. Richard M. Johnson, and there is corroboration of this claim, from the fact that his bills were paid by drafts on a Louisville bank drawn by those who were interested in the settlement of Colonel Johnson's estate. Johnson was a bright pupil, and he was the envy of some of the boys of his age, by reason of being the possessor of an illustrated paper containing pictures of the Sayers and Heenan prize fight which took place in England in 1860. Two young women with negro blood by the name of Taylor, from Newport, Kentucky, were pupils at College Hill. They were reputed to be daughters of a Col. Taylor, who tradition said, once lost thirty slaves in one night, by means of their crossing the Ohio river on the ice. Another colored pupil, Louisa Page, from near Carrollton, Kentucky, showed the scars upon her lips caused, so it was said, by a cruel mistress attempting to sew her mouth shut. Two of her brothers, "Jim" and George, were also pupils, the freedom of the whole family having been purchased by their father. It is not likely that more than forty negroes or persons of negro blood attended the school during its entire history. The statements have been made with reference to this old institution, that fugitive slaves were brought there and partially educated before being sent on toward Canada. Such statements are wholly fanciful, and have no basis in fact. An undertaking of that kind would have been hazardous

in the extreme. I only know of one instance where a pupil of the school was supposed to be still owned as a slave. This was a young woman from New Orleans or vicinity, having scarcely a trace of negro blood, who was brought north by her master to be educated. At one time it was rumored that she was about to be returned to slavery, and she was temporarily taken to Lebanon, Ohio, by Mrs. Ellen Collett, a daughter of Thomas Craven. The alarm of her friends proved groundless; she soon returned to the school, and after securing her education, for some years lived in the home of Hon. John R. Cravens, of Madison. Neither is it true that those connected with Eleutherian Institute engaged in any wholesale manner in the forwarding of fugitive slaves. If a fugitive reached Lancaster, by whatever means or route, the north star was pointed out to him, and he was sped on his way, but such things did not often occur. The stories that Thomas Craven had a secret apartment in the attic of his house, and that Dr. Samuel Tibbetts had a secret tunnel under his barn, where fugitive slaves were concealed, are wholly fanciful, for as a boy I knew every nook and corner of both attic and barn.

Two instances will suffice to show how fugitives were treated in the early days of the institution's history. One night in the summer of 1849 a step was heard on my father's porch and there was a knock at the door. It proved to be Squire Lyman Hoyt, and the intelligence was imparted to my father in subdued tones, that a man from Hanover was waiting in the shadow of the orchard, and with him an escaping fugitive slave, who had crossed the Ohio river that evening. The old family mare was quickly caught in the pasture, the negro placed astride her, and guided by Cushman, a carpenter then working on the dormitory, himself a grandson of Dr. Samuel Tibbetts, the slave property was transported to the Forks of Graham, in Jennings county. There among such abolitionists as the Neals and the Hicklins, there was but little danger of "stoppage in transitu." The same year a colored man came to my father's house in great distress. He was a free negro whose home was at Pittsburgh. He had worked as a roustabout on an Ohio river steamboat, had left the boat at Madison to go back into the country, when he was seized by a gang of white men and mercilessly flogged, for the pur-

pose of making him confess that he was a fugitive slave. This he would not do, and he was finally let go. My father washed his stripes, dressed his wounds, took care of him for a while, when an effort was made to identify and punish his assailants; but without avail, there being no evidence sufficient to identify the guilty parties. These instances are enough to show that those were "times which tried mens' souls."

The most prosperous years of the Eleutherian Institute were from 1855 to 1861, and at one time during this period the annual enrollment of students exceeded one hundred and fifty. Professor Craven pursued strict, sometimes austere, and at other times even harsh methods of discipline, and he was somewhat eccentric of manner. He was an accurate scholar along certain lines of study, and notwithstanding his peculiarities of method and manner, he usually succeeded in imparting a commendable degree of energy and enthusiasm to his pupils. He was a profound student of the Greek New Testament, and in his later years became an enthusiast in his advocacy of certain changes of translation of divers controverted passages of the New Testament. He died at Smith Center, Kansas, in January, 1894. Those who were associated with Professor Craven during the period from 1849 to 1861 were Prof. John C. Thompson, already mentioned, Mrs. Martha W. Craven, wife of Professor Craven, Mrs. Lucy Hoyt Thompson, Mrs. Lydia Hildreth Hatch, Miss Barbara Thompson, Prof. M. J. Smith and wife, and Judson Smith. The Smiths were Massachusetts people, and were popular and efficient teachers. Prof. M. J. Smith was suspected of leaning toward Unitarianism, and this caused the withdrawal of himself and wife from the institution, and their return to Massachusetts about the year 1860. Judson Smith afterwards became eminent as an educator at Oberlin and Amherst colleges. In his later years he was secretary of the American Board of Foreign Missions, at Boston, and in this position was one of the chief promoters of the Ecumenical conference on Foreign Missions, held in New York in 1900, over which Ex-President Harrison presided.

Prof. William Brand, formerly of Franklin college, succeeded Professor Craven as principal of the institution, and served from 1861 to 1866. During a part of this time he was

in England soliciting funds for the support and endowment of the school (being himself a native of England). His efforts did not meet with any considerable success. In his absence the school at different times was conducted by the Rev. Samuel Collins, a United Presbyterian minister, and at that time county examiner of Jefferson county, Miss Sarah B. Hoyt and Prof. Solon B. Campbell of Vernon. Professor Campbell's connection with the school lasted about a year, and the year was quite a successful one. The "exhibition" given by himself and pupils in the spring of 1865 was long remembered in the community. This "exhibition" lasted for two evenings before crowded houses in the old chapel, and was a curious but attractive combination of high school oratory, dialogue, and vaudeville stunts of considerable variety.

The Civil war caused a decreased attendance and interest in the school, but the community was not lagging in patriotism. Volunteers drilled upon the institute grounds almost before the smoke of Sumter had cleared away, and some of these who were students enlisted in Indiana's first regiment of the Civil war, the Sixth. The institute grounds were often used for drilling during the war and the chapel for union meetings and concerts. One notable concert given by local talent for the benefit of the union cause received high commendation, and on this occasion Hon. David C. Branham made a fiery union speech, with his characteristic style of oratory, so familiar to old residents of Jefferson county. In fact Lancaster came near feeling the touch of actual war; for Morgan's raiders passed near by, and burned a railroad bridge over Big creek, but two and one half miles north. What might have been the fate of the "nigger college" had their route been through Lancaster can of course only be left to conjecture.

Professor Brand, after leaving Eleutherian Institute in 1866 became a financial solicitor for Franklin college. In this position he was successful in raising what was known as the endowment of the Johnson county professorship, which afterwards formed the nucleus for the present endowment of that institution. Professor Brand was succeeded at College Hill by Prof. F. W. Brown, afterwards and for many years, professor of Latin in Franklin college, and by William H. McCoy, also afterwards connected with Franklin college. Professor

McCoy remained only a part of the year, and after one year Professor Brown accepted a position at Franklin college. They were succeeded in 1867 by Prof. Altheus W. Blinn, and he for a time was associated with Rev. James S. Read, for some years active as a Baptist minister in Indiana, and one of the early graduates of Franklin college. Professor Read suggested a plan by which the Eleutherian Institute was to be taken over, managed and supported by three Baptist associations, the Madison, Coffee Creek, and Sand Creek. The plan was carried out to the extent of appointing a board of directors, with representatives from each of these associations. The support of an institution of learning was too great a burden for so limited a constituency, and the associational control was abandoned in 1870. Professor Blinn was a bachelor well past middle life when he came to College Hill, and was so lame that he walked with a crutch and a cane. He was without much method in the school room, was somewhat eccentric of manner, and a little given to pedantry; but withal he was much respected by his pupils, and imparted much valuable instruction. One eccentricity I remember was the wearing of a linen duster constantly from September until mid-winter, without the same having once visited the laundry. Another peculiarity was the burning of four-foot cord wood in the school room stove, a process that required the ends of the sticks to project from the open door of the stove, a smoky experiment at best. For all that Professor Blinn had an unselfish purpose and did his best for his pupils. He temporarily retired from teaching in the spring of 1870, on account of ill health and was succeeded in the fall of 1870 by Prof. Robert Gilmour, of Cincinnati, a United Presbyterian minister, who had for some years edited a paper of that denomination. Professor Gilmour was a graduate of Washington university, Pennsylvania, and continued as principal of the school until 1874, at one time having a lease upon the buildings. While his school was never large as to numbers he was a successful instructor. In 1878 Prof. John G. Craven, the first teacher in Eleutherian Institute, returned to Jefferson county from Iowa, with the avowed purpose of resuscitating the institution. He continued to conduct the school with some degree of success until 1887,

when the institute building was sold to Lancaster township, for a public school, and Professor Craven removed to Kansas.

Perhaps those who read this sketch will think it ought to be better, and I think so too; but he who tries to write the history of such an institution will soon discover how elusive facts are and especially when they have sped so far into the past. The minute book of the board of directors was in the library of the institution as late as 1886, when I recall seeing it; but it was probably taken to Kansas by Professor Craven. The library of the school was never very large, nor especially adapted to its needs. The books first presented dealt largely with the question of slavery, and Judge Stevens of Madison, and Prof. John C. Thompson were the largest donors of books. No negro pupils attended the school after the year 1861. Of those who were pupils in the school before the Civil war, and who have "made good," I have already mentioned Moses Broyles and Judson Smith. Among the young women who were pupils of the institution, and who at least partially obtained their education there, I am sure I make no invidious comparison in especially mentioning Miss Sarah B. Hoyt, daughter of Lyman Hoyt, and Miss Rebecca J. Thompson, daughter of Prof. John C. Thompson. Miss Hoyt completed a course of study at Oberlin college, and at the time of her death was principal of the Newport, Kentucky, high school, having deservedly high rank as a teacher. Miss Thompson completed a course of study at the Young Ladies Institute, Granville, Ohio, now Shephardson college, and for thirty-eight years held the chair of mathematics in Franklin college, with marked success, retiring in 1910.

Some of the men most intimately connected with the institution in its earlier years as trustees, friends and patrons, aside from those already mentioned, were Dr. Samuel Tibbetts, and his four sons, Samuel, John H., Joshua and Dr. Earl Tibbetts, Milton Craven, a son of Thomas Craven, Benajah and Lyman Hoyt, Lemuel Record, Isaiah Walton, Calvin Hildreth, Reuben Walker, James Baxter, Angus McKay, William D. Kinnear, Jefferson Nelson, and last but not less deserving of mention, William Brazelton, the jolly and odd old postmaster of the village, whose answer to the question, "Is there any mail for

me?" was usually "I think there are." Of course there are many others worthy of mention, but these names occur to me now.

Of those who were students of the institution and who lost their lives in the Civil war I can recall John Baxter, Russell Record, Isaac J. Elliott, Edward Tibbetts, Theodore Johnson, John and William Hughes, sons of David Hughes, Thompson Saulsbury, Calvin Gillett, Linus Literal, Zephaniah Delap and Frank Shaw. Of these John R. Baxter, Isaac J. Elliott, Calvin Gillett and Thompson Saulsbury died in hospital. Russell Record was killed at the battle of Perryville, Ky., Edward Tibbetts near Dalton, Ga., Theodore Johnson at battle of Richmond, Ky., John Hughes at Chicamauga, and Linus Literal and Frank Shaw at Ft. Fisher, N. C., and William Hughes and Zephaniah Delap died in Andersonville prison. It is impossible within the limits of this sketch to name all the students of the "Eleutherian Institute" who enlisted in the union army.

Not having had access to the records of the board of directors some inaccuracies must have unavoidably crept into this sketch; but as to names of teachers and dates of service I am sure there is substantial accuracy.

The idea of Eleutherian Institute undoubtedly was obtained from the plan of Oberlin college in Ohio, the first institution of higher learning in the west, if not in the entire country, to open its doors to negro students. Eleutherian Institute was the first such institution in Indiana, and was founded several years before the Rev. John G. Fee successfully carried out the same plan at Berea, Kentucky. Had not the Civil war come with its momentous changes in the status of the negro race, it is likely that Eleutherian Institute, by reason of its unique distinction and odious notoriety in admitting negro pupils, would have enjoyed a fair degree of patronage and success as long as the system of slavery endured. Emancipation, however, brought some opportunity for education to every negro's door, and this, with the general establishment of the state system of high schools, caused the decline of Eleutherian Institute, as well as the decline of nearly all the other once prosperous academic institutions of Indiana, that were unsupported by endowment. The idea for which the school was

founded has prevailed until every northern college from Harvard down gives to all races equal educational privileges, and this is an abundant success in itself.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THOMAS CRAVEN

Thomas Craven who, with his son, founded Eleutherian college on College Hill in the village of Lancaster, Jefferson county, Indiana, was of English descent. The first one of this branch of the family to come to America came about 1674. Years afterward he set sail for England "to see about some estate," but the ship on which he sailed was captured by a French war vessel, and he was kept a prisoner for a long time. He was not able to communicate with his wife, who had remained in America. After the lapse of several years she concluded that he was dead, and contracted a second marriage; but before doing so she consulted the officials of her church as to the propriety and rightness of this important step, and received their approval. Then Craven, released from his long imprisonment, appeared upon the scene. She gladly returned to her first love.

It is almost certain that the one who had this Enoch Arden experience was Thomas Craven, a blacksmith, husband of Emmetje Isbrants, who from before 1683 to 1718 lived at Kinderhook, about 20 miles down the Hudson from Albany; at Bergen, New Jersey, just across the river from New York; at Gravesend on the west end of Long Island; and finally in New York.

Thomas Craven, the subject of this sketch, was born in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania, March 19, 1792. His parents were married in Bucks county, Pennsylvania, in 1779. Shortly after they moved into "the southern part of the state on the waters of the Conecocheague," doubtless Franklin county, and later to Westmoreland county. His father was a Revolutionary soldier and was with Washington at Trenton, Princeton, Valley Forge, and the Brandywine. When Thomas was three years old the family moved across the Conemaugh river into Indiana county, Pennsylvania, and here, in the rough and wild frontier country, he grew to manhood.

The following quotation from the autobiography of Thomas Craven shows something of the conditions surrounding his early life:

My next youngest brother, William, and myself being somewhat discouraged and dissatisfied with our domestic circumstances, obtained permission of my father to leave in the spring and do the best we could for ourselves. Our object was to cross the mountains and go into Huntingdon county, where I had spent one winter before, knowing that we could obtain better wages than in my father's neighborhood. But the place was about 60 miles distant. We had no money with which to bear our expenses on the way, nor even shirts to change ourselves when we arrived there. My father made no offer of giving us the least outfit, and we were too proud to ask him to do so. The time had nearly arrived, the 1st of April, 1811, which we had set to leave home. A day or two preceding we called on our oldest brother, John, and told him our circumstances. Our sister-in-law prepared us some provisions for the way and sold us a piece of linen on credit sufficient to make each of us a shirt to change us. My brother lent us \$1.00 in money. Having got our knapsacks ready and stowed away our provisions, our piece of linen with some other trifling articles of clothing, we went to my father's to spend our last evening in that neighborhood. That night a slight shower of snow fell, but we set out the next morning on our journey.

About six or seven miles on our way we had a large creek to cross which we were obliged to wade. The creek was not very deep but the bottom was rocky and the current was rapid. William, in crossing with his shoes in his hand, unfortunately fell into the water and lost one of his shoes. We stopped, however, at a little village on the mountain called Ebenburgh with a shoemaker and got a piece of leather to make a moccasin, for we were not able to buy a pair of shoes. We offered to pay the shoemaker for the piece of leather but he would make no charge. I suppose, indeed, that we looked like objects of charity. At night I made him a moccasin, and in the morning we set out again with fresh courage, and thus kept on until we arrived at the place of our destination.

Having been acquainted in the place before, we had no difficulty in getting into work or in securing board in the same family where I had formerly boarded. In a little while we were able to buy such articles of clothing and other necessities as we needed. Here we kept very steadily at work and went but little into company. When the inclemency of the weather hindered us I frequently spent the time in studying arithmetic or reading. When harvest drew nigh we concluded to visit my father and assist him with his harvest, and at the close of it to return again. We did so and paid my brother the bill which he held against us, and helped our father through with his harvest.

As a boy Thomas Craven longed for an education, but in the region where he lived educational facilities were of the

most meager character. So he became his own instructor, and at the age of nineteen, although he had gone to school only nine months in all his life, he qualified as a teacher and taught his first school.

Like many other prudent and practical young men of that time and of this, he resolved that he would not marry until he was comfortably settled in life and could easily support a wife, and he hoped to be thus pleasantly situated by the time he was thirty—but then, he met Rebekah Selfridge. They were married April 14, 1812. For their wedding trip, with many relatives and friends, they floated down the beautiful Ohio to the alluring west—the Land of Promise—never to see Indiana county again. A large flat-boat was constructed on the Conemaugh river and brought down to Newport, Indiana county, where most of the company went on board. Newport was on the north bank of the river, about two miles down the river from the present town of Blairsville. Newport, like those who embarked there is now only a memory—“some of the old chimneys” are all that mark its site.

Of this trip Thomas Craven writes:

But having three horses to take on board, and the river being at rather low stage for boating, it was thought best, in order to have the load as light as possible, that my wife and myself should take the horses and go by land to Pittsburgh, and then take them in there. We did so and arrived in Pittsburgh the second day after we left Newport about noon. The boat had not yet arrived. We visited the Allegheny river several times during the afternoon longing to see the boat appear in sight, not knowing but that it had stuck fast on some of the shoals which it had to pass. At length, about sun-setting in the evening, we discovered a boat coming down the river at such a distance that we could scarcely tell what it was. As it came nearer we discovered it to be a flat-bottomed boat, but we were still not altogether certain that it was ours. However, in a little time we were able to distinguish the voices of some of our friends, a soft gale gently bearing the sound down the current of the river. I need not say that we were glad to be relieved from our state of suspense and to have the privilege of meeting our friends again at the destined point.

Having made the necessary arrangements, we left Pittsburgh and floated slowly down the beautiful Ohio in consequence of the light winds, which generally blew from the west, the roof of our boat being high. However, after a slow passage of seventeen days through a variety of beautiful scenery on every side, we landed safe at Columbia, below the mouth of the Little Miami, about five miles above Cincinnati, on the 17th day of May, 1812.

Among the relatives of Thomas Craven who accompanied him on this trip were his brothers John and William; his father-in-law, Thomas Selfridge, his brother-in-law, William Ferguson, and his cousin, Samuel Craven. Many Indiana people trace their ancestry back to those who came down on this boat. Samuel Craven spent his life in Indiana. In 1829 he wrote to his cousin Thomas that there were a number of people in his county bearing the name Cravens; that he was called Cravens so generally that he had accepted it as his name; and that letters should be addressed to him accordingly. John Cravens, son of this Samuel Craven, left a large family of whom at least eight lived in Indiana.

A short time after his arrival in the western country Thomas Craven purchased land in Springfield township, Franklin county, Indiana, and proceeded to carve out a home in the wilderness in the midst of poverty, hardships, and dangers. Part of the money to pay for his land he earned by teaching school. One of these schools was about six miles from his home. Of this he says:

So I provided plenty of wood for fires and left my wife and little child and a little boy about seven years old in an unfinished cabin to make the best of the winter they could, and went to teach school, getting home to see them only once a week. Thus they spent the winter, having their ears often saluted with the nocturnal music of howling wolves. Thus I continued teaching school and laboring alternately, sometimes at home and sometimes abroad, until I succeeded in completing the payments on my land.

During the War of 1812 there was an Indian uprising in his part of the country, and he joined the frontier forces protecting the scattered settlements from massacre. His daughter, Lucinda C. Thompson, who died at Franklin, Indiana, in 1915 at the age of ninety-seven, wrote thus about his services:

He was made a captain in an Indian war that broke out during the War of 1812. He was stationed at a block-house in the southeastern part of this state, Indiana, probably in Decatur county. According to one account this block-house was on Salt Creek, near the road going from Brookville to Greensburg, and its ruins were pointed out as late as 1862. At that block-house was a barrel of whiskey that was popular with all but father. A messenger came from another block-house one day and saw the state of affairs, and returning to his own block-house told his

superior officer that the only man there who did not make free with the whiskey was Thomas Craven. Immediately the superior officer made out a captain's commission and sent it to father—and that was how he became a captain.

A document neatly written and yellow with age reads as follows:

State of Indiana, Franklin County:

To all to whome it may concern Know ye that the Regular Baptist Church on big Cedar Grove has on the 12th day of March, 1825, Licensed Brother Thomas Craven to preach the Gospel where God in his providence may call or send him.

JONATHAN STOUT, Clerk.

From the time he received this authority until his death, preaching was a very important part of the work of Thomas Craven.

In 1826 he moved across the state line and bought a tract of land within two miles of the campus of Miami university at Oxford, Ohio. Here his first dwelling was a cabin made of rough logs, soon replaced by a cabin made of hewn timbers which, in 1834, was replaced by a brick house, which is still in good condition, standing almost upon the site of the cabins.

When he was forty-five years of age he entered Miami university, took the full course, and graduated at the age of fifty, in the class of 1842—thus, at last, gratifying the desire for an education, that he had cherished since boyhood.

It is not the purpose of this article to give a history of Eleutherian college, in the establishment of which Thomas Craven was the prime mover, so a few facts relating thereto must suffice.

The first session of Eleutherian Institute, which developed in 1854 into Eleutherian college, began on Monday, November 27, 1848, with John G. Craven, son of Thomas Craven, as instructor. Fifteen students were in attendance, of whom, the record says, "All will study arithmetic; 3, Latin; 8 or more, English Grammar; 5 or more, geography."

At first the school was held in the old meeting house down near the village sawmill on the Middle Fork, and on the east side of the road going north to the mill.

The circular of the Eleutherian Institute for 1853 announced:

The Eleutherian Institute is pleasantly situated in a very healthy neighborhood, ten miles from Madison, on the Plank Road from Madison to Paris, and four miles south of Dupont, which is on the Railroad from Madison to Indianapolis * * *. Eld. Thomas Craven has donated and deeded to us an elevated and healthful site of six and a half acres of land, on which was a comfortable log house, well, spring and orchard. We have since erected and completed a two story stone building for a boarding house * * *. We are now making preparations for the erection of our main building.

The log house mentioned stood on a direct line between the boarding house and the college, slightly nearer to the boarding house than to the college. For a time it was the home of John G. Craven.

Since the school was an "abolition school", open to all regardless of color, and situated only a few miles from slave territory, it excited the bitter opposition of pro-slavery people, many of whom lived in that part of the state where the school was situated. A planter from Alabama brought his own children with their black mother, all of whom were his slaves, to College Hill to be educated and freed. For their use he built a cottage a little to the east of the present graveyard, and perhaps 600 feet back from the road. Another planter from Mississippi also built a cottage at the same place and for exactly the same purpose. One night, just before the cottages were ready for occupancy, both were set on fire and burned to the ground. It was believed that the incendiaries lived in the neighborhood. This was in 1850. A third house which was to accommodate colored students was burned. Threatening letters were received by those managing the school. Finally the principal of the school and the steward were arrested under the "black laws" of Indiana; and the prospect looked very discouraging.

But the men and women backing the enterprise had intense convictions and high courage, and at last succeeded in overcoming much of the opposition; and the school was a success until the beginning of the Civil war. The catalogue of Eleutherian college for 1856 shows an attendance of 109 students, of whom 18 were colored, and of these ten were born slaves.

The catalogue mentions the plank road from Madison to Paris—think of such a road now—and says:

Our buildings are of stone. The boarding house is 55 by 33 feet, two stories high, divided into fifteen comfortable rooms. The College building is 42 by 65 feet, three stories in front and two back, with a neat belfry and cupola, and when completed will furnish a commodious chapel, rooms for literary societies and recitation rooms sufficient to accommodate 200 or 300 students.

The catalogue for the school year 1857-8 shows an attendance of 112 students; and names the officials of the school as follows:

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr. S. Tibbets	Thomas Craven
Seymour Straight	Samuel Tibbets, Jr.
Lemuel Record	Calvin E. Hildreth
John H. Tibbets	T. Milton Craven
B. S. Tuttle	W. R. Collett
Reuben Walker	M. J. Smith
Joshua C. Tibbets, Secretary	
James Nelson, Treasurer	
Thomas Craven, General Agent	

FACULTY

John Gill Craven, A. M., President, Professor of Mental and Moral Science.
Metcalf J. Smith, A. M., Professor of Mathemaics and Natural Science.
Judson Smith, Instructor in Languages
Mrs. Harriet L. Smith, Teacher in English Department and German.
Mrs. Lucinda C. Thompson, Teacher in Primary Department.
Ruben Walker, Steward.
Mrs. Sarah Walker, Matron.

In 1857 Thomas Craven and his son made a trip to the east for the purpose of collecting money for an endowment fund for the school, but did not meet with much success. On this trip they visited the old neighborhood in Bucks county, Pennsylvania, where their ancestors had lived for three gen-

erations, namely: Thomas Craven (wife Catherine), who was the father of Peter Craven (wife Mary Oliver), who was the father of Thomas Craven (wife Eleanor Adams), who was the father of the subject of this sketch. The first one of the three just named, Thomas Craven, husband of Catherine, was in all probability the son of the emigrant Craven mentioned at the beginning of this article.

In 1858 Thomas Craven again went east in the hope of raising money for an endowment fund. In a letter from Boston, dated November 19, 1858, he says:

I visited Theodore Parker, Wendell Phillips, and William Lloyd Garrison, and met a kind reception from them all. Mr. Garrison will publish whatever I want in the *Liberator*.

In another letter he speaks of receiving a letter of recommendation from Harriet Beecher Stowe and her husband, and of calling on Charles Francis Adams and Josiah Quincy. But the panic of 1857 was on; it was found impossible to secure substantial contributions; and the plan for an endowment fund failed.

In the summer of 1860 Thomas Craven returned home from a preaching trip in Illinois, sick. It was thought that his illness was due to the drinking of impure milk. He died August 21, 1860, and was buried in the graveyard at College Hill. His life exemplified the principles which he often urged upon his children—"An unflinching adherence to truth and justice, regardless of consequences."

The following address is given as characteristic of the man:

FAREWELL ADDRESS OF ELDER THOMAS CRAVEN, A. M.

BELoved CHILDREN—

Knowing that the time of my departure is at hand, I leave you these lines as the last testimonials of my love to you all and of my most ardent desire for your present and eternal welfare. Like others who have gone before me, I have passed through the scenes of infancy, childhood, youth and manhood to old age. A few days since (the impressions are still fresh in my memory) I was a little boy indulging myself in the pleasures and amusements of childhood. The kind father and mother who, then in the vigor of life, ministered to my wants and watched over me with care, have long been reposing in the house appointed for all living. A few days later and I was a youth indulging

myself to some extent in the follies and pleasures peculiar to my age. A little farther on and I found myself immersed in the cares and bustle of life—a husband and father. Now in advanced age, I look back on my past life with a mixture of sorrow and joy that I did not improve my time and opportunities better, and with joy and thanksgiving that God was pleased to shield me from many snares and temptations into which others have fallen, and enabled me at an early age to hope and trust in His pardoning love and mercy.

When your mother and I were first united we entered into cares and businesses of life under somewhat unfavorable circumstances in a new and strange part of the country without education, without property and even without friends whom we could rely on for counsel, but the Lord was good and kind to us and we never suffered from the necessities of life.

When we became your parents the interest we felt in your present and eternal welfare we found to be inseparably connected with our own, and hence all our plans and labor and toil and anxiety were to pursue that course which would be most likely to make you useful, respectable and happy, and with the hope of obtaining this most desirable end we denied ourselves of many of the comforts and indulgences of life. In my private devotion one special petition that I often offered up and seemed not to know how to be denied was that whatever might be the lot of any of you in any respects, God would make everyone of you a subject of His saving grace. When I saw everyone of you make a public confession of your faith in Christ, it filled me with joy that I cannot express. I rejoiced in the pleasing hope that God had graciously heard my prayer. Some inconsistency of conduct not very long after the younger part of you became professors filled me with painful reflections lest you might be deceiving yourselves. I fondly hope that your wanderings have been reclaimed, but it can do you no harm to examine yourself with care remembering that the satisfaction of your natures is inseparably connected with the justification of our persons; and if God and holiness is not the controlling principle in your nature, my pretensions to religion are vain. When I compare my family with thousands of others, I have reasons to be thankful. You have generally been obedient, kind and industrious, and your general conduct I approve, and what in this imperfect state could I expect more?

When I look back on my past life I see much to disapprove. I hope if you have seen anything in me that is virtuous you will strive to imitate it and that you will ever profit by my errors—my striving to avoid them. One thing I always endeavored to impress on your minds, and I hope that in the main it was exemplified in my own conduct, viz., an unflinching adherence to truth and justice regardless of consequences. Let this principle be at the foundation of all of your actions, but my irritable temper, my impatience and the improvidence into which I have often been betrayed, avoid with the greatest care. Many of the scenes of your childhood and youth which, no doubt you often review with interest, and which often fill me with delight, are past never to return,

but let not the consideration fill your mind with gloom. We are destined to exist forever, and if united to Christ shortly to bloom in everlasting youth to be connected again in our family, and to engage in exercises more delightful than those past scenes which we review with so much interest.

I have never attained that smooth and kind manner of expression which others have. In this I have probably been faulty, but I think not only your mother and you, but all of my immediate acquaintances will witness for me that whatever I may have been in words, my actions were not unkind. Few, I think, have sympathized more deeply with the suffering than I have done at heart, or been more willing to labor for their relief while the increase of human happiness (when known to me) have always increased my own; but if any of my actions towards any of you have appeared at any time unkind, impute to my mistake with regard to that which I suppose would be for ultimate advantage.

All the counsel which I would wish to give you and which I wish to impress upon your minds with all the interest and affection of a dying father, you may find embraced in the words of the wise man, "Fear God and keep His commandments." Let this precept never be forgotten; let the fear of God always be the principle from which you act; and let his revealed will determine at all times what your actions shall be. Much time spent in meditation, self examination and prayer you will find well spent time.

With regard to your duty to each other as children of the same parents, I hope though somewhat scattered you will strive to keep up a friendly correspondence, having in view as your highest object the spiritual welfare of each other. Although the center of your union which once held you together may be removed, yet do not forget it and cleave to Christ as that center of union which shall never be removed.

Never forget that solemn declaration of Christ himself, "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it," because "broad is the way and wide is the gate that leadeth to destruction and many there be that go in there at." While you strive to make yourselves agreeable with all with whom you may associate through life, guard with the greatest caution against that wicked temporizing spirit so common with your day. Let not the cry fanatic prevent you from always bearing an honest and faithful testimony against sin, whatever form it may assume. It is better to please God than to please man. Let love to God and man characterize your actions, and the glory of God and interest of Zion be your continued aim.

In looking back upon my past life I can see nothing ever done by me to rest my hopes upon. The best things I have ever done have been mixed with that which I know God hates, and blessed be His name I hate it myself. I long for and most ardently desire a perfect conformity to the will of God, but my only hope for pardon, for justification, for satisfaction and redemption is in His rich and sovereign mercy founded upon the merits of Jesus Christ. Resting my faith and hope upon Him

alone I hope to leave the world in peace and to experience fullness of joy when I awake in His likeness.

With regard to the little worldly property which I may leave behind me, I have only to say, divide it in an amicable and friendly manner among you, and do not differ among yourselves about it for although it cost your mother and myself much labor, it is not worth disputing about; and consider yourselves not only stewards of that but whatever more you possess for which you one day must give an account.

The riches and honor of the world, its frowns or its smiles seem greatly to diminish as I approach the verge of time, so that I can at least to some extent, adopt the language of the poet as my own:

"Careless myself the dying man

Of dying man's esteem.

Happy, O Lord, if Thou approve

Though all beside condemn."

The smile of the Incarnate is all that I shall need to make me happy in a dying hour; it is all that I shall need to make me rejoice at the judgment bar. Let this be my portion, and I envy not the rich, the noble or the honorable of the earth.

The filial regard which I doubt not you all cherish for your affectionate mother, will lead you to sooth the pillow of her age and sweeten her passage down the steps of time. If ever children were laid under special obligations to a mother, those obligations doubtless rest on you for whom she suffered and toiled by day and night, and whose greatest failure in duty to you as doubtless the effect of a maternal tenderness.

With regards to my earthly remains, I have no doubt but what you will see that they are decently interred, and I desire nothing more; but as it may be useful to some who may pass by my grave where my moldering flesh may rest after my spirit may have passed its flight to God who gave it, to know the faith in which I live and in which I hope to die, I would be pleased that in connection with whatever else you may think proper, you would engrave on my tombstone these lines of Dr. Watts:

"My flesh shall slumber in the ground

Till the last trumpet's joyful sound;

Then burst the chains in sweet surprise,

And in my Savior's image rise.

O glorious hour! O sweet abode!

I shall be near and like my God."

Finally, my dear children, farewell. May the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob and of your father, be your God, and make you a blessing on earth, and through the blood of the everlasting covenant, conduct you safely to immortal glory where I hope through the riches of Divine grace, to spend a happy eternity with you all and with your dear mother in the presence of Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

(From the original farewell address loaned by Mrs. E. G. Phillips, of North Madison, Ind.)