

## William Henry Smith Memorial Library of the Indiana Historical Society

CAROLINE DUNN

The library of the Indiana Historical Society recently became with sentimental pride and pleasure possessor of a copy of the Society's first publication. In April, 1831, only a few months after the organization of the Society, the secretary, John H. Farnham, sent out a printed circular letter telling of the aims of the new organization and inviting contributions. Outstanding among the responses to this appeal was a lengthy letter from Nathan Dane, of Massachusetts, telling of his part in the drafting of the Ordinance of 1787 while a member of the Continental Congress. Mr. Dane also sent a set of his nine-volume *Abridgement of American law*; these books have survived the vicissitudes of the years and of the Society's earlier homeless existence and are today in their original bindings and in good condition on the shelves of the State Library. This letter the Society considered so worthwhile that it voted to have five hundred copies printed and distributed. This seven page leaflet was the Society's first publication and was probably printed in Indianapolis in 1831. But although the Society had a record in its minutes of the gift and of the decision to print the letter, it no longer had the original letter or a copy of the leaflet in 1897 when it again printed Mr. Dane's communication as Number 2 of Volume 1 of its *Publications*. This printing was copied from an article in the *New York Tribune*, of June 18, 1875, the material for which was supplied by John D. Defrees, who probably made a transcript of the leaflet in the Library of Congress, the only known copy until the Society acquired this past spring the one which, according to the notation on it, was sent the Honorable James Kent.

Three letters to Judge Samuel Hall, of Princeton, Indiana, from William Henry Harrison, Benjamin Parke and Noah Noble, and subscription lists of 1848 and 1849 for the Mount Carmel and New Albany and the Evansville and Illinois Railroad companies were secured for the Society. Also purchased were a group of thirty-five letters of Indiana governors and public men originally assembled by a collector about forty years ago.

Interesting material on surveying and map making in Indiana is contained in eighty-seven letters of 1817 to 1846 to Samuel Williams, of the Surveyor General's Office in Ohio. Many of the letters are from the office of the Auditor of the State of Indiana and concern Land Office records. Also in this collection purchased by the library are a manuscript plat of the Michigan Road from Madison to Indianapolis, a manuscript plat of about 1808 or 1809 of land in the Jeffersonville Land District, which shows the old Buffalo Trace road to Vincennes, and a printed broadside of July, 1834, advertising the sale of lands in the Crawfordsville District.

A collection of manuscript material which was presented to the Society by Mrs. William E. English in 1930 and which has been in storage since is being sorted and arranged. It is a part of the material gathered by William H. English for his projected history of Indiana and includes: biographical sketches, and notes for such sketches, of members of the Constitutional Convention of 1850 and of judges and other officials of the Territorial period; early Indiana documents and letters signed by these men and facsimiles of others; the original election returns of the various counties for the elections of 1809 and 1812, which are being indexed; longhand transcripts of speeches and articles in the *Western Sun* and other early Indiana newspapers; lists of members of the state legislature, by session, by county, and alphabetically; lists of county officers; and pictures of members of the legislature.

A manuscript orderly book of Colonel John Boyd, of the 4th Regiment, U.S. Infantry, who came west and participated in the Battle of Tippecanoe, has been purchased and has since presented some interesting problems. The Burton Collection of the Detroit Public Library has a manuscript, which it has printed, which purports to be extracts from an orderly book of this same colonel and for the same period. The Burton manuscript and ours contain many of the same entries but each also has many entries, scattered throughout, which are not in the other manuscript. Possibly there is somewhere a more complete third orderly book!

The library has added several items of Owen or New Harmony interest: *The radical, and advocate of equality*, by Paul Brown, an erstwhile member of the community and writer on his experiences there; *Criticism of Robert Owen's*

"*An examination of the new system of society,*" by W. L. Fisher (1826); *A memoir of William Maclure, Esq.,* by Samuel G. Morton (1841); Robert Owen's *Rational Quarterly Review*, v. 1, 1853 (all published); an interesting pamphlet by Robert Owen, published in 1846, *Reasons for each law of the new constitution proposed to be introduced first into the State of New York, afterwards into each state of the Union, and then from the universal and unchanging truth of the principles and innumerable advantages in practice to all other nations;* and copies of two speeches of Robert Dale Owen, *A lecture on consistency* and an *Address on the hopes and destinies of the human species.*

Books in German have been appearing on the market and the Society has secured several interesting ones, concerning life in the United States and German settlers here:

*Anschauungen und Erfahrungen in Nordamerika,* by Heinrich Bosshard (1853-55)

*Amerika und die moderne Volkerwanderung,* by Ernst Ludwig Brauns (1833)

*Das Deutsche Element in den Vereinigen Staaten von Nordamerika, 1818-1848,* by Gustav Koerner (1880)

*Des Auswanderers Handbuch. Getreue Schilderung der Vereinigen Staaten,* by George M. v. Ross

Other outstanding books among those recently acquired are:

*Life and times of Patrick Gass,* by J. G. Jacob (1859)

C. S. Rafinesque's *A life of travels and researches in North America and the south of Europe* (1836)

*Observations on the present state of the waste lands of Great Britain.* (1773) Attributed to Arthur Young. Concerns the Ohio region.

*The western monthly review,* v. 2 and 3, 1828-30. In original wrappers.

*Histoire de l'Amerique Septentrionale,* by Bacqueville de la Potherie (1753)

*Geographical, commercial and agricultural view of the United States,* by Daniel Blowe (1820)

Dr. Charles M. Andrews, of New Haven, permitted us to have microfilmed an unpublished monograph by him, *Ancestors and descendants of John Walker, 1749-1914,* a socio-genealogical account of a family which pioneered in western Pennsylvania and in Indiana, in Dearborn and La-

porte counties. From the Toronto Public Libraries the Society secured a photostat of a memorial of Edward Abbot concerning his service as Lieutenant Governor at Vincennes in 1775-78.

The library has been given a number of interesting and valuable items during recent months. Among these gifts are:

Journal of Samuel Donnell, Sr., describing a trip down the Mississippi in 1806, presented by James Arthur Donnell, of Greensburg.

Walter J. Ball, of Lafayette, presented a copy, typed and bound, of his account of old houses in Lafayette.

From Allan Hendricks, Indianapolis, came a letter-book of A. W. Hendricks, while assignee of the Madison Branch Bank, 1859-1866, two letters of the Civil War period, several pictures and pamphlets and other material.

David Gibson, formerly of Indianapolis but now a resident of Cleveland, sent two interesting letters, one from Isaac Cochran, of Aurora, in 1857, and the other a Civil War letter of Jesse F. Cochran.

Mrs. Ferris Taylor presented a photograph of a drawing of Captain Samuel C. Vance by Peyton Symmes.

Dr. Willis W. Carey, Fort Wayne, sent the Society a diary of Asa Fletcher, of Spencerville, DeKalb County, for 1853 and his account book of 1870 to 1879, together with some old legal papers.

Nine pamphlets, Masonic speeches on various occasions, in Indiana or by Indiana Masons, were received from an unknown donor. Several of them were hitherto unknown early Indiana imprints.

The Indiana Historical Society hopes that more and more such gifts may come to its library as Hoosiers realize that here is a place where these documents and letters and books will be cared for and will be available to persons engaged in historical research. In times of moving and of cleaning out attics, drawers, desks and bookcases, remember that the Society's library is a good repository for these old records, one in which they will be carefully preserved and used.