Changes in the Whitewater Valley, 1840-1850

Chelsea L. Lawlis*

Migration of native Americans declined in importance in the forties. Those settlers who were searching for new lands to conquer settled farther west where more land was available. The Quakers, who had provided the largest single group which migrated to the valley up to this time, were no longer coming in large numbers. During the thirties, eighty-eight removal certificates had been received by the four meetings in the valley, but during the forties, this figure had dropped to thirteen, the greatest decrease thus far.[1] Some inhabitants of the valley were emigrating and going to new homes in the West. Besides the prospect of fertile land, another attraction was the discovery of gold in California in 1848. The Richmond *Palladium* spoke of groups of men who, in 1849, left Centerville, Hagerstown, and Richmond to seek their fortunes in the Western gold fields. The issue of April 3, 1850, told of a group of thirty-six men leaving the previous day from Richmond, Centerville, and Boston.[2] An exodus of this size, if it were even an occasional occurrence, would serve to diminish the population considerably.

Foreign immigration, in contrast to the movement just described, was steadily increasing. The Germans began to arrive in the Whitewater Valley in the thirties, settling chiefly in Franklin and Wayne counties. In the former county, they had been responsible for the plotting of two towns and had lost little time in organizing their churches and schools. It was quite evident that they were going to be a factor to be reckoned with in the life of the valley. At about the same time, the Irish were also settling in this area and many were serving as laborers on the Whitewater Canal, which was under construction.[3]

---

* Chelsea L. Lawlis is a member of the Carlisle High School Faculty, Carlisle, Indiana.

[1] Stephen B. Weeks, *Southern Quakers and Slavery, A Study in Institutional History*, in John Hopkins University *Studies in Historical and Political Science* (Baltimore, Maryland, 1883-   ), Extra Vol. XV (1896), 270.

[2] Richmond, Indiana, *Palladium, 1831-1931, 100th Anniversary* (January 1, 1931), 11-12.

[3] Chelsea L. Lawlis, "Prosperity and Hard Times in the Whitewater Valley, 1830-1840," *Indiana Magazine of History* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1905-   ), XLIII (1947), 364-366.

In the forties, emigration from Europe was a highly organized affair. It was put on a strictly commercial basis by transport companies set up to take the emigrant from his homeland to the farthest territories of the United States. Great evils were committed in this system. Frequently the emigrants were victimized by unscrupulous agents and ship captains and suffered untold hardships.[4] In Germany, the principal emigration was from the Upper and Middle Rhine, the Grand Duchy of Baden, Württemberg, the two Hesses, and Bavaria. In the latter place, entire village communities sold their property and left their homes, led by their clergymen. Those from southern Germany went overland, through France, to Havre, which was the nearest port. They traveled under such poor conditions along the Strasburg Road that of necessity they endured many hardships. They were poorly prepared, their carts were drawn by half-starved beasts, and only scanty boxes contained their few possessions. "One might take it for a convoy of wounded, the relics of a battlefield, but for the rows of little white heads peeping from beneath the ragged hood."[5]

One motive for migration was the success of earlier settlers, such as the Rappites. Other causes were the opportunity to acquire land, the dread of destitution in Europe, "the desire for absolute political and religious freedom; the absence of all restrictions upon the development of society; and the publication of opinions which cannot be realized at home."[6]

The *Niles' National Register* of June 25, 1842, stated that thousands were preparing to leave Germany for America, in some cases entire villages, with their pastors and schoolmasters. Three villages in Upper Hesse had been completely abandoned.[7] The German influx to Cincinnati in 1842 was the greatest ever, and many thousands more were reported on their way to the West.[8] During the year before July, 1845, some forty-five thousand Germans emigrated from Germany,

[4] Edith Abbott, *Immigration, Select Documents and Case Records* (Chicago, 1926), 26.

[5] Edith Abbott, *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem* (Chicago, 1926), 96-97.

[6] *Ibid.*, 97.

[7] *Niles' National Register* (Washington, Baltimore, or Philadelphia, 1837-1849), LXII, 272 (June 25, 1842). This publication is a continuation of *Niles' Weekly Register* published in Baltimore from 1811 to 1837.

[8] *Ibid.*, LXIII, 48 (September 17, 1842).

about twenty thousand sailing from Bremen. The cost of passage from Bremen to Baltimore or New York was twenty-six dollars.[9]

Between August, 1840, and August, 1844, there were 233 foreigners naturalized in Franklin County, besides eighty to a hundred Germans who came from Cincinnati and other places already naturalized. In Highland, Ray, and Brookville townships, where the Germans settled, there were nearly six hundred German voters. The editor of the *Indiana American* lamented the fact that they voted "loco-foco." He attributed this to their ignorance of the English language.[10] An example of the Germans who came to Franklin County during this decade was Louis Federmann, Sr., who had formerly worked in a woolen business in Strasburg. In 1846, he and his wife came to America and located in Brookville.[11] Although many Germans came to the Whitewater Valley during this decade, the wave of German migration reached its height after 1850.[12] A large percentage of Germans landed at Baltimore, yet many also landed at New Orleans and traveled up the Mississippi River to Indiana.[13]

The chief occupation of the German was farming. His thrift and intensive agriculture soon reaped dividends for him and enabled him to buy a farm and add field after field until he became a large landowner. He usually preferred land that was slightly improved. The German took exceptionally good care of his livestock and his farm and was the picture of neatness and good order. He preferred to do the larger part of his work using his own hands, assisted by his wife and children. In the town, the German became a retail merchant and an artisan. In Richmond, there eventually rose a great demand for German boys in business houses, and, as a result, many of them gradually acquired their own businesses and became financially independent.[14]

---

[9] *Ibid.*, LXVIII, 289 (July 12, 1845).

[10] Brookville, Indiana, *American*, August 9, 1844.

[11] August J. Reifel, *History of Franklin County, Indiana* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1915), 623.

[12] Returns of the Seventh Census, 1850, Fayette, Franklin, Union, and Wayne Counties, Indiana; Returns of the Eighth Census, 1860, Fayette, Franklin, Union, and Wayne Counties, Indiana.

[13] William A. Fritsch, *German Settlers and German Settlements in Indiana* (Evansville, Indiana, 1915), 21.

[14] Albert B. Faust, *The German Element in the United States* (2 vols., Boston, 1909), II, 29-30; Rachel DuBois, *The Germans in American*

The Irish were to have ample cause for migrating from their native land during this decade for, beginning in 1845, there occurred the disastrous potato famine, resulting in untold hardships upon a large part of the population. This acted directly to increase emigration. In the early part of the year 1847, the roads to Irish seaports were crowded with people, attempting to escape from the great crisis which was to come. Of the 240,401 people who emigrated from the United Kingdom during the first three-quarters of 1847, most of them came from Ireland and went to Canada and the United States. The problem appeared too grandiose to be solved.

> The fearful problem to be solved in Ireland . . . is this: A large population subsisting on potatoes which they raised for themselves, has been deprived of that resource, and how are they now to be supported? The obvious answer is, by growing something else. But that cannot be, because the small patches of land which maintained a family when laid down to potatoes, are insufficient for the purpose when laid down to corn or any other kind of produce; and corn cultivation requires capital and skill, and combined labour, which the cotter and conacre tenants do not possess.[15]

A young Englishman describing conditions in Ireland during the famine saw sights which distressed him greatly. In the town of Westport, a mob of hungry, almost naked women were at the poorhouse, begging for soup tickets, but the rural people which he saw near Galway appeared to be in even worse plight. "Some of the women and children that we saw on the road were abject cases of poverty and almost naked. The rags they had on were with the greatest difficulty held together, and in a few weeks, as they are utterly unable to provide themselves with fresh clothes unless they be given them, they must become absolutely naked."[16]

The people were, naturally enough, unwilling to die in the face of those conditions. In Armagh and Down, men

---

Life (New York, 1936), 86; Henry P. Fairchild, *Immigrant Backgrounds* (New York, 1927), 45; Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America* (New York, 1940), 188; Frederick J. Turner, *The United States, 1830-1850* (New York, 1935), 284; Fred J. Bartel, *The Institutional Influence of the German Element in the Population of Richmond, Indiana,* in the *Papers* of the Wayne County, Indiana, Historical Society (1 vol., nos. 1 and 2, Richmond, Indiana, 1903-1904), I, no. 2, p. 15.

[15] Abbott, *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem,* 112-115. A conacre in the Irish land system is the letting by a tenant for the season a small portion of land already plowed and prepared for a crop.

[16] *Ibid.,* 116.

went in groups from house to house in the rural areas and insisted that they be fed. In Tipperary and Waterford corn stores and baker's shops were sacked, and at Galway four men were convicted of stealing a filly, which they had killed and eaten to escape starvation. The churches were half empty, but the jails and poorhouses were filled to overflowing. Those people who had depended upon the farmer for their livelihood felt the effects of the famine also; these were the shopkeepers, the tradesmen, and priests.[17]

The Irish emigrant who left his native land during the forties to escape certain evils, discovered that there were other evils as soon as he boarded a ship. The so-called Irish "fever-ships," which plied the high seas at this time, made the traveler feel that he was little better off than before, if not worse. He had read glowing accounts of these ships before he sailed, but once on board, he found that they were often unseaworthy, insufficiently provisioned, and usually undermanned. It is true that the ship, her crew, and provisions passed inspection at Liverpool, from which most of the emigrants sailed, but something strange occurred after the ship had left the dock.

> There were tenders and lighters to follow the vessel out to sea; and over the sides of that vessel several of the mustered men would pass, and casks, and boxes, and sacks would be expeditiously hoisted, to the amazement of the simple people, who looked on at the strange, and to them unaccountable, operation. And thus the great ship with its living freight would turn her prow toward the West. . . .

Ships had to be manned by the male passengers and impressed seamen. It was up to them to handle the ropes and to work the pumps. The scarcity of water and provisions and long confinement between decks resulted in severe outbreaks of fever, and frequent splashes told the passengers that still another passenger would never see the promised land. It was not uncommon for only one of a family of ten or twelve to survive the voyage, and he or she would arrive, a bewildered and broken person, indeed.[18]

The size of English migration to the Whitewater Valley never approached the size of Irish and German migrations. It might be mentioned here that in 1850 there were 336

---

[17] *Ibid.*, 118.
[18] Abbott, *Immigration, Select Documents and Case Records*, 29-30.

English, 704 Irish, and 2,474 Germans living in the valley.[19]
One account is available of a young Englishman who migrated
to the valley in this decade. He was Hart Bishop, who, in
1847, left England with his family and his parents, landing
at New Orleans. They crossed the ocean in forty-nine days,
and during the latter part of the voyage they had to eat
hardtack. From New Orleans, they traveled by boat up the
Mississippi and Ohio rivers to Cincinnati, and from there to
Franklin County. During the first summer, he labored in
the harvest fields and later was engaged in wagonmaking.
When he had saved a sufficient amount of money, he and
his father began the manufacture of reeds used in the making
of cotton and silk.[20]

The Whitewater Canal project, begun in a wave of enthu-
siasm in the thirties, had finally bogged down in 1839, due
to the financial failure of the state. By 1842, however, when
financial conditions had improved, the canal was turned over
to a company organized to complete it—the Whitewater Valley
Canal Company, which had been chartered by the legislature
of 1841-1842, with a capital stock of four hundred thousand
dollars. By 1845, the canal had reached Connersville, and in
the following year it was completed to Cambridge City. In
1846, the Hagerstown Canal Company was organized and
the canal was completed to that place in 1847.[21]

This ambitious undertaking was destined to suffer one
disaster after another. The fall of the river was excessive
and the destruction of timber resulted in frequent floods.
In 1847 and 1848, flood damage amounted to one hundred
thousand dollars and eighty thousand dollars respectively.
Considerable damage was suffered by industries along the
canal, dams were washed out, and millraces were demolished.
The great risk of rebuilding the canal caused many of the
industries to disappear, and it is also believed that the flood
damage caused an exodus of population from the valley.
The canal, however, was rebuilt, but it was doomed to extinc-
tion when the railroads arrived.[22]

---

[19] Returns of the Seventh Census, 1850, Fayette, Franklin, Union, and Wayne Counties, Indiana.

[20] Reifel, *History of Franklin County, Indiana*, 589.

[21] Logan Esarey, "Internal Improvements in Early Indiana," In-
diana Historical Society *Publications* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1895-   ),
V (1915), 122; Interstate Publishing Co., *History of Wayne County,
Indiana* (2 vols., Chicago, 1884), I, 452-453.

[22] Reifel, *History of Franklin County, Indiana*, 201; Esarey, "Inter-

The construction of turnpikes during the forties provided a much needed improvement in the transportation system of the valley. Roads had been invariably bad, causing great hardships to travelers, as indicated in their written accounts of this area. The Brookville, Indiana, *American* advertised on August 19, 1842, that subscription books to the capital stock of the Franklin Turnpike Company would be opened at Brookville, Mt. Carmel, Scipio, and Fairfield.[23] The first turnpike road in Union County, excepting a possible short one in the northeast corner of Harrison Township, was the Liberty and College Corner Turnpike, built by a stock company organized in 1848.[24] The Wayne County Turnpike Company was formed in 1849-1850 to complete the unfinished National Road, which had been turned over to the state. It was completed in 1850.[25] An important aid to transportation in Fayette County constructed in this period was the first bridge over the Whitewater River at Connersville.[26]

Throughout the forties, the inhabitants of the valley were very enthusiastic about the Whitewater Canal and this was especially true at Brookville. In 1844, the Cincinnati *Atlas* stated that the forks of the Whitewater at Brookville were studded with flourmills and that the canal had caused a great increase of business.[27] In the vicinity of the town, there was great improvement, farmhouses and the fences around them gave evidence that the people were looking to their comfort. It was predicted that Brookville would become a great manufacturing place.[28] By 1850, it boasted a population of twelve hundred and was noted for its manufacture of paper, cotton, and flour. Franklin County's supply of water power,

nal Improvements in Early Indiana," Indiana Historical Society *Publications*, V, 122; George S. Cottman, "The Whitewater Valley," *Indiana Magazine of History*, I (1905), 208.

[23] Brookville, Indiana, *American*, August 19, 1842.

[24] J. H. Beers and Co., *Atlas of Union County, Indiana* (Chicago, 1884), 12.

[25] Interstate Publishing Co., *History of Wayne County, Indiana*, I, 454.

[26] Frederic L. Barrows (ed.), *History of Fayette County, Indiana* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1917), 275.

[27] Cincinnati, Ohio, *Atlas*, quoted in the Brookville, Indiana, *American*, August 2, 1844.

[28] Cincinnati, Ohio, *Gazette*, quoted in the Brookville, Indiana, *American*, August 2, 1844.

its proximity to Cincinnati, and its fertile soil were increasing its population and wealth rapidly.[29]

Fayette County towns, too, received an impetus to business as a result of the building of the canal. A large flourmill, which was capable of turning out two hundred barrels a day, was built in Connersville in 1846, not long after the completion of the canal. Likewise, several pork packers opened business after the canal had been built and this became one of Connersville's leading industries. Flourmilling and pork packing led to barrelmaking and such an industry was established in 1845. A large stove foundry was opened in 1846 by William F. Gephart.[30] According to the *Indiana Gazetteer* for 1850, the population of Connersville was 1,500 in 1847. Three years later, it was 1,700 and still increasing. Pork, beef, and flour in large quantities were exported by way of the canal.[31]

Union County could not expect a very direct increase of business, although the canal could serve as an outlet for surplus produce. Proof that it was predominantly agricultural can be obtained from an examination of the various industries and businesses in 1850. The county possessed sixteen gristmills, twenty-one sawmills, two oilmills, four woolen factories, and twenty-five stores.[32]

Wayne County continued to grow more rapidly than the other counties and was becoming an industrial as well as an agricultural region. The *Wayne County Record* of October 11, 1843, stated that there were eighteen towns in Wayne County.[33] Centerville and Richmond were the chief towns, yet Cambridge City, which was only laid out in the thirties, had a population of 1,217 by 1850.[34] The *Indiana Gazetteer* for 1850 gave a glowing account of the industrial progress of Wayne County.

The surplus articles exported are flour, pork, beef, and marketing of various kinds sent to Cincinnati mostly, and horses, mules and cattle driven off, and their value has been estimated to amount to

---

[29] E. Chamberlain, *Indiana Gazetteer or Topographical Dictionary* (Indianapolis, Indiana, 1850), 174, 230.

[30] Barrows (ed.), *History of Fayette County, Indiana*, 549-550.

[31] Chamberlain, *Indiana Gazetteer or Topographical Dictionary*, 223-224. The census of 1850 states that Connersville had only 1,396 persons.

[32] *Ibid.*, 404.

[33] Wayne County, Indiana, *Record*, October 11, 1843.

[34] *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Statistics of Population*, Table II, 779.

$400,000 annually. There are on the east fork of the White Water and its tributaries, 19 flouring mills, 21 saw mills, four woollen factories, two cotton factories, four oil mills, one paper mill, one peg factory, one foundry and several turning and carding machines, all driven by water, and there is about an equal amount of machinery on the other streams in the county. The manufacturing of carriages, wagons and a great variety of machinery and farming utensils is carried on extensively at Richmond and other places, so as to supply the neighboring counties. . . .[35]

The *Gazetteer* further stated that Richmond had a population in 1833 of 1,740, in 1840 of 2,070, and in 1850 reached the 3,000 mark. A still greater indication of that city's importance was the fact that it employed more mechanical and manufacturing labor than any other in Indiana.[36]

The chief religious developments during the forties were the expansion of the Universalist church and the various German churches and the continuation of antislavery work by the Quakers, involving a split in their ranks in 1843. There had been Universalist preaching in 1829, but not until the forties were there many churches established. Billingsville, in Union County, had a church in 1842; and in 1844, a church was built at Everton, in Fayette County. Fairfield, in Franklin County, established one in 1848.[37] The Germans of Franklin County, who had already established a Catholic church in Butler Township in 1844, and a Catholic church at Brookville in 1845, were responsible for several churches in 1848 in Highland Township and in Brookville.[38] St. John's Lutheran Church, organized in 1844, was the first German church in Richmond. Although most of the early Germans who came to Wayne County were Lutherans, a German Catholic church was organized as early as 1844.[39]

In the thirties the Friends of Wayne County had sanctioned unconditional emancipation and opposed the coloniza-

[35] Chamberlain, *Indiana Gazetteer or Topographical Dictionary,* 429.

[36] *Ibid.,* 373. The census of 1850 gives the population of Richmond as 1,443.

[37] J. H. Beers and Co., *Atlas of Union County, Indiana,* 38; Reifel, *History of Franklin County, Indiana,* 459; Barrows (ed.), *History of Fayette County, Indiana,* 442.

[38] Reifel, *History of Franklin County, Indiana,* 452-453, 467, 470.

[39] Bartel, *The Institutional Influence of the German Element in the Population of Richmond, Indiana,* in the *Papers* of the Wayne County, Indiana, Historical Society, I, no. 2, p. 17.

tion movement.[40]   Gradually, there arose in the Quaker ranks
a group which advised against the practice of Friends opening
their meetinghouses to antislavery meetings and also against
reading antislavery periodicals that were not sanctioned by
the yearly meeting.   In 1841, this group gained the upper
hand, and the next year the Indiana Yearly Meeting warned
its members not to participate in antislavery societies and
to be careful about the type of reading material which they
gave to their families.   This attitude had apparently been
produced by John Meader and Christopher Healy, two min-
isters from the East, where opposition to abolition was strong.
At the conclusion of the meeting, a large group of antislavery
Friends assembled at Newport.   The actual split in the
Quaker ranks occurred in 1843, when the antislavery group
was proscribed by the yearly meeting.   Included among
those proscribed was Charles Osborne, one of the leading
men in the antislavery movement.   A committee was later
appointed by the London Yearly Meeting to heal the breach,
but it was unsuccessful.[41]

The antislavery Friends were very much in the limelight
in the fall of 1842.   At this time, Henry Clay visited Rich-
mond on a stumping tour.   Some of the Friends at Newport
drew up the following petition and presented it to Clay, asking
him to free his slaves.

> We the undersigned citizens of Indiana, in view of the declaration
> of rights contained in the charter of American independence, in view
> of that justice which is due from man to his fellow man; and in view
> of those noble principles which should characterize the Patriot; the
> Philanthropist and the Christian; ask you, most respectfully, to "un-
> loose the heavy burdens", and that you let the oppressed under your
> control, who call you master go Free.   By doing so you would give
> "liberty to whom liberty is due"; and do no more than justice to
> those under your charge, who have long been deprived by you of
> the sacred boon of freedom; and set an example that would result
> in much good to suffering and debased humanity, and do an act al-
> together worthy a great and good man.

Clay, in his response to the petition, said that it was not
presented at the proper time, that he actually did detest slav-
ery but felt that the abolitionist methods were impractical.
Clay also defended his treatment of his slaves.   It was esti-

---

[40] Lawlis, "Prosperity and Hard Times in the Whitewater Valley,
1830-1840," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XLIII, 373.

[41] Walter Edgerton, *A History of the Separation in the Indiana
Yearly Meeting of Friends* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1856), 48-67, 325-352.

mated that one-third of the signers of the petition were anti-slavery men, another third Democrats, and the other third Negroes. After Clay's refusal, the antislavery Friends set to work to secure his defeat. He was defeated, but it is doubtful if this incident was responsible for it.[42]

Another movement closely allied with the antislavery cause was the Free Produce Movement.[43] The Indiana Yearly Meeting of Antislavery Friends, while they existed as an organized unit, gave much of their time and effort to this movement. In 1840, the Indiana Yearly Meeting had its Committee on the Concerns of the People of Color to investigate possible means of obtaining goods produced by free labor, and their report was made the following year. In January, 1842, a group of radical Friends assembled at Newport and organized the Wayne County Free Produce Association. The aims of this organization were "to boycott slave labor products, to induce merchants to provide free labor goods, and not to be deterred by 'pecuniary considerations'." Some of the officers were Benjamin Stanton, Henry H. Way, Levi Coffin, Jonathan Unthank, and Jacob Grave. In April of the same year, they began the establishment of a firm designed to supply the West with free labor goods.[44]

Only a month after the Wayne County Free Produce Association was formed, the same leaders organized the Western Free Produce Association in Union County. Another Union County organization, the Salem Free Produce Association, was formed. It selected Levi Coffin to open a wholesale free produce business at Cincinnati. He at first refused but finally consented and started the business in 1847. Throughout the existence of the business, from 1847 to 1857 when he sold out, he waged a continual struggle with limited capital. In 1841, Levi Coffin and Joel Parker had opened a free produce store at Newport. There were others at Newport in 1844, 1846, and 1847.[45]

Levi Coffin was maintaining a highly organized under-

---

[42] Wayne County, Indiana, *Record*, September 21, 1842, and October 5, 1842; Mary C. Johnson and Percival B. Coffin (comps.), *Charles F. Coffin, A Quaker Pioneer* (Richmond, Indiana, 1923), 104.

[43] Only goods produced by free labor would be used, goods produced by slave labor would be boycotted.

[44] Ruth K. Nuermberger, *The Free Produce Movement, A Quaker Protest Against Slavery* in Trinity College Historical Society *Historical Papers* (Durham, North Carolina, 1897-   ), XXV (1942), 48-49.

[45] *Ibid.*, 49, 51, 119.

ground railroad during this period and had been since a few years after his arrival in Indiana. His home town, Newport, was the central depot where three lines of Negro traffic from the Ohio River converged, these three led from Cincinnati, Madison, and Jeffersonville. Coffin's house contained a secret room which could hold twenty or thirty people. The thing which made the underground railroad so successful was the fact that the Newport inhabitants kept the whole affair a secret. It was estimated that Coffin aided, either directly or indirectly, in the escape of thirty-three hundred persons from slavery.[46]

The latter part of the forties witnessed the passing by the state legislature of a common school law, a much needed statute. The act, which was passed in 1849, levied a tax of ten cents per hundred dollars on property and a twenty-five cent poll tax. It also taxed premiums of insurance companies not chartered in Indiana. Proceeds from these sources, together with those from saline and surplus revenue funds and a bank tax, were to form a county common school fund, to be placed in the hands of the county treasurer. Townships were divided into districts under trustees, and voters of a district might vote labor and money up to fifteen cents per hundred dollars to erect a school building.[47]

The question of free schools was submitted to a vote at the election of 1848, and over the state as a whole only fifty-six per cent of the people voted in favor of free schools. All of the Whitewater Valley counties except Union showed a majority in favor of the new system. Opposition came chiefly from those counties settled by people from the Southern states, yet Wayne and Fayette counties, settled chiefly by Southerners, showed a fairly high percentage in favor of free schools. The law of 1849 also provided that the question should be submitted to the voters for approval or rejection.[48] The chief

---

[46] Richmond, Indiana, *Palladium, 1831-1931, 100th Anniversary* (January 1, 1931), 33; *Reminiscences of Levi Coffin* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1876), 111.

[47] *Laws of the State of Indiana, 1849,* pp. 123-131. A bill with similar provisions had passed the House in the thirty-second session but did not reach the Senate in time for passage, therefore, it was provided that it be submitted to the people at the polls.

[48] Richard G. Boone, *A History of Education in Indiana* (New York, 1892), 103-109, 124-126. Fayette voted 66.2% in favor; Franklin, 59.7%; Wayne, 63.7%; Union, 44%. When the bill was submitted again in 1849, Fayette voted 50% in favor; Franklin, 54.8%, Wayne, 59.2%; and Union, 58.5%,

opposition in Franklin County came from the strongly religious townships. Brookville had its first free school in 1849, but Connersville had none until nine years later.[49]

The newspapers of the Whitewater Valley during the forties continued to be chiefly supporters of the Whig party, although some of them were now proclaiming strictly antislavery doctrines. The *Indiana American* at Brookville was a staunch supporter of Henry Clay, favoring the protective tariff, a national currency, and distribution of the proceeds of the public land sales.[50] In Centerville, Wayne County, the *Wayne County Record* also supported Clay. In 1848, it was changed to the *Wayne County Whig*. Another Centerville paper, the *Free Territory Sentinel*, espoused free-soil principles. Cambridge City boasted a Whig paper, the *Reveille*, which was published from 1845 to 1850. At Newport the *Protectionist*, an antislavery organ, was established during this period and the *Free Labor Advocate and Anti-Slavery Chronicle*, which championed the antislavery and Free Produce movements, was also founded at Newport.[51] In 1849, the Whigs at Fayette County started a paper to rival the *Indiana Telegraph*, calling their paper the *Whitewater Valley*, a forerunner of the *Times*.[52]

The increase in population during the forties was the smallest yet recorded. Immigration from other states to the Whitewater Valley had slowed down considerably, and some inhabitants of the valley were leaving in search of new homes. The population of the region was 54,493, in 1840, and 60,432 in 1850, showing an increase of slightly less than six thousand.[53] This gain is not an inconsiderable one, however, when one considers the small area covered by the four counties. An examination of the age groups indicates that there was a slight increase in the number of older persons. In 1840, there were only seven per cent over fifty years of age, while in 1850, the figure was nine per cent. In the latter

---

[49] Michael Bossert, "Early Schools of Franklin County," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXVI (1930), 234; Barrows (ed.), *History of Fayette County, Indiana*, 373-374.

[50] Brookville, Indiana, *American*, January 5, 1844.

[51] Interstate Publishing Co., *History of Wayne County, Indiana*, I, 533-534, 536-537.

[52] Barrows (ed.), *History of Fayette County, Indiana*, 468.

[53] *Sixth Census of the United States, 1840*, pp. 370-373; Original Returns of the Seventh Census, 1850, Fayette, Franklin, Union, and Wayne Counties, Indiana.

year, three per cent were under one year of age, sixteen per
cent under five, thirty-one per cent under ten, forty-four per
cent under fifteen, fifty-five per cent under twenty, seventy-
three per cent under thirty, eighty-four per cent under forty,
ninety-one per cent under fifty, and nine per cent were over
fifty years of age.[54]

Even though the increase in population during the for-
ties was small, new immigrants arrived to take the places
left vacant by former residents who had been lured on to seek
their fortune elsewhere. The prospect of more fertile land
and the Western gold fields appeared particularly attractive
to some. Foreign immigration was steadily increasing. This
may be attributed in part to the fact that emigration from
Europe had become highly organized and was conducted on
a strictly commercial basis. The opportunity to secure eco-
nomic advancement and the desire to enjoy political and re-
ligious freedom influenced many to leave Europe. The con-
struction of turnpikes and bridges during the forties improved
the transportation system of the valley. The antislavery cause
continued to remain in the limelight. The religious and edu-
cational developments in the valley were in part determined
by the coming of the Europeans.

---

[54] *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Statistics of Popu-
lation,* Table I, 748-756.