Upon the Occasion of the Lilly Library Sesquicentennial Exhibit, November 28, 1966

*Roger D. Branigin**

Here in this warm and safe place lie many of the literary and historical treasures of Indiana. How appropriate in this one hundred fiftieth Birthday Year to display many of them and to join in tribute to the benefactor whose name this rich collection bears.

As you turn the pages of this exquisite catalog, each item brings a host of recollections and stirs our Hoosier pride.

"The Old Swimmin'-Hole" and 'Leven More Poems by Benjamin F. Johnson. of Boone, the first published work of the beloved James Whitcomb Riley, carries one down memory lane from Greenfield to Lockerbie Street. In the mind's eye we see again the old home on the National Road, where the skilled hand of his father, more woodworker than lawyer, carved the newel posts and the trundle bed. With the ear attuned we can hear his talented mother at the organ and the patter of little feet from cubby hole to press. The scene may shift to the travels with Old Doc McCrillus and the canvases the poet painted for his display of patented medicines—and the nostrums of bygone day. Or again to his exciting and reckless lecture tours with Bill Nye and his proper conduct with William Lyon Phelps, defender of Riley and his rhymes.

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* On Monday evening, November 28, 1966, President Elvis J. Stahr of Indiana University presided at a brief program which formally opened an exhibit of rare books and manuscripts from the university's Lilly Library in commemoration of the Indiana Sesquicentennial. The highlight of the program was an address by the Honorable Roger D. Branigin, governor of Indiana. The article which follows is that address. Written by the governor in his inimitable style, it indicates ideas and evaluations which occurred to him as he reviewed a special catalog which identified and interpreted the 118 items in the exhibit. This catalog, subsidized by the Lilly Endowment of Indianapolis, was prepared by Cecil K. Byrd and William R. Cagle. The governor's remarks reflect his lifetime study and substantial knowledge of Indiana's history and heritage, and the address is reproduced here without change in substance. Like Governor Branigin, the editors of the *Indiana Magazine of History* assume considerable knowledge of Hoosier history

The critics described it all as doggerel; but to the untutored ear of a Hoosier, it was music, unalloyed, sweet and lazy, lyrical music. Pleasant dreams in metrical perfection, some one said.

> Oh, it sets my heart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,
> When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock!

And on to the Riley Room in the Claypool Hotel, where impatient speakers waiting their turn have for generations let their eyes wander to the poems on the frescoed walls. Always in front of the podium looking eastward:

> There! little girl; don't cry!
> They have broken your doll, I know;
> And your tea-set blue,
> And your play-house, too,
> Are things of the long ago;
> But childish troubles will soon pass by.—
> There! little girl; don't cry!

Just a glance at John Scott's map of 1826 unveils the stories of a score of conflicts, treaties, massacres, sad monuments to the bloody engagements with the red man. You see the Greenville Treaty Line, forming the west boundary of Dearborn County and the Grouseland Treaty Line separating Decatur from the counties of Ripley and Jennings, behind which the Miami, the Pottawatomi, and the Delaware thought they might be left alone. There on the map are the once flourishing places like Springfield and Pottersville, long since abandoned and forgotten.

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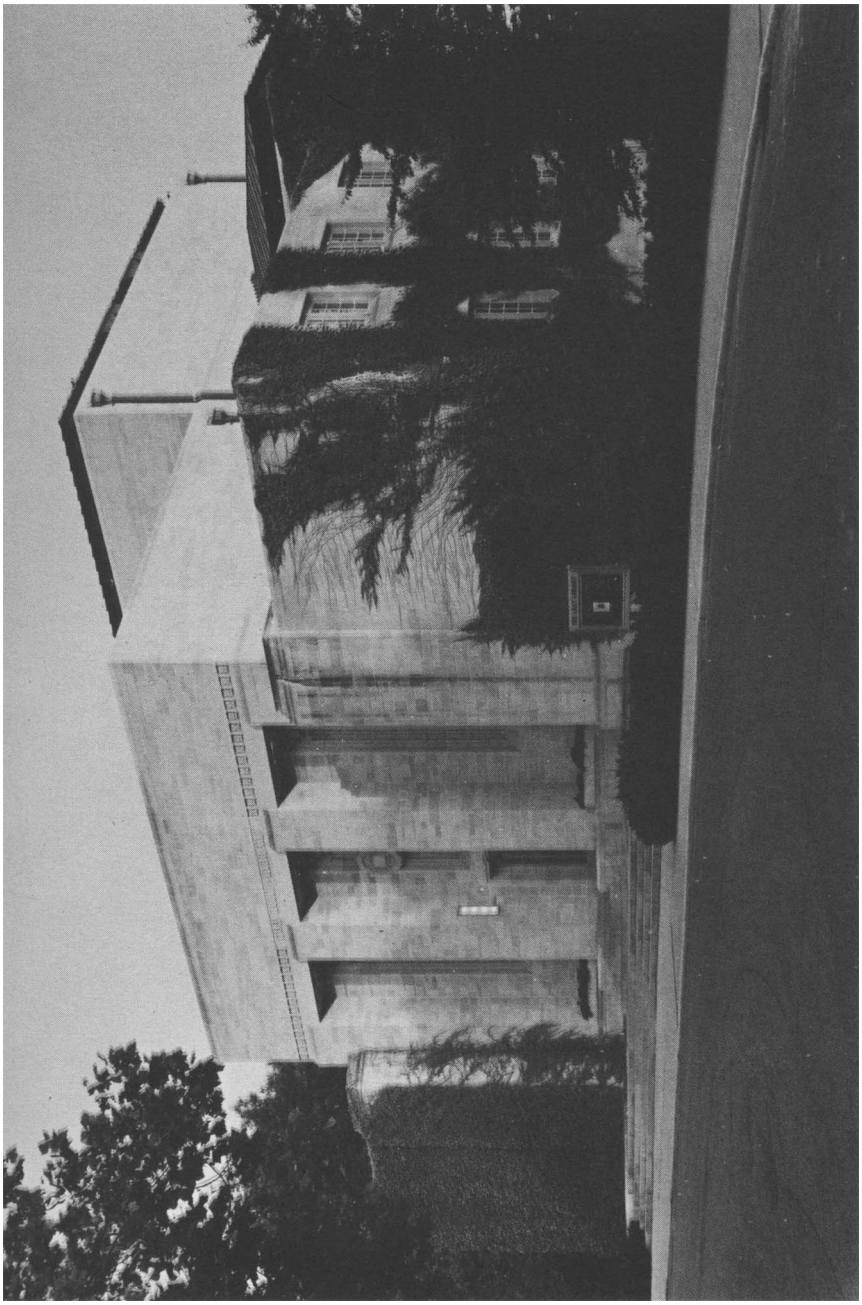
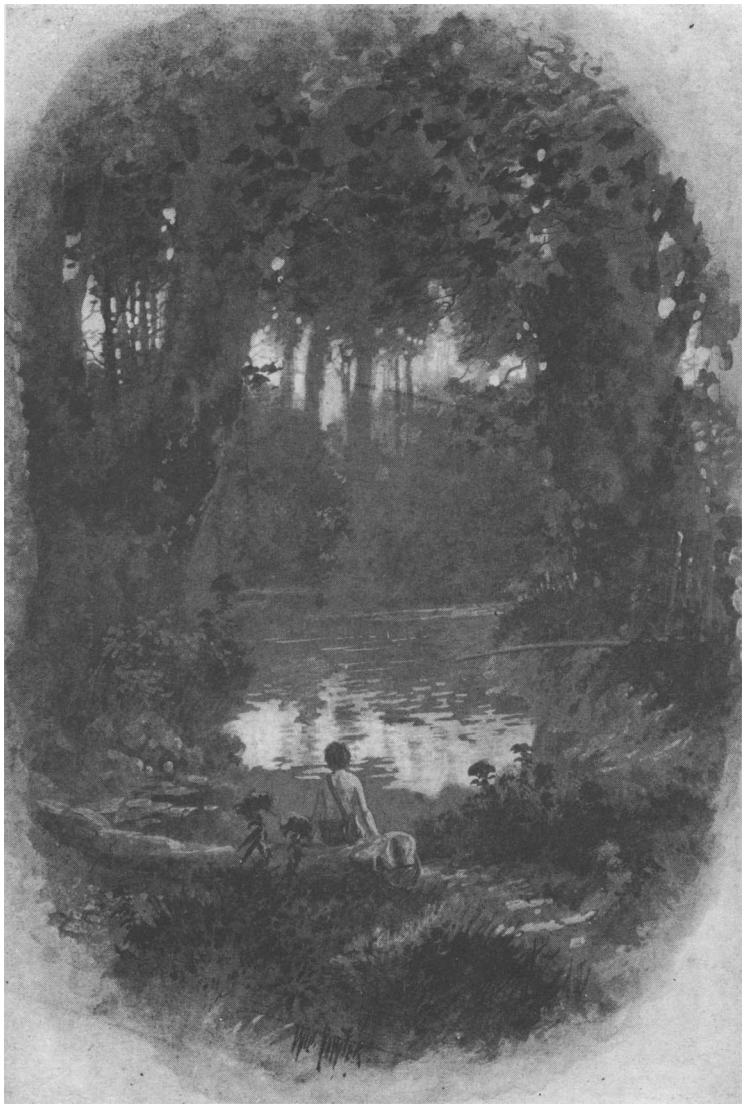
on the part of their readers; thus, no explanatory material or footnotes have been added. Minor editorial changes, particularly in capitalization and punctuation, have been made. Most of the illustrations have been chosen from items noted in the special catalog already mentioned. During the program on November 28, President Stahr presented Governor Branigin a certificate on behalf of Indiana University and the Lilly Library. This certificate designated him as an Honorary Fellow of the Lilly Library "in recognition of his effective contributions, as citizen and as Governor, to public awareness of Indiana's heritage, and in appreciation of his personal zeal and scholarship in collecting and making available to other scholars the books and manuscripts which document that heritage." The Lilly Library, opened in 1960, was established as the result of a large and extremely valuable gift of rare books and manuscripts which Indiana University received from the late J. K. Lilly.

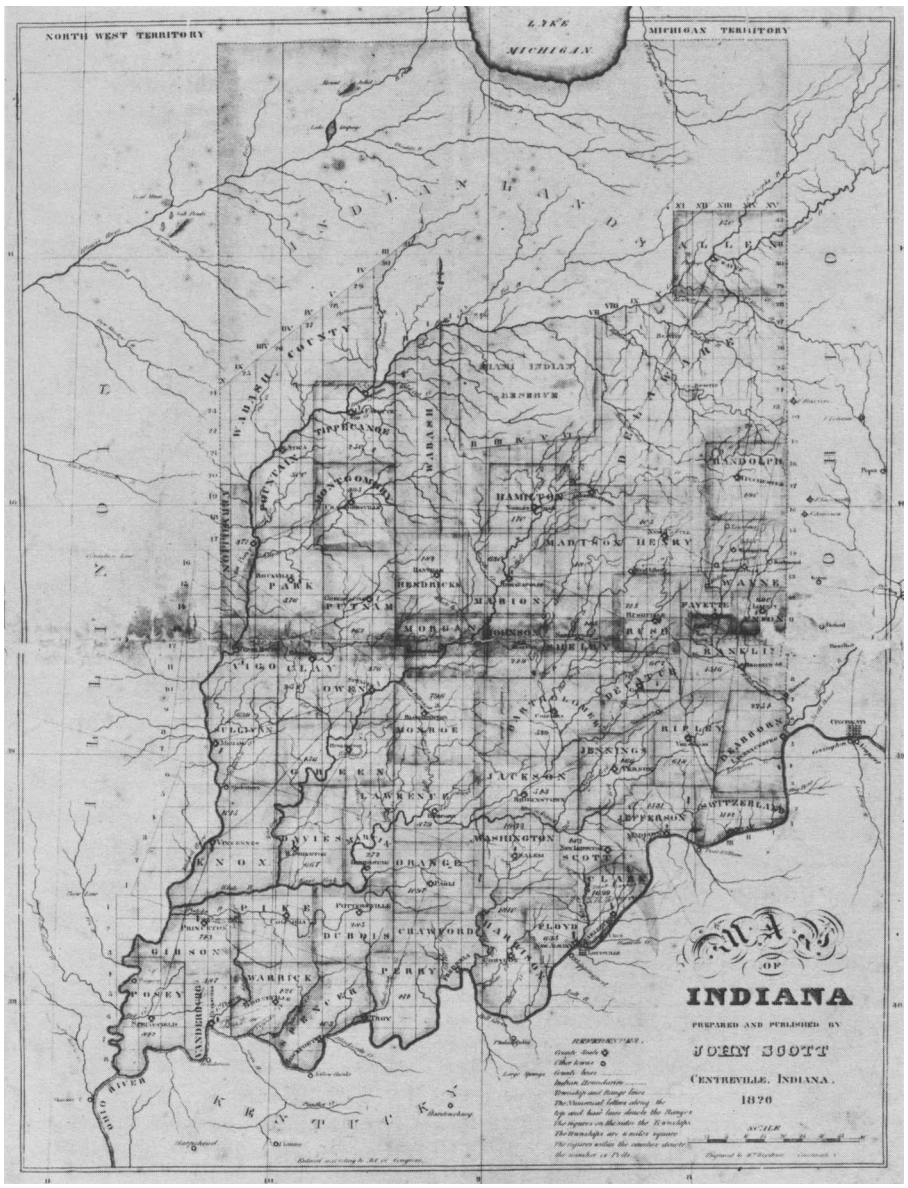


LILLY LIBRARY, INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Courtesy Lilly Library



RILEY'S OLD SWIMMIN' HOLE
AS INTERPRETED BY ARTIST WILL VAWTER

Reproduced from Marcus Dickey, *The Maturity of James Whitcomb Riley* (Indianapolis, 1922).



EARLY MAP OF INDIANA BY JOHN SCOTT, 1826

Courtesy Lilly Library

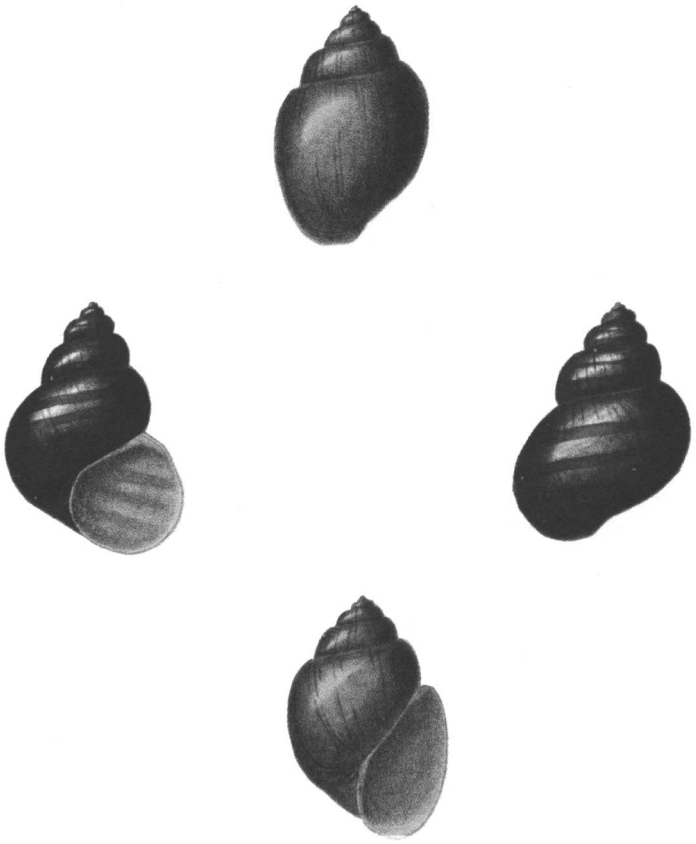


ILLUSTRATION FROM THOMAS SAY'S *American Conchology*
(COLOR NOT AS IN ORIGINAL)

Reproduced from Thomas Say, *American Conchology* (New Harmony, Ind., 1830). Courtesy Lilly Library.

But more important, the map shows the rectangular or, as some say, the Jeffersonian system of survey. With meridians and base line and the congressional townships, each with thirty-six sections one mile square, Mr. Jefferson, you remember, wanted the sections ten miles square, but Indiana was the first real beneficiary of the compromise rectangular system of land survey. Indeed, the east line of Indiana is the first principal meridian in the United States, and the second passes through Lebanon intersecting the base line at Initial Point Park in Orange County, now in course of preservation by the civil engineers.

Few have known, until the distinguished historian, Dr. Thomas D. Clark, our Sesquicentennial visitor, so informed us, that the survey system was a primary factor in the rapid development of the Northwest Territory and the absence of it seriously impeded the growth of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. One who ever dared trace a metes and bounds description which begins with a hackberry tree, witness an oak, follows the meanders of a creek, and ends with a chiselled rock can readily understand.

Again our eye catches the name of Thomas Say, one of the great men of his day, his biographer in truth said. Almost at once in mind's flight we are at the prestigious Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences where the young scientist began his *American Entomology*—and where he came under the spell of the great William Maclure. Together they became disciples of Robert Owen, the New Lanark spinner, who managed to alter human relations in his own time. Maclure, the retired and wealthy merchant, was a sort of a patron Macaenas for this young Horace. Together they went to New Harmony, port of the famed Boatload of Knowledge, Gerard Troost, Josiah Warren, Joseph Neef, and their scientist associates. Arthur Bestor was to call it one of the backwoods utopias.

But it was there, we recall, Thomas Say wrote and printed his *American Conchology,* the monumental collection and description of shells. Hand colored under the guidance of the little lady who became his wife, the colors are as delicate and faithful as they were almost a century and a half ago.

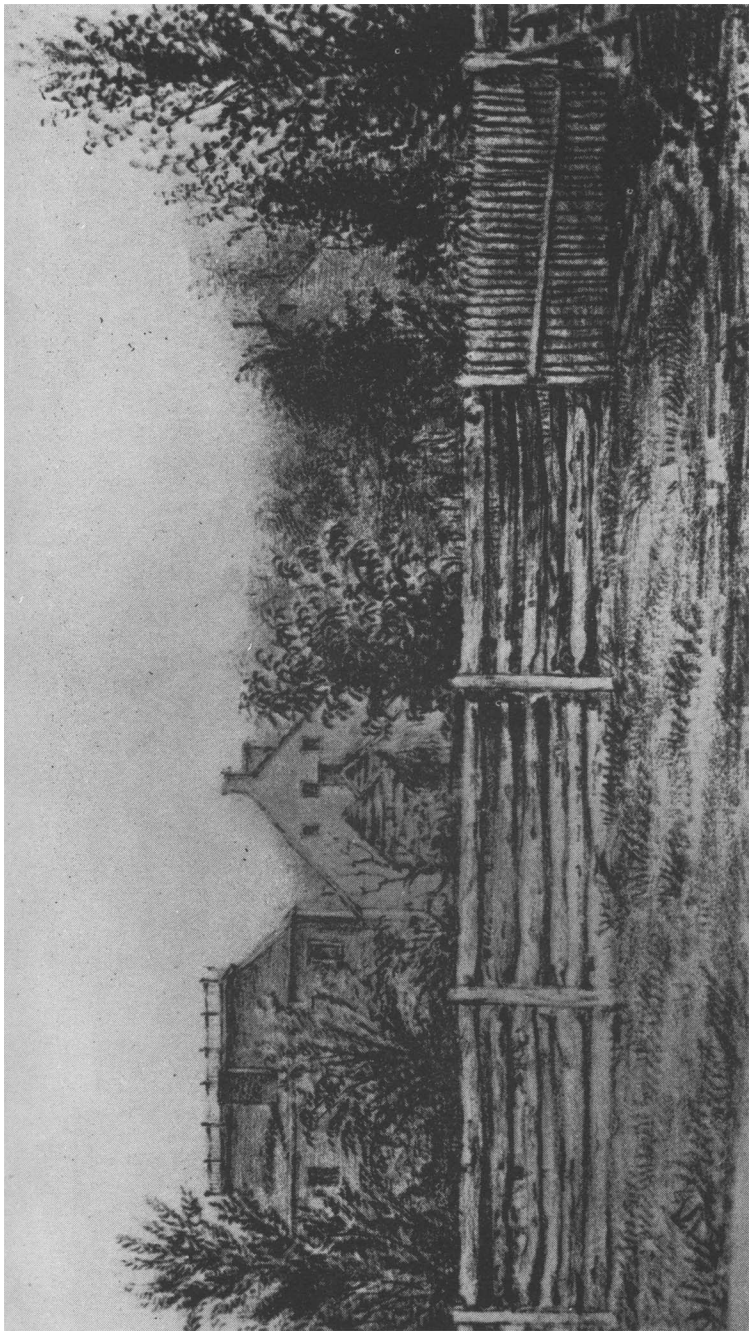
Oh, some will say, you have led us out of the main surge of history and into a tiny byway along the Wabash. Perhaps, but it is a delightful pause to observe once more the artistry and ingenuity of men and women in this western wilderness, to wonder at the remarkable industry of the Rappites and the massive contribution of the Owenites, in education, the diffusion of knowledge, the rights of women, the advancement of science.

If you listen, you can almost hear the chant of the talented Alsatian Joseph Neef, friend and student of great Swiss educator, Pestalozzi, and the excited classroom of Madame Marie Fretageot, master teacher and disciple. Nearby, the patient Constantine Rafinesque works, scholar in almost a score of fields: geology, botany, icthyology, art, music, literature. Today, as the Department of Interior surveys the remarkable Devonian and Silurian fossils at the falls of the Ohio for a national monument, it should be remembered that it was Rafinesque who first discovered them and reported their existence to scientists throughout the world.

We can hear William Maclure, ever ready for debate, give his opinion on various subjects. He was the visionary who frightened the pioneer countryside by advocating universal education and by financing workingmen's libraries.

And standing in a row, Robert Owen's progeny—whose combined contributions to our state are enormous: the talented Robert Dale Owen, statesman, educator, principal draftsman of our Constitution of 1851, advocate of social justice; David Dale Owen, great geologist, articulate scientist; Richard Owen, distinguished educator, long time teacher on this campus, and first president of Purdue University; William Owen, scientist, imaginative scholar. Four great sons, all became American citizens as did their bright and charming sister, Jane Owen Fauntleroy. Strange, it is, their mother never came from Scotland to be with them, but the Dale name and the strong blood line lingers on to this day.

And we catch the name of Clark on the map, General George Rogers Clark, the intrepid Virginia redhead, who, by sheer courage, wrested the western land from the British.



NEW HARMONY, DAVID DALE OWEN, 1830

Reproduced from R. C. Buley, *The Old Northwest: Pioneer Period, 1815-1840* (2 vols., Indianapolis, 1950), II.

STATUE OF GEORGE ROGERS CLARK, QUINCY, ILLINOIS

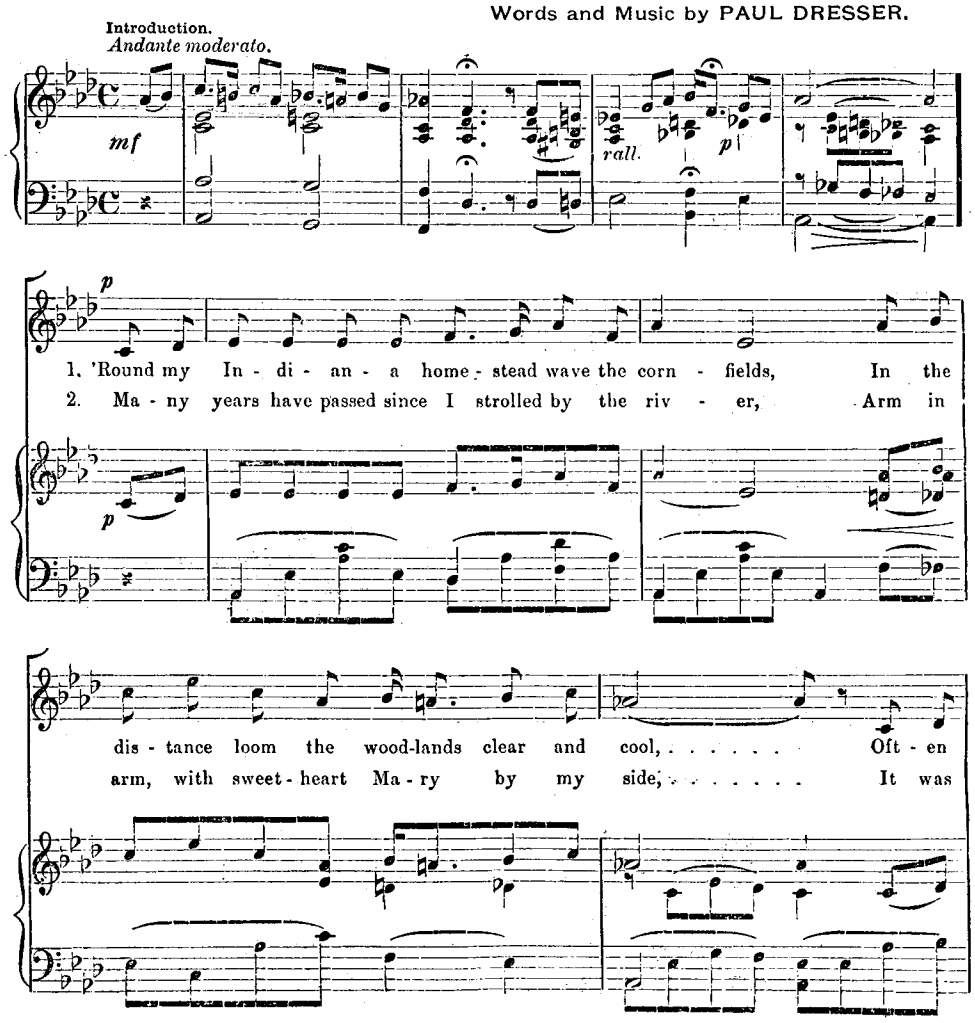
Reproduced from James A. James, *The Life of George Rogers Clark* (Chicago, 1928).

Respectfully inscribed to Miss Mary E. South, Terre Haute, Indiana.

ON THE BANKS OF THE WABASH, FAR AWAY.

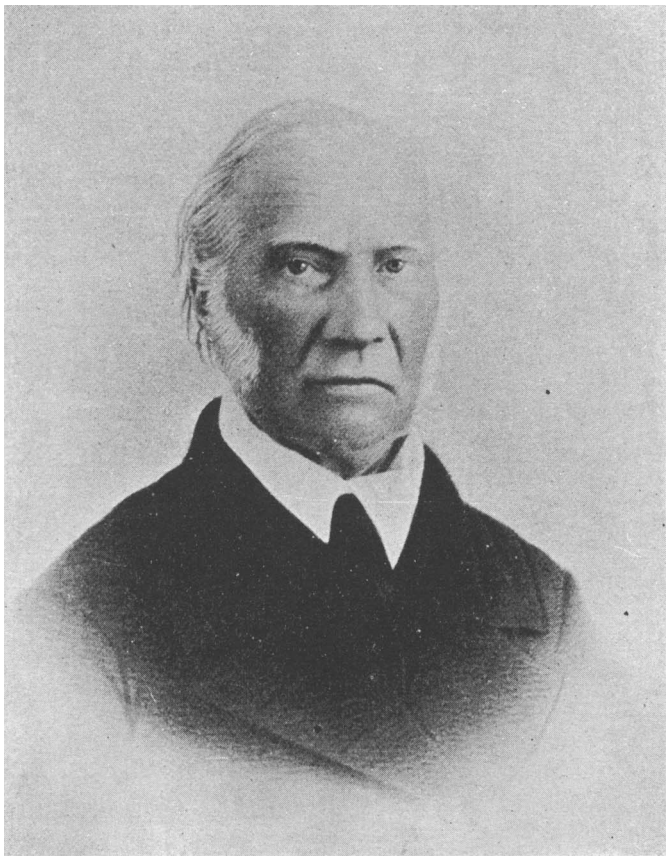
SONG and CHORUS.

Words and Music by PAUL DRESSER.



PORTION OF INDIANA STATE SONG

Reproduced from 1897 copy of sheet music.
Courtesy Lilly Library



ELIHU STOUT, FATHER OF THE HOOSIER PRESS

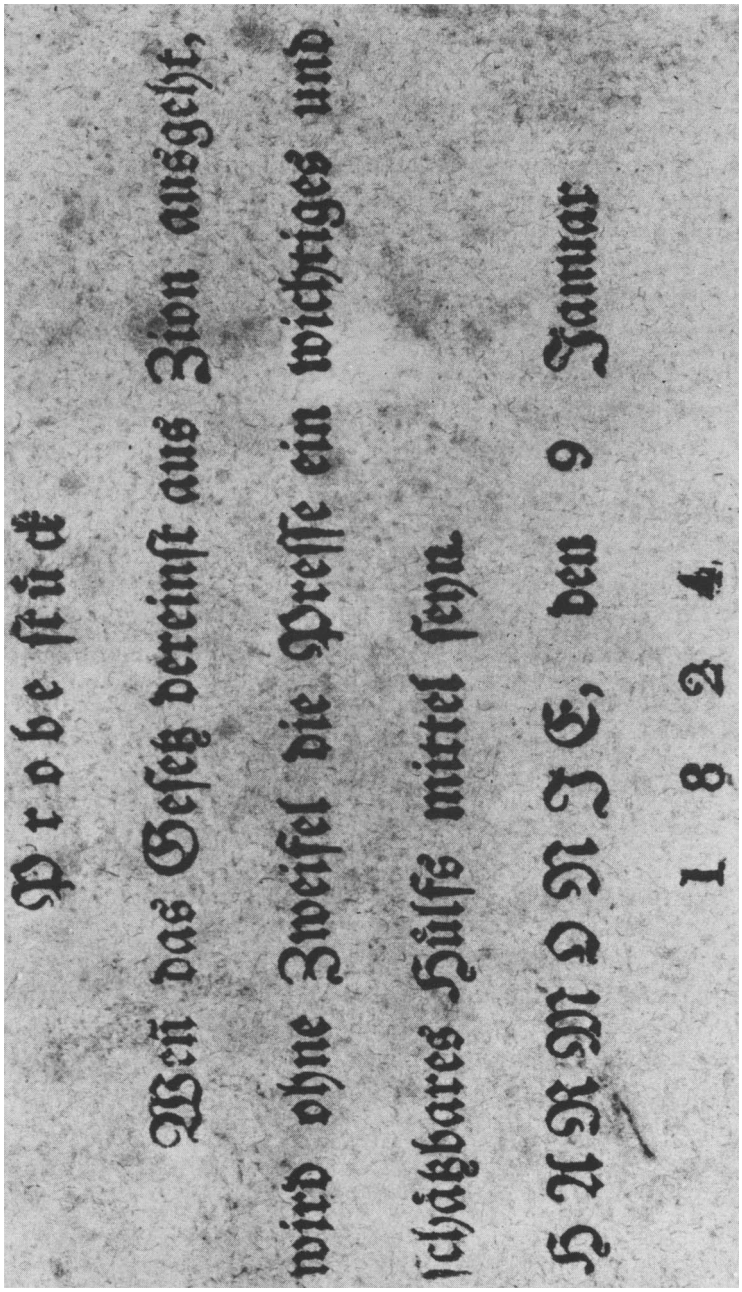
Reproduced from Daniel McDonald, *A History of Freemasonry in Indiana from 1806 to 1898* (Indianapolis, 1898).

What an exciting life—he had traveled the western country before he could vote; he knew the Kanawha, the Muskingum, the Miami, the Licking, like you know the streets of the city. So much has been told of him, we can see him as though he were striding by—restless, resourceful, strong, ambitious, as accurate with an expletive as he was with a long rifle. Respected among men but wasteful with his own talents, his days ended in bitterness and despair. But *enough* of that, I shall see him in my imagination as Colonel English, Mr. James, and Professor Lockridge pictured him at Kaskaskia or drenched by driving rains from Cahokia all the way east to Vincennes—the superb warrior of the woods, bringing the British to their knees.

Already a hero for fifty years, Francis Vigo is there on the map. This frontier tradesman was as sharp, they say, as any who ever sailed the China Sea, part pirate, part entrepreneur, but mostly true patriot. Without his financial aid the western cause would have been lost. But his patriotism, his faith in the young nation, is preserved forever in the county along the Wabash.

The Wabash—magic word to Hoosiers! Paul Dresser, who lived nearby as a boy, gave us our song. Dreaming one day in his home along the Hudson, he let nostalgia quicken him to the immortal "On the Banks of the Wabash"—the song that never fails to make a Hoosier heart skip a beat—whether he be at Shepheards in Cairo or hunting the Alaskan tundra.

As we turn another page, we are reminded that the books stir different and varied memories in each of us. It should not be otherwise. Thomas Carlyle said, "All that Mankind has done, thought, gained or been it is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of Books." There are, in the stroll down memory lane, dreams and hopes, contentment, excitement, happiness, and sadness for all. These are the rich dividends of the great storehouse of books and pieces of the past. Upon these we reflect—and weigh them and fit them into the course of useful lives.



Probe stück

Wenn das Gesetz vereinst aus Zion ausgeht,
wird ohne Zweifel die Presse ein wichtiges und
schätzbares Hülfsmittel seyn.

HARMONIE, den 9 Januar
1824.

EARLIEST SURVIVING ITEM FROM HARMONY SOCIETY PRESS, 1824
Courtesy Lilly Library

Why archives, the cynic says? Why preserve the relics of the past?

The obvious answer is that these furnish the scholar the most reliable source for continued study of the past. It recalls the adage that "Historians repeat each other more often than history repeats itself." But, the critic says, why history at all? Is it, as Mr. Ford once said, in a moment which should have been more guarded, pure bunk! Or was Master Shakespeare nearer right when he said, "What is past is prologue"? Is it true, as wise men have said, that any nation which fails to heed the mistakes of the past, is bound to repeat them?

The Constitution, the legislative journals, and the acts of the general assemblies in the catalog are instances in point. They cover virtually every subject—proof almost positive that there is nothing new under the sun. Political scientists would do well to keep an informed eye on the past in developing panaceas for progress.

Or the statute of the Territory Northwest of the River Ohio, once the domain of proud Virginia! Memory reminds us that Kentucky has title to the bed of the Ohio River to low-water mark on the northwest side, and its current significance is that the title and the line are now the subjects of litigation between the State of Ohio and the Commonwealth of Kentucky in the Supreme Court of the United States.

In a twinkle, we are off again in our garden of memories. Why was the line on the Indiana side? George Wythe, Benjamin Harrison and Patrick Henry and the House of Burgesses wanted it so. Control of the only sure pathway through the wilderness was vital in the course of empire.

And we see our own laws were then printed in Kentucky, at Lexington or Louisville. The journeymen printers had not yet brought their lead pots and cumbersome presses across the mountains. Soon we would see a John Scott, a Stout, a Kent, a Norman, or a Smith at Paoli, Corydon, or Vincennes with their presses. Kentucky imprints would shortly disappear.

Yes, archives are the lamps which help to illuminate the past, lighting the manners, the thoughts, the dreams, the progress of those who have gone before. They are the one faithful guide for the steps of the historian. They are the grist for the scholar's mill.

They do not, certainly, furnish the facts for the whole story of civilization—most of which is hidden in the mists of history. For that we look to the archaeologist—and the artifacts that he laboriously uncovers—the paleontologist, the geologist. But the archivists, who hold the writings and the graphic pieces of days gone by, can give to those who will look, an intimate and genuine view of the past.

Those who give of their bounty, their talent and time to so add to the storehouse of knowledge deserve eminence among men and the name of blessed. Mr. J. K. Lilly stands among them.