

The First Families of White Oak Springs

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White Oak Springs,¹ White River Township, Knox County, Indiana Territory, was the name of the pioneer community which in 1817 gave way to Petersburg, Washington Township, the county seat of Pike County, Indiana.² The change of center of the community, which in territorial days was the fort, and after state and county organization, the courthouse, was characteristic of the changing order of the times. The fort was built (at an unknown date preceding 1807) with other log buildings and surrounding stockade upon the slight eminence which was named for its unique combination of natural features, White Oak Springs. The courthouse site was chosen (1817) a mile to the east on a somewhat more commanding eminence. Both locations were directly upon the Buffalo Trace,³ with the bottom lands along Pride's Creek intervening.⁴ Although the community thus changed its name, and the site and character of its center of activity, the settlers of White Oak Springs were the same (with a few exceptions, and the addition of other pioneer settlers, of course) who became the citizens of Petersburg. This study will therefore treat the White Oak Springs-Petersburg community as one and its growth as continuous.⁵

Investigation reveals that the community underwent three changes in leadership and personnel by 1817. This was due to the three waves of immigration which washed over it in the general surge towards Vincennes. The first movement occurred during the eight or ten years immediately following the organization of Indiana Territory. It began just after the territorial government was set up in the old French

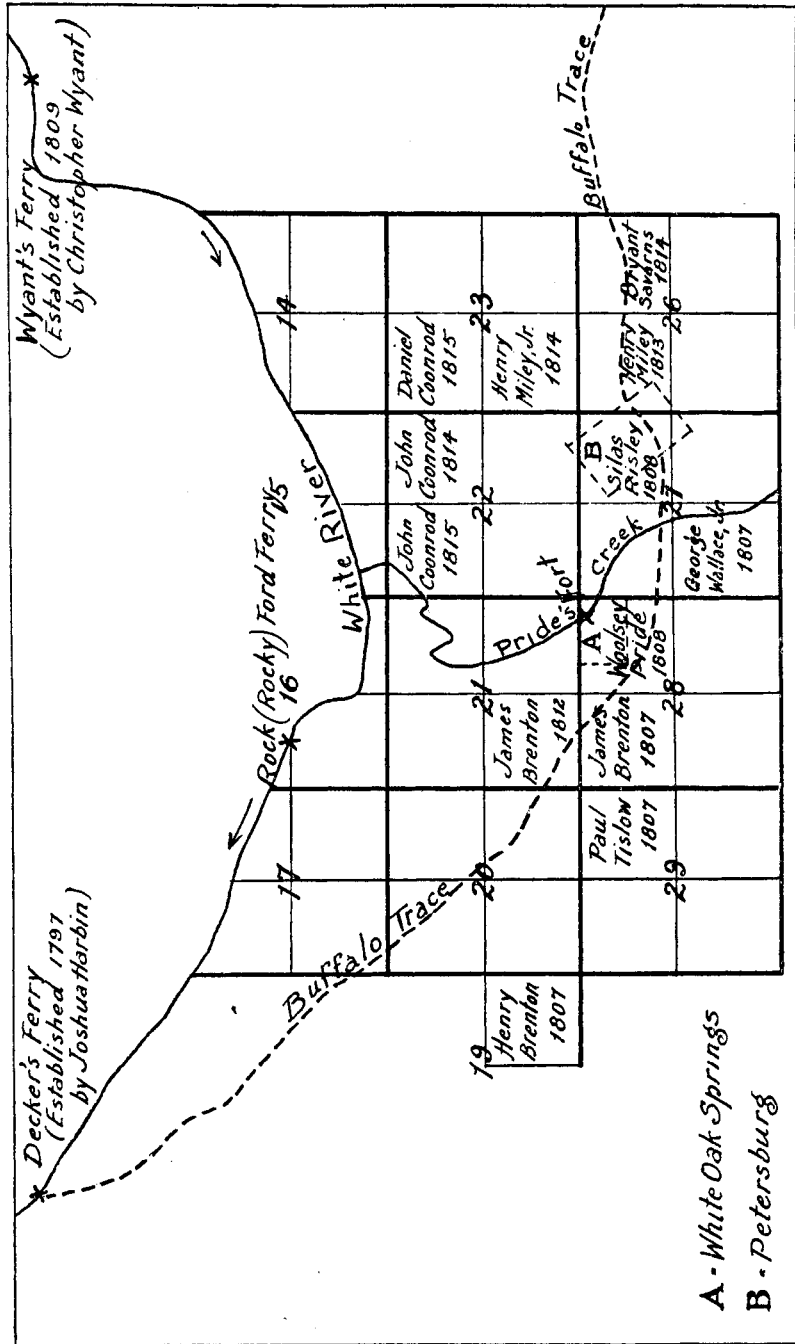
¹ The writers of this paper were stimulated to a study of the early history of Petersburg and its forerunner White Oak Springs by the frequent requests made at the City Library for information on the subject. Mrs. Jean, one of the authors of this article, has been Librarian of the City Library since its beginning in 1922. The purpose of this investigation has been to discover, through the use of source material, who were the first families of White Oak Springs, where they came from, and further details of historical and genealogical interest.

² Gibson County from 1813 to 1817.

³ Also called the Kentucky Road, the Vincennes Trace, the Clarksville Trace, and Harrison's Road. For the exact route, see George Wilson, *Early Indiana Trails and Surveys* (Indianapolis, 1919), 364. Mr. Wilson says: "Two thirds of all the early settlers who came to southern Indiana, west of Louisville, came over this route."

⁴ See map on next page. Drawn from Pike County Tract Book of 1817 (probably).

⁵ The corporation of Petersburg as now defined extends to within a few hundred feet of the White Oak Springs Quarter section line. Main street of Petersburg, following the route of the Buffalo Trace, ends and becomes State Road No. 56 near the south east corner of the White Oak Springs site.



town, and was no more than a mere trickling of adventurous souls through the wilderness of forests, Indians, and wild animals. The pioneers of this advance guard came mostly from the growing state of Kentucky, which had been permitted by Virginia to be made into the fifteenth member of the Union in 1792. The movement was given fresh stimulus by the Indian treaties of 1804 and the survey of Knox County lands in 1804-1805, which were followed by the opening of the federal land office at Vincennes. These steps in the opening of the territory offered a definite and two-fold promise of protection to prospective immigrants. By the treaties mentioned, all lands in Indiana Territory south of the Buffalo Trace and the Vincennes Tract were ceded to the United States, and personal safety was promised to settlers and travelers along the Trace. By the federal survey system, security of land titles was assured, a desirable condition not universally enjoyed by Kentucky landholders.

During the years from 1807 to 1810, there was a lull in the westward movement, and few permanent settlers arrived. Fresh Indian hostilities due to new boundary disagreements between the Indians and Governor Harrison, made the Trace almost impassable. Some who attempted to reach White Oak Springs were waylaid and murdered,⁶ a few who arrived were so unhappy that they returned to their former homes,⁷ and others who had planned to come either postponed their coming⁸ or did not come at all.

In the year 1811, however, activity was renewed on the Trace, and there began an influx of immigrants of a little different type from many of the early ones. Few of these were purely seekers of adventure, nor did they expect to accept the wilderness as it was. Land ownership, permanent homes, the cultivation of the soil, and the transplanting of the religious and social customs of their native states (mostly North Carolina and Virginia) were their immediate objectives. Some arrived during the Indian troubles preceding the Tippecanoe campaign, and many more in the succeeding months and years, when it seemed that the Indians were at

⁶ See William M. Cockrum, *Pioneer History of Indiana* (Oakland City, 1907), 201, for facts relating to the Larkins family.

⁷ See Goodspeed, *History of Pike and DuBois Counties* (Chicago, 1885), 407, for information in regard to the family of Richard Selby.

⁸ Cockrum, *Pioneer History*, 487. Elijah Malott.

last subdued, and travel and homesteading had become less hazardous, if not less difficult.

The third migration was that which was stimulated by the admission of Indiana to the Union as a state. The consequent formation of Pike County, the location of Petersburg as the county seat, and the organization of the new court and other machinery of local government attracted many new settlers into the community from various sources.

The first problem presented by this study was the reconstruction of the citizenry of White Oak Springs during its earliest period (1800 to 1810).⁹ This involved a long process of elimination in both time and space. The township being the smallest political unit of the period, township records were given first consideration.¹⁰ They revealed that White River Township of Knox County, the township in which White Oak Springs was located, had, in the elections¹¹ of 1809 for Representative and two Councillors to the Territorial Legislature, a total of 51 qualified voters.¹²

Land records were consulted, and they yielded the information that 1807 was the first year in which land patents were granted in the neighborhood, and that May 29 of that year was the exact date of the first land transaction.¹³ On that day Paul Tislow made his first declaration of claim to the Northeast Quarter of Section 29, Township 1 North, Range 8 West.¹⁴ On the following day, May 30, James Brenton registered his claim to the Northwest Quarter of Section 28 (immediately adjoining Tislow's tract), Woolsey Pride to the Northwest Quarter of Section 27, and Henry Brenton to the Southeast Quarter of Section 19.¹⁵ One other land patent

⁹ This report will confine itself as much as possible to the period previous to 1811. It is the purpose of the authors of this study to follow it up with two others bearing respectively upon the period from 1811 to 1816, and the year 1817.

¹⁰ Township figures do not admit of any satisfactory interpretation, due to the fact that township boundaries of that period have not been preserved.

¹¹ *Western Sun*, Vincennes, Feb. 11, April 15, 1809. Elections for White River Township were held at the home of James Robb, of the Hazleton neighborhood, and at that of Luke Decker, of the Decker settlement.

¹² John B. Dillon, *History of Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1859), 540, "The privilege of voting for members of the House of Representatives was restricted to those inhabitants who, in addition to other qualifications, owned, severally, at least fifty acres of land."

¹³ Transactions referred to in this paragraph, and other original land claims mentioned are recorded in the Pike County Tract Book.

¹⁴ Since Township 1 North, Range 8 West, is the location of most of the land mentioned in this paper, no township and range description will be given in later instances except for land lying outside this township.

¹⁵ Although the White Oak Springs quarter section (northwest quarter of section 28) was the site of his fort, and his original location, Woolsey Pride was not granted patent to it until 1808.

was granted in 1807 in the White Oak Springs Community. It was that of George Wallace, Jr., of Vincennes, to the Southwest Quarter of Section 27, adjoining Woolsey Pride's tract on the south.¹⁶ Wallace was a Vincennes merchant, a son-in-law of General John Gibson, the Secretary of Indiana Territory, and there is no evidence that he ever lived upon his White River Township land. Possibly he was the community's first land speculator.

In the year 1808 patents were granted for two tracts of land important to this study. The first was that of the White Oak Springs quarter-section (the Northeast Quarter of Section 28) to Woolsey Pride, and the second was the quarter section which was to become the site of Petersburg. This was the Northeast Quarter of Section 27, granted to Silas Risley. The original claimant assigned his claim to this quarter section to Peter Brenton, about 1812, who in turn donated it for the county seat of Pike County in 1817.

Between 1808 and 1816 about forty land patents were issued and recorded in (Congressional) Township 1 North, Range 8 West. The names of James and Henry Brenton appear among the purchasers, and the names of at least four others who were, beyond doubt, members of the White Oak Springs Community prior to 1810. They are John Coonrod, Daniel Coonrod, Henry Miley, and Henry Miley Jr.

Land records are unreliable, however, for the purpose of establishing the actual citizenry of any given place in that period, inasmuch as it was not uncommon procedure for the settler to squat upon the land of his choice and take no legal steps to establish his claim until forced by competition to do so. It is therefore doubtless true that some of the settlers who acquired title to their lands as late as 1814 and 1816 had actually lived upon them for a number of years.

Marriage records are useful in reconstructing the names and relationships of the younger generation. Henry Brenton, the first Justice of the Peace for White River Township, Knox County, performed the following marriages of residents of his bailiwick in 1809:

George Coonrod to Betsy Miley
Robert Brenton to Betsy Pride
Thomas Pride to Caty Miley
Jeremiah Arnold to Barbary Coonrod

¹⁶ See map.

In addition to township census figures, land records and marriage records, a precious document in the office of the Auditor of Knox County seems to conclude the evidence bearing upon the list of citizens of the White Oak Springs community of 1810 and earlier. This document is a petition to the Knox County Court, April term, 1810, for a road which would cut off several miles of the dangerous trip from White Oak Springs to Vincennes. It reads as follows:

To the Court of Common Pleas of Knox County—The petition of the undersigned householders of the township of White River pray that a road may be laid out commencing at the White Oak Springs and thence the nearest and best way to the rock fording on the white river four miles above John Decker's ferry.

Woolsey Pride
Daniel Rizley
Thos. Walker
Jacob Schearmahon
Thomas Pride
James Brenton
Peter Brenton
Silas Risley
David Miley
Robert Brenton
John Coonrod
Jeremiah Arnold
Henry Brenton
Wm. Coleman
Page M. Coleman
Henry Coleman

This list of petitioners is the most valuable contemporary record of the settlers of White Oak Springs in the period before 1810, and the authors of this study are of the opinion that it is an almost complete roster of the families whose common interests centered immediately about Woolsey Pride's fort. It has its omissions, but none of them is a serious drawback to the reconstruction of the community, inasmuch as every family represented on it is also represented on other records. It is difficult to understand the failure to sign it of Paul Tislow, young George Coonrod, and the two Henry Mileys, father and son. The presence of Jeremiah Arnold's name is, on the other hand, puzzling. He did not at that time nor later

own land in Township 1 North, Range 8 West.¹⁷ Both his stepfather, Bryant Savarns, and his father-in-law, John Coonrod, became owners of land in this township, however, and it is entirely probable that he and his bride were living upon a quarter section held or claimed by one or the other of these.

Based, therefore, upon research to date, the authors of this paper submit the names of Pride, Risley, Walker, Schearmahon, Brenton, Miley, Coonrod, Arnold, and Coleman, as revealed by the White Oak Springs Road petition, and that of Tislow, as established by land record, as those belonging to the First Families of White Oak Springs, White River Township, Knox County, Indiana Territory, in the Year of Our Lord, one thousand eight hundred ten.

It is entirely fitting that Woolsey Pride's name should head the list of signers of the White Oak Springs Road petition. It establishes him in the role that tradition has assigned him—the leader and moving spirit of White Oak Springs. The authors of this study have very few facts to add to the mass of traditional information generally accepted in regard to Mr. Pride. The year 1800 is believed to be the date of his settlement at White Oak Springs, but it was not until September, 1806, that his name appeared on any public record. This reveals his service on the jury panel of the September term of 1806 of the Knox County Court of Common Pleas, and as foreman in the case of *Jacob Schearmahon v. John Patman*.¹⁸ Beginning in the year 1808, his name began to occupy a frequent place on the unclaimed letters listed published by the Vincennes Post Office, the spelling of his given name usually being Wilsey, but sometimes Wolsey.¹⁹ His land claims in Township 1 North, Range 8 West, 1807 and 1808, have been mentioned in a previous paragraph.

The most reliable and the most valuable information in regard to Woolsey Pride and his fort has been preserved by Colonel William N. Cockrum in letters of Captain Hargrove, commanding officer of one of the three divisions of the Rangers of Indiana Territory in 1807.²⁰ These letters are

¹⁷ Jeremiah Arnold did not become a land owner until 1818, and then chose his homestead about seven miles east of White Oak Springs in Township 1 North, Range 7 West, Section 8, Northeast Quarter.

¹⁸ Order Book, General Court of Indiana Territory.

¹⁹ *Western Sun*, Vincennes, Oct. 8, 1808, and later issues.

²⁰ Cockrum, *Pioneer History*, 202-229.

chiefly orders and instructions to Captain Hargrove from General John Gibson, Secretary of Indiana Territory. Statements in these letters indicate very plainly that by June 1807, the fort at White Oak Springs, under the ownership and direction of Woolsey Pride, was a well patronized stop-over for travelers on the Trace, a place of refuge for settlers from miles around, and headquarters and ammunition depot for the rangers of Captain Hargrove's division, and altogether, a populous, busy, and important place.

From out of the maze of tradition in which Woolsey Pride moves as original pioneer, Indian fighter, and mighty hunter, the authors of this study have extracted few substantiated facts about the personality of the man, and none as to whence he came, whom he married, or the numbers of his family. He deserted White Oak Springs in 1812 for the less thickly settled part of the woods which is now Jefferson Township, Pike County (adjoining Washington Township to the east). He was accompanied or shortly followed in this move by Thomas Pride, who is supposed to have been his brother. This is without question the same Thomas who married Caty Miley in 1809, who registered his first land claim to the Northeast Quarter of Section 18, Township 1 North, Range 6 West (in the present Jefferson Township) in 1814, and who died in 1857, leaving the following heirs, besides the widow: Henry Pride, Woolsey Pride, Thomas G. Pride, Joel Strong, Permenes Palmer, William Rhodarmel, and the heirs of William Russel and E. G. Hayes. (The authors interpret the three heirs named Pride to be the sons of Thomas, the heirs of William Russell and E. G. Hayes to be grandchildren, and the other three mentioned, either grandchildren or the husbands of deceased daughters.) It is impossible to read the life of Woolsey Pride from the records as it is that of Thomas for two reasons. First, there are records missing (his estate papers, and others), and second, the records available may refer to the Woolsey Pride who was his nephew, or to a son, Woolsey Pride, Jr.

The following names upon early marriage records indicate that Woolsey Pride either had a large family of his own, or that he was well favored by the presence in the neighborhood of his sisters and his cousins and his aunts:

Betsy Pride to Robert Brenton, 1809
Nancy Pride to Henry Miley, 1811
Hannah Pride to Jeremiah Kinman, 1816
Benjamin Pride to Catherine Taylor, 1822
Mary Pride to Peter Wilson, 1824
Sally Pride to Peter Miley, 1830
Frances Pride to John Russell, 1830
Mary Pride to John Harvey, 1830

There was a William Pride who served in the same company of Territorial Militia with Woolsey Pride and others of the White Oak Springs settlement at the Battle of Tippecanoe, Nov. 7, 1811.²¹ Beyond a search of the records, the authors have made no attempt to unscramble the Pride relationships. The influence of the family as such was transferred from White Oak Springs about 1812, to the community which was to become Jefferson Township, and therefore came to center about the town of Otwell. Descendants of the early members of the family are still numerous and influential in that neighborhood, and the study of their genealogy relates more closely to the history of that township than to the Petersburg community.

Efforts to trace the Pride Family to some previous location have been fruitless. The name was a common one in Virginia, and early county records bear frequent coincidence of given names or other clues to suggest connection between them and the Prides of White Oak Springs.

It seems pertinent at this point to take up the Coleman family, whose menfolk signed their names at the foot of the White Oak Springs Road petition. Woolsey Pride's name at the head, the Colemans at the foot, was a singularly appropriate order, inasmuch as it was at Pride's fort that the road was to begin, and at the Colemans' ferry that it was to terminate.

The Colemans were the keepers of the Rocky Ford ("Rock Ford") ferry.²² William was the petitioner for it, according to his notice in the *Western Sun* of May 6, 1809, which reads as follows:

May 4, 1809, Notice

I intend to apply to the next November term of the Court of Common Pleas for the county of Knox and Indiana Territory

²¹ *Ibid.* 290. See for a roll of the army that served at the battle of Tippecanoe.

²² Rocky Ford is the currently accepted name for this shallow place in White River. Rock Fording, Rockey Ford, and Rock Ford were early variations.

to establish a ferry on White River below the mouth of Pride's Creek at a place known by the name of Rock Ford.

Wm. Coleman.

Considering together the fact that William Coleman was the ferry petitioner and that his name preceded those of Page M. and Henry Coleman on the White Oak Springs Road petition, one arrives at the inference that William was the father, or at least the elder male of the family.²³ He was, moreover, the first of the Colemans to be mentioned in any record. This was when he served as ensign in the territorial militia in 1807 under Lieutenant Henry Brenton.²⁴

It appears that the Colemans were members of a large Virginia family of that name who came into Indiana from Kentucky and settled in various localities in the country which is now included in Pike and Gibson counties. The Virginia census of 1872 shows one Suttan Coleman, head of a family of six, residing in Amelia County, Virginia, and the same name appears also upon the rolls of Captain Walter Wilson's Company of Territorial Militia which served at Tippecanoe.²⁵ The repetition of this somewhat odd combination of given and family names seems unlikely to be an insignificant coincidence. It appears probable that the Suttan Coleman of the Indiana militia was related both to the Virginia family and to the Indiana family. His enrollment in Governor Harrison's army in the same company with the men of White Oak Springs is not conclusive evidence, however, that he himself was a member of the community. The company was made up of forty-eight men, only about seven of whom are known certainly to be of the White Oak Springs group.²⁶ Others were recruited from points east and west.

A fascinating subject for speculation, and perhaps a departure point for further research, is to be found in the fact that the census returns of Amelia County, Virginia, 1782, record a number of heads of families by the names of both Pride and Coleman. It is easy to imagine that the "Odyssey" of the Prides and the Colemans from Virginia to Indiana *via* Kentucky was a common project, or at least that they may

²³ James Brenton's signature just ahead of that of his son, Peter's, and John Coonrod's before that of his son-in-law, Jeremiah Arnold, indicate that the precedence of the elder member of the family was observed.

²⁴ *Executive Journal*, Indiana Territory, August 20, 1807.

²⁵ Cockrum, *Pioneer History*, 290.

²⁶ Daniel Risley and Peter Brenton, corporals; Woolsey Pride, Joab Chappell, John Risley, William Brenton, and Robert Brenton, privates.

have been acquainted in Virginia, and that the influence of one upon the other may have accounted for their settlement in the same neighborhood in Indiana Territory.

The Colemans were prolific contributors to the population of Pike County for a period of more than fifty years. They were not landowners at an early date, however, apparently indifferent to the advantages of title-holding until after 1820. From that year until about 1844, there were at least nine of them,²⁷ six besides the three on the White Oak Springs Road petition who became landowners in Pike County.

In numbers the Coleman family has steadily decreased since about 1875 in the neighborhood of Petersburg. Within the memory of the writers of this paper, two families carried the name who believed themselves related to the original settlers, but the members have been reduced by death and removal to a single person.²⁸

The Risley family, besides the Daniel Risley and the Silas Risley who were signers of the White Oak Springs Road petition, included at least one other adult male member, John. The relationship between the three men is not established. Silas was the first to get on record. This was in 1808, the year in which he was married to Catherine Adams, and acquired his first land. This was the historic Northeast Quarter of Section 27, which he later assigned to Peter Brenton, and which Peter Brenton in 1817 deeded to the Commissioners of Pike County for the location of the county seat.

John Risley, who was a native of New Jersey, and his wife, Margaret, of Virginia, were married in the latter state. Their children, however, James and William, were born in the Indiana settlement. The birth date of William is not known, but James was born on June 7, 1811, at the Risley homestead on the above mentioned tract of land belonging to Silas.²⁹ The presence of the new baby in the home did not prevent the father from enlisting in the army of General Harrison on September 18 of that year.³⁰ He served as a private

²⁷ Samuel, Ambrose, James Marion, Samuel D., Coonrod, and John Coleman.

²⁸ Mr. W. B. Coleman of Gary, Indiana, says that the members of the two families mentioned, his own, and that of his father's cousin, Hicks Coleman, believe themselves related to, if not descended, from the three Colemans whose names were on the White Oak Springs road petition, but the lineage is not clear. No inquiry has yet been made to determine whether the Coleman families of the south part of Pike County are their descendants.

²⁹ Goodspeed, *History of Pike and DuBois Counties*, 451, 452. See for a biography of James Risley.

³⁰ Cockrum, *Pioneer History*, 290.

and Daniel Risley as a corporal in Captain Wilson's company, as mentioned earlier in connection with Suttan Coleman and others.

Several Risley families still live in Pike County, but according to the word of two very well informed members of these families, their ancestral line has not been preserved, and they can not positively identify themselves as descendents of the pioneer Risleys. With one or two exceptions, these families have made their homes in the south part of the County, and their members have resided in the county seat town only temporarily while engaged in teaching, or holding county office.

Little as research has yielded in regard to the Risleys, the reward has been even less in regard to Thomas Walker and Jacob Schearmahon. They remain little more than names. The records are extremely reticent. Neither was a landowner, nor did either one take out a marriage license or become a member of the territorial militia. The sole mention of Jacob Schearmahon³¹ outside the appearance of his signature on the White Oak Springs road petition, was in the court records of Knox County and of Indiana Territory.³² There he appeared both as plaintiff and defendant.

Thomas Walker failed even as much distinction as Schearmahon. There were other Walkers on contemporary records, however. They located in that part of the Territory which was at first a part of Knox (to 1813), then of Gibson (to 1817), then of Pike (1817), and finally of Du Bois County.³³ One of these, Jonathan Walker, proved his interest in White Oak Springs by his marriage in 1811 to Polly Brenton, a daughter of James Brenton.³⁴ Serving, moreover, in the same militia company with the Brentons, Prides, Risleys, and others of the White Oak Springs neighborhood, were Isaac, John, Benjamin and James Walker.³⁵ From these facts it seems reasonable to believe that Thomas Walker may have been of the same family, a familiar of the White Oak Springs settlers, and probably a temporary resident of the community.

³¹ Order Book, General Court of Indiana Territory, spells the name *Scamahorn*. Goodspeed, *Pike and DuBois Counties*, spells it *Scallerhern*.

³² Order Book, General Court of Indiana Territory, September term, 1806, April term, 1807.

³³ George R. Wilson, *History of DuBois County* (Jasper, 1910), 38.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 125. This man became a famous fighter, champion of both Pike and DuBois counties.

³⁵ Cockrum, *Pioneer History*, 290.

Jacob Schearmahon appears to have been the sole bearer of his name in the community and there is scarcely ground for speculation concerning him. Neither in his case nor that of Thomas Walker did the authors of this study locate descendants, or learn of family traditions, or discover any other information with which to enliven the county records.³⁶

It is pleasant to turn from speculation in regard to such unknowns as Thomas Walker and Jacob Schearmahon to the consideration of a man whose cycle of vital statistics is so nearly complete as that of Jeremiah Arnold. As step-son, as husband, as father, and as ancestor, there is a great deal of satisfying evidence relating to the twelfth signer of the White Oak Springs Road petition. His name has been generously distributed among a large number of his descendants living in and near Petersburg, and it lives, moreover, in the institutions which have grown up in the immediate neighborhood of his homestead.

Jeremiah Arnold was the "dearly beloved" step-son of Bryant Savarns, so-called in his step-father's will, and named by him to be administrator of his estate in preference to sons of his own.³⁷ As previously explained in the general discussion of the signers of the White Oak Springs Road petition, it was Bryant Savarns who had entered land in the White Oak Springs community, and not Jeremiah Arnold.³⁸ But it was Jeremiah Arnold who put his name to the historic document, who married into the community, and who left sons and daughters to continue his name from that day to the present.

It was not until 1818 that Jeremiah Arnold was granted a patent to the farm which became his permanent homestead. This was the Northeast Quarter of Section 8, Township 1 North, Range 7 West, on the Buffalo Trace about seven miles east of White Oak Springs. On this farm, he and his wife, the Barbary Coonrod to whom he had been married by Squire Henry Brenton in 1809, and their growing family, lived out the remaining twenty years of his lifetime.

³⁶ This inquiry has not established whether or not the Walker and Scammerhorn families who reside in the southern part of Pike County are descended from these men.

³⁷ Pike County Probate Record, 1829. Bryant Savarns was one of the family of John Severns (Savarns) who had settled on the Patoka River (near the present site of Princeton) in 1790. Gibson and Pike County records show members of this family signing themselves Savarns, Severns, Savarns, Soverns, and Soverigns, the same person using different spellings for different signatures.

³⁸ See map, section 26, northeast quarter.

In a will prepared with evident anxiety to do the right and generous thing by all his heirs, Jeremiah Arnold left to his "beloved Barbary" all his property and money and a life interest in his lands with instructions that each son staying at home until twenty-one should be furnished with a horse, and each daughter, on the same condition, \$20. After the death of his widow, "the remains of his substance" should be equally divided among the surviving children.³⁹

A great many of the descendants of William, Jackson, Josiah, Aaron, Marion, Richard, Delilah, Sally, and Polly Arnold, the sons and daughters of Jeremiah and Barbary Arnold, have made their homes in Petersburg, and so do at the present time. In the main, however, they have remained a race of farmers, and have populated the Arnold neighborhood, attended the Arnold School and the Arnold Church, and have been buried in the Arnold Graveyard.⁴⁰

The simple history of Jeremiah Arnold is in sharp contrast to the ramifications with which the Brenton family history is complicated. Evidence from public records points to the conclusion that the Brenton name owes its continuance in the community of White Oak Springs and Petersburg to three men who were possibly brothers, James, Henry, and Robert Brenton, whose names were affixed to the White Oak Springs Road petition. The fourth Brenton whose name appeared on the petition, Peter, son of James, is one who has acquired more fame than that of all the others put together, due to the perpetuation of his name in *Petersburg*. There were also two others by the name who were residents of the community or thereabouts: William, who left an estate but no heirs at his death in 1815; and James A., an old man when he died in 1842 without property and without heirs. These five seem to complete the list of the older generation who settled about White Oak Springs. There must have been, however, among the second generation, several boys and girls almost or quite grown up according to the standards of pioneer thought when the families arrived in Indiana. Peter Brenton, son of James, served as corporal in the territorial militia in 1811;⁴¹ Robert married Betsy Pride in 1809; Polly,

³⁹ Pike County Will Records. Probated February 18, 1839.

⁴⁰ The authors of this study are deeply indebted to Mrs. B. C. Ornbaum, of Petersburg (the former Miss Lena Arnold), who has supplied them with all the information included in this study of her ancestor, except that which is a matter of public record.

⁴¹ Cockrum, *Pioneer History*, 290.

daughter of James, married Jonathan Walker in 1811; and as early as 1822, Henry, son of James, had died and left his widow, the former Elizabeth Coonrod, with four infants under eleven.⁴²

There was still another family of Brentons, however, that made a stop-over of some years "somewhere in Knox County" and located finally in Johnson and Marion counties.⁴³ Their settlement was probably north of White River, perhaps in Harrison Township, as their address remained Knox County after the date of the formation of Pike County. Their presence would be of no significance in connection with this paper, except that their names were Henry and Robert, which creates the possibility that some of the names of the Knox County and Territorial records may have belonged to them rather than to the Brentons of White Oak Springs. This fact completes the complications of the Brenton relationships, already bristling with difficulties of "Which Robert?" and "Which Henry?". They came from a family, it is of interest to note, bearing almost exactly the same names as the family of James Brenton of White Oak Springs, except that there were more of them. Their group included Peter, Mary, Charity, James, William, Robert, and Nancy. They were the children, moreover, of another James, who was killed in Kentucky in the course of Revolutionary War service.

The authors of this study sincerely wish that the Brentons had used more imagination in choosing names for their children. It would be a relief to come across an Ethelbert or a Harold; or to find that some such differentiation had been made in the early generations as became necessary in later generations to distinguish the Johns, as "Red" John and "Black" John.

The Brenton families came to the White Oak Springs settlement from Mercer County, Kentucky, according to family tradition, in 1803. A numerous clan of that name (spelled sometimes *Brenton* and sometimes *Brinton*) had been residents of the central part of Kentucky now comprising the counties of Lincoln, Boyle, Mercer, Anderson, Franklin, and

⁴² The marriage record of this couple has eluded the authors, but the marriage must have occurred before 1811.

⁴³ Information in regard to this family was furnished by Mrs. Almeda Brenton Harpel, 511 W. 29th St., Des Moines, Iowa, a descendant of the Henry Brenton mentioned. This Henry Brenton was a minister and removed from Knox County to Johnson County and later to Marion County (about 1821 or 1822).

Shelby, since before the Revolution, and their names appeared frequently upon the county records.⁴⁴

A few of the record entries are of quotable interest, as revealing somewhat of the names and possessions of members of the family who may, or may not, in some instances, have been the same persons who migrated later to Indiana.

The taxable property lists of Shelby County for 1795 included:

Joseph Brinton, 7 cattle, 141 acres
James Brenton, 1 horse, 7 cattle
John Brenton, 1 horse, 6 cattle, 200 acres
Henry Brenton, 1 horse, 11 cattle, Gisses Creek, 167 acres
Robert Brenton, none.

The taxable property list of Mercer County for 1795, shows the following:

Robert Brenton, 5 cattle, no horses, no blacks.

A Lincoln County entry of 1782 records a Brenton land deal:

Henry Brenton, 338 & $\frac{3}{4}$ acres, N. Fk. Rowling Fk.

The Shelby County marriage bonds of 1793 list a Brenton marriage:

Henry Brenton to Mistress Hannah Gin.

By these records it is plain to be seen that the confusion of Henrys noted in the Indiana group is a complication characteristic of the Kentucky clan also.

The writers of this paper are not content to have traced the Brentons as far back as Kentucky. (Doubtless the only happy genealogist is the one in the current news who has traced the lineage of her family from her own generation straight back to Adam and Eve.) Considerable research has been done without definite reward to find a clue to previous locations of the family. There seem to be two possibilities: one that the Brentons came from the Brintons of Pennsylvania (this spelling was not determined until late times), a large and prominent family of Quaker descent which had flourished around Philadelphia since about the middle of the eighteenth

⁴⁴ County boundaries were in process of change for a number of years after the admission of Kentucky to the Union, and neither Mercer County nor any of the other counties mentioned are the same now as then.

century;⁴⁵ and a second, that they are descended from the original Virginia settler of that name, John Brinton, who was transported to this country from England by Captain John Seward, landing July 1, 1635.⁴⁶ The inclination is to believe that the latter theory of origin is the more acceptable.⁴⁷

But to return to the Brentons of Indiana—the James and Henry and Robert who fathered the generations of Petersburg. The evidence suggests that James (1764-1836) was the patriarch of the family. His military record closed in 1782,⁴⁸ indicating that he was content to let Henry and Peter and others uphold the family honor when Governor Harrison was recruiting rangers in 1807 and thenceforward. At this time (1807) James Brenton was forty-three years old, the father of a family of grown and half grown children, and a veteran of the War for Independence. What wonder that he was willing to let the young blades do the Indian fighting while he attended to his manifold personal duties in the new settlement?

There is a very significant piece of evidence, however, which indicates that James Brenton was by no means completely engrossed in his own affairs, but that on the contrary, he was giving of his time and talents to affairs of public interest and importance. It reveals him, moreover, as a man of intelligence and education, a student of civil law and political philosophy, and a constructive critic of the territorial government and legislation.

The evidence referred to is a news item printed in the *Western Sun* of August 29, 1807, being an account of a "meeting of a number of citizens South of White River at Mr. James Brinton's" at which resolutions were passed for the purpose

⁴⁵ Frequent mention of members of this family is to be found in almost every volume of the records of the Pennsylvania Genealogical Society. Clarence Cresson Brinton is one of the society's present officers.

⁴⁶ *A List of Virginia Settlers*, VII, 304.

⁴⁷ The writers have not learned of any Quaker names or traditions among the Indiana Brentons. Certain members of the family believe, moreover, that there was a strong strain of Irish blood among their ancestors, and cite their red hair and fiery temperaments for evidence. These tendencies as to appearance and disposition do not characterize all the members of the family, but they seem to occur at a certain rate of frequency in each generation.

⁴⁸ James Brenton's pension claim, W. 2518, "While a resident of Virginia, he enlisted and served as private with the Virginia troops as follows: from August or September, 1780, served more than one month as Private under Captain Peter A. Sturgus and Colonel George Rogers Clark, and was in an engagement with the Shawnee Indians at Picqua; in 1781, one month as private under Captain Ambrose Gordon, and one month as private under Captain Ellison; in 1782 he served three terms amounting to more than three months in all as private under Captains Joseph Kincaid, Samuel Kirkham, and Colonel Benjamin Logan, and was in General George Rogers Clark's expedition."

of influencing territorial legislators to favor certain proposed laws and oppose others, having to do with the freedom of elections, the practice of law, and the authorization of arbitrations.⁴⁹ Ephraim Jordan of Vincennes⁵⁰ presided at this meeting, and James Brinton signed it as clerk. By methods explained in this news item, James Brenton was undoubtedly making a valuable contribution to the progress of government in Indiana Territory, a rarer one, certainly, than if he had been actively engaged in Indian fighting. That his type was all too infrequent is borne out by the political blunderings of the period.

James Brenton's family, children of his first wife, Catherine, who signed his deeds as late as 1818, included Peter and Henry (called Henry, Jr.), Polly and Charity, and a third daughter whose name has eluded the writers. Henry died in 1822, as already mentioned, leaving a widow, the former Elizabeth Coonrod, and four children, John, Robert, Katherine, and William Henry. Polly married Jonathan Walker in 1811, Charity married James Harris in 1818, and the third daughter who preceded her father in death, married Jacob Harbison.⁵¹ In 1830 James Brenton remarried, and left the second wife, Mary Ainley, to receive his Revolutionary pension at his death in 1836.

Judged by the standards of public service, Henry Brenton was the most distinguished member of the original generation of the Brenton family which settled around White Oak Springs. Though he died before James, he lived a much more fully recorded life. From 1807, when he was appointed Justice of the Peace for White River Township, Knox County,⁵² until his death in 1824, he was prominent in public affairs. In the same year that he was appointed Justice, he was also appointed Lieutenant in the Second Battalion of the First Regiment of the Knox County Militia.⁵³ In 1817 he was appointed Associate Judge of the Pike County Circuit Court

⁴⁹ These resolutions, printed in their entirety in the *Western Sun*, suggest a few of the constitutional and governmental problems arising under the territorial government. They are extremely interesting, but scarcely pertinent enough to this paper to justify quotation.

⁵⁰ *Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison*, Logan Esarey, editor, 236. Jordan was a citizen of Vincennes. His public service as justice of the peace, Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, and as an officer of the militia extended from 1790 to his death in 1820.

⁵¹ Wilson, *DuBois County*, 36. All three of these men were listed as heads of families in the 1820 census.

⁵² *Executive Journal*, Indiana Territory, August 15, 1807.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, August 20, 1807.

and held that office until his death. When he died in 1822, he left a complete and detailed will relating to the division and disposition of his lands and personal property to his five children, four of whom were girls.

In addition to the widow, Polly (who remarried in 1825 before the settlement of his estate), Henry Brenton's heirs were his eldest daughter, Patsey, the wife of John Borders; Betsey, who married William Beck in 1825; Polly, who married James Fowler in 1824; Sary, a minor child for whom John Borders was appointed guardian and who later married Hugh Shaw; and Henry, his only son, who was named executor of his estate.

It is at this point in the Brenton history that the authors of this study have been utterly confounded by the many Henrys. Three marriage licenses issued to Henry Brentons between 1816 and 1820;⁵⁴ the use of the title Jr. by Henry, son of James, rather than by Henry, son of Henry (though perhaps also by the latter); the possible presence in the county, as mentioned above, of a third Henry, distantly related, or unrelated, to whom records might refer—these are a few pieces of the jig-saw puzzle of the Brenton genealogy. Until further facts are discovered which fit with these, the puzzle can not be solved.

Concerning Robert Brenton, the third of the Brenton family heads to be treated here, there appears to be a singular lack of information. He died in 1842, leaving nine children to inherit his lands and other property. Although five of these were boys, Peter, William, John, Kursey and Robert (remarkable to note, no Henry), the writers have not located any Brentons of the present generation who trace their ancestry to them. One daughter, Pamela, married Job Chappell, and another daughter, Milly, married William Coleman. Two other daughters, Katherine and Narcissa, were still unmarried at the time of their father's death. All other records, besides that of the probate record from which the above information was gleaned, from which information might be extracted concerning Robert Brenton, may, for all the authors

⁵⁴ Pike County Marriage Records;

Henry Brenton to Mary Borders, 1816.

Henry Brenton to Matilda Parker, 1819.

Henry Brentin to Susan Borders, 1820.

(None of these could refer to Henry, son of James. These dates come too close to the date of his death, 1822, when he left a widow, the former Elizabeth Coonrod, and three orphans.)

of this study have been able to learn, refer to Robert Brenton, Jr. No distinction is made between the father and son, and one can only speculate as to which one married Betsy Pride in 1809, served in the army of General Harrison at the Battle of Tippecanoe,⁵⁵ or acted as coroner of Pike County in 1822.

The authors should perhaps acknowledge the answer, or part-answer, which the Robert Brenton family made to their prayer for imaginative names. Kursey, Narcissa, and Pamela, have a strange and charming ring in the midst of the Henrys, Pollys, Charitys, and Betsys. Still stranger, but less romantic was the name which came into the family by the marriage of Robert Brenton's son John. The authors of this study could not believe their eyes when they saw it first upon the marriage record, John Brenton to Degeneracy Caldwell. Its reappearance upon later deeds and other records, however, dispelled their doubts. For homely and unconventional names, the writers nominate this name *Degeneracy* for the blue ribbon, the brown derby, or what have you in the way of first prizes.

Peter Brenton, the eldest son of James Brenton, is the only member of the second generation of the family who signed his name to the White Oak Springs Road petition. It seems that Peter Brenton had that happy faculty of being in the midst of community activities. By virtue of this, and particularly of his part in the land transaction which gave his name to Petersburg, he has seemed to collect most of the honors of the family to himself. With but two exceptions, the members of the family interviewed in the preparation of this paper all claimed descent from him. That some of them are in error as to their true ancestry seems sure, inasmuch as James left one other male heir besides Peter, Henry one, and Robert, five. Without proof to the contrary, it seems inevitable that a number of the present generation are descended from other Brentons and not from Peter.

Peter Brenton was probably but a stripling when his family came to Indiana, but he was evidently recognized as a householder when he signed the White Oak Springs Road petition in 1810⁵⁶ and was of militia age in 1811 when he

⁵⁵ Cockrum, *Pioneer History*, 290.

⁵⁶ This would seem to indicate that he was married, but his first marriage record has not been discovered.

served as a corporal in the Tippecanoe campaign.⁵⁷ At an unrecorded time between 1811 and 1816, he received from Silas Risley title to the land which he donated to Pike County for the county seat in 1817.⁵⁸ He was married first to Eleanor Smith, the Nellie who signed his early deeds, and after her death to Elizabeth Johnson. He died in 1851, leaving five children and three grandchildren as his heirs, the children being Peter, Wesley, George, John W., and Nanny, the wife of J. O. N. Selby.

This account of Peter Brenton closes the very sketchy and incomplete history of the Brentons during the White Oak Springs period. The descendants of these families have continued in and about Petersburg from that day to this. Many still cling to the soil for their living, but others are engaged in all the trades, professions, and business callings that the town and country demands. They have become such a highly diversified and versatile group that it is difficult to think of them as a family, or to discover among them common family traits. Yet there is noticeable among great numbers of them a lively interest in current history and public affairs which may very well be a heritage from the gentlemen who signed the White Oak Springs Road petition.

The only serious contenders with the Brentons for first place in both numbers and extent of influence in the White Oak Springs-Petersburg community are the Mileys, whose ancestor, Henry Miley, was the contemporary of James, Henry, and Robert Brenton. There are two schools of thought among the Mileys as to the former location of their migrating ancestor. One branch holds that he came from Virginia, another that he came from Pennsylvania. To lend equal strength to both opinions, the records of both states reveal a few persons of that name during the seventeen-eighties.⁵⁹ The fact, however, that the property left behind by Henry Miley included a German Bible and other German books, gives weight to the belief of those who hold Pennsylvania as their native state. It seems probable that they may have come from the so-called Pennsylvania-Dutch stock. There is no

⁵⁷ Cockrum, *Pioneer History*, 290.

⁵⁸ This transaction was preceded and accompanied by an interesting and amusing set of circumstances, the account of which belongs to a later period, and will be related in a later study.

⁵⁹ Virginia census, Shenandoah County, 1782, in *Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, Publications*, Vol. X, 69.

reason, however, for the complete rejection of the theory that the family came from Virginia. They may have been one of the numerous Pennsylvania families that settled in the Shenandoah Valley and Piedmont Plateau of Virginia before the Revolution. Or they may have made a stop-over of a short period of years in that state before pushing on into Indiana (Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, was the established line of travel). Thus the varying traditions may be easily reconciled.

David Miley's signature on the White Oak Springs Road petition of 1810, and the marriage record of Betsy Miley to George Coonrod, and that of Caty Miley to Thomas Pride (1809), seem to be the earliest documentary notice of the family's presence at White Oak Springs.⁶⁰ Although there is a strong tradition that they arrived about 1803, the name is noticeably absent from territorial court and military records. The family was a large one, and at least four of the children were grown by about 1810. Henry Miley, Sr., lived until 1847, having seen his neighbors, John Coonrod, James and Henry Brenton, Jeremiah Arnold and Woolsey Pride, two of his sons, Henry and William, and two of his daughters, Catherine (Caty) and Elizabeth, go to their graves. The unnumbered children of the four last mentioned deceased sons and daughters shared in the estate at the death of Henry Miley, along with his own living children, Mary Harrell, Sarah Davenport, Nancy Griffith, David, Martin, and George. Peter also survived, but did not share in the estate, having already had his part. David as executor was able to allot the heirs \$16 each, besides a portion of land, a very respectable inheritance in those days, and especially so, considering the large number of the heirs.

David Miley seems to have been the most able of his father's children. At least, as he gave most of his life to public service, he left the most complete record of his capacities. He was a wheelwright by trade, but a public officer by election, serving Pike County in all of its elective offices. He had more education than was common in his day, and one is tempted to speculate upon the possibility of his having had educational opportunities in a previous home, Virginia or

⁶⁰ Henry Miley's first land claim was made in 1813, to the northwest quarter of section 26. That of Henry Miley Jr. was made in 1814 to the southwest quarter of section 28. (See map).

Pennsylvania. Family tradition does not uphold such speculation however. His descendants say that he came to White Oak Springs when ten years old, and that he educated himself from books by the light and warmth of his father's fireplace. He was twice married, first to Miss Van Zandt, who bore him three children, Mary, Newton, and Deborah, and second to the "Widow Finn," who before her first marriage was Sarah Osbourne.⁶¹

The Miley family have been and still are prolific contributors to the population of Petersburg. They are distinguished by versatility and talent. A comparatively small number now bear the name Miley, but the descendants who have inherited the blood from the distaff side are numerous, and they have made a notable contribution to the cultural and artistic life of the community.

The Coonrod family is another which has had a continuous existence in the White Oak Springs-Petersburg neighborhood since the original immigrant of the name settled there. John Coonrod (1757-1836) came to Indiana from a settlement he had made in Jefferson County, Kentucky. But the home of his youth, and the place of his enlistment for service in the Revolutionary army in 1776-1777, was Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.⁶² Lutherans, Moravians, Seventh Day Adventists, Dunkards, and Mennonites, of whom it was said, "They found it a wilderness and turned it into a rose-garden," had lived there since the early part of the eighteenth century. Among them had been the Coonrods.

The modern generations of the Petersburg family are not agreed upon the spelling of their name. Their ancestor's signature may be seen upon a number of old Pike County records, very plainly spelled in fine old German script, Johannes Coonrod. But present day variations include Conrad, Conard, and Conrod. The writers of this paper were amused at finding even greater disagreement upon the subject among the very early generations of the family. The

⁶¹ This information was procured for the authors by Mrs. Samuel E. Dillin from Mr. Tom Mount, David Miley's grandson. Mrs. Dillin is a descendant of Mary Miley Harrell, a daughter of Henry Miley Sr.

⁶² John Coonrod's pension claim, S. 1629: "Born September 5, 1757, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He enlisted in June 1776 and served three months as a private in a company of Pennsylvania Flying Camp under Lieutenant Contee. Enlisted June 1777, and served three months as private in Captain Snyder's Pennsylvania Company. Enlisted October 1777, and served four months as private in Captain Shafer's Company. After the Revolution he moved from Pennsylvania to Kentucky, and about 1812 he moved to Pike County, Indiana." (Authors' note: the date 1812 is an obvious error, possibly meant to be 1802).

tendency to individualized spellings seems as strong a characteristic with this family as the Brenton tendency to unaccountable Henrys. Witnesses to the marriage in 1710 of Henry Kunders signed the name a dozen ways, proceeding from Kunders to Cunroed, thence through Kunrods, Conders, Cunrods, Cunrads, Cunrod, Cunrat, Cönrads (umlaut o) to Cunrod.⁶³ The spelling *Conrad* is the preferred spelling among a large number of the descendants of Johannes Coonrod, or John Coonrod.

John Coonrod must have been a middle aged man when he came to White Oak Springs. Like James Brenton, he must have felt that the days of his greatest activity were behind him. His descendants know little of the personality of the man, but his choice of a whole section of the very finest river bottom farming land (Section 22) indicates, no doubt, something of his Lancaster training as a farmer. His children, all outlived him. All except John, who had already been provided for, shared in the inheritance of his estate. They were George, Henry, Daniel, Mary Barbara and Elizabeth. Three of these children, and possibly others, of whom the records have not been discovered, married into the families of White Oak Springs: Henry, in 1819, to Elizabeth Sovereigns (Savarns), a half-sister or step-sister of Jeremiah Arnold; Mary Barbara to Jeremiah Arnold, as mentioned before; and Elizabeth to Henry Brenton, son of James Brenton.

The oldest son, George (d. 1849), whose name was upon the White Oak Springs Road petition and who married Betsy Miley in 1809, outlived his father but fourteen years. He also outlived his wife Betsy, though she lived long enough to bear him fourteen children. Thirteen of them lived to share in their father's estate at his death, and the deceased daughter left four children who also shared. The names and ages of the heirs of George Coonrod were as follows: Sarah (Woods), 30; George W., 28; Lewis, 26; Rebecca, 23; Delilah, 21; Henry, 18; Catherine, 19; Barbary (no age given); Polly (Kinman), 18; Mary, 18; Jane, 14; William, 12; and Sally Ann, Absolom, Malissa, and Mary Jane Harbison, aged respectively, 11, 8, 5, and 3. The last four were children of a daughter who married a Harbison.

⁶³ *Pennsylvania Magazine of History*, V, 140. (Authors' note: the present day descendants of Thoenes Kunders, the first witness who signed this marriage, spell the name *Conrod*. They are a distinguished Philadelphia family, one of their members, Robert T. Conrod, having been the First Mayor of consolidated Philadelphia.)

The Conrad (Coonrod) family is now represented in Petersburg by a very few of its members, but this is a very recent condition. Until the last few years, there were great numbers of them. Few of these carried on the agricultural tradition of their ancestor, however. The modern generation have succumbed to the attractions of business and industry, many of their members having sought opportunities in larger cities. At least five families of one branch have emigrated to Detroit, while one other member of the same branch lives in Chicago. This is a typical, though extreme case, of what has happened to other branches of the family.

The Tislow family alone remains to be discussed of all those who may be called the First Families of White Oak Springs. This postponement may seem particularly fitting to certain descendants of Paul Tislow, if they bear in mind the prophecy that the first shall be last. This reference is to the strong but unsubstantiated tradition among them that Paul Tislow was the first permanent settler in the community which was to become White Oak Springs. According to his grandson, Mr. Tom Tislow, of Petersburg, the following statement is correct: "Paul Tislow came from Germany in 1776, starting the day before he was twenty-one in order to evade military service in the German army. He settled in Pennsylvania, lived there two or three years, and married his employer's daughter, Matilda Nay. He came with her to Indiana in 1778 or 1779 with one horse and sled, and built a fortified cabin in what is now Madison Township, Pike County."⁶⁴ His descendants feel sure, moreover, that Paul Tislow served a military enlistment, as one of his deeds reads, "a grant for military service." Naturally they like to think that this was Revolutionary War service. But his name is on none of the rolls of the pension department, nor is it in the adjutant's office, or on the records of Indiana Territory as a member of territorial troops. Though he may have been, as his descendants believe, the first settler of White Oak Springs or thereabouts, and a veteran of the Revolution, the evidence uncovered to date does not bear this out.

The first recorded item referring to Paul Tislow is a suit which was filed by him in the April term of the Knox County Court of Common Pleas, 1806, against one William

⁶⁴ Madison Township adjoins Washington Township to the west.

Martin of the state of Kentucky, and the court's subsequent issuance of a writ of foreign attachment by which Paul Tislow could recover damages from the defendant.

This piece of legal business seems to the authors of this study to indicate a very strong probability that Paul Tislow had established his residence in Kentucky previous to coming to Indiana. It also suggests the possibility that, despite tradition, Paul Tislow may have come to Indiana from Kentucky in the company of his German speaking neighbors, John Coonrod and Henry Miley (one or both) rather than having preceded them by a decade or two.

Whatever the time of his coming, the fact remains that his presence was established by 1806, and that from that time on his name (sometimes spelled Tisselow and again Tysloe) was a steadily recurring one on the records of the Knox County Court. He seemed to make a specialty of jury service. In the September term, 1808, he served in the case of the *United States v. Daniel Decker*, and *United States v. John Glass*. In the meantime, as mentioned earlier in this paper, he had registered his claim to the Northeast Quarter of Section 29, the first land claimed within the territory embracing the present Pike County.

Large figures are required to account for Paul Tislow's activities. Eight hundred acres of land,⁶⁵ four wives, and eight children, were his, within his span of ninety-seven years (1775-1852), a record, except for children, even for those rough and lusty times.

The descendants of Paul Tislow, through his sons, Peter, John, Christopher, Richard, and Thomas (Willie died young), and his daughters Delia (married name Nichols) and Lizzie (married name Burke) are still in and about Petersburg in generous numbers. Many have remained farmers, but others have been successful in business, in the professions, and in the arts. They are a group who show many traits of physique and personality which may well be derived from their common ancestor (or, if the pun be permitted, their uncommon ancestor). Large of frame face and eyes, brunette in complexion, full of enthusiasm for accomplishment, discontent

⁶⁵ 1807, 160 acres N. E. qr. sec. 29, Tp. 1N., R.8W.
1814, 160 acres N. E. qr. sec. 34, Tp. 1N., R.8W.
1814, 160 acres N. W. qr. sec. 35, Tp. 1N., R.8W.
1815, 160 acres N. E. qr. sec. 18, Tp. 1N., R.8W.
1816, 160 acres N. E. qr. sec. 35, Tp. 1N., R.8W.

with the commonplace, generous and hearty, with a certain sweep and breadth to their activities, they have contributed a picturesque and colorful element to the population of White Oak Springs and Petersburg. These descendants of Paul Tislow are all descendants of his first wife, Matilda Nay. His other wives were of his old age. He married Ellen Ashby in 1821, Sarah Osbourne in 1831, and Mrs. Nancy Griffith (maiden name Miley) in 1833.

It may be of interest to add, as a conclusion to this faulty and incomplete account of the First Families of White Oak Springs, that no landmark remains where the fort and stockade formerly protected their inhabitants in time of Indian attack. Until a few years ago there stood upon the crest of the White Oak Springs eminence a two story log house which was commonly called the "Old Fort." Students of early local history feel sure, however, that this was only one of the dwellings within the Fort's enclosure, if indeed the building dated so far back. The Fort in 1807, as revealed by the letters of Captain Hargrove and traditional accounts, must have been of adequate size to house a dozen families and several squads of rangers. Many of the old families of Madison and Jefferson Township, as well as of Washington Township, have stories about their ancestors staying at the fort, or of their great-great-grandmother's stay there while great-great-grandfather was gone to Vincennes, or to mill. Like the men and women themselves of those distant days, the "Old Fort" can be but imperfectly reconstructed from the few facts, the several traditions, and much speculation.