

## Mishawaka on the Eve of Conflict

Ward Baker\*

In 1860 Mishawaka, Indiana—lying along both sides of the St. Joseph River, four miles east of South Bend—was a prosperous manufacturing and trading center. In 1832 bog iron deposits had been discovered in northern Indiana. The next year Alanson M. Hurd from Detroit, Michigan, built a blast furnace on the south bank of the river at the foot of a small rapid and plotted a town which was named the St. Joseph Iron Works.<sup>1</sup> The furnace was successful and soon another town was plotted. On February 17, 1838, the General Assembly incorporated the small towns in this vicinity—Indiana City on the north side of the river and the St. Joseph Iron Works on the south bank, together with all lots and additions laid out on either side of the river—into one town called Mishawaka.<sup>2</sup>

Construction of a dam at the head of the rapids and mill races on both sides of the river provided excellent water power sites.<sup>3</sup> Heavy timber and rich farm land in the vicinity was a source of raw materials for manufacturing and processing. Transportation by steamboat and keelboat via the St. Joseph River gave access to a Lake Michigan port at Benton Harbor, Michigan.<sup>4</sup> The Vistula Road, connecting Chicago and Toledo, passed through the village,<sup>5</sup> and in the fall of 1851 the

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\* Ward Baker is a teacher of history at Mishawaka High School.

<sup>1</sup> St. Joseph County, Recorder's Office, South Bend, Ind., Deed Record A, p. 337; also Mishawaka, City Engineer's Office, Map of St. Joseph Iron Works, in Plat Book of City of Mishawaka, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Indiana, *Local Laws* (1837-1838), Chap. CCXXXIII, 410.

<sup>3</sup> "Synopsis of the History of the Mishawaka Dam and the Mishawaka Hydraulic Company," Prepared from the records of the Mishawaka Hydraulic Company, which are in the possession of the Engineer's Office of the United States Rubber Company, Mishawaka, Ind.; South Bend *Free Press*, October 14, 1837; *Indiana State Journal* (Indianapolis), quoted in *St. Joseph Valley Register* (South Bend), October 17, 1845; *St. Joseph Valley Register*, July 26, 1855; *Mishawaka Enterprise*, August 14, 1858.

<sup>4</sup> Otto N. Knoblock, "Early Navigation of the St. Joseph River" (*Indiana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. VIII, No. 4; Indianapolis, 1925), 190-200.

<sup>5</sup> Indiana, *Laws of the State of Indiana* (1832-1833), Chap. CLIII, 201-202, notes that there was authorized the location of "a state road from the South Bend in St. Joseph county, by the way of the mouth of Elkhart River in Elkhart county, and the county seat of Lagrange county, to the east line of this state, in the direction of Vistula, on the Maumee Bay in the state of Ohio." According to John B. Stoll (ed.),

Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana Railroad, which connected Toledo and Chicago, entered Mishawaka.<sup>6</sup> Men with money to invest settled in the village, and new industries were started. In the late fifties steam engines, cast iron pipe, cast iron stoves, agricultural implements, edge tools and cutlery, coffins, chairs, furniture, wagons, carriages, leather goods, barrel staves, woolen goods, flour, and lumber were manufactured and shipped to outside markets.<sup>7</sup>

The two parts of Mishawaka were connected by a covered bridge. The most important street on the north side was Bridge, which ran from the river due north to the village limits. Intersecting Bridge at right angles soon after it crossed the river was Joseph Street. Most of the buildings on the north side were private homes, but along Bridge Street were some business establishments, notably the blacksmith shop of William Oliver, located on the southeast corner of Bridge and Joseph. Further north along Bridge was the Holy Angels Catholic Church, School House No. 2, and at the village limits the graveyard. On the south side of Joseph, west of Bridge, on a high bluff overlooking the river was a grove of trees known as the Grove, a popular place for picnics.

The main part of the village was situated on the south side. Factories occupied the low land along the river bank and the race, while private residences and business houses were along the streets to the south. Vistula Road, which was named Second Street inside the village limits, ran along a plateau some four hundred yards south of the river. Second Street was the most important east-west street. In this part of the village (the original St. Joseph Iron Works) the streets were of checkerboard design with Main, the important north-

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*An Account of St. Joseph County From Its Organization* (Dayton, 1923), 50: "The Vistula Road, one of the earliest in the County, was laid from Vistula, Ohio, through Mishawaka and South Bend to join the Chicago road just west of South Bend."

<sup>6</sup> The *St. Joseph Valley Register*, October 2, 1851, reported that "the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana cars are now running regularly to Mishawaka, and it is expected will extend their trips to South Bend tomorrow or next day."

<sup>7</sup> The *Mishawaka Enterprise*, March 5, 1859, and the *St. Joseph Valley Register*, March 17, 1859, both stated that the value of manufacturing in 1858 was: flour, \$125,000; iron castings, \$30,000; wagons and carriages, \$120,000; agricultural implements, \$20,000; woolen cloth, \$15,000; cabinetware, furniture, and coffins, \$15,000; edge tools, \$5,000; lumber, \$50,000; boots, shoes and leather goods, \$15,000; barrel staves, \$12,000; saddles and harness, \$10,000. The total value of manufactures was \$407,000.

south street, starting at the blast furnace on the river bank and running due south to the village limits.<sup>8</sup>

During the late 1850's the business section of the town centered near the intersection of Main and Second streets. On the southeast corner stood the Milburn House, a local hotel popular with travelers and used by the local people for parties and meetings. East of the Milburn House stood the Methodist church, and on the south side of Second, a block west of Main, was the Presbyterian church. On the east side of Main and north of Second was the Town Hall, which housed the fire department on the ground floor, while the upper story—called the Wigwam—was used for political and social gatherings. Opposite the south end of Main Street stood a large, two-story, red brick building called the Institute Building, where the Mishawaka Academic and Normal Institute classes were held. This was a Free school for the children of Mishawaka and a Select school for advanced study and teacher training, supported by the village, with an enrollment of over two hundred students from Mishawaka and surrounding area.<sup>9</sup> Lining the streets close to the intersection were the stores of various merchants. The buildings were of wood, with wooden awnings extending over the plank sidewalks. The unpaved streets were dusty in summer and almost impassable because of mud and water in the winter. Until the anti-hog ordinance was passed by the town board in 1857, hogs and cattle roamed at will throughout the town. Construction of sidewalks, hitching rails, watering troughs, and crosswalks at the street intersections were recent improvements made by the town board.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Mishawaka, City Clerk's Office, Town Board Records, 1845-1892, Vol. I, 123; Report of survey of town of Mishawaka by M. W. Stokes, St. Joseph County surveyor, August 4, 1858; Stokes Survey Map, in Plat Book of City of Mishawaka, 10.

<sup>9</sup> Many notations in the Mishawaka Town Board Records, I, during the late 1850's show that financial support for this school came from taxes levied by the town board. Hiring of teachers, textbook adoptions, and courses of study were approved by the board. The *Mishawaka Enterprise*, August 28, October 1, 1859, and August 25, 1860, has articles lauding this school and commending the citizens of Mishawaka for their support. H. Beth Bingham, "History of the Mishawaka Public Schools, 1834-1946" (Mishawaka School City, 1946), 4, (Mimeographed), indicates that "the regular term was six months, with three months of select school. The Institute had a fine reputation, and students came from distances to attend classes here."

<sup>10</sup> The *Mishawaka Enterprise*, *St. Joseph Valley Register*, and the Mishawaka Town Board Records, I, have many items describing Mishawaka during this period.

Mishawaka in 1860 had a population of 1,488, including two colored people.<sup>11</sup> It had been settled largely by Northerners with a considerable sprinkling of New Englanders and their descendants.<sup>12</sup> During the forties opportunities for work had attracted many German and Irish immigrants to the community,<sup>13</sup> and later when Know-Nothingism was popular in the village, these foreign people were subjected to discrimination and some persecution.<sup>14</sup> No other evidence of social classes existed except those dictated by wealth, education, and type of occupation. The village had some wealthy but many poor families. The family of the poor German Catholic immigrant did not associate socially with the family of the wealthy Protestant mill owner, but in civic affairs and in entertainment and cultural areas there was association and cooperation rather than class snobbery.

With self-reliance and pride in their community the citizens made for themselves a rich and varied social life within the village. Church socials, charity bazaars, dances, concerts by the Sax Horn Band, German Band, and Martial Band were popular. Serenading, picnics, sleigh rides, and skating were for the more active citizens, while older people enjoyed the debates of the literary society, lectures, and political gatherings. The Odd Fellow and the Masonic lodges were active. A public library of over five hundred volumes and a McClure's Workingmen's library provided reading materials. Seven saloons were licensed for business, despite the objection of a strong Total Abstinence Society, whose members were pledged to work for outlawing liquor throughout the state. The volunteer fire department was an elite organization. Efficient in fighting fires in the village, Union Company No. 1 inflated local pride by winning drill and water pumping contests with fire companies from the surrounding towns. Nationally known entertainers, musicians, and tour-

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<sup>11</sup> U. S., Bureau of the Census, *Eighth Census of the United States: 1860, Population of the United States*, 125.

<sup>12</sup> Lois Kimball Mathews, *The Expansion of New England* (New York, 1909), 196-206, map, 236; Alice L. Judkins, "Mishawaka Has Romantic Past—Brockport Colony Plays Important Part in City's History," *South Bend Tribune*, Sunday May 15, 1932, describes the migration of thirty-two people from Brockport, Monroe County, New York, to Mishawaka in 1837.

<sup>13</sup> Reverend C. A. Suelzer, *A Century of Catholic Faith in Mishawaka* (Mishawaka, 1948), 20.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 16; *St. Joseph Valley Register*, May 22, 1856.

ing theatrical companies gave performances before large audiences at the town hall and the Institute building; moreover, the villagers acquired a reputation for being gracious hosts for the many conventions, teachers' institutes, church meetings, and agricultural gatherings held in Mishawaka.<sup>15</sup>

Party affiliation and political thinking of the voters in Mishawaka in the decade preceding the Civil War were influenced by the slavery controversy. Local town board elections, held each year on the first Monday in May, were not contested along party lines; but in township, county, state, and national elections, the voters expressed their preference for either the Whig or Democrat tickets. In 1848 dislike of the Mexican War and slavery caused bolting from the two parties, and a Free Soil party was organized in the village.<sup>16</sup> Taylor won the local township by a plurality of seven votes over Cass—210 to 203; Van Buren, the Free Soil candidate, received 84 votes.<sup>17</sup> In 1849 the Whigs, supported by dissatisfied Democrats and Free Soilers, won the county elections.<sup>18</sup> But in 1852, for the first time in history, the Democrats won the majority of votes in St. Joseph County, and they also elected Dr. Norman Eddy, of Mishawaka, to Congress from the Ninth District.<sup>19</sup>

Several factors influenced the voters in Mishawaka during the political upheaval in the mid-1850's that led to the formation of the new Republican party. The relative calm which had followed the "final" solution of the slavery question by the Compromise of 1850 had been ripped apart by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. The Whigs, following their defeat in 1852, had little hope for success in the future, and many were convinced that a strong Northern party should be formed to check the sectional hostility of the Solid South.<sup>20</sup> In South Bend Schuyler Colfax, the editor of the

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<sup>15</sup> The *Mishawaka Enterprise* and the *St. Joseph Valley Register* throughout the fifties have many accounts of these activities.

<sup>16</sup> *St. Joseph Valley Register*, July 21, 1848.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, November 8, 1848.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, August 9, 1849.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, December 2, 1852.

<sup>20</sup> Willard H. Smith, *Schuyler Colfax: The Changing Fortunes of a Political Idol* (*Indiana Historical Collections*, Vol. XXXIII; Indianapolis, 1952), 47-48. See Charles Zimmerman, "The Origin and Rise of the Republican Party in Indiana from 1854 to 1860," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XIII (September, 1917), 217, for "finality" of the 1850 Compromise; see *ibid.*, 219-221, on importance of Kansas-Nebraska Act; and *ibid.*, 226-228, on formation of Northern party. *St. Joseph Valley Register*, May 18, 25, 1854.

*St. Joseph Valley Register*, was rapidly becoming a person of importance in state and national politics, and this astute politician saw that it would be good politics to lead the people in the formation of such a Northern political party.<sup>21</sup> The *Mishawaka* paper at first followed a policy of neutrality in politics. In 1856 its name was changed from the *Mishawaka Free Press* to the *Mishawaka Enterprise*, and in 1858 when Archibald Beal became the new owner and editor, the *Enterprise* became a staunch supporter of Colfax and the Republican party.<sup>22</sup>

An Anti-Nebraska meeting in *Mishawaka* on February 18, 1854, passed resolutions against the Kansas-Nebraska Bill and the extension of slavery into the territories.<sup>23</sup> On July 17, 1854, a large People's party meeting in the village endorsed the platform and the candidates of the People's party convention which had been held in Indianapolis on July 13.<sup>24</sup> In the fall elections Colfax, the People's party nominee, won the congressional election from Democrat Norman Eddy.<sup>25</sup> The new party, first called Republican locally in 1856, continued to draw strength from Northern Democrats, Know-Nothings, Abolitionists, and others who were opposed to the stand of the Democrats on the slavery question. During the intervening years before the outbreak of the war, *Mishawaka* and *St. Joseph County* remained in control of the Republican party.<sup>26</sup>

By 1858 the nation was rapidly drifting into the "Irrepressible Conflict," but *Mishawaka* citizens were not too concerned over the great question of state sovereignty versus the supremacy of the federal government. Economic conditions were good; and despite the financial crisis of the late fifties, money was plentiful. The menacing sectional controversy did not quench the optimism of the people, and there

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<sup>21</sup> Smith, *Schuyler Colfax*, 48; Zimmerman, *Indiana Magazine of History*, XIII (September, 1917), 227.

<sup>22</sup> The Democratic *St. Joseph County Forum* (South Bend) for October 15, 1859, in speaking of the *Mishawaka Enterprise* complained, "But taking the stilts of neutrality, and walking in the dim shadow of a demoralizing press, they soon transformed their hardy and adventurous yeomanry into the most intensely bewildered and bedarkened subjects of the blindest leadership of the opposition."

<sup>23</sup> *St. Joseph Valley Register*, February 23, 1854.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, July 27, 1854.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, October 19, 1854.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, October 16, 1856, November 6, 1858, gives election returns.

was progress, expansion, and continued prosperity rather than retrenchment.<sup>27</sup> News that the Atlantic cable had been successfully completed inspired a celebration which ended with a grand torchlight parade to the center of town. Squire Harris E. Hurlbut was called on, and he responded with an impromptu speech, which according to the *Enterprise*, was one of his "happiest hits."<sup>28</sup> In September a stabbing affair by some South Bend "boys" after a political rally at the Institute building gave local citizens something to discuss. The consensus was that the next time a candidate spoke in the village the "boys" from out of town should stay home, or at least not get drunk and try to cause a disturbance.<sup>29</sup> News items in the local paper included a report of the "Death of Cora Virginia, only daughter of D. H. and Mallie A. Smith, aged one year and eight days"; a note that the editor had received a large squash and a half bushel of nice potatoes; an announcement that the "friends of Reverend Nelson Kellogg have erected for him a new barn in place of the one that was burned"; and an account of the marriage by "Reverend William S. Birch, of Mr. Thomas Milburn to Miss Mary E. Luce."<sup>30</sup>

The discovery of gold at Pike's Peak had men dreaming of the wealth they could find at the "diggin's." Older men—some of whom had had the experience of the California gold rush in 1850—advised against going, but this did not keep young men from the adventure. Several parties left for the gold fields<sup>31</sup> and laid out claims there to the wealth they hoped to find, while others who were more easily discouraged returned to the village richer only in their experiences in the West. Some never returned but continued on to California and made their homes there when they found things not to their liking in Colorado Territory. At times throughout the spring of 1859, from five to ten big wagons passed through

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, May 21, 1857; *Mishawaka Enterprise*, August 14, 1858; *St. Joseph County Forum*, June 19, 1858.

<sup>28</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, August 21, 1858.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, September 25, 1858; *St. Joseph Valley Register*, September 23, 1858; *St. Joseph County Forum*, September 22, 1858.

<sup>30</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, October 2, 1858.

<sup>31</sup> The *St. Joseph Valley Register*, April 7, 1860, stated that eighty-five men from St. Joseph County had gone to Colorado to search for gold. The *Mishawaka Enterprise*, March 24, 1860, lists the names of twenty-one men who left the village for the gold fields during the spring of 1859.

Mishawaka enroute to the gold fields. Merchants made money selling supplies to the many outfits that started from or passed through the village. Interest of the Mishawaka citizens in the gold rush remained high throughout the year 1859.<sup>32</sup>

Elaborate plans had been made in 1859 for a Fourth of July celebration, and everything was in readiness when disaster struck close by. Heavy rains had weakened a railroad culvert two miles west of town, and during the night of Monday June 27, the east bound train crashed into the rain-swollen creek. Sixty-eight of the one hundred and fifty passengers were killed or injured. All the unidentified dead and most of the injured were brought to Mishawaka, and the facilities of the small community were gladly given for the relief of the suffering. Most of the victims were taken to the Milburn House, but various private homes were turned into temporary hospitals. Fifteen bodies that were not immediately identified by relatives were given a mass funeral in the graveyard. The Fourth of July celebrations were abandoned by the citizens in respect to the suffering of the injured.<sup>33</sup>

Although the people in the village were not entirely unaware of what was happening to their country, war was far from the thoughts of the average man and woman. The topics for debate by the Literary Society throughout 1858 and 1859 do not indicate that the villagers saw a long and terrible war rapidly approaching. "Who did more for the service of mankind, Columbus, who discovered America, or George Washington who defended it?" and "Which will best promote the interests of this Union, a protective Tariff or Free Trade?" were among the subjects debated before the society.<sup>34</sup> Such topics had little of the spirit of the "Irrepressible Conflict" in them.

Throughout 1859, A. Eberhart and Company received large contracts to build government wagons. During 1858 this company had built some six to seven hundred of their famous "Utah" wagons for Colonel Johnson's expedition against the Mormons.<sup>35</sup> The villagers did not know where

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<sup>32</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, January 29, February 5, 26, March 19, 26, April 9, October 1, 1859.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, July 2, 1859; *St. Joseph Valley Register*, July 7, 1859; *St. Joseph County Forum*, July 2, 1859.

<sup>34</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, March 26, June 25, 1859.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, February 26, 1859; *St. Joseph County Forum*, April 10, 21, 1858.



the wagons manufactured in 1859 were to be used, but they did know that the activity of A. Eberhart and Company was increasing the prosperity of the village. The company produced one hundred wagons for Uncle Sam in eight days, and the citizens were justifiably proud of a "shop, where a stick of timber can be taken in at one end and come out at the other a complete wagon."<sup>36</sup>

But one of the sparks that would touch off the "Conflict" had been struck. The *Enterprise* for October 22, 1859, carried a brief story describing John Brown's raid on the government arsenal at Harpers Ferry. It was a straight news story without editorial comment.<sup>37</sup> By the time of the next issue details of the raid had reached Mishawaka, and the citizens had had ample opportunity to discuss what had happened in Virginia and to form some opinions about John Brown's attempt to start a slave uprising. The *Enterprise* for October 29 had a long story explaining the John Brown affair in detail. The editor probably was expressing local sentiments when he editorialized that "John Brown was a madman who should be punished for his treason," and that the whole thing was just a "strange freak of the brain of a madman who had created such excitement."<sup>38</sup> The editorial gave no hint that the editor thought the affair at Harpers Ferry would be a spark to help start a war.

The increasing tension between the North and the South during 1859 did not, on the surface, disturb the established ways of life in the village. Nevertheless, leaders of business and politics, as well as those who thought about the problems of the nation, perhaps sensed that a crisis was near. For example, the Literary Society debated the timely subject, "What have the people of the North to do with the institution of slavery?" The debates were reported in the *Enterprise*. All the debaters agreed that the North had a right to interfere in the question of slavery, but some felt compelled to elaborate their views. Squire Theodore Cowles, a lawyer, deplored the recent Dred Scott decision because it established a new policy for slavery in the territories. Dr. William Butterworth stated the view that the Negro would never be the equal of the white man, but he agreed with the new Republican party

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<sup>36</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, March 19, 1859.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, October 22, 1859.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, October 29, 1859.

by insisting that slavery should never go further than its existing borders and went on to say that it was the duty of the North to prevent its spread. George Milburn, the prominent wagon manufacturer, while agreeing with the various speakers that the North should prevent the spread of slavery, also felt that there was a higher law than the Constitution. He stated that if statutory law violated his conscience he would not obey that law even though it had the support of millions of people.<sup>39</sup>

Local citizens continued debates and discussions regarding slavery and secession throughout 1860. At a meeting of the Literary Society held at the Wigwam on December 3, George Merrifield read a very "able and elaborate essay" on the question of southern secession. He assumed the position that a state had no right to sever her connection with the Union, and that the federal government was fully warranted in maintaining the supremacy of the Constitution and laws by force of arms if necessary. Mr. Dempster Beatty, Theodore Cowles, and Harris Hurlbut generally agreed with Merrifield; Hurlbut, however, went still further in his remarks. He expressed the belief "that the States are sovereignties and as such have the same right to withdraw from the confederacy that they had to join it. The commission of treason by a State, in its sovereign capacity, was, in his opinion an impossibility." Beatty and Cowles dissented from these views. Cowles was not in favor of rash measures; he would await an "overt act"; then, "he would hang the traitors as high as Haman." The states had delegated certain powers to the federal government, and once delegated, the states had no right to resume these powers, and for them to assume that right was "incipient treason." Beatty's speech was a strong and forceful stand against the right of secession by the states.<sup>40</sup>

Several weeks later, Dr. Butterworth presented a paper before the Literary Society that was, according to the *Enterprise*, of a "very conservative character." He advocated the

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, January 7, 14, 1860.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, December 8, 1860. The political beliefs of these men changed during the late 1840's and the decade of the 1850's. In 1848 Cowles, Butterworth, and Hurlbut were Whigs, while Merrifield, who had supported the Democrats in the early 1840's, was a member of the Free Soil party. In 1854 all were members of the People's party—Merrifield was elected state representative. After 1856 all were active supporters of the Republican party.

preservation of the Union by reasonable concessions and compromises if possible, but if this would not save the Union, then force should be used. Most other members differed with him. In general they maintained that no concessions were due; and that since none would be accepted by the southern states, except at the sacrifice of principle, it was of no use to make any such attempt. Everyone seemed to agree, however, that the Union must be "preserved at all hazards," and that the North should "awake to the issue."<sup>41</sup>

Hoosiers have normally taken their politics and their right to decide political questions seriously, and in this respect the people of Mishawaka were certainly Hoosiers. During the political campaign of 1860, mounting interest and tensions existed. The campaign was a political contest for the control of governmental power; yet the Union, states' rights, and possible war were at stake. The editor of the *Enterprise* explained on May 5, 1860, that: "Never in our recollection has there been such a rush for the daily papers by the citizens so that they could find out the result of the Charleston Convention."<sup>42</sup> Many columns of the weekly *Enterprise* were devoted to accounts of the Democratic convention, held at Charleston, South Carolina, during April, and to national political issues. These stories and accounts were generally printed without comment and without editorial effort to influence readers by inserting local issues.<sup>43</sup>

Mishawaka was well represented at the Republican convention held during May in Chicago. Over one hundred of its citizens, including Editor Archibald Beal of the *Enterprise*, were in attendance. Beal "doubted very much if there was another town no larger than ours, which turned out an equal number." The editor described the excitement and the political maneuvering of the convention, ending his story with "Lincoln was nominated amid heavy applause."<sup>44</sup> Apparently the majority of citizens approved of Lincoln's nomination. At a large ratification meeting:

Milburn Hall was crowded with a large crowd to ratify the nomination of Lincoln and Hamlin. Speeches were made

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, January 12, 1861.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, May 5, 1860.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, April 28, May 5, 1860.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, May 19, 1860.

by Hurlbut, Merrifield and Thomas, while outside the cannon boomed and a bon fire of tar barrels and dry goods boxes burned and lighted up the otherwise quiet town. Stirring notes of fife and drums added to the scene. Early in the evening Nelson Ferris led a company in from the south part of the township on horse back and when opposite the Milburn House they halted and gave three cheers for Lincoln and Hamlin—this started off the festivities—the pleasant smiles on the faces of almost everyone showed that the nominations were accepted by everyone.<sup>45</sup>

In June, Beal of the *Enterprise*, along with other editors of midwestern newspapers, attended the convention of Northern Democrats at Baltimore as a guest of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Beal reported the convention fairly and at length. Noting the importance of the inability of the Democratic party to survive the split over slavery, he pointed out the significance of this split to the nation and to the Republican party. "The most probable conclusion now of the whole matter is a split in the Convention, and the nomination of Douglas by the North and of another candidate by the South."<sup>46</sup>

In the campaign during the summer and fall of 1860, the enthusiasm of the new Republican party overwhelmed the badly demoralized and sectionally torn Democratic party. Nevertheless, two stronger tickets never opposed each other in an Indiana campaign. Republican nominees were: Henry S. Lane for governor, Oliver P. Morton for lieutenant governor, Benjamin Harrison for reporter of the supreme court, and Schuyler A. Colfax for Congress from the Ninth District; and the Democratic nominees were: Thomas A. Hendricks for governor, David Turpie for lieutenant governor, and Daniel W. Voorhees for Congress from the Seventh District. The candidates from both parties were leaders of ability and promise. In later years all these men occupied positions of importance in the federal and state governments, bringing honor and distinction to themselves and to Indiana. Lane and Hendricks as well as Morton and Turpie traveled widely throughout the state to bring the issues before the people in joint debate. Little bitterness and almost no personal issues were present in the Indiana campaign.<sup>47</sup> Misha-

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, May 26, 1860.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, June 23, 1860.

<sup>47</sup> Logan Esarey, *History of Indiana: From its Exploration to 1922* (3 vols., Dayton, 1923), II, 657-662.

waka Democrats conducted a good campaign, and many of their old leaders appeared in the community, speaking forcefully and well for their candidates and platform. These addresses were well received by the citizens.<sup>48</sup> It was, however, the youthful Republican party that provided most of the local political enthusiasm, since it felt that its chances of winning control of the state and national governments for the first time were very good and since it was further inspired by the leadership of the Rail Splitter.

Mishawaka Republicans were well-organized, and they worked hard for their victory in 1860. An unofficial campaign company called the Rail Splitters—whose uniforms consisted of overalls, overshirt, chip hat, maul, and wedge—was formed.<sup>49</sup> The men of the village and of Penn Township, which included Mishawaka, organized the Mishawaka Wide Awake Club to arouse enthusiasm for Republican candidates. They marched and drilled, carried lighted torches, and, with similiar organizations from neighboring towns, appeared at numerous Republican rallies.<sup>50</sup>

Though the Democrats had several meetings and rallies in Mishawaka, the Republicans always seemed to be either having or planning political rallies. One of the largest was held in Mishawaka on August 24 when Schuyler Colfax, of nearby South Bend, who was Republican nominee for Congress from the Ninth District, headed the list of speakers. On the day of the rally:

At an early hour processions commenced pouring in headed by martial bands of music and floating banners, inscribed with the names of the Republican nominees, and especially that of Colfax, so that by the time of the speech there were 1,500 to 2,000 people in town. Mr. Colfax addressed them from an east window of the Methodist Church—ladies occupying the inside and the men the outside on the east. The speech of Mr. Colfax was a grand one, the best we ever heard him make. He held the crowd for about two hours and was then followed by H. Kressmann of Chicago.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, August 11, 18, September 8, 29, 1860.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, August 18, 1860.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, July 21, September 1, 8, 1860; *St. Joseph Valley Register*, August 16, September 6, 1860; Zimmerman, *Indiana Magazine of History*, XIII (September, 1917), 405-407, has a good account of the organization of Wide Awake clubs and Lincoln Maulers and their activities during the campaign of 1860.

<sup>51</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, August 25, 1860.

The Republicans, using what had been traditional methods of American political parties to arouse enthusiasm, played upon the emotions of the people. According to the *Enterprise*:

In the evening was the grandest time of all. The Elkhart Wide Awakes (a fine company) about eighty strong, came down and were escorted into town by the Mishawaka Wide Awakes, numbering about sixty and the Lincoln Rail Splitters, about thirty five in number. All marched out and met the South Bend Wide Awakes, nearly seventy five in number, when one grand procession formed, which marched through our streets making a most beautiful display. They went through with the drill, exhibiting some dexterity in handling torches, and cuts, mauls and wedges, after which took place the speaking. Mr. Kressmann held forth eloquently in the Wigwam in German, and Messers. Merrifield and Hurlbut, of Mishawaka, Anderson, Colfax and Harper, of South Bend, Shuey and Kilbourne from Elkhart, on the corner outside. After the speaking was over another grand procession of Wide Awakes marched through the streets.<sup>52</sup>

Not all was Republican enthusiasm, however, for the *Enterprise* reported that

some unprincipled person or persons spent their time during the speaking last evening in cutting halters and harness. Such an act is meaner than stealing sheep, and we are glad that steps are being taken to find out who the guilty parties are and bring them to justice.<sup>53</sup>

Meetings and rallies by the Republicans continued. The German Republican Club was not overlooked. In September, Albert Lange, Republican nominee for state auditor, and Charles Coulon, a prominent German and former Democrat from Indianapolis, gave speeches in German before the German Republican Club.<sup>54</sup> On September 1, the Wide Awakes were requested to meet at the Institute building to plan a trip to Republican rallies in South Bend and at Niles, Michigan.<sup>55</sup> On September 22 they met again and resolved "hereafter until the time of election to hold our regular drill and business meetings every Monday evening."<sup>56</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, September 15, 1860; Mildred C. Stoler, "The Democratic Element in the New Republican Party in Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXVI (September, 1940), 204-205, tells of the wooing of the German voters, many of whom were Democrats, by the Republicans in 1860.

<sup>55</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, September 1, 1860.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, September 22, 1860.

Tuesday, October 9, finally came and the state elections were held. The *Enterprise* gleefully announced:

Last Tuesday will be long remembered in the political history of this country for inaugurating a great change, especially in the politics of Indiana. The entire Republican State Ticket in this State, as well as in Ohio and Penn. has been elected. Commencing with our own township there was a Republican majority of 247. Our county gave about 700 Republican majority. The State went Republican by about 15,000 majority.<sup>57</sup>

With the state now Republican, the task of making sure that Lincoln carried it in the federal election in November was made easier, yet no chances could be taken. Once again Captain James Houghton of the Wide Awakes called his men to the task. "One more rally and the victory is ours," he told them. This final rally was planned for Monday night, November 5, with Colfax speaking at the Wigwam, and the Wide Awakes from Mishawaka, South Bend, and Harris Prairie gathering for a grand torchlight procession.<sup>58</sup>

The editorial in the *Enterprise* the week preceding the federal election carried a nonpartisan appeal for all men to vote. The political rallies, speeches, and general humbug of the campaign was about over, and the time of fateful decision had arrived. The owner and editor of the village newspaper was perhaps thinking of this decision to be made by the people, when he penned a forthright appeal for all men to vote:

Reader, next Tuesday will end the Presidential contest of 1860 and decide in part, if not altogether, the complexion of this government for the next four years and perhaps for all coming time. Every man has a duty to perform, a duty to himself and to his country. That duty, on next Tuesday, will be to cast a freeman's vote for one of the four candidates before the people for the highest office in their gift, who, you may have made up your mind from a careful examination of his record and the principles he professes, will seek to promote the best interests of the people of these United States. All of these men are worthy, no doubt, in some particulars for the office for which they are named, but they do not all advocate the same principles, nor the same plan of government, but in some cases those directly opposite; therefore choose well between them. Don't vote this way or that way because father did or does, but vote intellectually [intelligently?] for yourself. There cannot but one of the four candidates be elected, and no doubt some of their knees are beginning to tremble over

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, October 13, 1860.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, November 3, 1860.

the result, nevertheless vote for the one you consider the best man even if he should not happen to be on the beating side.<sup>59</sup>

Election day brought a decisive victory for the Republicans. Their victory in Indiana was complete, Lincoln winning the state by a majority of 5,924 over his three rivals. St. Joseph County was carried by an 846 vote majority.<sup>60</sup> The banner for the election story in the *Enterprise* was: "THE GREAT CONTEST OVER; LINCOLN ELECTED: ENTIRE NORTH FOR 'OLD ABE.'" <sup>61</sup>

The Republicans, having won a great victory, celebrated with a "Jollification" Monday night following the election. Banners were strung across the streets and they were hung from the principal buildings. A large pen, made from fence rails, was erected in the street in front of the Wigwam. It was filled with pine boxes, dry wood, and tar barrels, and all was made ready for burning. Toward night the people started to gather, and soon the crowd was so large that the Wigwam could not hold them. A platform was erected on the street corner nearby, and enthusiastic addresses were delivered by Colfax, Harper, and Clark, of South Bend, as well as by Merrifield and Hurlbut, of Mishawaka. The Mishawaka Wide Awakes, the Lincoln Rail Splitters, the Brass Band, and the Martial Band enlivened the proceedings with music, and a street parade was lighted by the large bonfire. The "Jollification" ended with a grand supper at the Milburn House.<sup>62</sup>

But even the sober thinkers of the village, as elsewhere throughout the North, could not clearly see the impact on the Union of the Republican sectional victory and the election of Lincoln. Lincoln had taken pains to assure the South that he was no abolitionist, that he would guarantee slavery where it existed, and that he was only opposed to its extension into the territories. Furthermore, the Democrats had control of both houses of Congress and, at least for the next two years, could effectively block any steps taken by the Republicans against southern interests. There was, however, widespread agreement among the southern political leaders that the election of Lincoln was a threat to southern property and that the North contemplated an attack on the South's basic institution. The Republican party had been founded upon the as-

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<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Esarey, *History of Indiana*, II, 662-665.

<sup>61</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, November 10, 1860.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, November 17, 1860; *St. Joseph Valley Register*, November 15, 1860.



saults upon this institution, and the personal opinions of Lincoln did not reassure the Southerners.<sup>63</sup> War was not inevitable, but the sectional character of the Republican party, together with the quick action by the Secessionists to overcome the moderate elements in the South, made it increasingly difficult for the new administration to bridge the growing gulf between the sections.<sup>64</sup>

War between the states was imminent, yet the residents of Mishawaka did not seem to realize that it was near. They were concerned, during the last weeks of 1860 and the early months of 1861, with commonplace events in a midwestern village. During December and January they sought suitable homes for orphan children from New York Children's Aid Society. A committee composed of George Milburn and Harris E. Hurlbut was appointed to see if homes could be found for the children, and by the latter part of January places had been found for most of them.<sup>65</sup> On the night of February 15, the Catholic church caught fire, and despite heroic efforts to save it, the church and most of the furniture burned. There was much talk and excitement, for the priest, Father Henry Koenig, immediately stated that the church had been set on fire by an incendiary.<sup>66</sup> Several days later, however, Father Koenig stated in an "Expression of Thanks" to the town—printed in the *Enterprise*—that he had been mistaken and that the fire had been started by an overheated chimney.<sup>67</sup> In April exciting events in the town included the exhibition of "wild men to be shown at Milburn Hall" and the serious injury of the son of Mr. Joseph Garrow who was kicked in the face by a horse.<sup>68</sup>

Meanwhile, the suffering of the people in Kansas Territory caused by a prolonged drought resulted in relief efforts. A committee was formed, composed of John Niles, John Thomas, George Milburn, Albert Hudson, and Austin Sherwood to take subscriptions and gather goods and money to help the Kansans. By February the citizens of Mishawaka

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<sup>63</sup> William B. Hesseltine, *The South in American History* (New York, 1943), 374-375.

<sup>64</sup> John D. Barnhart and Donald F. Carmony, *Indiana: From Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth* (4 vols., New York, 1954), II, 155, stresses the sectional split in Indiana; Hesseltine, *The South in American History*, 375-377.

<sup>65</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, December 29, 1860, January 12, 26, 1861.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, February 16, 1861; Suelzer, *A Century of Catholic Faith in Mishawaka*, 18.

<sup>67</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, February 23, 1861.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, April 13, 1861.

had sent \$135 worth of boots, shoes, and clothing, and \$100 in cash to help relieve the suffering.<sup>69</sup>

Mishawaka citizens were not indifferent or ignorant of the great and exciting developments taking place in the nation. A great number of them subscribed to out-of-town newspapers, and although the news was a little stale when the papers arrived, the readers got a confused picture of the country drifting into a Civil War.<sup>70</sup> The *Enterprise*, as usual, editorialized on national affairs and printed excerpts from out-of-town papers. On December 22, 1860, the editor told of the secession of South Carolina; on December 29 he wrote again about the Secession Convention at Charleston, and the news that Fort Moultrie had been abandoned by the federal forces.<sup>71</sup> On January 5, 1861, the *Enterprise* printed an excerpt from the Charleston *Mercury* on "Harbor Defense at Charleston" and stated in an editorial that President Buchanan had changed his mind about Fort Sumter. "It is about time, we think, for him to do something to save the country from ruin."<sup>72</sup> On January 12, an editorial gave an account of the *Star of the West* being fired on in Charleston harbor; and this was followed on February 2, with a story from the New York *World*, "Why Fort Sumter Held Its Fire When the 'Star' was Fired On."<sup>73</sup>

During February accounts appeared of the journey of President-elect Lincoln to Washington. Editorializing on Lincoln's speech in Indianapolis the editor wrote, "He had no idea of making war upon the South or interfering with her institutions, but the public property must be preserved and the laws executed at all times."<sup>74</sup> On February 23 there was a story telling of the inauguration of Jefferson Davis at Montgomery, Alabama, which quoted Davis as stating, "Our separation from the Union is complete. No compromise, no reconstruction can now be entertained."<sup>75</sup>

On March 2 the editor defended Mr. Lincoln's night trip into Washington and gave editorial support to Colfax's

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<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, November 17, 1860, February 2, 1861; *St. Joseph Valley Register*, February 7, 1861.

<sup>70</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, March 5, 1859, and the *St. Joseph Valley Register*, March 17, 1859, stated that the total number of newspapers and other periodicals regularly received at the Mishawaka Post Office was 1,626. Of these 10 were dailies, 30 semi-weeklies, 1,200 weeklies, 300 monthlies, and 6 quarterlies.

<sup>71</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, December 22, 29, 1860.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, January 5, 1861.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, January 12, February 2, 1861.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, February 16, 1861.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, February 23, 1861.

candidacy for postmaster general.<sup>76</sup> Lincoln's inaugural was printed in full and the editor commented:

It is generally regarded, we believe, as an able document, possessing Union sentiments. Mr. Douglas speaks in its praise and Mr. Wigfall likes it, but we leave our readers to judge of its merits for themselves without further comments.<sup>77</sup>

Following Lincoln's inauguration, Fort Sumter received considerable attention. An *Enterprise* editorial stated:

It seems to be the prevailing opinion at present that Major Anderson will be recalled, and Fort Sumter given up to the Secessionists. General Scott advises it as a military necessity, for it cannot be re-enforced without a fight, great loss of life, and the use of all the army. Besides the Government is not prepared for war and the Secessionists are.

Whatever the policy of the Government may be, will be known soon, for a recent dispatch from Major Anderson states he has but fifteen days provisions, and the Government must re-enforce him or order his withdrawal. The latter would be very humiliating, but it may be the best course to take.<sup>78</sup>

The news stories were confusing during the first week in April. Some told of a willingness to let the Southerners have Fort Sumter because there was no desire to start a war, while others stated that Major Anderson was to be reinforced at Fort Sumter, and that there was great activity at the naval yards where the ships were being fitted out to carry supplies and reinforcements.<sup>79</sup> On April 13, the *Enterprise* printed dispatches from the *New York Times*, *New York Post*, and the *Chicago Tribune* that told of the crisis. All were of the same tone—bloodshed was inevitable. The local editor again wrote:

The news of the week has been of so contradictory a character [*sic*] that it is almost impossible to express a decided opinion as to the result. Everything however, seems to portend the approach of a crisis in Southern affairs, and a conflict between the United States forces and those of the Southern Confederacy appears to be inevitable.

In our opinion, a few days will settle the question, whether the Union is really to be dissolved and henceforth there are to be two rival nationalities within its boundaries, or whether the honor of the old flag is to be maintained and the country remain one and undivided.<sup>80</sup>

The news of the fall of Fort Sumter was received at Mishawaka on the morning of April 15, and the response of

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, March 2, 1861.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, March 9, 1861.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, March 16, 1861.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, April 6, 1861.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, April 13, 1861.

Mishawakans to its fall was immediate and enthusiastic. It was as though they had been waiting, along with the rest of the people of the North, for the cause célèbre that had been presented to them by the action of the seceders. Waiting and uncertainty had passed, the time for a declaration of principle and for action had arrived. At the Town Hall on Monday evening, April 15, citizens assembled and proceeded to form a permanent organization and to appoint committees to formulate resolutions supporting the federal government. George Milburn was made chairman of the permanent organization, and he appointed Squire Hurlbut, George Martling, and Squire Cowles as a committee on resolutions which submitted the following:

Whereas, War has actually commenced by the act of those who have arrayed themselves in Rebellion against our common country—

Resolved, That we hereby express our sympathy with, and determination to support the Government in putting down this Rebellion to the full extent of our ability.

Resolved, That we regard it the duty of every citizen, regardless of former party ties, associations or platforms to rally at his country's call, and assist in maintaining her sovereignty.

Resolved, That this meeting approve the act of the Government in endeavoring [*sic*] to sustain and succor the troops in Fort Sumter—we approve of the call of the President upon the country to rise and maintain its sovereignty.

Whereas, This Government was established by those who pledged their lives, their fortune and their sacred honor to the maintenance of the principles which lie at its foundation—

Resolved, That we hereby pledge our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor in defense of that Union and that Flag thus bequeathed unto us.<sup>81</sup>

These resolutions were adopted unanimously, but some men wanted action, not "resolves" and "whereases"; however, as patriotic emotions quickened, men rose to make speeches and offer additional resolutions. George Merrifield wanted immediate action, and he proposed the resolution that the citizens of Penn Township forthwith raise and organize an infantry company to be tendered the federal government. Dr. William Butterworth resolved that a "crisis has now arrived when every man here and elsewhere must take one of two sides—for the Government or for its enemies." George Milburn believed as Butterworth did and suggested the rope for "traitors in our midst," while John Niles spoke of the

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, April 20, 1861.

glory of his ancestors at Bunker Hill and said he would fight against all traitors. Albert Judson arose and offered his personal estates if necessary in support of the government. These motions and resolves were unanimously adopted amid deafening cheers and rounds of applause. It was late when the meeting finally adjourned.<sup>82</sup>

The people met again on Tuesday evening, April 16, to enroll a company of volunteers. Before this business could be undertaken, George Milburn introduced a resolution calling for a committee of three to take "the proper steps to form an Aid Society, for the purpose of rendering the necessary assistance to the families of such of those who volunteer." George Milburn, Harris Hurlbut, and John Thomas were appointed to that committee. With this business taken care of, the book was opened for volunteers. As the men arose and volunteered for enlistment, the gathering gave each a long and loud burst of applause and cheers. Twenty men enlisted and Captain James Houghton was invited to drill the volunteers the next afternoon.<sup>83</sup>

On Wednesday evening, April 17, there was still another meeting to continue the work of changing the town from peace to war status. George Milburn, chairman of the Committee of the Aid Society, reported that over \$1,500 had been subscribed, to be "paid on demand, pro rate, for the assistance of those families of volunteers who might be in need of aid." A committee of Hurlbut, Robert Montgomery, and Barnet, Byrkit was appointed to take subscriptions, make assessments, and to see to the equitable disbursement of the funds collected. Fifteen additional men enlisted, and Captain Henry Loring, who had taken charge of the volunteers in the village, announced that fifty-five men had volunteered in South Bend and that they and the men from Mishawaka would form a full company. He requested that all volunteers meet with those from South Bend on Thursday for drill and to elect officers. It was moved and adopted "that the volunteers' way be paid to South Bend and that they be paid out of the subscription fund for all time lost while drilling before they entered the National service." Before adjournment, the standing committee was delegated the power to convene future meetings.<sup>84</sup>

A telegram was sent to Governor Morton on Wednesday, tendering the services of the Mishawaka and South Bend

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

volunteers. They were accepted and ordered to leave for Indianapolis on Friday, April 19.<sup>85</sup> During Thursday more men volunteered for the company, making a total of forty-two. These men with the fifty-five from South Bend formed a full company and elected the following officers: Andrew Anderson, Jr., of South Bend, Captain; Henry Loring, Jr., of Mishawaka, First Lieutenant; and H. J. Blowney, of South Bend, Second Lieutenant.<sup>86</sup>

Patriotism, war fever, and excitement were in the air. Additional subscriptions to the Soldier's Aid Society raised the total to over \$2,000. The streets were crowded with people. Flags waved from many private as well as public buildings. A large and expensive flag was greeted by enthusiastic cheers and the firing of cannon when it was hoisted over the Masonic building. More than three hundred citizens accompanied the volunteers to South Bend on Friday and remained with them until their train left for Indianapolis.

The parting of soldiers with friends was very affecting. Many tears were shed by wives, mothers, and sisters, and perhaps those more dear, at the thought that many of the band now departing might find graves in a distant land.<sup>87</sup>

Mishawaka had vigorously reacted in support of the Union in less than a week after the news of Fort Sumter reached the village. A permanent organization had been established to represent the village in matters pertaining to the war. A Soldier's Aid Society had been formed and over \$2,000 had been subscribed for the relief of the volunteers' families. Forty-two men had volunteered for the army, to risk their lives to support the sovereignty of the national government—all this in less than a week. Patriotism had not been extinguished, but had only slumbered during the frustrating times of the preceding years. The first breeze of war had fanned it into a flame. Never in the four long years of war that lay ahead did the people of Mishawaka turn away from the path they had chosen in November of 1860. For having made their decision to support the policies of the new Republican party, they supported the war to save the Union with their wealth, their blood, and with their honor.

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<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*; Timothy Edward Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana* (2 vols., Chicago, 1907), II, 717-718.

<sup>87</sup> *Mishawaka Enterprise*, April 20, 1861.