

THE QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF THE  
Ripley County, Indiana, Historical Society, Inc.

Museum--Corner Main and Water Streets

Versailles, Indiana 47042

---

VOLUME XIII

JULY 1989

NUMBER 3

---

SUMMER MEETING AT VERSAILLES

The Ripley County Historical Society will meet July 9, at 2 o'clock (Ripley County time) in the Archives building next to the museum. Mrs. Mildred Cizek will give the program on "Old Times".

SUMMARY OF THE SPRING MEETING

On Sunday afternoon, April 9th, twenty five members and friends of the R.C.H.S. met at the Bear Creek Baptist Church in Friendship.

The President, Randy Young, called the meeting to order. He asked everyone to tell his home township or town. The secretary's and treasurer's reports were read and approved.

A get well card was signed by all for Mildred Cizek, who had broken her wrist. Herbert Thompson gave the nominating committee report, stating that the present directors from Adams, Brown, Center and Delaware townships would be willing to serve another term. There were no nominations from the floor. All were in favor so the same directors were elected: Adams, Mrs. Charles Roepke; Brown, Mrs. Alice McCoy; Center, Mrs. Mildred Cizek; Delaware, Mrs. Grace Dunbar.

Myron Kelly was in charge of the program. He showed slides of World War II. Many memories were brought back to life while viewing the pictures, especially the old "fly boys".

The meeting was adjourned. Lunch was served. The redbud wasn't as beautiful as some years but the drive to Friendship was very pretty.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SOCIETY SPONSORS ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS. One was in May, one in June and one is scheduled for Sept. 9 at the Holiday Inn, Elkhart. Registration deadline is Sept. 2. The \$8 registration fee includes lunch and all handouts.

AN EXHIBIT OF "HOOSIER MELODIES" opens June 5 through Aug. 31 at the I.H.S. The exhibit is free and open to the public and will include Hoosier songwriters Carmichael, Cole Porter, Paul Dresser and Noble Sissle to name a few of the Ragtime and Jazz artists.

FREE FOLK MUSIC CONCERT. The internationally-known French folk music ensemble, Lo Jai, will perform in a free concert at 7:30 P.M., July 8 at the Indiana War Memorial auditorium, 431 N. Meridian St. They will present music from the 18th and 19th centuries according to the Society's Ethnic History Project.

For more information about the above items or for membership application, write or visit the Society's offices at 315 W. Ohio, Indianapolis, IN 46202; or call the I.H.S. at (317) 232 - 1882.

SOCIETY BOOK EXAMINES LIFE OF A COUNTRY DOCTOR. The life and work of an early 19th century country physician in Indiana is explored in the book "The Journals of William A. Lindsay; An Ordinary 19th century Physician's Surgical Cases", recently published by the I.H.S.

"Lindsay made no major contributions to the field of surgery, but he did leave behind a unique legacy -- three journals that contain a wealth of information about medical care and procedures in the early 19th century rural Midwest. Most of these early physicians performed major operations only in cases of absolute necessity." said Katherine Mandusic McDonell, Society medical research historian and curator of the Indiana Medical History Museum.

In the early 1820s, Lindsay moved to Lawrenceburg, IN to practice medicine. He stayed there for two or three years and then attended the Ohio Medical College. Lindsay never graduated, but 20 years later he did receive an honorary degree from the Starling Medical College in Columbus, Ohio. He practiced medicine for a short time in Ohio before setting up a stable career in Richmond, In in 1829.

Lured by the prospect of earning \$20,000, Lindsay joined Indianapolis physician George Stipp in a pharmaceutical and medical practice in the capital city in the summer of 1837. However, less than a year later the partnership turned sour and their joint venture was dissolved.

Lindsay later moved back to Ohio and at the age of 68 enlisted in the Union Army as a contract surgeon. He began his army tenure in Indianapolis and served at a number of camps and hospitals in the city and later in Kentucky. Lindsay died on May 7, 1876, in W. Alexandria, Ohio.

"The Journals of William A. Lindsay sells for \$27.50 and is available through the Society at 315 W. Ohio, Indianapolis, IN 46202.

I thought these bits of information from the Commissioners Records of 1835-36 might be of interest. This was handwritten in Ole English.

Walker Brown allowed \$3.50 for 7 wolf scalps under 6 months old.  
Thomas Collins, Jeremiah Patelee received \$1.00 each for wolf scalps over 6 months old.

Although they weren't called foster children, I am using this word.

Children and who they were with.

Joe Canfield w. Hezekiah Canfield

Mason Jourden w. Joseph McDaniel

Malinda Wade w. Bennett Ward also Mrs. Stanley and also Elizabeth Alfrey

Martha Whitaker w. William Jolly

Frances Terril w. Boswell Prather

Emily H. Johns w. David Fox

Returning Judges were receiving 75¢ a day.

Citizens Petition - to put a new cupola on the Court House. Jan. 1835. It was ordered that the old cupola all but square and to erect a good one in its' place much as county agent may think suitable so as to be respectable. Have the Court House Pencilled and paint underpin. Done before 1st day August 1836 in best advantage, in a good workman like manner. Also fix stone steps to the front door and such other improvement on the outside of said house as agent thinks best.

Jesse Markland  
Samuel Gookins  
Abraham Yater

contributed by Bea Boyd

Lorain Cook, who recently retired as a director of the R.C.H.S. was featured this spring in the MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR feature of the Versailles Republican. For the benefit of those members who have migrated out of the area and don't see our local paper we are reprinting parts of it.

The art of making home made maple syrup was once practiced by many small farmers during the late winter to provide syrup and sugar for their households. Now, because of a lack of equipment and time, the small maple syrup producer is becoming a thing of the past. Eighty-five year old Lorain Cook, of the rural Napoleon area, carries on the tradition of tapping trees and gathering the sap for boiling down into syrup that was begun in his family and on his farm before he was born.

The 145 acre farm, (45 acres are wooded) has been in the Cook family for five generations. Lorain Cook's great grandfather was the first Cook to actually live on the farm and Lorain's father, John R. Cook passed it on to his son. Lorain (pronounced Lauren) was the only surviving son of John and Elnora Cook. He had two sisters who introduced him to a neighbor girl named Ruth Abplanalp and the two were married on August 14, 1930.

When Lorain and Ruth were married, Lorain had already spent many years with his father working on the farm and gathering sap to make syrup. "I started out when I was about 14 years old. My father did it before me. We used to have a camp about a quarter of a mile back further from this one, but I moved it here and got a little closer to home," Lorain stated while adding more wood to the sap house furnace.

The present sap house stands on a small hill in the center of the forest approximately one half mile from the Cook house and with the help of a crutch, Lorain makes the trip back and forth almost every day during the maple syrup season. He is usually accompanied by his pet German Shepherd. Wooden buckets used on the farm since before Cook was born are still used in the gathering of sap from the maple trees but many of the buckets used now are galvanized because the old ones have worn out. The spigots used are old also, but do the job quite well.

The syrup that Cook makes is sold in the local area around Batesville but making syrup is not all that has filled his life. He was a farmer for many years, raising hogs and cattle and he sold cream at one time. He and Ruth have lived on the farm for their entire married life of 58 years. They have two children. John lives in Indianapolis and works in education and is the father of four sons; Jonn, Tom and twins Jerry and Larry, all of whom are grown. Their daughter, Caroline Hahn, lives on the Delaware Road and works in Batesville. She and her Husband have two children: Ann, who is a student at St. Mary's at Notre Dame and Bill, who is a freshman at Batesville High School.

Lorain and Ruth manage to live alone, "and get along very well with Caroline's help", according to Ruth. Caroline calls her mother and father every day and comes at least once a week to help with housework, laundry and grocery shopping for the couple. Lorain still drives into town on occasion and until recently, the couple attended their home church, the Methodist Church in Batesville. They have worked in years past with the Ripley County Historical Society and have donated some items to the museum.

Cook has continued making maple syrup year after year for the past seventy years and has no plans of quitting. He enjoys keeping as active as possible. "I kind of worry about him when he's back there by himself, but it doesn't do any good." Ruth explained, "He wants to do it and he wouldnt have to, but it's just a hobby for him. I guess that's better than sitting around and compleining."

## RECENTLY DECEASED MEMBERS

We will miss Mr and Mrs. William Abdon. They had been members since reorganization in 1970. "Dink" as he was called died in February and Marguerite passed away this June.

Loyd Wilson, although he was a new member he had been responsible for quite a few new members that he had recruited at Lafarys' Malt Bar "Round Table".

## GIFTS AND ACQUISITIONS

Diplomas of Eunice Smith, Versailles; Common School 1906; Versailles High School 1910; Moores Hill College 1916; Master of Arts, I.U. 1922 History of English Literature, 2 Bibles, one from Austin Family and 1 from Smith Family. 3 school books of English Literature.

## GENEALOGICAL QUERIES

As a service to readers interested in genealogy we publish queries in each issue. Please make them as concise as practical. Typewritten copy is preferred. If handwritten, make sure it is very legible. The charge is 50¢ per query to society members and \$1.00 per query to non-members; payable in advance by check or stamps. Please send queries to: Mrs. Don Boyd, P.O. Box 83, Holton, IN 47023

There were no query requests for this issue.

We are asked to announce that a book, "HERITAGE HISTORY" by Vallie Jo Whitfield is available with "INDIANA HISTORY".

A TRUE REPORT OF THE RIPLEY COUNTY LYNCHING AT VERSAILLES, RIPLEY COUNTY, INDIANA, WHICH TOOK PLACE ON THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 14th 1897.

(Post script by Dr. William F. Glover from Mrs. Roxanna Harrington. I am putting this p.s. at the beginning because this will be printed in two parts. This is the personal account of an eye witness, Mr. William F. Bagot, of the historic lynching at Versailles, Indiana, which occurred on the night of September 14, 1897. It was typed by him some years before his death in April 1935 and given to W. E. Lawless of Milan who later gave it to Roxanna Harrington. It is regrettable that he did not sign the document. Later Mrs. Harrington gave it to Dr. Glover who, at her request, had a copy made for the State Historical Society and the original processed for donation to the Ripley County Museum.)

I was present and witnessed the proceedings from start to finish. Early in the evening of above date it was reported about Milan a town 8 miles distant from Versailles that a Mob was forming to storm the County Jail at Versailles on that night and Lynch 5 prisoners contained therein. I paid little attention to the report at first, as I knew every Man, Woman and Child in Versailles and vicinity and I little thought that there was sufficient nerve in that Town and surroundings to undertake anything like that. However as the evening wore on I could not banish the report from my mind, and what a terrible thing it would be should the Mob make good its threat. I soon learned that it was a far more terrible thing than I could ever have imagined. I looked at my watch it was just Nine O'clock I told the stable boy to hitch up a Horse for me which he did. I stepped into the buggy and to Versailles I went. On my arrival at 10:15 not one person could I see in the Town, I thought what a fool

I was but just then a man turned the corner, a life time friend of mine, I called to him calling him by name he looked around and seen me, but paid no attention to me but just walked on. I then made up my mind that there might be some thing doing. I tied my horse to the Courtyard fence and crossed the street to the Hotel which was then the Hassmer House all dark as a dungeon. I tried the front door it was locked, I went to the back door it was locked. I then went around the back way and entered the Hall. I listened quietly in the dark hall. I imagined I heard a whisper I Knocked on the door of the room from which I thought I Heard the Whisper No answer, I knocked again much harder Finally the Door opened just a mere crack, and a man says who are you, I told him, then the door swung wide and he says come in, there was at least 20 people crowded in that little room, all of whom knew me, but they did not look natural. The fact is they were scared. Finally one fellow says Bill let us go up stairs, we did and in a big room, known as the parlor bed room, which faced the street, this room was also full of men watching out the windows. Finally a bunch of men came down the street from the West, I counted just 18 of them Masked, I then said to the man that asked me to come upstairs, well let us go down and see what they are going to do. He refused to come down, so I went alone and followed probably 30 yards behind the Masked party. As I passed in front of the Court house 2 more men came up behind me. They wore masks they passed me one on each side and I said Good evening Gentlemen and they said Hello Bill. I would have given anything to have known who they were. I followed on up to the corner where they turned East to the Jail. A guard there stopped me and says holdup there where are you going. You are not masked. I told him why you know me don't you, I am just going down here to see the fun. Oh is that you Bill all right go ahead. Before I got to the Jail the Mob had entered and the killing was going on within. To my dying day I will never forget the begging, screaming of those poor unfortunates, some of them scarcely out of their Teens. They commenced shooting them in the jail and I thought from where I Stood a glancing bullet might come out the window and get me, so I retraced my steps back to the corner, spoke to the Guard, and turned north to the next corner known as the Eli Hunter Home. There I met another Guard I think he was the tallest man I ever seen and the awfulest looking Gun. He held me up, I gave him the old song why you know me, but he said no sir I dont know any one to night you stay right here with me. I took one look at that Gun and concluded to stay. Presently the Mob come down the back street just a short distance from where we stood, They were dragging those poor men with ropes around their necks like Hogs. I says to my Guard we may as well walk down a ways now they are gone, down and he says come on boys and two men crawled out of the Rose bushes in the Hunter yard. We walked down opposite the tree. There was a small corn field between where we was and the tree. I climbed up on the fence, but my Guard stopped me, and says you stay here with me. I watched my chance, and when his head was turned I dropped down in the Corn and run. I got within 10 yards of the tree. They had 3 of the fellows hanging when I got there I saw them hang the other two. They were all stone dead, killed in the jail. After the last one was hung the crowd scattered going in all directions I walked back up town with two fellows Masked they talked flipantly of the evenings entertainment and paid no attention to me. I was in hopes they would remove their Masks, but they did not. I got my horse and started Home. When I got to the Hill top opposite the tree, I tied my horse and went over to the Tree thinking there might be a spark of life in some of them but there was not.

I did not go to the Coroners inquest the following day, God Knows I had seen enough.

To be continue in the October bulletin.

RIPLEY COUNTY, INDIANA, HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Box 525

Versailles, Indiana, 47042

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

Officers elected to serve until after the April 1989 meeting.

ADAMS Twp.; Mrs. Charles Roepke, R. 3, Sunman, IN 47041

BROWN Twp.; SEC. Mrs. Alice McCoy, R. 1, Versailles, IN 47042

CENTER Twp.; V.PRES. Mrs. George Cizek, 433 S. Buckeye St., Osgood, IN  
47037

DELAWARE Twp.; Mrs. Grace Dunbar, R. 3, Osgood, IN 47037

FRANKLIN Twp.; Dr. William Glover, R. 2, Box 25, Milan, IN 47031

JACKSON Twp.; Mr. Randy Young, R. 2, Box 366, Osgood, IN 47037

JOHNSON Twp.; PRES. Mr. Chester Henderson, R. 1, Dillsboro, IN 47018

LAUGHERY Twp.; Mrs. Carolyn Hahn, R. 4, Box 268, Batesville, IN 47006

OTTER CREEK Twp.; TREAS. Mrs. Donald Boyd, P.O. Box 83, Holton, IN 47023

SHELBY Twp.; MUSEUM CURATOR Mrs. Howard Lane, R. 2, Versailles, IN 47042

WASHINGTON Twp.; Mr. Myron Kelly, R. 1, Dillsboro, IN 47018

GENEALOGY RECORD SEARCHER Miss Mary Manship, R. 3, Box 87, Osgood, IN  
47037

BULLETIN EDITOR Mrs. Alice Glover, R. 2, Box 25, Milan, IN 47031

The Ripley County, Indiana  
Historical Society, Inc.  
Box 525  
Versailles, Indiana 47042

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

---

Non-Profit Org.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 17  
Versailles, IN  
47042

---