

# THE WAYNETOWN DESPATCH.

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ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR

## EARLY EDUCATION

Education in Its Earliest Stages in Indiana, Told in Splendid Style  
By Virgil M. Hayes.

The education of Indiana, in its very earliest stage, was carried on by the French priests or missionaries, at the French military posts. This amounted to very little, however, for the happy-go-lucky frontier Frenchman resisted mental efforts as much or even more than he avoided physical toil. He had no education and all that he knew had been handed down from father to son. There were no schools until during the American occupation and then they gradually began to appear. The first regular



VIRGIL HAYES

school was probably taught in Vincennes in 1793 by Father Rivet.

After the Americans had gained control of the territory and the settlers first began to make their way thither, the children, on account of the danger from Indians and wild beasts, were taught in the homes by the so-called circulating teachers. These passed from house to house and spent about one-third of the day at each home instructing the children. In this way, with only six families, they could give three lessons each week to the children of each family. Although these teachers did a great work, their plan of instruction was interfered with by the introduction of the school house.

In time it became less dangerous for the children to pass through the forest, consequently they assembled at the home of the family which was located near the center of the neighborhood. Here, in a lean-to, built at the end or side of the cabin, for the purpose, they were taught to read, write and cipher by either one of the mothers or an older sister.

As soon as conditions would permit, the settlers of the community assembled and built a log cabin for the school, and hired a "master" for three months of the year. If possible the school house was erected near a permanent spring, that there might be an unending supply of the cool, clear and sparkling water. They were built with special reference to the resistance of the savages and wild animals and were made of hewed logs, and puncheon floors, large mud and stick chimneys and immense fire places. The benches for the scholars had neither back nor desk and above the teacher's desk were two long wooden pins upon which the beech and hazel rods were laid. Each teacher was expected to govern on the home plan of "spare the rod and spoil the child." The rod in their estimation had a two-fold virtue, — a terror to evil doers and a remedy for stupidity.

Since the state at this time had no school revenue to distribute each voter became a builder. The people by common consent divided themselves into bands of choppers, hewers, carpenters and masons. If any person was unable to help work he might supply glass, nails or boards for the roof. If, however, any one refused to either pay or work he was fined thirty-seven and one-half cents per day. School commenced at seven o'clock



LAURENCE R. RIVERS

in the summer and at half past seven in the winter. At noon there was one hour intermission and there were two recesses of five minutes each—one in the forenoon and one in the afternoon. "Loud schools" were universally esteemed at this time. That is, the pupils studied aloud, the theory being that sound intensified the memory. Younger pupils listened to the recitations of the older ones and each scholar stepped from one class to another as rapidly as he was able to progress. The geography lessons, however, were taught to the whole school at the same time. Manual labor was also part of the school life since the large open fire place must be kept replenished. This was done by the larger pupils

who rather enjoyed this rest from study.

The teachers hired were many times adventurers, from the east or from England, Scotland, Ireland, or some other European country, seeking temporary employment. Some were first class men while others were not. Instructors were not very plentiful, however, as the compensation was not so great as to create an over-supply. The price commonly paid was seventy-five cents, yet in some places the price ranged from one dollar to two dollars per scholar. Some teachers eked out their living by chopping wood at night and on Saturdays. They were in most cases obliged to receive for their services, produce, consisting of wheat, corn, bacon, venison hams, dried pumpkins, flour, buckwheat flour, whiskey, leather, coon skins and other articles. These they either hauled to the closest market or floated down to New Orleans on a flatboat. Many of the unmarried instructors "boarded around" and thus took part of their pay in board. The presence of the teacher in the family was, in most cases, highly acceptable for, since there were few books and the visits of travelers were few and far between, the conversation of an intelligent teacher was a luxury.

In some localities all sorts of teachers were employed, as for instance, the one-legged teacher, the lame teacher, the teacher who had been educated for the ministry, but owing to his hab-



NELLIE E. BUNNELL

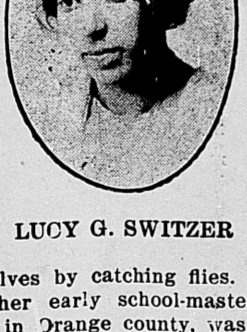
its of hard drink had turned pedagogue, and the teacher who got drunk on Saturday and whipped the entire school on Monday, are spoken of.

The first school-master of Vanderburg county, — a German — and helped gain a subsistence by trapping and trading in furs.

John Malone, a Jackson county school-master, was given to tipping to such excess that he could not restrain himself from drinking ardent spirits during school hours. He had enough self respect, however, to leave his bottle outside the school house.

Owen Davis, a Spencer county teacher, thought much of his trusty fiddle and while he was conducting the so-called "loud school" and his scholars were roaring at the top of their voices he would draw forth his old favorite companion and play such inspiring tunes as "Old Zip Coo," and "The Devil's Dream."

Thomas Ayers, a Switzerland county teacher, and a Revolutionary veteran, regularly took his afternoon nap during school hours while his pupils were supposed to be getting their lessons but in reality were amusing



LUCY G. SWITZER

themselves by catching flies. Another early school-master who taught in Orange county, was an old sailor. Under his encouragement the children spent most of their time roasting potatoes.

Thus we see that an odd character who had a little "learnin'," or a lame soldier who had seen some "schoolin'" in his mother country, or a Yankee tinker who could combine some useful trade with a few months' teaching the three R's to the frontier children, were generally the teachers found in the cabin schools.

The pupils learned to read from the Bible, Pilgrim's Progress, Gulliver's Travels, or whatever book the family happened to possess. Sometimes parents were compelled to cut up a book and paste the leaves on boards in order to accommodate all the children. A pointed goose quill was used for a pen and ink was made by saturating oak ball in vinegar.

The children were obliged to walk miles through the forest in order to gain the meagre knowledge that the eccentric master was able to impart to them. They arose early, did the chores about the farm, chopped the wood for the cavernous fireplace and then after their early breakfast trudged through the woods to school. "In imagination I can still hear the 'squish, squish' of water-soaked shoes

## WAYNETOWN SCHOOLS

The Past, The Present and The Future.

In preparation for the Seniors' part in this edition of the Despatch, very little special work has been done. Inasmuch as this year witnesses the last usefulness of the old school building; since this year marks the opening of a new regime in school affairs of Wayne Township, it was thought fitting and proper that a bit of local historical work be undertaken in connection with the changes. This was taken up in the regular Senior English work and those papers which seemed the most appropriate have been chosen for use in this edition. We trust they will prove of sufficient accuracy and interest as to make our effort not entirely in vain.

### SENIORS OF 1913.

The present Senior class of ten members is by no means the same group of students which enrolled in Waynetown High School in the au-

umn of 1909. The class at that time was the largest in the history of the school and its number of thirty-six is yet unsurpassed. Some of the former members have left school, some have moved away, while others are graduating from schools in neighboring towns.

With this constant lessening of numbers, however, there has not been a corresponding lowering of scholarship; in fact, if any difference is to be noted, the standard has been raised. Now as these students leave the old building as its last graduates, they are convincing evidence that wisdom may come from a building old and worn if the students but have the staving qualities. They have been handicapped, they have had discouragements, but they have succeeded. They are a class of which the school is proud.

as their wearers crossed the puncheon floors, to repeat their lessons," writes a historian.

The school children studied their lessons at night and "worked their sums" by the fire light or the meagre light of the "tallow dip." The children of early Indiana spent their lives not only under these, but many more disadvantages and privations. Yet they were the ones who laid the foundation for the better conditions of instruction which exist to-day. Nor did these men and women at a later day look back and say that their early years were a time of woe with no pleasures. The privations and dangers were forgotten and they thought only of the pleasures of a vigorous childhood spent amid the beauties of nature. They recalled the long walks to and from school in the late spring



LESLIE W. HAYS

time or remembered the happy hours spent rambling along streams or hunting the May apple, pawpaw, and blackberry. Thus they cherished fond memories and the "good old times" became also a term of reproach to modern degeneracy.

### History of Montgomery County.

BY LAURENCE R. RIVERS.

Montgomery county occupies a part of the great and fertile valley of the Wabash river. It is bounded on the north by Tippecanoe; east by Clinton, Boone and Hendricks; south by Putnam and Parke, and west by Fountain and Parke counties. The county is 24 miles north and south, 21 miles east and west, and has an area of 504 square miles of 322,500 acres. The main stream of Montgomery county is Sugar creek, formerly called Rock river. It enters the county a little south of the northeast corner and meandering through the central area passes out six miles north of the southwest corner. Much of the grand scenery along Sugar creek has been rendered famous by the genius of a former Crawfordsville artist, Walter Sies.

The tributaries of Sugar creek are Lye and Black creeks from the north and Walnut Fork, Offield and Indian creeks from the southeast. The south and southeastern parts of the county are drained by Big and Little Raccoon creeks, and the northwestern part by Coal creek, which flows into the Wabash. The water power of Sugar creek is utilized by some flour mills. The Yount's celebrated woolen factory was run by its power. There was an abundance of fish in this creek in early days but most of them have disappeared.

The land in the western part of the county, near the streams and along Sugar creek is hilly, and in the north rolling, dotted here and there with fertile prairies. The central areas are comparatively level and the southeastern part is flat.

Most of the county has a fertile soil, being composed largely of the drift of the glacial epoch and is therefore abundant in mineral elements which are necessary for the most productive fields. Another interesting feature of the topography is an ancient lake which

once covered a large part of the central region of the country. This ancient lake, named by Prof. Collett, "Ancient Lake Harney," was principally within a circle drawn through Crawfordsville, Brown's Valley and Ladoga, and probably was drained by Indian and Offield creeks into Sugar creek.

There were Indians in Montgomery county as late as 1800. They had been driven from their homes and had settled in the county temporarily. They moved westward about 1800.

The first settler, William Offield, came to Montgomery county in February, 1821. He settled at the mouth of Offield creek on Sugar creek. He entered the e 1-2 of ne 1-4, sec 4, t 18 n, r 5 w, July 4, 1822, and he and wife, Jane, sold it to Jonas Mann, December 31, 1823. July 3, 1825, John Lopp entered the first



PAUL HARVEY

tract of land ever sold by the government in Montgomery county. This land was in what is now Scott township (e 1-2 of se 1-4, sec 14, t17n, r 4w). On December 21, 1822, the legislature passed a bill defining the boundaries of Montgomery county and providing for the organization of civil government therein. William Offield, James Blevins and John McCullough were elected the first board of county commissioners on March 1, 1823.

The first murder in the county was committed about one-half mile north of the mouth of Black creek and some three or four miles northwest of Crawfordsville. One Mayfield had suspicions and perhaps proof that one Noggle had been interfering with his domestic affairs. He, meeting Noggle in the woods one day, fired at him and hit him in the knee. Mayfield reloaded his gun and shot the begging man through the heart. Mayfield fled the country.

The first court of Montgomery county was organized at the house of William Miller in Crawfordsville on May 29, 1823. Jacob Call, of Vincennes, was the presiding officer. The other officers of the court were John Wilson, clerk; Samuel D. Maxwell, sheriff; and Jacob J. Ford, prosecuting attorney. After ordering summons for a grand jury for the ensuing term to be held in August and adopting a seal for the court, the court adjourned. The court convened the second time August 28, (1823) and tradition says at the tavern kept by Henry Ristine. The first grand jury was composed of James Dungan, Richard M. McCafferty, James Scott, James Stitt, William Miller, Robert Craig, Samuel Brown, Elias Moore, Wilson Claypool, George Miller, Joseph Hahn, Samuel McClung, William B. Mitchell and John Farlow, with Samuel McClung as foreman.

The first indictment of the Montgomery county court was returned against John Toliver for assault and battery. Toliver fled from the county and although warrants for his arrest were issued repeatedly he was never captured.

At the May term of the court, 1825, one Jesse Keyton was sentenced to the penitentiary for two years for receiving stolen goods. This trial was held in the new court house which had been built. This house, the first of the

county, was of logs and two stories high. It was 26 feet long, 20 feet wide and there was a partition in each floor making four rooms in all. The building was erected by Eliakam Askton at a cost of \$295. It stood on Main street. The jury of the Keyton case was composed of Joshua Baxter, Reginald Butt, Samuel D. Maxwell, William Miller, George Miller, Samuel Wilhite, John Stitt, William Mount, John Ramsep, Edward Nutt, Abraham Miller and Isaac Miller. The case was prosecuted by Hon. John Law, while Joseph Cox and Nathan Huntington appeared for the defendant. The presiding judge not being present the associate judges, William Burbridge and James Stitt, ruled over the court.

The population of the county at this time was sparse but the public land sale December 24, 1824, and following brought many settlers, however, here.

A "jail house" was built in the year 1824 at a cost of \$200 only to be reduced to ashes three years later by Peter Smith. He was an inmate of the jail under a charge of larceny, and while trying to burn the lock from his cell, set fire to the building. It stood only a few yards from the northeast corner of the present court house.

Considerable boating was done on Sugar creek in the early days. In 1824 a keelboat of ten tons burden was brought to Crawfordsville by William Nicholson from Maysville, Ken-



WANETA E. STOCKDALE

tucky. When the first settlers came to Montgomery county it was almost wholly forested. The pioneers had to contend with bear, wolves and other wild animals. They found an abundance of deer in the forest and fish in the streams.

The first tornado found the pathway of a most destructive tornado which in some places had prostrated the entire forest. It passed about two miles south of where the city of Crawfordsville now stands, at times rising above the trees and at others descending to its work of devastation. The precise time of this tornado will probably never be known but from observations it is thought to have been about the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The houses of the early settlers were built of round logs. The logs were beveled on top and notched underneath so as to fit close together and prevent their slipping apart. The cracks between the logs were filled with mud. The floor was laid with puncheons and the roof was of clapboards weighted down with small poles. The house usually had only one room. The one door was fasten-



WANETA L. BARD

ed by means of a wooden latch on the inside, to which a long buckskin thong was attached and put through a small hole a few inches above. Anyone wishing to enter had to pull the string and thus raise the latch. At night the string was pulled inside so that the door could be opened only from within. The fireplace was built of stone and the chimney of mud and sticks.

Mills were few and very far between in the early days. When the first people came to the county the nearest mill was at Terre Haute. After the settler had gone to the mill, a trip taking two or three weeks, he would spend many evenings around the fireside relating to his wife and children the incidents of the journey and the news heard at the mill.

The first mill in the county was built at the mouth of the stream flowing into Sugar creek from Whitlock springs. It was fitted with an over shot wheel. The water was led to the wheel through an aqueduct made of hollow poplar logs. The millstones were roughly dressed out of huge boulders. It was a crude affair from beginning to end. This mill ground meal and cracked hominy for all the early inhabitants of Crawfordsville.

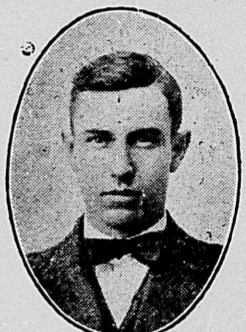
In 1836 there occurred a most singular murder on Sugar creek at a point just below where Deer's mill now stands. Mose Rush, an outlaw, and

## WAYNETOWN HISTORY

A Brief History of Waynetown as Told By Charles L. Zuck Makes Most Interesting Reading.

Waynetown, or rather Middletown, was laid out in 1829. The first church in the town was built in 1829 or '30 by the Old School Baptists. It was not really inside the village at that time, but barely outside, being located immediately south of the "old grave yard" at the extreme end of the present town. A school building was built near this shortly afterwards but being outside the limits of the town it was a township school.

The first school in the town, therefore, was not built until in 1852. It



RAY D. THOMPSON

was a frame structure and the money for its construction was raised by private subscription as was the custom at that time. It was a two-story building, the lower floor being used for school purposes and the upper story belonging to the Sons of Temperance, being afterwards bought by the Masonic lodge, after it was founded in 1863. It was located at the extreme south of the town as it was then, and on the south side of what is now Church street and in the middle of what is now Vine street. Edmund W. Berry was the first teacher in this building.

We then see the town growing and prospering until at the beginning of the Civil War it was no longer a village of a few grocery stores and a blacksmith shop but a thriving little inland town.

Then when President Lincoln's call for volunteers came a large percent of the able bodied men of the town and even many that were yet boys, left home and families to fight for their country. Nearly all of Company D of the Sixty-third Regiment, Infantry, was made up of men of Middletown and vicinity and their captain, Jim York, was a citizen of that place. Besides this many served in other companies and other regiments. Nor were any of these inactive troopers, but all were in the thick of the fighting, Company D being with Sherman in his famous march to the sea and others being in the battle of Gettysburg and other engagements almost as bloody.

After the war, however, the town continued to prosper until in 1869 when it received a great "boost" by way of a railroad. Up to this time the townspeople had had no communication with the outside world except by a stage line between Crawfordsville and Middletown, run by "Uncle Billy" Phillips, who also owned and operated a tavern in the town at that time. In 1868, however, the Indianapolis, Bloomington & Western Railway was formed by the consolidation of two other companies and work was begun on a road from Indianapolis to Danville. It was not completed until in 1869, however, and the first train was run to Indianapolis in May of the following year. Of course this was of almost inestimable value to the town as they now had good accommodations for both passenger and freight traffic.

About this time several lodges were organized in the town. The first was the Odd Fellows, it being organized in 1869 and shortly after this they built a lodge home which was destroyed in



CHARLES E. ZUCK

the fire of 1894, and then they erected their present building. Soon after the Odd Fellows organized in 1871 or '72, the Good Templars lodge, an organization for both men and women, was started and they used the Odd Fellows' building for their meetings. This lodge was very strong in membership for a time but after about six years it died out entirely. The Knights of Pythias was the next, it being organized in 1887, but their present lodge home was not built until in 1893. The Red Men, the young-

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