

On the morning of August 26, 1878, an alarm was sounded at 3 o'clock, to which the Company responded promptly. The cause of the alarm was a fire which originated in the Hayes Block, and was not discovered until it had burned through the roof. Being fed by a draught from an open hallway, it was beyond control before water could be thrown upon it. The firemen, however, determined to save adjacent buildings, if possible, and, to that end, endeavored to set the engine at a cistern near the burning building, when three kegs of powder, which were in one of the rooms, exploded in rapid succession, wounding several members of the Company, and they were compelled to remove the engine half a square away. In the mean time, the flames communicated with the building opposite and across Market street, which required the most determined efforts of the firemen to save it. They were compelled to stand so near the flames that their hands and faces were blistered by the heat; and they were only enabled to maintain their position by the citizens, who formed a line with buckets and threw water upon them continually. Their valor won the day, and the building was saved. The property destroyed consisted of the Palmer House, eight business rooms, and one dwelling.

A telegram was sent to Warsaw for assistance, but, the fire having been subdued in the mean time, a second message was sent, releasing the Warsaw department by the time they reached the depot.

This was the first great struggle in which the Pierceston Fire Department participated, and on this occasion they proved themselves worthy of the confidence reposed in them by the citizens.

KOSCIUSKO POST OFFICE,

otherwise known as Wooster, is a way-station on the P., Ft. W. & C. R. R. It is a small village, and possesses no commercial importance.

MONROE TOWNSHIP.

Monroe Township is situated in the southeastern portion of Kosciusko County, and is bounded as follows: North by Washington Township, east by Whitley County, south by Jackson Township, west by Clay Township. It has an area of twenty-four square miles, or 15,360 acres. The soil is of black loam, intermixed with sand, excepting the northwest corner of the township, which is characterized by yellow sand and marsh. Throughout the township the soil is very productive. It was originally covered by a heavy body of timber, including a large percentage of black walnut, poplar, oak, cherry, ash, and other valuable building material.

The township was organized March 8, 1855, under the name of Chester Township, but on the 4th day of December, following, was re-organized under the name of Monroe.

EARLY SETTLEMENT.

Hiram Bennett, who came in the spring of 1836, was the first white settler in the township; and in this fact alone is comprised his identity with its early history, as he was not remarkable for his industrious disposition, and bore but a feeble part in the development and improvement of the township. His cabin was constructed against a large fallen tree, which was made to serve the purpose of a "back-log" for his fire. His chief occupation seems to have been the sale of whiskey to the Indians. He was an indolent, good-tempered, good-for-nothing fellow, and took his fortune as it came to him, without complaint, and made no attempt to improve it. But there were those who came to the township with higher ambitions, with a determination to earn from the cultivation of its rich soil a living and a competence. First among that class was William Norris, who, in 1837, cut his way through the woods from the "Hayden Settlement" in Washington Township, and settled on Section 24. Joel Phillips came in 1839, with his mother's family, and Cornelius Hand, Sr., and Cornelius Hand, Jr., settled in the township about the same time. Later in the same year came Thomas York, H. I. Stevens, John Cuppy, John Copein and others. In 1840, they were joined by Louis Lipps, David Rolson and Samuel Fritz. Henry Clouse, James Norris, William Wilson and — Wey came in 1841. Among other early settlers, may be named William S. Hoagland, Isaac Brockway, George Sherburn, Robert Sibert, Eli Circle, Daniel Lucas, — Hagerman and — Falkner, who came at various times, and were prominently identified with the settlement of the township.

The first ground was cleared and the first crop was planted by Thomas York, on Section 15.

The First Death was that of Valentine Phillips, who died in 1839.

The First White Child born in the township, was Ulysses Stevens, who was born August 2, 1840.

The First Marriage was solemnized in 1840; Michael Ryan and Miss York being the contracting parties.

The First Mill was the saw-mill erected in 1843, by H. I. Stevens, at the outlet of a small lake on his farm. It was operated until 1856, when it was abandoned.

The First Steam Mill was the saw-mill erected by Daniel Miller in 1856, on Section 15.

The First Township Officers.—At the March term, 1856, the Board of County Commissioners appointed Jacob S. Rogers, H. I. Stevens and James Norris, Trustees of Monroe Township. They met at the house of H. I. Stevens, and appointed Daniel Miller Township Clerk, and at the same meeting numbered and located the road and school districts.

The First Election.—In April, 1856, the first township election was held at the house of Daniel Miller. J. S. Rogers, John Gripe and David McPherson were elected Trustees, and David Miller, Clerk.

A. M. Simpson was serving as Justice of the Peace at the time of organization, and was permitted to retain his position until the expiration of his term. He was succeeded by Jeremiah Myers.

The First Post Office was established at the house of H. I. Stevens, who was appointed Postmaster. Several years later, George Moore, Sr., was placed in charge of the office, as the successor of Mr. Stevens. In 1861, F. P. Sellers was appointed Postmaster, and shortly after that date the office was discontinued.

THE SCHOOLS.

The public schools of this township are among the institutions in which its residents feel a commendable interest and pride. Every district is supplied with a substantial school-building, in which school is regularly taught. The following is a list of the schools and teachers of the township:

Schoolhouse No. 1, William Hackett, Teacher; scholars enrolled, 44; Schoolhouse No. 2, E. M. Idle, Teacher; scholars enrolled, 40; Schoolhouse No. 3, William McConnell, Teacher; scholars enrolled, 29; Schoolhouse No. 4, Benton Thoma, Teacher; scholars enrolled, 35; Schoolhouse No. 5, F. L. Maxwell, Teacher; scholars enrolled, 56; Schoolhouse No. 6, William K. McKinley, Teacher; scholars enrolled, 50. Total, 254.

School institutes are often conducted in the township, and have uniformly been attended with successful results. None are too old to learn, and the teacher leaves these institutes, feeling that his attendance has ultimately resulted in the acquisition of valuable knowledge.

THE CHURCHES.

The Christian Church.—In 1841, the members of this denomination organized a church under the ministerial offices of Rev. John Plummer. It was organized at the house of Abner McCourtney, with eleven members, viz.: James Abbott and wife, Samuel Abbott and wife, Abner McCourtney, John Abbott and wife, Peter Circle and wife, and Alexander Hapner and wife.

Until 1868, the congregation met at the schoolhouses and the homes of its members; but in that year they erected a house of worship on Section 24. The building is a frame structure, 35x48 feet, and was built at a cost of \$1,500.

Services are conducted at intervals of two weeks, and the Church is under the pastoral care of Rev. David Hidy.

The Sunday School was organized in 1841. Samuel Abbott was the first Superintendent. It has now an average attendance of ninety scholars, and is only conducted during the summer. William Norris is the present Superintendent.

The Disciples' Church.—In 1846, the Disciples, or Christians, organized a congregation in the township, with the following officers: Elders, John Norris and Elijah Bird; Clerk, John Norris; Deacon, William Norris. In 1866, they adopted measures for the erection of a church, but abandoned the project before the building was completed. They now conduct services in the schoolhouse.

The present officers of the Church are: Elder, E. M. Idle; Deacons, J. Newcomer and Caleb Zook; Clerk and Treasurer, E. M. Idle. The present number of members is sixty.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

Excelsior Lodge, No. 144, I. O. G. T., was organized August 3, 1878, by J. J. Martin, of North Manchester, Ind., with ten charter members. The first officers were as follows: F. L. Maxwell, W. C. T.; Florence Messimore, W. V. T.; J. P. Driggs, F. W. C. T.; Etta Thoma, W. S.; J. P. Driggs, D. G. W. C. T.

The present officers are as follows: Valentine McPherson, W. C. T.; Ella Wolgumuth, W. V. T.; E. L. Maxwell, F. W. C. T.; J. P. Driggs, W. S.; P. E. Wise, D. G. W. C. T.

Monroe Grange, No. 425, P. of H., was organized October 9, 1873, and elected the following officers: H. I. Stevens, Master; J. P. Thoma, Secretary; D. McPherson, Treasurer; Ira Richhart, Lecturer; E. M. Idle, Chaplain.

In 1878, the Grange erected its hall, in which regular meetings are now held.

The following is a list of its officers for 1879: N. B. Norris, Master; E. M. Idle, Secretary; J. P. Thoma, Treasurer; H. I. Stevens, Lecturer; William Norris, Chaplain. (The above data furnished by Daniel Miller.)

IMPROVEMENTS.

For a number of years, the work of draining has been vigorously prosecuted by the farmers of this township, and has been instrumental in enhancing the value of its land, and redeeming portions once thought useless.

Farming is the only occupation in which the residents of the township are engaged, as Monroe contains no town or village within its limits, and consequently offers but little inducement to the merchant. This careful attention to agricultural pursuits has placed it among the most productive townships of the county, and the thorough system of drainage has added largely to the area of its tillable lands.

STATISTICS FOR 1878.

Wheat.....	28,000 bushels
Corn.....	60,000 bushels
Oats.....	14,000 bushels
Potatoes.....	4,000 bushels
Sweet Potatoes.....	500 bushels

JACKSON TOWNSHIP.

Jackson Township is situated in the southeastern part of Kosciusko County, and is bounded as follows: North by Monroe Township, east by Whitley County, south by Wabash County, west by Lake and Clay Townships. It has an area of thirty square miles, or 19,200 acres. The general character of its surface is what is known as "rolling land," and its natural drainage is excellent. Its farms are very productive, and the township is well improved. It was organized March 8, 1838, and, at that time, embraced what has since become Monroe Township.

EARLY SETTLEMENT.

James Abbott and family, and his son, Samuel Abbott, with his wife, were the first white settlers in the township. They came from Preble County, Ohio, and located on Section 13, September 17, 1834. Samuel Abbott entered 160 acres on Section 25, where he and his wife still reside.

In the fall of 1835, Abner McCourtney and Alexander Hapner, from Montgomery County, Ohio, settled on Sections 25 and 26, and each entered eighty acres of land. During the year 1836, Jesse Kyler and James Perkins settled on Section 26, and, later in the same year, Jacob Metzger and Isaac Ulery settled in the south part of the township. During the next year, the settlement received the following additions to its numbers: Nelson Baker, Jacob Cripe, Samuel and John Ulery, Henry Boze, Thomas Widup and Turrill Sisk.

The First Orchard was set out by James Abbott in the spring of 1835. Mr. Abbott also cleared the first ground and planted the first corn in the township.

The First White Child.—Abner Abbott, who was born June 11, 1835, was the first white child born in the township. He was the son of Samuel and Elma Abbott.

The First Road was surveyed through the northeastern portion of the township in 1837, running from Warsaw to Springfield, Whitley County, Ind.

The First Mill.—In 1839, John Hall erected a saw-mill and corn-cracker on McCourtney Creek. This was the first mill in the township. *The First Steam-Mill* was the saw-mill built in 1846 by James Abbott & Son, on Section 26.

The First Physician.—Dr. Pope settled at Dodgetown in 1859, and practiced his profession until the beginning of the late war, when he enlisted and died in the service.

The First Post Office.—In 1839, Jesse Kyler was appointed Postmaster and a Post Office established at his house. He served until his decease, after which, his son Jacob was appointed to the position. The office remained at his house about six years, when it was discontinued.

The First Township Election was held at the house of Abner McCourtney in the spring of 1838. Abner McCourtney was Inspector and Jesse Kyler was elected Justice of the Peace.

THE CHURCHES.

The German Baptist Church.—In 1840, this denomination organized a church in the southwestern part of the township, with fourteen members. Joseph Harter was the first Pastor.

In 1861, they erected a frame house of worship on the farm of Joseph Ulery, 48x75 feet, in which services are now regularly conducted.

They now have 225 members. Their Pastors are David Ulery, Jacob Metzgar and Jacob Cripe.

In 1873, they erected a new house of worship on Section 26, to accommodate their increasing numbers; and many of the former members attached themselves to the new congregation. This Church is served by J. Umbaugh and Jacob Snell, Pastors.

The United Brethren Church.—In 1862, the United Brethren organized a church with twelve members. Rev. N. Miller was the first Pastor. In the summer of 1872, they erected their present house of worship at a cost of \$1,550, and dedicated it in December, of the same year.

The Church is under the pastoral care of Rev. J. R. Brown. The Sunday School was organized in the spring of 1873, with forty scholars. George Vance was the first Superintendent.

The school is now in a prosperous condition, having sixty scholars enrolled, and a fine library containing 100 volumes. J. W. Pickard is the present Superintendent.

CLAY TOWNSHIP.

Clay Township is situated in the southern portion of Kosciusko County and is bounded as follows: North by Wayne, east by Monroe and Jackson, south by Lake, west by Seward. It is five by six miles in extent, containing 19,200 acres. When first organized, it had an area of fifty-four square miles, but was reduced to its present limits by the organization of Lake Township, in later years. Its surface is generally undulating, and its natural drainage good. Its soil is watered by several small streams or branches, and is very productive. All of its farms have been heaved from the forest, as the entire township was thickly overgrown with timber, when the pioneers (of whom we shall write later) first settled within its boundaries.

EARLY SETTLEMENT.

The First White Settler was Samuel Bishop, who came from Ohio in the spring of 1836, and erected a cabin on Section 17, but did not occupy it, as he returned to Ohio soon after.

The First Permanent Settler was George Luke, who, in August, 1836, came from Ohio with his family, and built a cabin on Section 4. In October following, he was joined by John S. Popham and Zadoc McCoy, from Knox Co., Ohio, who settled near him. In February, 1837, came Joshua Caldwell, Isaac Minear, Sr., and Isaac Minear, Jr., with their families, from Huron County, Ohio. Mr. Caldwell settled on Section 19, and the Messrs. Minear settled in the immediate vicinity. In June, 1837, Thomas and William Jameson, also from Ohio, settled on Section 19, and within the ensuing two years came Henry L. Farmer, Thomas J. Elder, Samuel Graham, Samuel Daniels, John Homan and George Miller. After that date, immigration progressed slowly, and for several years the settlement received no new families among its population.

The First Crops were planted simultaneously by George Luke, John S. Popham, Zadoc McCoy, Joshua Caldwell and the Messrs. Minear, who began to clear a place sufficient for the purpose immediately upon their arrival.

The First White Child born in the township was George, son of George and Jane Luke. He was born in April, 1837.

The First Female Child was Sarah, daughter of Thomas and Rebecca Jameson. She was born Sept. 10, 1837.

The First Death was that of Mrs. Sarah Minear, who died in the fall of 1838. Later in the same season, Mrs. Beatty, wife of Samuel Beatty, died, and both were buried on the farm of Isaac Minear.

The First Township Election was held in April, 1838, at the house of Isaac Minear. John S. Popham was Inspector, and Isaac Minear was elected Justice of the Peace. Of the voters who cast their ballots at that election, Thomas Jameson alone now survives.

The First School was taught in a cabin built of poles, in the northwest corner of the township, in 1840. In 1841, a hewed-log building was erected on Section 5, and was made to "pay a double debt," inasmuch as it was occupied during the week as a schoolhouse, and on the Sabbath as a house of worship. It was known as "Mount Pleasant." In 1859, this structure was replaced by a frame building, and, in 1877, a commodious brick schoolhouse succeeded the latter. In addition to this, there are now four brick and four frame schoolhouses in the township, having a total enrollment of 402 scholars.

The Township Library is a well-selected collection, containing about two hundred volumes.

The First Religious Meeting was held at the house of Joshua Caldwell in the winter of 1837-8. The service was conducted by Rev. Eliza Van Schoick, a missionary of the M. E. Church. No permanent organization was then effected, but services were subsequently conducted at irregular intervals by ministers of that denomination.

THE CHURCHES.

Mount Pleasant M. E. Church was organized about 1840, and, until 1841, held meetings at the houses of members of the Church, but in that year the log schoolhouse on Section 8 was adopted as the place of meeting, and continued as such until 1860, when they erected a house of worship on the same section, 38x50 feet. The Church is now under the pastoral care of Rev. I. J. Smith, and the present number of members is seventy-five. The Church officers are: W. A. Shipley and B. Popham, Stewards; S. C. Kinsey and George S. Heisler, Class-Leaders.

The Sunday School was organized in 1845, with twenty scholars. William Palmer was the first Superintendent. There are now about one hundred scholars enrolled. B. Popham is the present Superintendent.

Highland Presbyterian Church was organized May 12, 1853, by J. W. Clusky and Elder B. H. McClure, who were appointed a Committee of Organization by the Fort Wayne Presbytery.

The following were the constituent members: Isaac and Catharine Lucas, Jacob and Catharine Hapner, Nancy and Mary J. Simison. Isaac Lucas was elected Elder.

In 1854, they erected their present house of worship on Section 24, in which services are conducted once each month, by the Pastor, Rev. F. M. Elliott.

The present number of members is fifteen. The Sunday School was organized in December, 1877, with forty scholars, and is now in a prosperous condition. Henry Palmer is the Superintendent.

The Evangelical Association.—This denomination organized in 1865, with twelve members, under the preaching of Rev. S. S. Albert, and met at the schoolhouse and homes of its members until 1868. In that year,