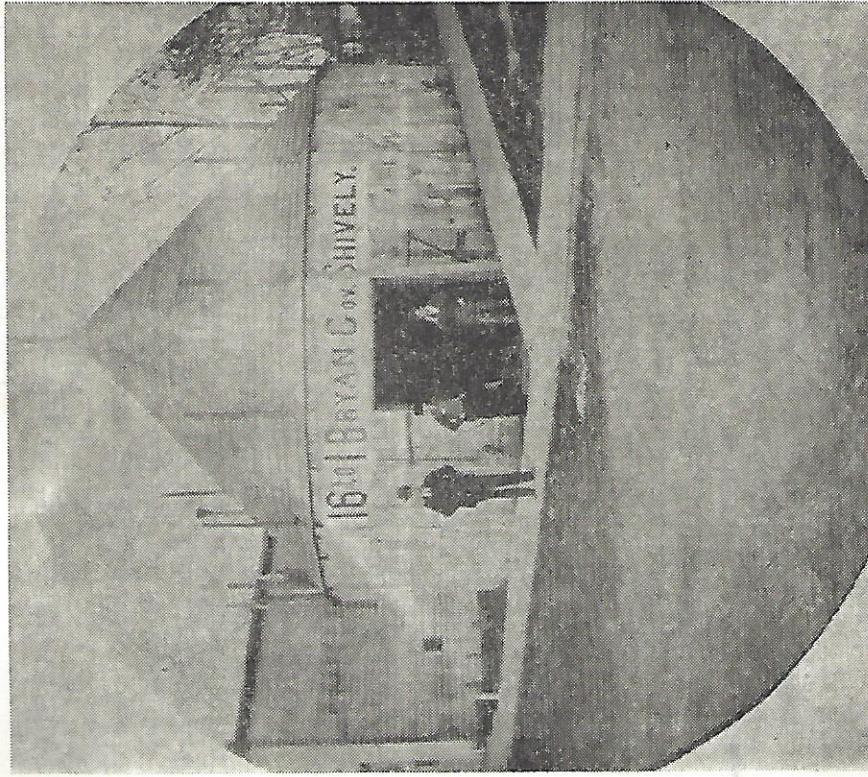


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KOSCIUSKO COUNTY Historical Bulletin



Vol. I SUMMER 1966 No. 1

Published by the Kosciusko County Historical Society

In this Issue: A History of Pierceton, History of Warsaw-Wayne Community Library, Historians Corner.

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Enclosed find \$..... for my (our) membership for the Kosciusko County Historical Society.

Signed

Address

Send your dues to Mrs. E. W. Creighton, Kosciusko County Historical Society, Warsaw, Indiana 46580

THE KOSCIUSKO COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WARSAW, INDIANA 46580

*Mrs. Walter Lackey
Mentone
Indiana*

If you do not keep this Bulletin in your files, pass it on to a friend or acquaintance who may be interested in becoming a member of the Historical Society.

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AN EARLY HISTORY OF PIERCECTON

By GEORGE NYE

(Excerpts from his book)

The present site of Piercetown was plotted from farm land in 1852 by Lewis Keith and John Butler Chapman.

Since this occurred during Franklin Pierce's administration, the town was named Piercetown.

Several attempts were made to locate a town in Washington Township before Piercetown was established. Westminster was plotted east of Sharton ditch, by Christopher Lightfoot for Samuel Eby in May, 1837. The community had 40 lots. Fairview was plotted about three-quarters of a mile southeast of the cemetery. It consisted of 45 lots. In the winter of 1852 John Chapman and Lewis Keith were instrumental in establishing a town one-half mile north of the present site of Piercetown. They found they had missed the railroad, so they plotted Piercetown near the Pittsburgh-Fort Wayne and Chicago Railway right-of-way.

Piercetown covers about 160 acres of ground. It is located in part in the west one-half of Section 27, Township 32 North and Range 7 East.

Additions that have been added to the original plat are: Hays, first and second; Redkey's Ryerson, Conant and Moore, and Fairview.

The town, in most part, is laid out in blocks, each block having six to eight lots.

Chapman, one of the founders, became irritated with policies of then president Pierce and suggested that the name be changed to Fremont. In 1869 an attempt was made to change the name to Birmingham because postal clerks confused the name with Princeton. Both attempts failed.

Early Structures

Chapman started the first store near Piercetown in a log cabin in what is now the north part of the community (see map). Lewis Keith built the first hewed log house in the community, just off second street, near the railroad tracks.

The first frame structures in Piercetown were on the corner of Second and Market streets. First Street near the bank, and the location of the old Foster drug store (see map).

Dear Reader:

The first Kosciusko County Historical Society Bulletin is dedicated to the town of Piercetown.

Piercetown residents are observing the town's 100th birthday anniversary June 11 through 18.

A brief history of early Piercetown is included in this issue. The facts used are from A History of Piercetown, Indiana, published by George A. Nye of Warsaw, in 1952. Mr. Nye has published a number of volumes of Kosciusko County History. He taught in Piercetown schools 1920-22 and 1923-24. Mr. Nye used old atlases, newspapers, (publications of The Northern Indianian and Piercetown Record) and information from old-timers of the area. The article on the 44th Regiment was pieced together from Indiana Report of the Adjutant General's Department 1861-65.

It is hoped that this article will inspire some Piercetown resident to write a full history of the community.

Firms and individuals in the Piercetown area made financial contributions to assist the society in publishing this bulletin. (See credit page).

Also included in this bulletin is an article by James Sloan on Warsaw and Wayne Township Community Library. Mr. Sloan gave this paper at the society's April meeting.

We invite all persons of the area to submit early county history to our organization for verification and publication.

You are all invited to join the organization. Please fill out the blank on the back of this publication and send it to Kosciusko County Historical Society. Mrs. E. W. Creighton, Warsaw, Indiana.

Sincerely,

Claude Stahl, President.

Pierceton's first postoffice, located on First Street, was opened in 1854 by O. P. Smith. He was succeeded in 1855 by William Hayes. Other early postmasters were S. E. Banta, a Mr. Skinner, David Binkley, James Getty, Henry Ruth, S. M. Hayes, John Justice and David Connell. Only Mr. Justice died while in office. The remainder lost out due to change in residents.

Railway and Progress

The railway, constructed into Pierceton May 25, 1853, made a profound effect on the community. Many Irishmen helped to construct the road. All of the physical labor required resulted in much drinking, especially after a payday. Men drew \$1.50 per day for their efforts.

The Catholic Church in Pierceton did missionary work among the railroad laborers, putting temporary church buildings in the area.

After completion of the railway, citizens of the community held a party for railroad officials.

A one-story frame structure was the first railroad station in the town. The first passenger reached Pierceton Sept. 1, 1854. First freight left the community in October the same year. A. A. Bainbridge was the first railroad agent. He was succeeded in 1855 by D. F. Nichols.

Pierceton 1860-1870 Period

From the Northern Indianian of 1869 we learn that Pierceton had about 1,600 residents. There were four churches (Methodist, Presbyterian, Universalist and Catholic).

A number of industries were located in the town, the largest being the W. C. Conant and John Moore furniture factory. The industrial complex of three buildings was in the east part of the community (see map). The industry employed between 85 and 100 men and boys and paid from \$1.50 to \$4.00 per day. The firm in one year made more than 15,000 bedsteads. These sold from \$2.50 to \$25 each. In addition to bedsteads, furniture and caskets were made. The furniture factory in 1868 used more than a million and a half feet of lumber. Their gross earnings were more than \$100,000. Baker and Conant established the factory in 1864. John Moore replaced Baker the same year. The industry during this early period made

sash and doors, converting to furniture in 1866. In 1873 the factory closed due to the national panic. Former residents of the community used to tell of hearing the whistle at the mill sound when a fire broke out in the town.

Fire destroyed the Eli and Phillip Fluke planing and saw-mill in 1868. They had established the firm in 1865. Jonathan Thatcher and W. H. Cornell later constructed a mill on the same site.

In 1866 Pete Conrad started a wagon works. He employed eight to 10 men and manufactured about 100 vehicles per year.

A hub and spoke factory was operated by L. C. Smith in 1867. He sold to Spayde and Miller, who later sold to J. A. Shorb.

Shaffer and Rush and Engle ran a wagon and carriage shop during this period. They also were reported to have turned out about 100 vehicles per year.

Frary and Murray operated the Woolen Mills. The wooden building housed the looms that made cloth for blankets, jeans, and stockings. At its peak the mill turned out 300 yards of cloth per day. Twenty persons worked at the mill.

Michael Murray constructed a flour mill in 1862. The mill ground flour, corn meal and buckwheat flour.

Early Merchants

Merchants in Pierceton in the 1860-70 period were: Miss Elijah Finney and Mrs. A. A. Westfall, milliners; Thomas Murray, Gibson and Lawrence, dry goods; William Spayde, Conant and Moore, general stores; H. M. Hayes, restaurant; Mr. Duck, billiards and liquor; Minnich and Schaefer, Answeaon and Dowling hardware dealers; also Snyder and Brothers, J. L. Garber, boot merchants; John Castater, carpenter. L. L. Lampson and William Fenton, sold harness.

Thomas Graver ran the Sherman Hotel near the depot; Steel and Clover were in charge of the Crawford House.

B. F. Andlauer was town tailor, William Brace, barber. Harvey Hostetter operated the livery stable. Ira Ryerson and J. H. Lisle were lumber dealers.

Other businessmen during this period were: T. D. Doke, livery; J. N. Skinner, tinware and stoves; Snyder and Hemmick, furniture; Samuel Forsythe, butcher; A. B. Downs, tanner;

County's First Band

The Pierceton Cornet band was the first of its kind organized in Kosciusko County. The group of 13 pieces was organized in 1868. D. Strauss was director of the group.

Early Town Churches

The Methodist Church in 1854 organized in the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago depot with Rev. Camp in charge. The group met in the home of Robert McNeal for a number of years, then the school house until they constructed a house of worship about 1862.

Jan. 9, 1858, the First Presbyterian Church was organized at the Crawford school house. J. N. Swan and W. S. Wilson were ministers. The group constructed a church in 1863, after meeting in various school houses.

St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church was organized at the home of Thomas Murray by Rev. Father Lawler in 1863. In 1864 they constructed a church home, which is still in use today.

Rev. Nathaniel Cray organized the First Universalist Church in 1865. The church membership constructed a building and dedicated it. Today the church is used by the Presbyterian congregation (see map).

The Dunkard Church was organized in 1860. The congregation purchased the Baptist Church house in 1866.

Lodges

The Odd Fellows and Masonic Lodges were the early organizations in the community. The Odd Fellows were organized May 16, 1866. D. H. Shoemaker, N. B. Morland, Jacob Klingel, J. W. Shaffer, Eli Hayden and George Watis were charter members.

The Masonic Lodge was founded June 20, 1868. Charter members were Henry Sweet, William Babcock, John Waldo, Dwight Nichols, William Sherburn, Jerome Plotter, Uriah Ruch and David Johnson.

On July 8, 1884, the Eastern Star was organized. Officers in 1886 were Mrs. E. Moore, Mrs. O. Palmer, Mrs. M. Bates, Mrs. C. Clemens, Mrs. J. Miller, Mrs. D. Moody, Mrs. William McNamara and J. Finton.

D. W. Phillips and W. H. Moyston saloons. E. G. Eddy and John Lightfoot were engineers. D. Lichtenwalter, a justice of the peace.

Doctors in the community were: Dr. D. M. Marshall (father of Vice President Thomas Marshall); William Hayes and J. R. Baker, Dr. Hayes, Dr. Long, Dr. Callet, Dr. Matchett, Dr. Olney was a dentist. J. W. Bradshaw and J. H. Taylor were attorneys in the area.

Thatcher and Brother also operated a sawmill. According to the Northern Indianaian, the mill was capable of sawing 10,000 feet of timber in a 10-hour period.

Pierceton Incorporated

Citizens of the community voted to incorporate in 1866. On May 10, 1866, the town government became a reality. The first town board was composed of John Moore, Adam Simmons and Alexander Dougherty. E. T. Marshall was town marshal, town clerk and treasurer. Board members on Nov. 5, named the first school board for the community. The school board consisted of Michael Murray, J. A. Shorb and John Shaffer. Town officials levied a tax totaling \$355.18 to pay all town expenses for the first year.

First School

In 1870 citizens decided to build a new school. The brick structure, located at the south edge of town, cost an estimated \$10,000. Chester Prentice Hodge was the first principal in the new school. Mathias Scott was in charge of the grammar grades; Mary Sanders, intermediate, and Miss M. A. Beach, primary. Isaac Gross followed Hodge as principal in 1872; O. W. Miller succeeded him in 1874; J. H. Lewis followed in 1875; M. F. Scott in 1876, and W. J. Speer in 1878. There were 336 pupils enrolled in the school in 1879. Children attended school for a six-months period.

Early Fire Company

The Alert Fire Company No. 1 was organized Aug. 4, 1876. F. H. Foster, R. M. Lawrence, Levi Snyder, S. B. Albright, F. V. Minnich, L. D. Nichols, Josiah Trump, and J. McGonigal were officers. Town officials purchased the following equipment for the department: a hand engine, 400 feet of hose, 12 Babcock fire extinguishers.

Early Veteran Groups

The John Murray Post of the Grand Old Army of the Republic mustered Dec. 28, 1882. John Moon was commander; Frank Foster, O. Palmer, J. W. Miller, L. C. Smith, H. Hackett, W. F. Eddy were the other officers.

John Moore Camp Sons of Veterans was organized April 1, 1886. Officers and charter members were Eugene Underwood, William Shader, W. A. Clifford, A. B. Palmer, W. Thomas, A. E. Douglas, Charles Finton, L. Wine, Jerome Gain, Charles Galbreath, Dan Finton, and Thomas Graves.

Early Township History

John Makemson is believed to have constructed the first house in the township in October, 1835. In 1836 Henry Hoover, John McNeal, George and Henry Sommerville, Samuel Firestone, William Moore, and others settled in the township. The first election was held at the house of Martin Braysted in April, 1838, and Lewis Keith was elected justice of the peace. The first death was that of a daughter of John and Mrs. Bratt in 1838. William Devinney, a missionary of the Methodist Church, officiated at the service. This became the first religious service held in the township.

George W. Ryerson in 1839 donated land for the Ryerson cemetery. Albert McQuigg was the first to be interred. Morris Chaplin and Sarah A. Morris were married in 1840.

The first post office in the township was located in the G. W. Ryerson house a mile or so south of Piercetown. This occurred in 1837.

The Methodists organized in the Robert McNeal home in 1838. In 1851 the group constructed a church; however, they joined the Piercetown church in 1872.

Early Schools

A log school house was erected in 1840 on the farm of Daniel Firestone, and the same year Adam Laing taught the first term of school. The scholars paid tuition to Mr. Laing, the free school system not being established until 1851. Deeds Creek, south of Piercetown, was the site of the second school. This was located on the John Ryerson farm.

Washington Township in 1870 period had at least 11 school districts. Confusion reigns because various records list dis-

tricts one through 13. However, four and 12 cannot be found on old maps of the township. Below are the names and locations of schools as listed in the 1879 atlas.

District One—Fashbaugh School, west of Ridinger Lake.

District Two—Makemson School, center of Section Three.

District Three—Morris Chapel School, on Logan farm.

District Five—South quarter of Section Seven.

District Six—Menzie School, now Alfran Nursing Home, on old U. S. 30.

District Seven—Two and one-half miles north of Piercetown.

District Eight—Cummings School, a mile and one-half east and a mile north of Piercetown.

District Nine—Moore School, a mile north of Piercetown.

District Ten—Wooster School.

District Eleven—Middle of Section 32 west of Catholic cemetery.

District Thirteen—Railroad School, along railroad tracks a mile and a half east of Piercetown.

Company B 44th Indiana Regiment

Many Piercetown young men served in the Civil war; however, the unit that probably had more local youth than any other was Company B of the 44th Indiana Regiment. The unit was incorporated into federal service Oct. 24, 1861, and final muster was held Sept. 14, 1865.

At least 97 Piercetown men were listed on the company roster during this period. (There may have been more because the Adjutant General's records do not list all the communities men were from.)

Of the Piercetown men listed 40 per cent were casualties. Six died from battle wounds, 15 from disease and sickness; 16 were discharged due to wounds or illness.

Company B fought in all major early battles as a part of the Army of the Cumberland under Generals U. S. Grant and William T. Sherman. The unit saw service at Fort Donelson, Pittsburg Landing, Corinth, Murfreesboro, Chickamauga and Mission Ridge, and Shiloh.

At Fort Donelson, William Grose, Joseph Kirkpatrick and David Lichtenwalter died as the result of battle wounds; Samuel Wedner and Thomas Helsper died as the result of Stone

River engagement, and Samuel Firestone lost his life from wounds suffered at Chickamauga.

Others who suffered wounds and had to be discharged were: Thomas Caldwell and William McCourtney, Fort Donelson engagement; Mecasin Campbell, Levi Lightfoot, Albert and Newton Westfall at Shiloh.

Firestone died Nov. 11, 1863; Grose, March 6, 1862; Helsper, March 7, 1863; Kirkpatrick, Feb. 22, 1862; Lichtenwalter, Feb. 15, 1862; and Wedner, Jan. 29, 1863.

George Slate died Oct. 10, 1864, in the notorious southern prison at Andersonville.

Those who are believed to have died from disease rather than battle wounds are as follows:

In 1862—James Royce, Jan. 20; Isaac Graham and John Hand, Feb. 17; Stephen Moore, March 5; Jacob Banta, March 21; Henry Goldsmith, April 3; Alvin Danner, April 6; William Brown, Dec. 18; and James Phillips, Dec. 31.

1863—Henry Shrunck, Feb. 14 and Edward Lightfoot, March 22.

1864—Elisha Craizan, Feb. 6; Andrew Fluke, April 27 and Joe Underwood, Sept. 16. Craizan and Underwood are listed as having died at Chattanooga; Phillips at Nashville. The adjutant general's records do not make it clear whether these men died from an illness or wounds.

Those discharged due to disability were as follow: 1862—Henry Lamb, Dec. 30; Andrew Stafford, June 30. 1863—William Eddy, April 8; John Cole, June 23; Abraham Archer, May 2; Martin Brother, Oct. 9; Jasper Corder, May 2 and Alonzo Sherburn, May 16. 1864—William Widner, May 16; Isaac Clark, Oct. 27.

Others who served in Company B of the 44th Regiment were: First Sgt. James Getty, promoted to first lieutenant; George Murray, promoted to second lieutenant. Sergeants—William McNeal, missing in action at Shiloh, April 6, 1862. Charles Ward discharged June 5, 1862.

Corporals—Thompson Duke, promoted to first lieutenant; Edward Whitney, discharged; George Shurber, missing in action Stone River, Dec. 31, 1862; Albert Reitz transferred, April 3, 1863. Musician, John Walds, mustered out Sept. 14, 1865. Wagoner, William Shurber, promoted to second lieutenant.

Privates—Marshall Bugden, David Brawlier, Benjamin Campbell, John Fluke, John Griffith, George Hughes, Francis Phillips, Valentine Phillips, John Smith, Joseph Stafford, Jacob Schoof, Daniel Thompson, William Ulrey, all discharged Sept. 14, 1865. Others and their date of discharge were: Henry Craig, Nov. 22, 1864; Columbus Crawford, July 26, 1862; Abraham Diller, Aug. 23, 1863; Scott Eddy, 1863; Thomas Griffith, 1863; James Garnett, Aug. 18, 1865; William Gopal, Jonathan Hand, Nov. 22, 1864; Basil Hunter, Nov. 5, 1862; Thomas Hanover, Oct. 28, 1862. Others, James Heaton, no date; Robert Jack, Jan. 5, 1862; Jacob Kyle, May 10, 1862; Warren Moosier, Oct. 2, 1861; Benjamin McIntire, Nov. 22, 1864; Timothy McIntire, Oct. 4, 1863; Frank Phillips, Nov. 22, 1864; James Wells, July 2, 1862.

Recruits—William Cartwright transferred to V.R.C., Nov. 26, 1863; John Cisle, July 13, 1865; James Cowgill, Sept. 14, 1865; George Cowgill, Matthias Clay, both Sept. 14, 1865; Thomas Caldwell, Sept. 18, 1865; William Davis, Sept. 18, 1865; John Deardorf, promoted to rank of captain; John Douglass, Sept. 18, 1865; Jonathan Eddy, Sept. 14, 1865; John Graves, Sept. 14, 1865; Stephen Harter, Sept. 14, 1865; David Lambertson, Sept. 14, 1865; Egbert Rogers, Aug. 21, 1863; Josiah Redmond transferred to V.R.C., Nov. 26, 1863; Lafayette Sherburn, Sept. 14, 1865; James Wheeler promoted to second lieutenant; William Werts, Sept. 14, 1865; and James Walters, Aug. 5, 1865.

PAGE ONE PICTURE

The picture featured on page one of this issue was loaned by Mrs. Bernice (Dick) Noble. The picture is of the old Tepee that for a number of years was a community gathering place. It was located across the street from the Pierceton Lumber company building. The picture apparently was taken shortly after the turn of the century. William Jennings Bryan and B. F. Shively, Democrats, apparently were being promoted at a political rally.

Kosciusko County Historical Society Formed

By RUTH KAIN

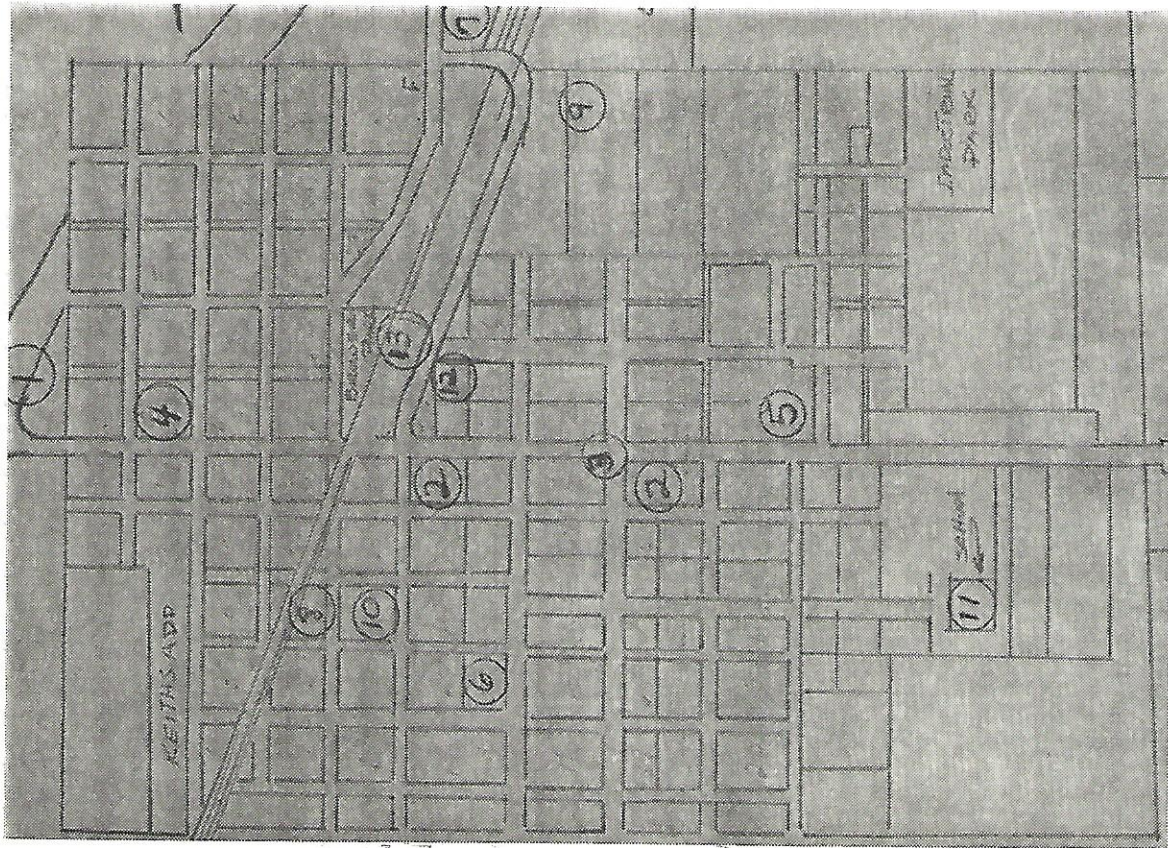
Much has been said by many about the need for a historical society in Kosciusko County, but like Mark Twain's classic remark concerning the weather, "Everyone talks, but nobody does anything about it." This was true until May 1965 when Miss Pauline Jordan, then state Civic Participation chairman of the Warsaw Business and Professional Women's Club, brought data, gathered by BPW members, for a history of the Kosciusko County courthouse to me.

We discussed the need for an organization dedicated to the preservation of local history. Mrs. Floyd Schue, chairman of the BPW Civic Participation committee, was contacted concerning such a project. She accepted the suggestion of organizing such a group.

Those appointed to serve as temporary officers were Joe Ettinger, Warsaw, president; Claude Stahl, Pierceton, vice president; Mrs. William A. Nice, Warsaw, secretary and Ralph Brubaker, Leesburg, treasurer. The organizational meeting was held Nov. 16, 1965, in the courtroom in Warsaw.

Miss Pauline Jordan presided over the business meeting, with Miss Connie Phillips serving as acting secretary. Mrs. Ira Moore, first vice president of the Warsaw BPW club, gave the welcome, and the invocation was given by Rev. William Vamos, Boy Scout Fred Helfrich. General chairman Mrs. Schue, recognized the valuable work of George Nye in recording so much of the history of the county. Judge Gene B. Lee, Giles Hoffer, and Mayor Joe Johnson were also recognized. The mayor introduced the speaker of the evening, Hubert Hawkins, director of the Indiana Historical Bureau. Mr. Hawkins spoke on the organization of a local historical society.

A nominating committee, with Mrs. Kain as chairman, Theodore Good, Etna Green, Chauncey Tucker, Claypool, Mrs. Frank Smith, Mentone; Noble Blocker, Syracuse; Stanley Nice, Warsaw, and Waldo Adams, Route 2, Akron, was appointed.



PIERCETON HISTORICAL MAP — 1860-1870

- 1—Chapman's first store. 2—Early frame houses. 3—First postoffice.
- 4—First Methodist Church. 5—Universalist Church. 6—St. Francis Catholic Church. 7—Conant and Moore factory. 8—Eli and Phillip Fluke Mill. 9—Michael Murray Flour Mill. 10—Presbyterian Church. 11—Early School. 12—First hued log house in township. 13—Early Depot.

Miss Lucy Upson, Winona Lake, headed the by-laws committee. Her committee included John Helfrich, Warsaw; Mrs. Amy Knepper, Etna Green; Tom Warner, North Webster; Ronald Sharp, Syracuse; Mrs. Jack Smith, Sechrist Lake, and Ernest Myers, Warsaw. The group also set membership dues at \$2 for adults and \$1 for students or persons under 21 years.

At the first general meeting, held Jan. 18, 1966, officers were elected and a constitution and by-laws were adopted. The first officers to serve the new historical society are Claude Stahl, Pierceton, president; Mrs. Floyd Schue, Warsaw, first vice president; Waldo Adams, Route 2, Akron, second vice president; John Steffe, Warsaw, third vice president; Mrs. W. E. Creighton, Route 5, Warsaw, secretary; Mrs. Geraldine Lemna, Warsaw, assistant secretary; Ralph Brubaker, Leesburg, treasurer; and Robert Chamness, Warsaw, assistant treasurer. The newly-elected president received a gavel presented by Mr. Ettinger. The gavel was made from a part of the walnut railing removed from the Kosciusko County Court room when it was remodeled. At the first general meeting, the treasurer reported a total of 165 members.

CREDITS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Persons of the Pierceton area who contributed funds to pay for this issue of the bulletin were Mr. and Mrs. Joe Bill Mishler, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cole, Mr. and Mrs. Donnie Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Roger Logan, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Collier, Mr. and Mrs. Milo Lightfoot, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Gradeless, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Crouch, Mr. and Mrs. Claude Stahl, The Spangle Funeral Home, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Pequignot and Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Brower and Pierceton Fair Board.

Those who also contributed and assisted in work on the bulletin were Warsaw Times-Union, and Warsaw Secretaries organization.

The Bulletin committee consists of Robert Chamness, Ronald Sharp, Mrs. Ruth Kain, Miss Mary Kessie, and Claude Stahl.

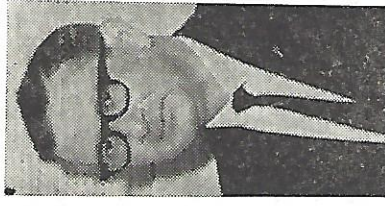
History of Warsaw Community Public Library

By JAMES SLOAN

An article entitled History of the Public Library of Warsaw and Wayne Township, written by George A. Nye and Miss Miriam Netter, and published in the 1931 edition of The Tiger, the yearbook of the Warsaw High School, begins with the statement, "The early history of the public loaning of books in the community now known as the City of Warsaw, is a rather difficult theme to write upon because of the limited amount of data at hand." This statement remains true today, and their excellent and interesting work is still the statement of the history of the library to the year of its publication.

It is probable that the private lending of books in this community preceded the public lending of them, and accounted, in the early years, for the greater volume of book exchange and reading. A few of the pioneer citizens of this area are believed to have had significant private libraries, and to have been generous in lending them to their friends and neighbors. This would have followed the custom of those years, when books and learning were highly prized but not easily obtained on what was then essentially a frontier.

There is evidence that an attempt at a formal library organization was made at a very early date in this county, although the exact nature of this venture is not known. In the possession of the Warsaw Community Public Library is an old ledger headed, "Accounts of books let out of Kosciusko County. Library." The first entry is for a loan made on July 27, 1839. It would appear that this library had some support for dues or subscriptions, as there is a series of entries indicating payments of fifty cents by several persons "for one year." The last entries are for February, 1849, and appear to be for returned books only. Following this is an entry headed "Inven-



JAMES SLOAN

tory of the Books in the County Library taken April 14, 1849 by I. A. Funk and G. W. Stacy in pursuance of an Order passed by the Board of Co Comrs at their March term 1849." Following this is "A List of Books Sold at Private Sale." This very short list of sales runs from April 14 to August 6, 1849. This would seem to mark the end of this library effort.

The next library of which record survives was the McClure Workingmen's Institute of Warsaw. The precise dates of this library are not known, but the Nye-Netter paper records that in 1855 the sum of five hundred dollars was received from the estate of William McClure, first president of the Philadelphia Academy of Science, and a co-worker of Robert Owens, of New Harmony, Indiana. The paper further records that in 1858 A. J. Blair was president and G. D. Copeland secretary of this organization, which met at the offices of Dodge and Copeland. A very few of the books said to be from this library are today in the possession of the Warsaw Community Public Library.

County Library

A county library is said to have been established somewhere in the City of Warsaw at about the time of the Civil War, or soon thereafter. The Nye-Netter paper records the establishment of a reading room in the second story of the Phoenix Block in January, 1867, by Captain John Runyan, who had lost a leg at the battle of Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia. The connection between the McClure Workingmen's Institute, the County Library, and Captain Runyan's collection is not completely clear, but must have existed, for sixty-seven volumes, said to have been listed by Captain Runyan, are recorded as having been turned over to the Warsaw Public Library by the County Commissioners on March 30, 1885. This established the present library, which was first housed in the Old Center Ward School at the corner of Detroit and Market Streets, and was under the direction of the city school board. The Nye-Netter paper mentions Miss Ethel Baker, Mrs. Minnie Gary, Mrs. Lulu Helpman and Miss Blanche Goddard as among the librarians who served during this period.

Organize

On March 3, 1914, a public meeting was held in the basement

of the Methodist Church, under the auspices of twelve women's organizations of the city, to start a movement to secure a new Carnegie library building. Mrs. William Conrad presided. Henry Sanborn, Secretary of the Indiana State Library Commission, made the principal address of the evening, outlining the steps necessary to secure a Carnegie grant. Other speakers were Mrs. W. W. Reed, of the City School Board, Judge F. E. Bowser of the Circuit Court, W. D. Fraser, President of the Chamber of Commerce, Professor H. S. Kaufman, Superintendent of City Schools, Judge L. W. Royse, Hon. J. E. Eschbach, Warren Darst and Rev. A. G. Neal.

As a necessary first step in the securing of a Carnegie grant, the School Board passed a resolution, on September 29, 1914, providing for the transfer of the library to the jurisdiction of the city, subject to its acceptance by the City Council. On February 19, 1915, by unanimous vote of the Council, the library was accepted by the city, and a library tax of one mill was levied. This produced an annual income of about two thousand dollars.

The first Library Board was then appointed, with three members being appointed by the Judge, two by the School Board, and two by the Mayor and Council. Its officers and members included: Mrs. William Conrad, President; Mrs. W. W. Reed, Vice President; Flint Bash, Secretary; A. G. Wood, Mrs. Emma Shackelford, T. Wayne Anglin, and Superintendent H. S. Kaufman.

The Library Board then began plans for a library building, and entered into correspondence with the Carnegie Corporation regarding a building grant. Following the inclusion of Wayne Township into the library district, a grant of \$15,000 was received from the Carnegie Corporation. The board then purchased the lot at the corner of Center and Detroit Streets. The Nye-Netter paper notes that it was realized that an additional lot should be secured at that time, but that funds for its purchase were not available, and that B. F. Richardson, then Mayor of the city, generously secured the lot, for transfer to the library board when funds should become available. This was accomplished, and the construction of the new library building began in July, 1916. The cost was between \$15,000 and \$17,000, the amount in excess of the \$15,000 Carnegie

grant being made up by interested local persons. On January 1, 1917, the library collection, then consisting of less than 5,000 volumes was moved to the basement of the new building, where it was housed until the completion of the building. Miss Miriam Netter, who had served for a short time in the old building, was appointed librarian, and Miss Anna C. Fitch was appointed assistant librarian. On April 26, 1917, the building was completed, the books were moved from the basement to the main room, and the library was opened to the public. The City Federation of Clubs contributed toward the furnishing of the basement auditorium, and the County Medical Association furnished the Board Room.

Circulation in 1916, the last year of service in the school building, is recorded as 7,825. In 1917, the first year of service in the new building, it had increased to 13,750 and in 1930, the year before the Nye-Netter paper, it was 81,624.

In the annual report of the year ending August 1, 1916, just prior to the move into the new building, the book collection was listed as 4,095. By 1930 the collection had grown to 20,165. New book stacks had been added several times to house the growing collection, and in 1927, because of overcrowded conditions on the main floor, the auditorium in the basement was converted into a children's room, and Miss Leah Power became the children's librarian, serving in this capacity until her death in 1954.

In 1948, following the retirement of Miss Netter, Mrs. Mary B. Brown was appointed Librarian, and served in this capacity until 1956. In July, 1965, James Sloan was appointed Librarian.

Continued Growth

The growth of the library continued through these years, and efforts at rearrangement of the service areas provided only minor and temporary relief from extremely overcrowded conditions. In the spring of 1964, after long consideration and planning, contracts were let for the remodeling of the library building and the construction of an addition to it which would more than double its size. In the last summer of that year, ground was broken for the new addition.

Since June, 1965, the library has been operating in tempo-

rary quarters in the basement of the new building, serving the public from this area while the balance of the building was being completed, the furnishing installed, and the bulk of the book collection returned from storage areas, cleaned, and placed in the enlarged facilities. On April 18, the library will be closed for a period of approximately two weeks, so that the materials which have been in the temporary public service areas can be returned to their proper places in the library collection, and the permanent service areas made ready for public use. It is planned that the library will be reopened on May 2, 1966.

The book collection at the end of March, 1966, was 51,060 volumes, of which 28,181 are adult works, and 22,879 are juvenile. Borrowers registered since January 1, 1964, when a new system of three-year registrations was begun, and a system of machine charging installed, totaled 5,215 at the end of March. Circulation for the year 1964, the last full year before the disruption of services occasioned by the building program, had grown to 226,859 volumes. More than 150 newspapers and periodicals are received by the library. In addition to these materials, and not included in the figures listed for the library collection, there are large collections of back issues of periodicals and other uncataloged materials. The new and enlarged building, with an area of nearly 14,000 square feet, should allow for a considerable period of expansion in collection, public use, and services. Of particular interest to persons interested in history and related subjects, it should now become possible to receive, classify and adequately house materials which in the past, because of the lack of space, had to be placed in storage, or, at best, shelved in circumstances which very greatly limited their accessibility and usefulness. It is hoped that it will become possible to microfilm, and thereby both preserve and make available for use by historians and others, such materials as the files of old local newspapers, whose bulk and deteriorated physical conditions curtails or precludes their use at this time.

The Warsaw Community Public Library is, we believe, entering into a new era of public service. The foundations laid in the past, and the work which we are trying to do today, should enable future generations in this progressive and grow-

ing community to build ever-better library services to meet the needs of their day.

Present officers and members of the Library Board are: President, Robert Rasor; Vice President, Mrs. Jess E. (Sara) Eschbach; Secretary, Mrs. Edmund P. (Jean) Whitby; Miss Estelle Lynch, Miss Esther Pfeleiderer, Joseph Lessig, and Edward Funk.

(Mr. Sloan presented the above paper at the April 1966 meeting of the Historical Society.)

TO HAVE EXHIBIT

The Kosciusko County Historical Society will have an exhibit at the Pierceon Centennial celebration to be held June 13 through 15.

President Claude Stahl and Joe Ettinger with the co-operation of Richard Zimmer, of Warsaw, have assembled an exhibit of a pioneer room. All persons are invited to visit the display, located in the Nan Matchett store in Pierceon. Plans are underway for the society to have displays at the North Webster Mermaid Festival, Syracuse Police and Firemen's benefit and the Kosciusko County Fair. All persons who have items that could be displayed or wish to work at such exhibits is asked to contact Mr. Stahl.

WORK ON SEMINAR

Kosciusko County Agent Don Frantz and a committee from the historical society are working on plans to have a historical seminar in Warsaw during the month of September and October. Tentative plans call for four meetings to be held. An expert on various periods of Indiana history will be the speaker. A small registration fee will be charged.

SOCIETY TO MEET IN AUGUST

The next general meeting of the Kosciusko County Historical Society will be held August 16 in the Kosciusko County Court Room, at 7:30 p. m. A special program is being planned.

Centennial Program

The highlights of the Pierceon Centennial to be held June 11 through 18 are as follows:

SUNDAY EVENING—

at High School, community religious services.

TUESDAY—

6 p. m.— Grand Parade.

8 p. m.— Square Dance.

WEDNESDAY—

2 p. m.— Kiddies Day.

8 p. m.— Barber Shop Chorus.

9 p. m.— Talent Contest.

THURSDAY—

9 to 12 p. m.— Record Hop.

FRIDAY—

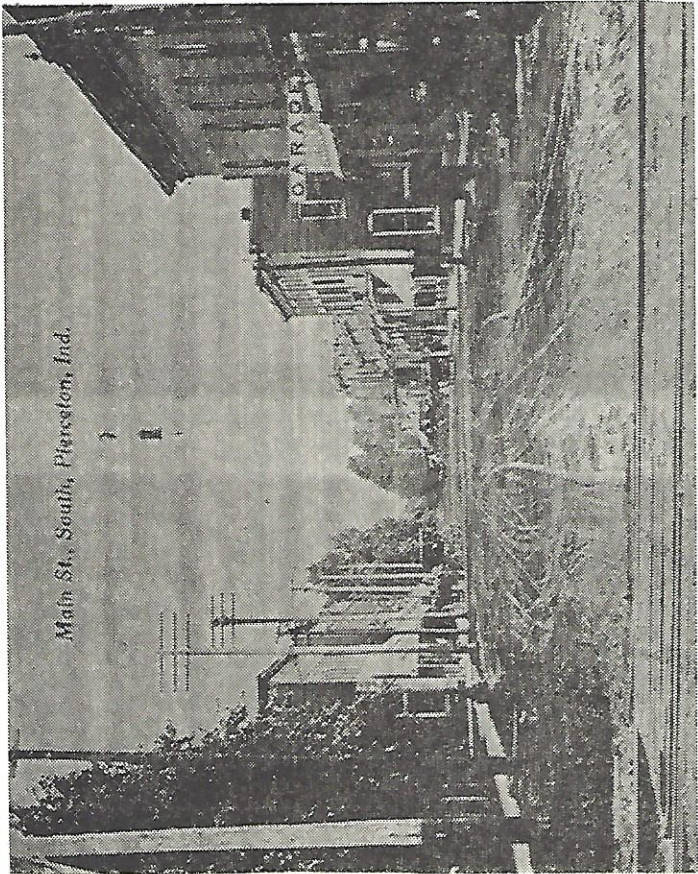
6 p. m.— Kiddies Parade.

SATURDAY—

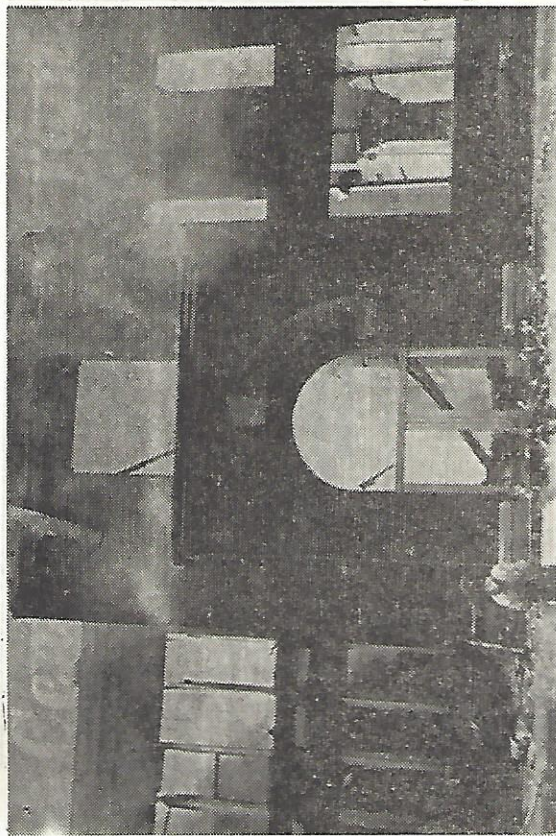
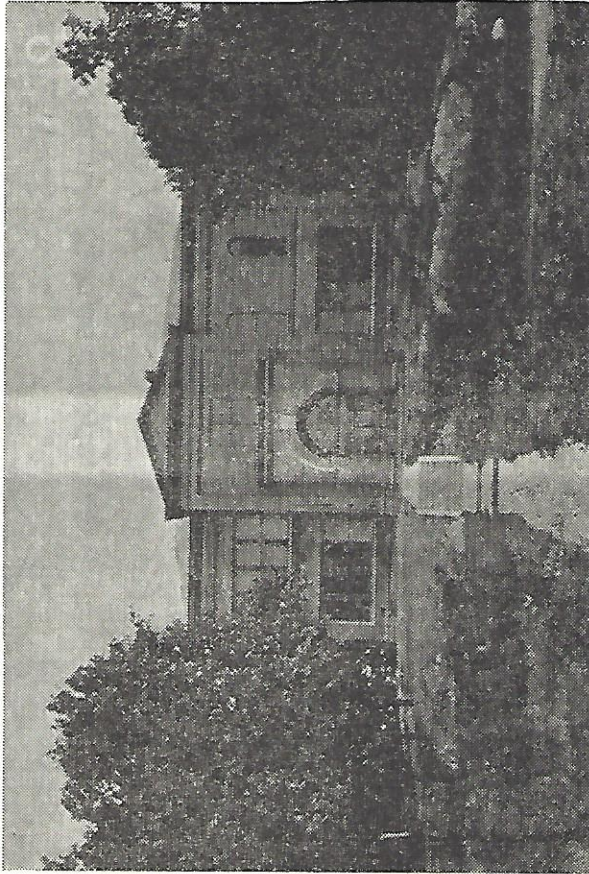
2 p. m.— Old Fashion Auction.

8 p. m.— Beard Judging.

12 p. m.— Drawings.



Math St., South, Pierceton, Ind.



PIERCETON SCENES

Picture at top of opposite page is Main street south from the railway tracks. Note the street lamp and dirt street. It is believed the photo was taken between 1905 and 1915. The bottom photo is the old school house. The above photo is after the school burned in June 1921. The photos were loaned by Mrs. Mary Ashley and Mrs. Lillian Sleighter.

Historians Corner...

Waldo Adams, Route 2, Akron, is interested in the French period in Indiana History. Anyone having information on this era is asked to contact him.

Theodore Good, of Etna Green, has letters of the Civil War Days. Anyone interested may contact him.

The Kosciusko County Historical Society executive board is interested in publication of any county historical items.

Anyone interested in joining the "Indiana Covered Bridge Society," may do so by contacting Miss Pauline Jordan, 218 Fort Wayne Ave., Warsaw.

Anyone interested in a period in Kosciusko County history, whether for genealogical or other purposes is invited to use this column.