

History of Mentone written by Carl Myers for Mrs. Furel Burns about 1935.

Along back in the early eighties (1881 or 2 ) the Hon. Calvin S. Brice, Senator of Ohio, and his associates - who had been consolidating a number of railroads in the middle west - Lake Erie and Louisville, Indiana Bloomington and Western, Peoria & Western - making connecting links and extensions & the Richmond terminal combination in the East and others - suggested to the late George W. Myers of Findlay, Ohio, that his associates had in mind a railroad, Cleveland to Chicago, over the old Contiental Grade which ran through the north part of Hancock Co.- from Mansfield, Ohio to Ft. Wayne; that the Chicago extension in Indiana would run close to his (Myers) Indiana land.

The preliminary survey showed it would be  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of the land. Then Mr. Myers got interested and decided to have a town close to (his) farm. He got interested Wm. E. Hackedorn of Lima, Ohio, a young attorney and Secretary of Senator Brice. They came out to look over the prospect. They found south of the farm one mile, a crossroad store of J. F. Johnson named Oak Ridge - and west of that  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles, the sawmill of Sam Mentzer and store of Allen Blue - town called Little Chicago, and in viewing the terrain decided to locate between the two stores, at the present location of Mentone. They got in communication with Albert Tucker and the three formed a partnership to start a town.

Having a nucleus of a schoolhouse, church, and cemetary to start with, they purchased the farm of Mrs. John Morgan - 80 acres (in 1882), and 20 acres off of the north end of the Sam Lee farm, and had the county surveyor A.T. S. Kist(?) make a plot - with Broadway as the main business street. This was done and the railroad company demanded the right of way in Franklin and Harrison Township and \$1500 for depot building. Solicitors, as I recollect, got all the right of way but two pieces - one in Franklin and one in Harrison Township, and about \$1000, and Tucker, Myers & Hackedorn raised the rest.

About this time there was a lot of agitation to have the highway Warsaw to Rochester road the main street, and Mr. James Blue, whose land adjoined the town-site on the west, laid out some of his farm in lots and half of Little Chicago.

Allen Blue's store sat on wheels and moved to this town locating just west of the stockyards. Oak Ridge came and located across the street. The Blue store moved east - to the side of the Methodist church. (Lem Latimer says Johnson was first store here).

A. C. Manwaring, who was born east of town  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles, having been in business in Kansas a few years, came back and located and built the first store east of the RR tracks on Main St., where the Farmers Bank is now located. Forest Bros. & D. W. Lewis arrived on the scene a little later. Wm. Reed of Reed City, Michigan, came about that time and built the Central Hotel. George Jeffris put in a Plaining Mill and Sawmill, later the Electric Light Plant. Stave & Heading Mill by Lesh and Mathews. Other mills and factories built up the town to 1000 by 1890.

The Name. At a meeting of the Tucker, Myers & Hackedorn, a name for this location was discussed and an effort to link the three initials or part of each name was made and a particular name Tuckertown, or something like, was finally agreed on, but was turned down by the Postoffice department - as there was a similar name in Indiana. In the discussion Mrs. George W. Myers suggested as the Queen Victoria of England had just sailed to the Mediterranean to Mentone, France, a popular resort - why not use that name. It was adopted - while now

almost every state has a town by that name each letter pronounced in full - while the French say Men-it-ten-a.

A Brickyard east of town at Stoops Hill furnished bricks at that time.

A. C. Manwaring also later built the Mentone Egg Case Co., the Grist Mill (1884) the first roller mill in this part of the state. Also organized Farmers Bank and the White City Egg Farm.

Dr. Chandler was the first Doctor and had first Drug Store.

John and Tom Taber of Argos started the first bank .

John Nichols (Richard Christian & Son written over the name of Mr. Nichols) started the grain buying in the old church and Albert Tucker built the elevator.

David Dillingham started the first sawmill - on the Morgan land- and his son Charles was first child born in town.

Ezra Railsback opened first furniture store & undertaker.

Doane & Clayton had first hardware store.

John Cox built a sawmill second. Lost by fire later.

Sullivan Eckert moved from Ohio on the railroad and was first paid freight at this place.

Henry Damon was first butcher.

Doctors arrived in this order - Chandler, Surguy, Heffley, Stockbarger, Robinson, Swigert, Yocum, Morehouse, Kasabur, Ballard, Bennet, Clutter, Taylor.

The first telephone line, Warsaw Courthouse to Mentone to Dr. Yocum's office, was constructed 1890 or about then. Dr. Yocum has the original in use in his office now 45 years later.

Carlin Myers brought in the first owned automobile, a one cylinder, 4 passenger Cadillac, no top or windshield or rear entrance to rear seats. It would go some 15 M.P.H. downhill and 7 or 8 on the level.

Having telegraphed he would be home that evening a big crowd awaited his arrival and as the demon auto with the awful cough and flaring oil-lamp-eyes rolled in town, one young lady was frightened and so she fainted while the horse tried to climb the telephone pole.

The first frame school was built by the joint work of the Harrison Twp. and Franklin Twp. trustees on North Broadway in 188\_\_ and the brick that replaced it was built by the town of Mentone in 1893. The new school north (east) two blocks costing \_\_\_\_\_ was finished in 1931 - by Harrison Township George Myers and Willard East, trustees.

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Additional pages:

Lewis S. Clayton was 2nd resident to locate in the town being preceded 2 days by Wm. Kinsel - 1882.

Town took over school 1893. L.P. Jeffries, Mose Wertenbarger, C. E. Doane, Trustees of Town.

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Put Willard East first and George 2nd(Myers) in new schoolhouse.

George W. Rickel was Franklin T, Trustee when frame school was built in 1884. This was a joint township school.

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In the 1850s a log M. E. Church was on the east side of Franklin St. a block south of the RR. In 1865 the church was a frame structure - Slade was the minister at this time. At the junction of Franklin Street and Warsaw-Rochester road on the east side so close that when the RR came along it had to be moved short way south. Afterwards used as grain shipping building and in short time burned down.

The church had been reorganized and built on Main Street at present site about 1885. New Church 1893. The discension after the war caused part of the congregation to organize the Protestant Methodist church which erected a building at Little Chicago west of town 2 miles. This was moved to Franklin St. on Wm. Clemmer lot about 1884 and abandoned and members joined with the M. E. Church.

Baptist church moved here from Sevastapol in 1886 - new church built in 1916.

Church of Christ built 1893.

First birth in Mentone:

Some people say that an Anna Baker was born 17 days before the Dillingham baby.