

# THE CRAWFORD COUNTIAN



**FALL 2020**

ANGRY CROWD OF  
FARMERS BESIEGE CITIZENS  
BANK, OF LEAVENWORTH

Greetings! Welcome to the fourth quarter issue of “The Crawford Countian”, the official newsletter of the Crawford County Historical and Genealogical Society! This issue features some stories shared to me by CCHGS member Jason Froman and his deep dive into newspaper articles from yesteryear. For those unaware, longtime CCHGS member Donald Standiford passed away recently and I have included his obituary. Don held many positions in the society throughout his years. He will be missed.



The Proctor House had its last open house earlier this month and will be closed until Spring. However, it can be opened during the winter time via appointment (send me an email if interested).

Thanks to all who support us, especially during this year. Big thanks to the Indiana Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act economic stabilization plan of 2020. Also to The Community Foundation of Crawford County through their COVID-19 Emergency Funding Grant. Both these grants really help fill the gap where we were not able to do proper fundraising during the restrictions brought on from the pandemic.

Stay safe and be well! - President of CCHGS, William Piper ([billgpiper@hotmail.com](mailto:billgpiper@hotmail.com))

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EXCITING SCENES ATTEND BANK FAILURES WHICH HAVE IMPOVERISHED CRAWFORD CO., IND.



From the Chicago Tribune, Sunday November 21, 1897 issues. Thanks to Jason Froman for the story.

**DROVE TANDEM BANKS TO A COUNTY'S RUIN.**

Rapid Financial Gait of John Weathers and Richard Willett Brings People of Crawford County, Ind., to Grief.

ASSETS GONE - CREDIT GONE - CASHIER GONE.

What follows is the story of a "cleaned out" county. Through the operations of two men-or, it is beginning to be believed, one man - Crawford County, Ind., has "gone broke"; not merely publicly "broke," by a shortage of county funds - that sort of thing has happened before; but publicly and privately "broke," by a shortage of public funds and a shortage of private capital - the year's taxes, the school moneys, and the proceeds of the sale of its crops, gone, or, seemingly, gone.

By the failure of three banks in the Towns of Leavenworth, Marengo, and English, Crawford County is apparently, for the time being, wrecked. It has passed through a period of despair, followed by riots, and excited hunts for the two men, the President of the organizations and the cashier, who had the money in their hands; this followed again by a time of hope that matters were not so bad as they seemed. And Crawford County now does not know where it stands. Its schools have been closed because it is not yet certain whether there is money to run them; weddings have been postponed; business has been interfered with, and no man knows now whether the defunct institutions will pay dollar for dollar or approximately nothing.

JEFFERSONVILLE, Ind., Nov. 20 - [Special.] - Two weeks ago Crawford County, Ind., was the possessor of three trusted and apparently trust-worthy institutions - the banks of Leavenworth and John Weathers of English founded the Citizens' Bank of Leavenworth, a State institution. It prospered and they prospered with it. Two years later they embarked in another venture and extended their operations by founding another bank in the neighboring Town of Marengo. Perhaps they had never heard of Zimri Dwhighins and his financial operations; if they had not, they were unintentional plagiarists, for they soon founded another bank, this time in the Town of English, which had just become the county seat.

They drove the banks tandem and they drove them a rapid pace. The bank at Leavenworth was the lead horse; the others merely adjuncts. Money deposited at Marengo and English was sent to the institution at Leavenworth. Willett was cashier of the Leavenworth Bank and Vice President of the two others; Weathers was President of all three. But Weathers, engrossed in a law business, according to his statement, left the disposition of the funds almost entirely in Willett's care, and Willett made them fly.

#### Trusted by All Men.

The two men were implicitly trusted by the people of the county; farmers, merchants, and capitalists all had absolute faith in their ability and integrity; and apparently such faith was due. No men stood higher in the community, no men seemed to have more at stake.

They were brothers-in-law, married to the wealthy Holcroft sisters of Leavenworth, whose \$50,000 had enabled them to organize their first bank. Both were young and both were prominent in politics and business.

Weathers, the elder, was only 37 years old. He was looked upon as an able lawyer and a long-headed business-man. He was a member of the church and taught in the Sunday school. In short, to the eyes of the people, he was a good man and an upright man, not too much taken up with business to find time for higher things, but one who knew always what he was about. But, according to his own statement, he did not know. He was President of three banks in which the money of his friends and neighbors was deposited, but for over two years, he says, he paid no attention to their workings and left Willett to make a spoon or spoil a horn as best he might.



Willett, the reputed Mephistopheles of the firm, was 29 years old. There was no odor of sanctity about him; he was a "good fellow" and he pleased the "boys"; but he was looked up to in the business world. He was the great promoter of the section. There was no large enterprise but he had a finger in it. He established a spoke factory at Leavenworth and bought thousands of acres of timber. In connection with it Weathers started a similar establishment at English. Willett was the promoter and the largest stockholder in the water and electric light plants of Leavenworth. With Weathers he owned the Crawford County Telephone company. Politically he had begun to make a name for himself. Through the influence of Senator John Benz, one of the most prominent Democratic politicians in Southern Indiana, he had become District chairman of his party in the Third District.



Both men were honored; both were respected. Their institutions seemed as firm as any in the country. And then the crash came.

On Nov. 8 President Weathers was in Corydon, Ind., pleading a case. He received a telephone message to return immediately to Leavenworth; that something was wrong with the bank. He hurried from the court room, found a buggy, and drove the fifteen miles to Leavenworth. At the bank he found a notification from the Union National Bank of Louisville, warning the Leavenworth institution not to draw any more.

#### At His Grandfather's Grave.

The same day "Dick" Willett was at the funeral of his grandfather, Jackson Hatfield, near Alton, Ind. He had been talking with Attorney Hatfield of Booneville, Ind., about the settlement of the estate, \$16,000 of



which was in the Leavenworth bank. They had reached the little country graveyard and stood beside the open grave, when a boy on horseback appeared with a message for Willett. The crash had come, though no one but Willett knew it. He left the cemetery and hurried to Leavenworth. At the bank he drew \$1,200, left a message that he was going to Louisville to straighten out the "mistake," and disappeared.

Gradually it became known that the bank was in trouble. Then President Weathers disappeared also. And on Friday, Nov. 12, the banks in all three places closed their doors.

Crawford County, trusting implicitly until the "break" came, went wild when the news became known. It is an agricultural county and the failure had not come until the farmers had deposited a large share of the money received for their crops. The blow struck the section hard. Nearly every one who had saved anything at all had had all or much of it in the

three institutions. Women who had sewed for a living, girls who had worked out, small farmers, merchants - all saw their savings disappear. Simon Ray, a farmer, had just sold his farm and belongings and put the money in the English bank; Eli Van Winkle, a disabled veteran, had just received a back pension of \$1,000 and deposited it; dozens of people with small savings had placed them in the bankers' care at a time so



recent that it seemed to them impossible Willett should not have known what was coming.

Every county officer was a depositor. The year's taxes had been in the banks. County Treasurer Brown, seeing ruin staring him in the face, was stricken with paralysis. Every township trustee in the county had lost his funds. The schools were closed because there was no money left to pay expenses.

Hurried investigation showed almost no money in the banks. On Saturday morning, crowds of people collected before their doors. Cashier Jones of the bank in English when he appeared on the streets was surrounded by a mob waving checks for their deposits in the air and threatening violence. His coolness alone enabled him to convince them that he had not helped to rob them and saved his life.

Bodies of men with ropes in their hands searched the country for Willett and Weathers. Word came from Weathers that if he were promised safety he would return and try to straighten out affairs. His friends told him that if he appeared in the county he would be lynched. Trains upon which it was thought likely he might arrive were boarded and searched.

The excitement in all three towns grew. Persons who it was thought might have been concerned in the affair were threatened. Riots in the three towns were put down with difficulty. The county was "broke" and it knew it and wanted revenge. Business was almost at a stand-still; social events were declared "off" because people were no longer sure they could pay their bills; four weddings were postponed until the couples could learn whether they had enough left to live on. No one could give out a statement as to the condition of the banks, for there was no one who knew. And then the arm of the law made itself felt.

Strong guards of deputies were placed about the banks, for the crowds had shown a desire to destroy the buildings, and a receiver, W. C. Arnold of Leavenworth, was appointed. From Willett nothing had been heard, but Weathers had communicated with his friends, and declared a desire to return and see what could be done to clear up matters. He was met at Corydon, Ind., by R. C. Arnold and Isaac F. Johnson of Leavenworth, and stated his side of the case. He pledged himself to assign all his own and his wife's property to the creditors and save as many persons as he could from the wreck.



Regarding the condition of the banks Mr. Weathers professed to know nothing. He said he had left the management of them entirely to Willett, and had no idea how much money was left or how deeply they were involved. He said he had left Crawford County, not because he was guilty but because he feared for his life. He was believed and returned with the assignees and a number of his creditors under promises of protection to Leavenworth.

Then began an organized search for Willett. He had left a letter for his wife saying that he had gone for good and would never be heard from again. He said that he had foreseen the crash for months, but had hoped that he could avert it, that he had overreached himself and would have been able to save the banks if he had not had difficulty in disposing of the output from his spoke factory. Mrs. Willett was prostrated by the shock.

Willett was heard from in a dozen different places. Rumor reported him as appearing in several different towns under as many different names. Wealthy relatives of his in Kentucky raised \$125,000 to cover his possible shortage. But from Willett himself nothing has been heard.

Then came an anti-climax. President Weathers met committees appointed in the three towns to confer on the matter. The feeling against him vanished. He was believed to be a victim of Willett's operations and a fellow-sufferer. People, who twenty-four hours before had been anxious to lynch him, took him by the hand.

The situation is still doubtful. Mr. Weathers and the committees have gone over the banks' accounts, but the exact standing is not yet certain. Some persons declare a belief that the institutions will yet pay almost dollar for dollar, others doubt whether the payment will be more than 10 per cent. In the three banks there is left some \$8,000 in money and a number of notes. In all the liabilities amount to not much more than \$172,000, and there is thought to be about \$52,000 assets. If Mrs. Willett and Mrs. Weathers put in a claim to their fortunes, which were in the institutions, the assets will be reduced almost to the vanishing point.

How the crash came to occur is as yet a matter for speculation. It is known that Willett has at times engaged in speculation on the Chicago Board of Trade, but it was not thought that his operations were at all extensive. In the more kindly feeling toward him which has now sprung up incidents from his family history are now recalled which make it appear doubtful whether he was wholly sane. His mother, apparently with no reason for the act, committed suicide. His father died mentally unbalanced.

But there are many who still believe that the affair was a deliberate attempt on Willett's part to fleece the county; that he laid his plans carefully and has disappeared with his pockets well lined. \*\*\*\*

## *From the County Historian.....*

### **Crawford County's Unsolved Mystery**

William Dessie Messamore, was born on December 16, 1916, in Christian County, Kentucky. His father was James Alva Messamore and his mother was Doshia Elizabeth Down. William Dessie Messamore was married twice: 1. Lorene Kipper, which lasted four months and 2. Elsie DeSpain, which lasted for one month.

He owned a farm in Crawford County near Hemlock Cliffs and his neighbors a short distance from his home were (pictured below) Thomas Vandiver, (name sometimes spelled Vandiveer), his wife Beatrice and her 19 year old daughter, Wanda Johnson from a previous marriage. Wanda moved in with Messamore and



Photo added by Jan Bateman



several months later her parent's house was burned and they had no choice but to move in with him. William Messamore would occasionally go away for several days at a time. On January 7, 1949 the Vandiver's were seen taking mail from their mailbox and were never seen again after that day. Messamore returned shortly after their disappearance and inquired of a neighbor about their whereabouts. The neighbor thought he should

know since they lived with him. He said he didn't know where they were and left without further questions.

Two days after the Vandiver's disappeared a few people walked up Saltwell Hill to Messamore's house while he was gone on another trip. They discovered what looked like two bullet holes underneath the window of the room that was thought to be the one the Vandiver's were staying in. The bullet holes were just about chest high. There were also several wheelbarrow tracks leading to the edge of a cliff near the house and disturbance in the brush all the way to the bottom of the precipice. It looked like four or five trips had been made to dump stuff over the cliff and then a fire had been built. While rummaging through the rubble they discovered what looked like bone fragments among the ashes. Also, the obvious remains of a charred wheelbarrow were found among the debris.

One neighbor also had two dogs that were missing. This neighbor contacted the police and Messamore was taken to Corydon jail on charges of stealing the dogs. He escaped the Corydon jail by tricking the sheriff and deputy and locking them in the cell. He then admitted to them that he had robbed the Kevil bank in Kentucky.

People kept going to Messamore's place to look for clues, even by bus loads. Eventually Howard King was charged with arson for burning the foolish act of burning the house and possibly a shed down. Pete Eastridge was the sheriff at that time and it is said that Messamore told him "No one knows what I am about to tell you, and if it gets out, I'll know where it came from." He had apparently confessed to Pete that he had killed the entire family. He said he had cut the family members up and put mismatched pieces into barrels. He also admitted to killing five others. When asked why, he simply replied, "They were in my way."

No death certificate has ever been issued for any of them and this mystery will probably never be solved.

William Dessie Messamore's first bout with crime was when he was 17, robbing a bank. He shot someone but the article did not state if they were killed or not.

He made several escapes from jails, once by using hacksaw blades that he paid someone for that were delivered to him in jail in a magazine.

He was given a 28 year prison sentence, including time in Alcatraz for bank robbery and a Paducah jail break. He was prisoner number 868 at Alcatraz.

After he served his time he had a house in the Highlands in Louisville. His neighbor said he was always trying to give her things. He offered her some drapes that he said came from a motel. His house had a secret room under the floor and he was asked what he used that for and he said to keep cool in the summer. He had an old refrigerator that he stored clothes in and it is said he took them out every so often and would refold them and put them back.

From the Courier Journal (Louisville, KY), February 15, 1986:  
Humana Hospital-University is seeking the next of kin of a Louisville man who died there Wednesday. William Messamore 69, of 4529 Louisville Avenue; died of natural causes, according to a social worker for the hospital. Anyone with information on Messamore should call the hospital at 562-3000.

Courier Journal (Louisville, KY), May 6, 1986:  
Messamore, a 69 year old ex-convict who spent his last years in Louisville, died Feb. 12, at Humana Hospital-University. His body was donated to the University of Louisville Medical School for research, according to Michael Green, an attorney handling Messamore's estate.

Sources:

Courier Journal Feb. 17, 1986

The Paducah Sun, May 14, 1949

The Paducah Sun, Apr. 1, 1950

Logansport Pharos-Tribune Feb. 17, 1949

[www.findagrave](http://www.findagrave)

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June 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 1949 The Indianapolis Star

June 17, 1949 the English News

July 1, 1949 The Indianapolis Star

Military Registration Card, ancestry.com

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Alcatraz, California Prison Index 1934-1963, ancestry. Com

News article by Gerald Hughes on Clever Intuition. Hughes Interview.

Roberta Toby, Crawford County Historian



WILLIAM MESSAMORE

### Messamore Transferred To Alcatraz

CORYDON, Ind., March 31—(P)—William D. Messamore, elusive bank robber who was questioned in the disappearance of a Harrison county farm family, has been transferred to Alcatraz, federal prison for dangerous men.

Messamore, who owns a farm near English, Ind., is serving a 28-year sentence after confessing the holdup of the Kevil, Ky. bank. Harrison county authorities have been informed he was transferred to Alcatraz in San Francisco bay from the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kans.

County officials still hold a warrant for Messamore's arrest on a charge of jail breaking. He was questioned in the disappearance in January, 1940, of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Vandiver and their 19-year-old daughter, Wanda Johnson.

The three were living in Messamore's farm home after their own farm home was destroyed by fire. No trace of them was found after they disappeared despite several extensive searches.





## Donald R. Standiford

In a tranquil, wooded valley a little northwest of English, Indiana, in a farmhouse nestled down against the crisp winter air, Donald Ray Standiford was born to Ray Standiford and Flora Pearl McDonald on December 4, 1932, joining his sisters, Flora Maxine and Marjorie Pauline, in a childhood full of good books, honest hard work, strong faith, beloved pets and good people to set an example of how to live and love.



Donald (Donnie) grew up on the family farm and as a youth participated in 4-H, neighborhood Bible study groups and school activities and was active throughout his life in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Donnie graduated from English-Sterling High School in 1950. He then earned a bachelor's degree in History from Indiana University in Bloomington in 1954. After graduation, he enlisted in the United States Army, serving mostly in Okinawa, Japan.

After his Army service, some of the jobs he held as a young man included a cave guide at Wyandotte Cave, a cave guide at Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico and a park guide at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Spencer County. He also held jobs at Indiana Civil Service in Indianapolis, a parole office in Bloomington and the TV-radio station WHAS in Louisville. He also taught Biology, American History, World History and Math at English High School in the 1957-1958 school year.

He was a teacher in various official capacities in church and schools throughout his life. He knew about history, literature, government, astronomy, birds and the scientific names of plants. He spent much of his life reading and listening, always learning and then passing on that knowledge.

But he taught most effectively simply by who he was. By his example, he taught those around him to keep learning, to avoid contention, to appreciate education, to be aware of opportunities to help and serve, to live according to your faith, to work hard and to be committed and trustworthy.

In 1967, Donnie married Yvonne Teaford and lived on a farm in Beechwood. He and Yvonne were the parents of five daughters — Geni, Georgianna, Maria, Laurel and Mary Anne — and he helped provide for them a magical childhood.

Donnie loved learning. He received a master's degree in Biology from the University of New Mexico in 1973. He attended Oakland City College, Purdue and the University of Louisville, where he did doctoral research in Botany.

Donnie retired from the United States Department of Agriculture in Evansville in 1996, and he and Yvonne returned to Crawford County. She preceded him in death in 2003, and Donnie devoted his time and energy to continued learning and to many community service activities.

Donnie and Carol Tomlinson married on December 23, 2013, and were companions to each other and a united pair in serving the community.

Donnie served on the Crawford County Library Board of Directors, the Farm Bureau Board, the Jasper Arts Council and the Crawford County Historical and Genealogical Society, acting as president for one year. He was a member and treasurer of The Friends of the Library. He was a member of the Veterans Memorial Association and founding member of The Association of Varied Arts. He served in many capacities at church, but most importantly he was a friend, a brother and an example of the Savior's love for others.

On August 17, 2020, in a tranquil, wooded valley a little northwest of English, Indiana, in a farmhouse nestled down where a heavy morning dew glistened in the moonlight, Donnie Standiford completed his journey here and began his next great adventure. With characteristic love and enthusiasm, he will continue to inspire and encourage those who knew him, blessed by the lessons and the love he shared with each of them.

Survivors include his wife, Carol Tomlinson of Sulphur; daughters, Geni Yvonne Wagner, and husband Dave, of Salt City, Utah, Georgianna Ray Wiseman, and husband Rodney, of English, Maria Lee Wishart, and husband Ben, of English, Laurel Anne Reyes, and husband Ryan, of Mount Vernon and Mary Anne Morriberon, and husband John, of Chantilly, Va.; grandchildren, David Ray Wagner, Connor Wagner, Earl Ray Wiseman, Elizabeth Wiseman, Jessica Yorgason, Jacob Yorgason, Josh Yorgason, John Ray Morriberon, Jacob Morriberon and Grace Morriberon; sisters, Pauline West of Utah and Maxine Redding of Richmond, Va.; and several truly beloved nieces and nephews.

Donald Ray Standiford is preceded in death by one grandson, Samuel Morriberon.

Thanks to everyone for all the prayers, cards, flowers, thoughtful gifts, food, music and kind words during this difficult time.

## SEEKING Family Genealogies!

The Crawford County Historical and Genealogical Society are seeking to obtain copies of family genealogies that have been preserved in family bibles. We are not looking to obtain the actual bible but a digital scan. If you have such a genealogy in a family bible and would like to share, you can email the scan to Roberta Toby at [dign4kin@gmail.com](mailto:dign4kin@gmail.com).

## THE WHITE CAP OUTRAGES

(newspaper reprint - Indianapolis Journal - Aug 19, 1888; thanks to Jason Froman for the heads up!)

Henry Houghton and His Wife Mercilessly Beaten by These Midnight Regulators, Driven from Their Homes and Ruined.

LEAVENWORTH, Ind., Aug. 18 - Among the many atrocious deeds of the White Caps brought out by the investigation of the Attorney-general was that developed by the cross-examination of Nancy Houghton. Her story develops one of unparalleled cruelty, and shows the raiders to be a set of inhuman devils, possessed of the barbarity of savages.

Nancy Houghton married her husband, Henry Houghton, fifteen years ago. He was a respectable farmer, who owned eighty acres of land, three miles from town, on a ridge. It was tillable soil, and by industry he managed to make a living. He had enemies. His wife, Nancy Houghton, was a hot-tempered woman, but was domestically inclined, and stayed at home. She adopted a child as her own and cared for it, and had made some bitter enemies by marrying the man she did. It created jealousy among a number of her acquaintances, and they commenced to figure on revenge from the day of the marriage. This spite grew and brewed until Mrs. Houghton's enemies took it up before the White Caps. One night she was called on, shortly after she was married, taken deliberately out of her bed in her gown, and stripped naked, her head thrust into the crotch of a tree and tied in that position. Thirty terrible lashes were then given her on her bare back. Then she was thrown down, and kicked and cuffed into insensibility.

"This occurred," she said, "about a year after I married Houghton, and two weeks before the birth of my child. There were about twenty in the band, and they gave me no reason why they whipped me except that my husband and I were not acting just right. Our farm was three miles from town, and we bothered nobody. I never heard of female White Caps or regulators till that night. They were more merciless and brutal than the men, and showed less feeling for me. One of the women, who whipped me, had the impudence to call on me the next morning at my house, to see how I was getting along so she could report to her companions. How did I know her? Simply because she had on the same dress. It was an old-fashioned linsey dress. Feeble as I was, I told her that I recognized her and I didn't want her sympathy." From this time on, the persecutions of this Houghton family continued.

The outrages in the slave States were no more diabolical than the treatment of this man and woman., She has been hunted and hounded until today, she is an object of pity - a starving unfortunate, without a home or friend, and without a decent place to lay her head. When this system of social slavery, or social ostracism, commenced, the Houghton family were considered respectable and well-to-do. The hate of these Ku-klux, or White Caps, followed them like an evil thing. Periodically their outbreak would come, and threats and warnings were made without number, year in and year out. Instead of a life of happiness, they lived one of darkness and terror. For fifteen years they have been hunted and pursued with devilish persistence. The modes of terrorization have been as varied as they have been numerous. Mrs. Houghton is a white slave to the barbarous cruelties and inhuman conduct of these southern Indiana Ku-klux. She is a woman now thirty-six years of age, small in stature, a pleasant face, and of earnest address. She is ignorant and poverty-stricken. Her pinched and wan cheeks would win the interest of any person with a human heart. The white-faced child she carried in her arms would wring feelings of sympathy out of the stoniest heart. From her farm she was compelled to seek shelter in the town of Leavenworth. Ostracised and driven out of here, the victim finally sought refuge in a boat on the Ohio river, where she now lives. The troubles of the Houghtons had their beginning more than fifteen years ago. Houghton himself was a loyal soldier in the army, and when he came home some time after the war was induced to join the White Cap band, who represented to him that it was an organization for the

purpose of putting down horse-thieving and counterfeiting. When he shortly afterwards found out that it was a band of ruffians for the purpose of whipping human beings, he left it, and denounced it, and exposed its members. This enraged them, and they have pursued him and his wife ever since. On one of the periodical reigns of terror Houghton was captured and whipped. He was given 100 lashes, from which he fainted. A rope was then tied around his body, and he was dragged like a beast down the road a long distance. They stopped at a grove, and there perpetrated a nameless and horrible crime on his person, which, however, was left incomplete. Houghton recovered from that terrible treatment, but was told to leave the county. As soon as he got well he moved to Leavenworth, and his farm went to rack and ruin. Later on, he was taken out and whipped again. The gang would always lodge some fancied complaint against him, but his misdemeanors, if any, were few and of the same kind that are practiced with impunity in any community. The second whipping was severer than the first. The gashes in his legs and back were long and deep.

"I helped him home," said Mrs. Houghton, "for he was dripping with blood. I wrapped some bed-clothing around him, but the blood actually dripped through this upon the floor."

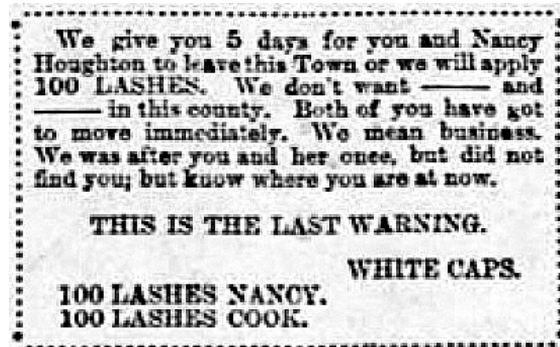
Houghton was formally sent to the penitentiary for some offense, where he now is confined. One of his children was quarreling one day with a neighbor's child, and its life was in danger, when Houghton fired off a revolver, the ball striking the neighbor's child in the arm. Houghton, although he shot clearly in defense, was sent up for three years. His many troubles drove him crazy, and he today writes letters to his wife that give unmistakable evidence of his insanity. Governor Gray's attention was called to this case, as Houghton's proper place is in the Insane Asylum, if confined at all.

Your correspondent was shown Mrs. Nancy Houghton as she entered Arbaker's store, in Leavenworth. She came for food. How she lives is not known. She has five children, and they are all squeezed in a little, narrow compass, in a squalid little place in a fish boat on the river. Mrs. Ada Arbaker is the wife of the proprietor of the dry goods store, and helps her husband by clerking. She has taken considerable interest in Mrs. Houghton and aided her all she could. "When they were driven from the farm to town by the White Caps," Mrs. Arbaker said, "they were well regarded." Very poor, they had a hard time to live, and it seemed as if misfortune was always with them. Finally, about two years ago, Houghton got into the shooting difficulty which sent him to the penitentiary, and his wife was left alone with her five children absolutely penniless. Her condition was desperate and we helped her all we could, although a good many people condemned us for it. The White Caps were determined to starve her out, if they could. She had no place to go and the poor woman couldn't leave. They (the White Caps) sent her orders repeatedly to do so until the woman was nearly demented. Sometimes she could earn a few cents, and I have known her to live on fifty cents per week. At last," continued Mrs. Arbaker, "I went before the County Commissioners myself and pleaded with them to make this poor victim a small allowance per week for the sake of her children. After a good deal of persuasion they allowed her \$1.50 per week for sustenance. As soon as the White Caps heard of it, however, they called on the County Commissioners and told them that they must rescind the order to support that woman, who had already been a victim of scores of their cruelties, and now allow her a cent, on peril of the direst punishment. The commissioners, who had very little moral courage, cut off the pay and, if it had not been for a few of us women, she would have been left to die like a dog."

Mrs. Arbaker's story is gospel truth. She is the daughter of ex-Secretary of State Hawn. Your correspondent asked her what there was in Nancy Houghton's character that made her so obnoxious in the eyes of the White Caps.

"I have known her all my life," she said, "and I never found her so obnoxious and vicious as she has been described. She is a woman of bad temper and storms and raves around a good deal, but is neither evil minded nor loose. If she had been a woman of the town, she would not have starved, as I have known her to, for the very crust she had to eat."

Here is a case that will excite the sympathies of everyone. Any reputable citizen of Leavenworth can testify to the truth of the story. Mrs. Houghton showed your correspondent the only White Cap notice yet exhibited. She received it a few days ago through a neighbor, William Cook. The warning was as follows:



It would take columns to relate Mrs. Houghton's career and her pursuit by these fiends. They are cowards and assassins. When your correspondent arrived in this section the word was whispered to him that the best citizens condoned the White Caps. Such a sentiment is an insult unworthy the people.

There is a revolution coming out of all this. The people of Crawford county are determined that the end must come to these scenes.

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### **Previous Meeting minutes....**

**JULY 14, 2020**

The meeting began at 6:30 p.m. with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes - were reviewed. Roscoe made a motion to accept them as no corrections were noted. Roberta seconded and the motion passed.

Presidents report - Jason had three visitors at the first open house for our historic Proctor House. Bill will hold it open tomorrow in the early afternoon. He plans to open to visitors three times a month during this virus pandemic. Newsletter is now out.

Financial report - Sharon reports a beginning balance of \$4,340.22. Deposits are \$470 for memberships, \$550 for donations, \$40 for books, \$2,000.01 Indiana Humanities Grant, and \$1,487.25 Community Foundation Grant which totals \$4,577.26. This makes a grand total of \$8,917.48. There were 14 disbursements for utilities, insurance, security, and house payment which totaled \$1,864.85. Ending balance is \$7,052.63. Total membership is 63.

County Historian/Archives/Veterans Memorial reports - Roberta reported depositing \$60 for books. The man who volunteered to lay new bricks as they come in, came and laid 6 bricks. A black spot has appeared and is troubling. Some bricks may have to be taken up to fix it.

Fund Raising - discussed having a yard sale at the VFW, maybe in September. Roberta will check with Clayton on the availability of the building.

Carol shared info about special zoom meetings held the second Sunday of the month. The participants grew up in English and attended the old high school during the late forties-early fifties. Several graduated in 1950. They share memories and funny stories of old English. Bill is posting them on our web site and on Facebook.

Angela shared a very old album dated 1923-1927 loaned to her by Vicky Cox. It contains photos, news clippings, etc, all about English. She reports that it is amazing.

Meeting ended at 7:20 p.m.

Attending were Bill Piper, Louie and Diane Mitchell, Roberta Toby, Ruth Terry, Roscoe Hooten, Jim Kaiser, Jason Froman, Angela Thompson, Sharon Morris, and Carol Tomlinson

**August 11, 2020**

Meeting started at 6:30pm with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Program: Louie Mitchell gave a short speech regarding outlaws in Southern Indiana, particularly the Archer Brothers in the Orange and Martin county areas in the 1880s.

Meeting minutes: no copies of the previous meeting minutes were available thus not read.

Presidents report: William Piper had nothing related to the historical society to report but did speak of his dad's recent passing. William Piper Sr. had done some work with the Proctor House pre-restoration.

Vice Presidents report: Roscoe was not at the meeting and no report was available.

Financial / Membership report: Beginning balance \$7,438.29 as of July 10, 2020. After deposits, total was \$8,011.88. Once disbursements were taken out, total as of August 11, 2020: \$7,467.64. Membership count: 65 / 1 Library / 2 Corporation / 1 Life member.

County Historian / Archives / Veterans Memorial report: Nothing for historian or archives. Regarding Veterans Memorial, there are plans to plant trees on the west side of the memorial. There are still bricks that have not been laid and some area of the memorial floor needs to be raised to compensate water build up.

Proctor House report: Nothing

Fund raising: Plans for indoor yard sale were canceled but we decided to do an outdoor yard sale at the Proctor House property on Friday September 17 and Saturday September 18. Also plan to have the house open for viewing during those days as well.

Donations & Acquisitions: William Piper purchased a Dog Creek school photo (1904) from Ebay and has donated it to the society.

Meeting ended 7:18 pm.

Attending: William Piper, Roberta Toby, Ruth Terry, Angela Thompson, Louie and Diane Mitchell

**September 9, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Piper at 6:30 p.m. A moment of silence was observed followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

No program

Minutes - were reviewed. Roberta made a motion to approve which was seconded by Louie. The motion carried.

Presidents Report - Bill is donating a book about the Harrison County Fair Sesquicentennial Anniversary, 1860 - 2009. A White Caps newsletter was posted on Facebook by Jason. We have a new member, Chris Issacs, a college student who is doing a project on the 1st Poor Farm in the County.

No Financial Report

Archives Report. - starting to get busy. Roberta is helping someone working on the Trusty Family history. She deposited \$24.00.

Veterans Memorial Assoc. - all of the bricks were placed. Trees for the landscaping will be about \$2300.

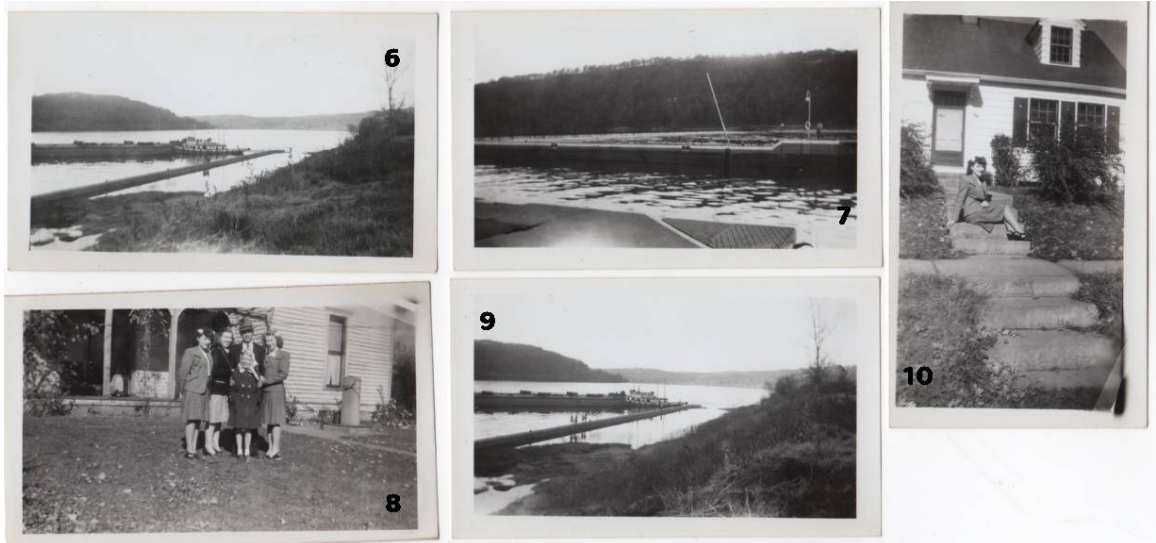
Proctor House Report - yard sale was discussed. It will be on Friday, Sept. 18, from 8 to 5, and on Saturday, Sept 19, from 8 to 12 at the shelter house in Marengo. A bake sale will be included. Will set up the tables on Thursday, the 17th. Bill has posted it on our website. He will open the Proctor House for tours during the yard sale.

Meeting was adjourned at 7 p.m.

Those present were Carol Tomlinson, Jason Froman, Louie and Dianne Mitchell, Roberta Toby, Ruth Terry, and Bill Piper.

## Help Identify Ruth's Pictures!!

CCHGS member Ruth Terry brought in these photos and would like identification of any. You can send any information to me ([billgpipe@hotmail.com](mailto:billgpipe@hotmail.com)) and I will pass along to Ruth.







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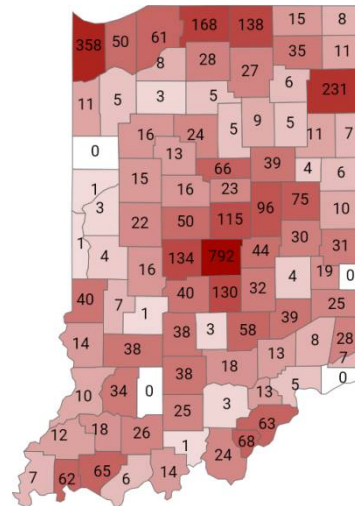
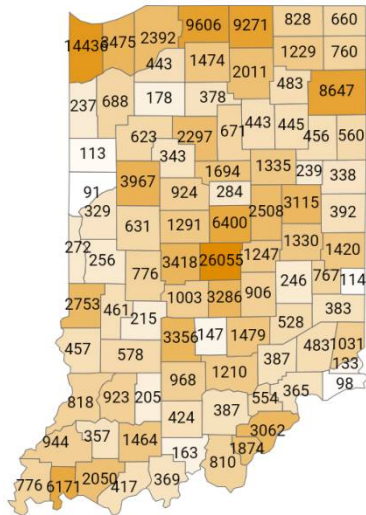
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History in the making.....

CCHGS member Jason Froman thought it was be a good idea to have a “snap shot” of our current pandemic involving the Corona virus outbreak. At some point in the future, people will want to look back and see how the pandemic affected our county (try finding info on the influenza outbreak in 1918 in CC and you'll come up with not much information). Here are the current stats in Crawford, as of October 26, 2020, in regards to the amount of confirmed cases (163) and deaths (1).



### **Membership Dues**

Dues for the Crawford County Genealogical and Historical Society are \$15 per year for single memberships, \$20 for family or \$25 for corporation/businesses. The fee is due each June as the new year starts in July. A renewal form is available on the website, [www.cchgs.org](http://www.cchgs.org).

Send your check to:  
Sharon Morris  
CCHGS Treasurer  
P.O. Box 162  
Leavenworth, IN 47137

### **Meetings**

The Crawford County Historical and Genealogical Society meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 6:30pm, at the CCHGS Headquarters (310 Oak Circle, English IN). You can call 812-338-2579 to confirm.

### **Website:**

[www.cchgs.org](http://www.cchgs.org)

### **Social Media:**

Search for "Crawford County Historical and Genealogical Society" on FACEBOOK!



### **Books for sale**

Our book list has been REVISED!! Some out of print titles have now returned and we are also offering DIGITAL versions of most of our books. The digital versions will be sold on CD-R in PDF format. Check our website, <http://www.cchgs.org> for more information!

The Crawford Countian is the official newsletter of the CCHGS.

Permission is needed for any re-productions.



Funding has been provided to the Crawford County Historical and Genealogical Society from Indiana Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act economic stabilization plan of 2020.

<https://indianahumanities.org/INCares>



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES

Funding has been provided to the Crawford County Historical and Genealogical Society from The Community Foundation of Crawford County through their COVID-19 Emergency Funding Grant.

<https://www.cf-cc.org/covid-19.html>

