

The Crawford Countian

Fall 2021



Welcome to the fall edition of The Crawford Countian. I hope everyone is enjoying the fall atmosphere with the leaves changing colors. It is definitely nice looking here in Crawford. Our fall yard sale fundraiser was a great success, doing a little bit better than the spring sale. These fund raisers help pay the bills (insurance on two buildings equals quite a bit of money!). Thanks to everyone for their support!

- William Piper, President of the CCHGS
 Email: billgpiper@hotmail.com



Cover photo: The Dillman Church in Curby.

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The Dillman Church of Curby Indiana

I wanted to share this story about the Dillman Church that was given to Roberta Toby by Mary Alice Dillman Wright. Lane Mae Dillman Parkhill is the author of the letter. The church ended services on August 29, 1993 and has since been abandoned and fallen into decay. Unfortunately I do not have access to any photos of the church when it was still in use, thus a modern day photo was used for the cover. -bP

Down Memory's Lane

Today we will take a stroll down memory lane, via our uncle, Russell Elwood Dillman's recollections concerning one of the oldest landmarks that stands near Curby, Indiana. This landmark, of which we are going to reminisce, is the Dillman Church. It has stood proud and tall, in this community for more than 75 years, braving many a storm that beat upon its doors. The devastating tornado of 1974, that swept a path across the entire county, came within 1 mile of the church, but it was spared.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, a visiting minister would visit the community of Curby and conduct services on Saturday night, Sunday morning and Sunday night in the little schoolhouse. Friends and neighbors looked forward to these gatherings, to hear God's word and sing songs of praise. It was customary for someone to invite the minister to their home for the night and to eat Sunday dinner. On one such occasion our great grandmother invited the minister to her house for Sunday dinner. During the course of the meal the minister asked, "Who was the young barefoot lad who led the singing this morning? Our grandfather's face matched the red checked tablecloth, as his mother replied, "That was my son, David Hendrix." Shoes were not worn by children until they were 16 or 18 years in those days. Parents could not afford to buy shoes for their children to wear when it was not absolutely necessary. Wearing shoes to church was not considered an absolute necessity. Another embarrassing situation occurred for our grandfather when he was a young lad, concerning the minister. His mother, Elizabeth Dillman, went to church at the little schoolhouse one Sunday morning. Her son stayed at home. She left strict rules that he watch the boiling hen on the stove, that it might be ready to pop the fluffy, light dumplings into the broth when she returned with the minister. Grandfather, David Hendrix Dillman, salted and peppered the cooking hen, but wait--when he shook the pepper shaker--, lo, the lid fell off and the entire contents were dumped into the boiling broth. He dipped out as much of the pepper as possible, but we can imagine the preacher had a "hot" sermon that night.

For several years the people had longed for a real church house. Finally a decision was reached. The community would have a church. The respected pioneer men of the

neighborhood had reached a decision. They would donate materials and their labor. It would be a church built of love.

About the year 1905, one could see huge virgin trees being felled by the saw, on farm after farm. Logs so long, they could hardly negotiate the curves in the road, were dragged by horses, to the sawmill to be sawed into timber for the new church. Enthusiasm ran high, as work progressed and men worked long hours seeing their dream take shape. Included among the men who donated much time and material were: Kelly Jenkins, Henry Jenkins, Jesse Jenkins, Walter Coleman, Samuel Batman, Carter Batman and our grandfather, David Hendrix Dillman. There were others who assisted, but these names are the ones our uncle Russell Dillman can remember.

The Rev. Lutes was the first pastor of the new church. He was a bricklayer and built several of the old brick buildings in English. The tolling of the church bell could be heard as far away as Temple. The first funeral was for the mother of our grandfather, Mrs. Peter (Elizabeth) Dillman, who died May 8, 1908. The 2nd funeral was that of Mrs. David Hubbard, who died May 10, 1908.

Our grandfather, David Hendrix Dillman, furnished the lumber for the seats. They were made from the best trees, beautiful walnut, but the lumber was not given time to dry. The seats were made from "Green" lumber and when the lumber dried out, not even the thought that our own grandfather made the seats, helped when one sat on them. We are glad to know those seats have been replaced.

We, (Lena Mae, writer of story), have many fond memories of the Dillman church, the church we attended until we were married. The first recollection we have of attending the church was an all day meeting in Aug. 1926. We rode in our Model T Ford, which our father had bought the previous year. It was quite an improvement over the buggy, although I cannot recall having ridden to church in a buggy. The car had 3 doors (no door on the driver's side) and side curtains that snapped in place when it rained or was cold. The curtains took the place of our glass windows of today. Learning to get into the car, when the side curtains were on, was quite a feat. Another fond memory was the Sunday school primary class. Eunice Boss (Stephenson) was the teacher. Each Sunday, when present, a blue bird was pasted on a branch of a beautiful tree. After 12 weeks, we were allowed to take our pictures home. Our picture hung on the wall until it faded beyond recognition.

In later years, good men like Bealie Rolle, Homer Summers, Artie Stephenson, Clive Parr, Roscoe Bowman, Ralph Dillman and others, also had a dream. They spent many hours remodeling the church, and today it still stands, leading people to God, more beautiful than the day it was built in 1905.

- Lean Mae Parkhill

H.H. Pleasant: a Historian of Crawford County

By Charles Isaacs

I think one of my favorite works on the history of Crawford County is by author Hazen Hayes Pleasant titled *A History of Crawford County Indiana* (H. H. Pleasant 1926). Published in 1926 by the Arthur H. Clark Company of California, the book recounts some of the earliest history of the county through various snippets of recorded information of the period (H. H. Pleasant 1926). It is a good source of information and to the best of my knowledge the historical society is in possession of a couple of copies of the book. Finding one, even a second printing, is difficult these days. Trust me I have been trying to locate one for my collection for some time. As good as the book is, I find myself just as interested in the man who wrote it.

Since discovering this book several years ago, I have been trying to locate information on the author. Aside from the typical biographical data, married, date of birth and death, etc., I have not been able to come across much more information than that provided in his seminal work on our community. Then I came recently came across a rather interesting historical document written by Pleasant in 1920. This document was written by Pleasant as his thesis for his Master of Arts degree from Indiana University (H. Pleasant 1920). Part of this thesis is a summary of landowners who had purchased farmland in Crawford County pre-1818. In Pleasant's research, the first listed landowner is one Henry Green as purchasing land in August of 1812 (H. Pleasant 1920). The document goes on to list many other pre-1818 landowners and corresponding maps of the county. These maps detail the property and early roads. The most special part of these documents is the handwritten notes which appear to be Pleasant's own. A link to a fellow historian and someone who did so much work on our beloved Crawford County. I hope you enjoy these documents as much as I do.

<http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids//view?brand=general&docId=InU-Li-VAA1332.xml&doc.view=items&item.position=101>

(Note it is the seventh entry down listed as September 17, 1920)

Works Cited

Pleasant, H.H. 1920. "Indiana University." *Archives Online at Indiana University*.

Accessed October 7, 2021.

<http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids//view?brand=general&docId=InU-Li-VAA1332.xml&doc.view=items&item.position=101>.

Pleasant, Hazen Hayes. 1926. *A History of Crawford County Indiana*. Greenfield, Indiana: WM.Mitchell Printing Company.



RICEVILLE SCHOOL — Mrs. Pearl Turner, of Eckerty, has submitted a picture of the Riceville School pupils, 1900-1901, taken on February 12, 1901. Shown are: First row, left to right: Lola East-ridge, Lovie Gerkins, Mayme Donahue, Otto Moery, (teacher:) Fred Austin, Lula East-ridge, Noah Scrimpscher, Isaac Lawrence and William Lawrence. Second row: Millie Sprag-gins, Dessie Jones, Audrey Self, Cora Connor, Elizabeth Donahoe, Jesse Spraggins, Orville Polen, John Donhoe, Bailey Scrimpscher, Herman Gerkins. Back row: Dora Montgomery, Pearl Lawrence, Bertha Lawrence, Maude Kendall, Ella Gerkins, Ocie King, Fanny Tillery, Robert Donahue and John Lawrence.

1912

Back in the spring edition of the newsletter, I included a Riceville school photo that had been donated to the society. Louie Mitchell brought me a photo of the school kids that identified them!! A big thanks to Louie for providing the pic (and constantly reminding me to include it this issue of the newsletter)!

CFCC Grant



I want to make a quick mention that the Community Foundation of Crawford County has awarded the CCHGS with a \$3,000 grant to provide road signage and/or a new sign for the Proctor House! I have not started the search for signs just yet, so I do not have much to report. But once more information is available, I will share.

A big thanks to the CFCC for this grant!



I have attached the photo. The only two people who are identified are my grandmother, Millie Blanche (Merrilees) Esarey 1886-1974 and her sister Jessie Myrtle (Merrilees) Turley 1881-1976. Of the three people in front, Millie is in the middle and Jessie is on the right. -Jo Nell Cass

Thanks to Jo for the 1903 Wyandotte cave photo!!!!

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES.

The transcripts of the previous three meetings were not sent to me in time for the publication of this newsletter. I will include them in a future issue. Sorry for the inconvenience.

From the County Historian:

Roberta sent me this photo and information to share. Its a picture of the grades 6 & 7 from English 1938.



Row 1:

**Curtis - Robert- Arthur- Willis- Harley - Marvin
Benham Walton Ingle Starkey Walton Pavey**

Row 2:

**Donald - Oscar - Alpha- Dean- Clifford- Bob- Max- Zelbert- Ralph
Bowman Brown Brown Tyler Simcox Roberts Duggins Longest Leasor**

Row 3:

**Sam- Fred- Elmo- Bob- Kenneth- Harold- Glenn- Bob- Howard
Bennett Allen Gilliland Denton Buchanan Sarles Barnett Welch Roberson
Teacher- Gordon Dicus**

Row 4 :

**Fred- Floyd - Jack- Bill - Clifton - Lowell - Norman - Bob Harry
Tucker Patton Heitz Gilliland Turley Kellams Roberson Standiford Petty**



The above picture is of the Mifflin School class photo, 1915-1916. This photo is on the “Mostly Old Pictures from Crawford County, Indiana” SmugMug page created by John Flanigan. This page can be accessed at:

<https://jmflanigan.smugmug.com/History/Mostly-Old-Pictures-from/i-6Q4mPdc/A>

If you have never visited the site, please do so! There are many great treasures featured on the page. Below is another photo from the page, this one of the Rothrock Mill.



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.

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

Social Media:

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



Books for sale

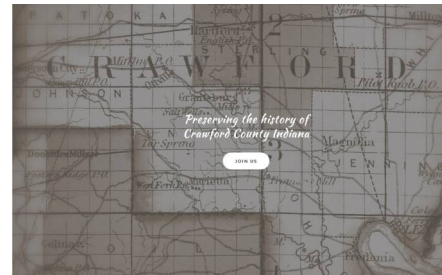
Our book list has been REVISED!! Some out of print titles have now returned and we are also offering DIGITAL versions of most of our books. The digital versions will be sold on CD-R in PDF format. Check our website, <http://www.cchgs.org> for more information!

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