

The Crawford Countian



Q4-2023

Greetings! Welcome to the Fall edition of The Crawford Countian. As always, thank you for your continued support. With great sadness I must mention CCHGS member and avid supporter of the Proctor house, Richard “Rip” Parks, passed away recently. I have included his obituary with this issue. His wife, Valerie Sue (Dean) Parks, grew up in the Proctor House, and the couple has helped out with various aspects relating to the house over the years.



As I mentioned in the last issue, we are coming up to the 100th anniversary of the historical society in Crawford County. Unfortunately my research has not yielded much information. I will pass along with what I have, but the resources I have access to I have not obtained much information.

If you have not attended one of our meetings lately, John Crawford has been putting together various programs and guest speakers. Visit our website, www.cchgs.org for details.

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

*Cover photo:
 Proctor House cemetery - fall view*

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Leonard Cummins Life Story

By John R Crawford

The day was Tuesday December 6, 1881. The place was a farm in Sterling Township outside English, Indiana. A young couple, James and Mary Cummins, were in their early 20's and had been married for 5 years. On this special day they welcomed their second child, Leonard Cummins. The world was a bit different in 1881. President James Garfield was sworn in, later assassinated and replaced by President Chester A. Arthur. Billy the Kid was killed and the Gunfight at the OK Corral took place. The American Red Cross was established, and the Cincinnati Reds played their first game. Life in Crawford County was busy. Most people made their living on family farms, but the railroad brought factories and jobs to English. It was a great time for Leonard to be born.

The 1900 Census shows Leonard as the second oldest of seven children on the Cummins farm. He went to school and church. He learned to work hard. At this point he was nearly 19 years old and had ideas on where he'd like to go in life. As it so happens, the Highfill family was the second house past the Cummins in this census. In that house was a young lady named Cynthia Hannah and Leonard knew he'd like to go forward in life with her. He and Hannah were married in February of 1902. They had two children: Densil (1903) and Cedric (1909). Apparently education was a very important thing to Leonard and Hannah because Leonard was a teacher for 28 years and both sons taught in college. At the time of Leonard Cummin's death Densil was at Western States College in Gunnison, CO and Cedric was at the University of South Dakota at Vermillion, SD. But let's not get ahead of ourselves.



Leonard Cummins, 1920's

In the 1910 census we find Leonard listed in English as a farmer. He and Hannah have two young boys. Ten years later the 1920 census shows Leonard as a common school teacher. Sadly, in 1928 Hannah died at the age of 45 leaving Leonard a widower. By the 1930 census their boys had left home. Leonard was living in the hotel/boarding house of AT and Settie Colebaugh in English. Shortly thereafter on October 11, 1930, Leonard married Estelle Elizabeth Rankin. In the 1940 census we find them living in English and Leonard, age 58, is listed as a Senior Visitor for the County Welfare Office. He made \$1080 in 1939. English was a busy thriving town. They lived on East Fifth Street. Their nearby neighbors give an idea of the community. Glen Mock was an attorney. Frank McGovern was a

drayman (delivered beer by truck). Culbert Hodge was a steam railroad telegrapher. Melton and Celia Melton were retired teachers. Charles Rodman was the steam railroad depot manager and Emmett Johnson was the night watchman at the furniture company.



Leonard and Estelle Cummins

We learn more about his life from obituaries in the Crawford County Democrat printed soon after his death on February 19, 1951, at age 69. Excerpts from the Democrat follow. “He was clerk of the Crawford County Circuit Court for eight years and had served as the Welfare Department visitor for several years. He had taught in the county schools for 28 years. In 1950 he was elected as a county councilman. He was a Mason and a member of the Eastern Star. During his ministry, he had performed more than 2,000 marriage ceremonies, and had officiated at enumerable funerals”.

“At an early age, he united with the Christian Church at English, and remained a faithful member throughout his years. At various times, he served as Sunday School superintendent, teacher and board member of the church. He became a deacon soon after he united with the church and in 1917 became an elder, holding that position throughout his life. On many occasions, in the absence of the regular pastor, he served as the minister of the church”.

“His long years of service for the county and the people he loved, made him one of the most revered men Crawford County and southern Indiana has ever known. During his 28 years of his teaching career, he endeared himself to hundreds of students who continued to come to him for advice long after they had left school. He kept his early love for children throughout his years, and few children in the community but looked forward to the hearty greeting he always gave them”.

“One of the proudest moments of his life was marked by a record found in his box of keepsakes which shows his ordination on July 1917, as an elder in the church. This started a life of devotion to the people all over southern Indiana. On August 13, 1917, he performed his first marriage ceremony, and throughout the years the number of ceremonies grew to the hundreds. He took a personal interest in each marriage. It became a source of personal pride and joy to him when children from these marriages would come and ask him to unite them in marriage because he had done the same for their parents”.

“Every church, school and public gathering place became his platform, as he was continually being called upon to speak to some group. Whether it was some educational, religious, or patriotic

address, he rarely refused a call. He preached funerals in all parts of the county, regardless of distance, weather or roads and continued to doing this long after his health was seriously impaired. When urged to give up this work, his answer was that he owed it to his friends to help in any way he could. Thousands of people will long remember the comforting messages he brought”.

Leonard Cummins died, after a long illness, in the St. Edwards Hospital in New Albany, Indiana on February 19, 1951. His funeral service was February 21st at the English Christian Church, and he was buried in the English Cemetery.

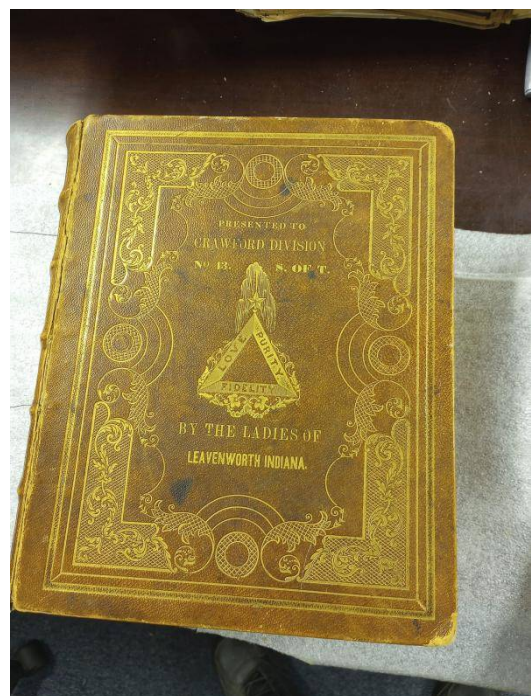
Bob Roberts of English remembers him fondly. Bob recalls that he was a really good speaker and gave great sermons and prayers. He had a pleasant personality; everyone liked him. He had a good smile. Bob also recalls that he performed some marriages at his home on East Fifth Street (later owned by Bob Harmon).

Louie Mitchell remembers a humorous story told to him by his father. Louie’s father asked Leonard Cummins why he regularly went into taverns. Leonard replied, “*You get one every once in a while!*”, meaning he would find people he could help. That says a lot about the man Leonard Cummins was. He cared about others and he was always ready to be of service. Teaching and education (whether it be school or church related) was important to him. He lived intentionally. He worked hard and with a purpose. Even many years later a good number of us in the area are still blessed by Leonard Cummins’ life. And we can still learn from his example.

(A video recording of John’s presentation on Leonard can be found on our youtube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@Crawfordcountyindianahistory>)

Queries:

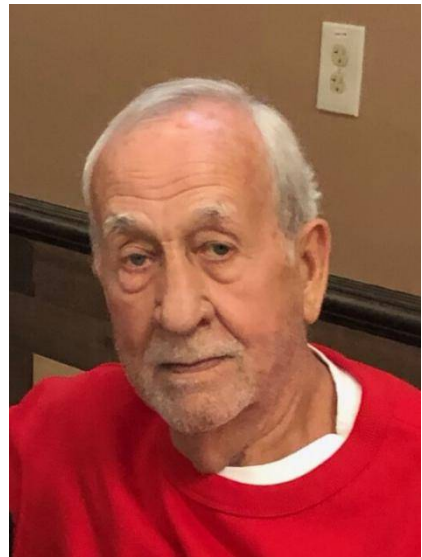
This month, I have a query of my own! I was going through all the family bibles we have at the CCHGS building and this particular edition caught my eye. It was a bible distributed by the Crawford division, No. 43 S. of T., Ladies of Leavenworth, IN. If anyone has any information on this lodge, I would definitely be interested! You can email me at billgpiper@hotmail.com



In Memory of Richard Parks

Richard “Rip” Parks age 80 of Paoli, IN passed away unexpectedly Monday September 18, 2023. In Louisville, Kentucky. He was born July 22, 1943, in English, Indiana to Howard and Lois Parks.

He graduated from English-Sterling High School in 1961. He married the love of his life, Valerie Sue (Dean) Parks on October 24, 1964. He Started his career at Tafel Motors in 1964, moving up the ranks from car-washer to service manager. He took his career seriously and helped several Mercedes Benz dealerships either start or improve their service departments.



He accumulated several awards and accolades during his career with Mercedes Benz. He came back to and retired from Tafel Motors. He was a wealth of knowledge and has trained many successful technicians over the years. In his later years he was co-owner of D&R Auto Sales and became a member of the Paoli Masonic Lodge #119.

Rip was one of the most loyal employees, friend, boss, or family member you could ever encounter. If you were a friend, you had a friend for life. He would be the first to offer his help and the last to ask for it.

He was preceded on death by his parents, his sisters Karen Sue Smith, Shelby Newkirk and Deborah Parks and brother Donald Parks.

He is survived by his wife, Valerie Sue Parks, his children Stacey Parks (Del Hauger) of Louisville, and Jason “Dutch Parks (Sara) of Paoli. The apples of his eyes were his grandsons Dean Parks (Alyx), Evan Marshall (Kayla) and Kyle Marshall, all of Paoli. Mason Hauger and Will Hauger of Louisville. Two great-grandchildren, Emmett Parks, and Amelia Marshall with another great-grandson on the way.

Two brothers, Donovan Parks and Mark Parks and several nieces and nephews.

Upcoming CCHGS meeting programs:

October 10, 6:30pm: “Your Pilgrims” - speaker John Crawford and Mike Hasenstab

November 14, 6:30pm: “Crawford and Harrison County Cavers and their Caves” - speaker Gary Roberson

If you wish to be a speaker at one of our meetings, contact me (billgpiper@hotmail.com). While local history is preferred, we are open to other histories as well.

Dr. Henry Harrison Deen (1876-1948) – Brief Life History

By John Crawford



Dr. Deen holding his medical bag.

Henry Harrison Deen was born the 29th of March 1876 in the little town of Oriole, Indiana. His parents were Richard W. Deen and Sarah E. Darlington Deen. His father, Richard, was a postmaster. Henry was the second of five children.

Henry was a smart young man that did well in school. He taught school for eight years and then made a drastic change in professions. Henry went to the Hospital College of Medicine in Louisville, Kentucky and graduated in 1906.

In 1907 he married Ottie E. Fullenweider. He set up an office and practiced medicine in what we now call the “Old Town” of Leavenworth, IN. WWI took him away from Leavenworth for a short while. He served in the Army medical corps, enlisting August 8, 1918. He was discharged January 5, 1919.

The US Census’s tell us a bit about his life. One thing we see is that Henry and Ottie didn’t have any children of their own but they welcomed other family members into their home.

1920 Census, 1/19/20. They lived west of Nelson St in old Leavenworth. In the household are:

Henry H. Deen, 43, doctor.

Ollie E (wife), 41

Mary A Spindler (sister-in-law), 48, teacher in public school

Thirza Deen (sister), 27, clerk in drug store

1930 Census, 4/4/30, Leavenworth

Henry H Deen, 54, doctor

Ottie (wife), 52

Mary Spindler (sister-in-law), 58, teacher

1940 Census, Leavenworth

Henry Deen, 64, doctor

Ottie E (wife), 60

Deen Wiseman, niece, 12

Delores Wiseman, niece, 10

Henry Deen was a small-town doctor taking care of all medical problems great and small. An incident recorded in the book, "Twentieth Century Crawford County" by Jones illustrates the sometimes unpredictable and unusual situations he faced.

"Aunt Lucy Parr survived a harrowing experience on September 8, 1934, when, at the age of 98, she fell into a cistern at the family home in Alton and lived to tell the tale. Mrs. Parr, who was almost blind, was alone at the house as her son Percy and grandson Chauncey were in the field cutting corn, and her daughter-in-law Nell was at the barn milking. The aged women had the presence of mind to lie on her back and paddle with her hands and feet until Nell returned from her chores and heard her splashing in the water. The men were hastily notified and came to the house, where Chauncey held his grandmother's head above water until she could be pulled to safety with a harness fashioned from bed sheets. Dr. H. H. Deen, called from Leavenworth, said that she was suffering from exposure and extreme nervousness. Aunt Lucy's main concern was over the loss of her "store teeth" which had to be retrieved from the bottom of the cistern. Mrs. Parr died during the 1937 flood, at the age of 100".

Dr Henry Deen did much good in his life. Carol Tomlinson of the Crawford County Historical Society remembers her mother going to him for medical care. He made a difference in his community and in his family. He was well respected. All of us hit low points in our life. Dr. Deen did as well. He died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound at 8:20am on May 29, 1948. We don't know why but we also know he was greatly missed and mourned by his family and community.

The June 11, 1948 Crawford County Democrat contained his obituary.

"Henry Harrison Deen was born March 29, 1876, and died May 29, at the age of 72 years. He was the son of the late Richard W. and Sarah Darrington Deen.

After eight years of teaching in early life, he entered Louisville College of Medicine, graduating in 1906. In 1907, he married Ottie Elizabeth Fullenwider. They established a home in Leavenworth, where he was engaged in the practice of medicine.

In August 1918, he enlisted in the army and remained in service until the end of the war. He then became a member of the Officers' Reserve Corps and was promoted to the rank of Major.

At the time of his death, he was Crawford County Health Officer, secretary to the Crawford County Medical Society, and a member of the American Medical Association. He was a member of the Methodist Church, and was a loyal supporter of that organization, as well as other worthwhile community affairs.

Survivors are his wife, two sisters, Miss Ida Deen, of Leavenworth, and Mrs. Christina Johnson, of Mooresville; two nieces, whom he reared from childhood, Mrs. Ellis McClure, of

Ohio, and Mrs. Russell Atkins, of New Albany. He was proceeded in death by a sister, Mrs. Thirza Wiseman, and an infant brother.

Funeral services were held May 31 in the Oriole Methodist Church, with the Rev. Mr. Miller of Indianapolis in charge. Interment was in the cemetery nearby (the Luxenburger Cemetery according to the death certificate). A very large number of persons gathered to pay their respects to one who had brought healing and comfort into their lives countless times during the last 40 years”.

They say it’s what a person does between the time they are born to the time they die that matters most. That being the case, the last sentence of the obituary is perhaps the best testament to his life, **“A very large number of persons gathered *to pay their respects to one who had brought healing and comfort into their lives countless times during the last 40 years*”.**

From our archives.....



Previous meeting minutes...

June 13, 2023:

Meeting opened at 6:30pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Program - John Crawford began a discussion on the Indiana Army Ammunition plant built in 1941. It was commonly referred to as the old bag plant because ladies sewed the bags which held the smokeless powder. It was a large plant with 3 divisions all connected located in Charlestown, Indiana. It had about a thousand sewing machines. Many people from our county worked there. John's grandfather, Ray Standiford, worked there and he asked if anyone else had a relative that did also. Many did. A bus from Corydon transported workers, some car-pooled, and some rented rooms only coming home on weekends. Once some of the black powder exploded causing fire and lots of damage.

Roberta Toby showed a World War II army uniform donated by Kay Greiner Wiseman that had been her father's. Her father was Harold Greiner who owned the jewelry store in English and her mother Eva Mae taught school for many years. The other two uniforms donated were worn in the Korean War and belonged to the Atkins family.

Tami Redding gave an update on her efforts to restore the old grain mill. She has gotten two estimates for a preliminary study for the design and cost to restore it. The study will cost around \$7,500. She plans to write a grant to Indiana Landmarks for \$4,000. She is also working on the process for changing its status to be eligible to be listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

Election - Was held by acclamation. Tyler Gallien is the new Vice-President. The rest of the officers and directors remained the same.

Minutes - Were reviewed. Two corrections were made. Then Louie Mitchell made a motion to accept them. Robin Piper seconded, and the motion passed.

President's Report - Bill Piper showed pictures of the new sign installed at the Proctor House location. He mentioned that Roberta's son, Greg Qualters, had hauled some gravel for the roads at Proctor House. Greg also pays for the mowing there. We really appreciate his contributions to the maintenance of that property. An intern, a college student interested in history, will be working on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Financial / Membership - Beginning balance was \$9,230 as of May 1, 2023. Deposits totaled \$825. After expenses of \$922.27, the ending balance is \$9,133.44. Due to the new fiscal year, membership total is 15.

Veterans Memorial / Archives - The program at the Memorial was short, but very nice.

Proctor House - Will be the site for our yard sale, July 21 and 22.

New Business - A discussion about us having a booth at the Marengo Fourth of July celebration resulted in a committee to plan and arrange it.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Attending: John and Sherry Crawford, Roberta Toby, Bob Roberts, Louie and Diane Mitchell, Tyler Gallien, Jason Froman, Robin and Bill Piper, Jenny Watson, Judy Faith, Cheryl Allen, Tami Redding and Carol Tomlinson.

July 11, 2023

Meeting opened at 6:30pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Program - John Crawford is interested in the programming for the Historical Society. He introduced himself and his wife, Sherry. A few moments were used to determine what topics members might like for future programs. Many suggestions were made. Louie Mitchell suggested a program on Leonard Cummings which was voted on. So the August program was settled.

John presented a program on what to do with your old family stuff, such as pictures, letters, stories, clothing, various items, etc. He had many ideas and displayed examples for many - a special photo album for his grandmother, Pearl Standiford, a Civil War letter from Elihue MacDonald that had been transcribed for readability, pillows made from old quilts and chicken feed sacks, crocheted lace collars under glass and framed, with the story on the back, clothing dry cleaned, family recipes imposed on a serving tray, a red rocker, etc.. Two questions to consider when deciding what to keep are - does it have special meaning, and would my great grandchild want it? Be a gate keeper - label - label - label! He passed out a useful hand guide titled "Preserving Keepsakes" to guide with the process.

Minutes - were reviewed. Louie Mitchell made a motion to approve, seconded by Roberta Toby, and the motion passed.

President's Report - newsletter is out.

VP report - Tyler Gallien suggested that our booth at the English Reunion feature Civil War artifacts. The first reunion was called Old Soldiers' Reunion where many political speeches were made. It was later changed to the English Reunion and rides were added. He volunteered to do it all, set-up, take down, etc...

Financial Report - The beginning balance as of June 1, 2023, was \$9,133.44. Deposits were \$595. Expenses were \$289.94. Ending balance is \$9,433.50. Membership is 41.

Proctor House - Yard sale is coming up next week. Will set up tables and set things out on Thursday the 20th. Sale is on Friday and Saturday.

Old Business - Our booth at Marengo's July 4th event was a success. The old courthouse bell drew many people and so a lot of books were sold.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Attending: William and Robin Piper, Angela Thompson, Tyler, Gallien, Jason Froman, Susanne McClanahan, Judy Faith, Roberta Toby, Sharon Morris, Cheryl Allen, Annette Gilliland, Kenneth Adams, James W. Bye, Louie and Diane Mitchell, John and Sherry Crawford, Debbie Oxley, Carol Tomlinson.

August 8, 2023

Meeting opened at 6:30pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Program - Future programs were discussed. The schedule is as follows: Sept 12 -at the library with Anne Hager presenting, Oct 10 - interesting stories on the Pilgrims, Nov 14 - Local caves.

John Crawford presented tonight's program on Leonard Cummins. Mr. Cummins was born in 1881 - a year when many memorable events occurred, such as the gun fight at the OK Corral. His parents were James Jackson Cummins and Mary Grimes Cummins, and he was the second of seven children. HE married Hannah Highfill and two sons, Denis and Cedric, were born. After his wife died, he married Estelle Black, and gained a stepson, Nelson Black. Mr. Cummins dedicated his life to service here in the county. He was clerk of Crawford County Circuit Court for 8 years, taught school for 28 years, was a county Councilman, and a Mason. But he is most remembered for his ministry, having performed over 2,000 marriages. He was a life long and faithful member of the English Christian Church. At various times, he served as Sunday School Superintendent, teacher, board member, and even as pastor when the regular pastor was absent. In 1917, he was ordained as an elder in the church which started his life of devotion to people all over southern Indiana. His long years of service made him a very revered man, and he gave speeches in churches, schools, and other public places everywhere. He took a person interest in his students, and in the couples he married, often marrying their children. He died at the age of 69 leaving an impressive legacy. What a remarkable man!

Minutes - were reviewed. Cheryl Allen made a motion to accept them, seconded by Louie Mitchell, and the motion passed.

President's Report - Bill Piper thanked everyone who had helped at the yard sale and the two booths we had for events. He also showed lots of frames that he had obtained from his work place. He read a letter from a law firm seeking heirs for Ralph Lafon Seacat who passed away at Todd-Dickey.

VP Report - Tyler Gallien reported on the booth at the English Reunion. Not much money, but got the word out to many people. It was very hot both days. He showed a booklet that had the license plates for the county in 1964.

Financial Report - The beginning balance as of July 1, 2023, was \$9,433.50. Deposits from donations, books, yard sale, and memberships were \$2,669. Disbursements for utilities, security and Indiana Historical dues were \$456.20. Ending balance is \$11,646.20. Membership total is 55.

Proctor House - was open during the yard sale and many people visited it.

Archives / Veteran's Memorial report - Roberta Toby reminded all that bricks are still being sold if anyone is interested. She also showed the recent donations from Ruth Terry's family.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Attending - Carol Tomlinson, Louie and Diane Michell, John and Sherry Crawford, Bill Piper, Cheryl Allen, Sharon Morris, Tyler Gallien, Annette Gilliland and Debbie Oxley.

100 Year Anniversary of the Historical Society

A few months ago, Carol Tomlinson brought up the fact that this year is the 100th anniversary of the formation of a historical society in Crawford County. I was vaguely aware of this, so I wanted to do some research to see what I can find. Now please note, this is not the current incarnation of the historical society, so a direct lineage does not exist in that aspect. Unfortunately I was not able to find much information. I came across a few newspaper mentions and that was it. If anyone out there has more information, please send along. But what I did find was that the organization started off in the fall of 1923 as a "junior society" at the Marengo high school. Their goals were preserving history and nature related items! I find it great that it was started by high schoolers! Their first meeting was held in December (from what I can tell) with 35 members. Below is a newspaper clipping mentioning the officers involved:

◆

A historical and nature study society has been formed at Marengo, principally of the local high school pupils. Thirty-five charter members have been enrolled. The purpose of the organization is to gather relics of a historical nature, and historical records of the county. Officers elected were Howard T. Batman, president; William Jenner, vice president; Knoefel Merryman, secretary.

◆

Notice who the VP was. Unless there were multiple William Jenners in the area (someone correct me if I am wrong), this is the same person who would later become an Indiana and US senator! Below is a clip from the December 27, 1923 *Crawford County Democrat* regarding a recent meeting of the history and nature study society:

noon.
The Historical and Nature Study Society conducted a large and interesting collection of relics in the lower hall Friday, December 21st. Committees were appointed to arrange for the display and collected and returned the articles.

If you have any more information on this group, please pass along!

-bP

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

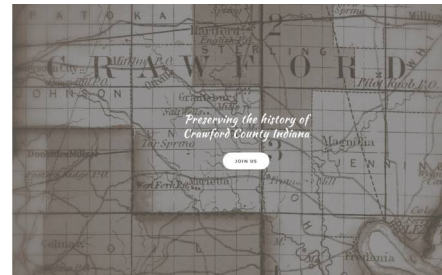
Our book list has been REVISED!! Some out of print titles have now returned and we are also offering DIGITAL versions of most of our books. The digital versions will be sold on CD-R in PDF format. Check our website, <http://www.cchgs.org> for more information!

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