

HISTORY OF VERMILION COUNTY ILLINOIS

A TALE OF ITS EVOLUTION, SETTLEMENT AND
PROGRESS FOR NEARLY A CENTURY

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Vermilion County, as such, has been known less than a hundred years.

The territory now known as Vermilion County had been recognized by the civilized world as a part of variously named lands for a century and a half previous to its organization as a county of the great state of Illinois.

First it was as a part of the "Country of the Illini," or maybe the "Valley of the Oubache;" then, successively as the "Illinois Country," "New France," the "British Domain," the "Illinois County of Virginia," "the Northwest Territory," the "Indiana Territory," the "Illinois Territory" and at last, as a county of the state of Illinois.

Each name involves a different story, and although permanent occupation by the white man did not begin until after it became a part of the state of Illinois, yet the beginning of the history of Vermilion County, must be sought in the beginning of the history of the territory of which it is a part.

The account of the beginning of any section of the United States, east of the Alleghany Mountains is sought in the founding of Jamestown, the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock, the discovery of the great river by Henry Hudson, or, it may be, the building of old St. Augustine.

HISTORY OF VERMILION COUNTY

A study of the lives and service of John Winthrop, William Bradford, Capt. John Smith, Jacob Eelkin, and William Penn, becomes imperative that necessary sidelights be thrown upon the picture of any locality along the Atlantic coast. And behind these lives, the influence of their old homes, whence they had emigrated, lies strong, so that their story must include the tale of Great Britain, Holland, and even Spain in the seventeenth century. Such is not, however, the necessity in investigating the beginnings of the history of any section in the Mississippi valley. Early explorations and settlements did not come from the nations which colonized the eastern coast. It was a century after the Mississippi was known to the white man before Great Britain, Holland, or Spain knew much of its fertile valley. A different nation than any of these discovered, explored, and, in a way, colonized this section, and claimed it for its own.

When Columbus discovered the new world, in the last decade of the fifteenth century, the pope decreed that Spain should have possession as far as forty degrees north latitude. Now Columbus did not discover the mainland of the continent; that honor was left to the Englishman, John Cabot, a few years later. Consequently, Great Britain claimed the western continent. The king of Great Britain, being a Protestant, ignored the claim made by Spain because of the authority of the pope, and made a grant of land in America to the London company, which included six degrees already accorded the other nation by papal decree.

All grants of land in America made, stated that the territory included between the two oceans was given, yet neither the king who made them nor the men who received them, had correct ideas of the extent of the territory. The Alleghany mountains presented a barrier which time and exploration alone could level and show the extent of country beyond. Great Britain busied herself building homes and establishing institutions in New England and Virginia; Holland contented herself with the strip of country along the Hudson river, for a century and more, unconscious of the possibilities of the country beyond the mountains; Spain had been active in exploring the new world, but her object being the acquisition of wealth, of itself, defeated any permanent possession of the land.

During the sixteenth century Spain discovered, conquered, and might have to some extent colonized, a large portion of inland America. Indeed, she laid claim to the vast domain from Colorado to Buenos Ayres, extending from sea to sea. Her insatiate search for gold made her push to the north and northwest, leaving fertile plains for the Rocky mountains which might hold the coveted treasure. This was the direction of colonization of America by three of the great powers of Europe, in the early part of the seventeenth century: Great Britain on a strip along the Atlantic coast, Holland along the Hudson river, and Spain in South America, Mexico, New Mexico, and toward the Pacific coast.

France was a powerful nation of Europe at that time. She was neither disinterested nor idle in her explorations of the New World. Catholic France recognized the claim of Spain because of the decree of the pope, to forty degrees north latitude, and so directed her explorations north of that limit. Thus France discovered and profited by the valuable fisheries and fur trade of the north. In 1534 Jacques Cartier discovered the St. Lawrence river. This gave France a valid claim to it. Early in the next century, Samuel de Champlain

established New France there, by building Quebec. Two motives combined to further the extension of New France; one was the wealth in the fur trade and the other, the religious zeal of the Frenchman and his love for his church. The common spirit of the times was a love of adventure. This spirit took the hardy Frenchman further and further into the wilderness, even to the region of the Great Lakes. Wherever the explorer and trader went, he was accompanied by the priest, so that by a little after the middle of the seventeenth century, missions were established as far west as Lake Superior.

In about 1634, Jean Nicolet was sent upon an embassy from Quebec to the Winnebago Indians near the heart of Green Bay, to secure their trade. Thirty-seven years later, Sieur de St. Lusson Jean Talon, the Intendent of New France, through his deputy, formally took possession in the name of the king of France, of "Sainte Marie du Sault, as also Lakes Huron and Superior, the Manitoulin Islands, and all the countries, lakes, rivers and streams contiguous or adjacent thereto." In this way New France extended westward and as a matter of course it fell to France to discover and explore the Mississippi river; that great, as yet, unknown waterway which ran through the heart of the continent, and at the same time to find the promising country of the Illini.

Although some knowledge, more or less vague, of the great river came to the missionaries and traders who had penetrated the wilderness, there was little definite information concerning it until, in a letter which he wrote to his superior while in charge of the mission at Chequamegon Bay in 1668, Father James Marquette made mention of it. This letter was written from the mission called La Point du Esprit, or Mission of the Holy Ghost, and is preserved in the Jesuit Relations for 1669 and 1670, and reads in part as follows: "When the Illini came to the Point (meaning to Chequamegon Bay where these Indians came to trade) they passed a great river which is almost a league in width. It flows from north to south and is so great a distance that this tribe, who know little of the use of the canoe, have never as yet, heard of its mouth. * * * "It is hardly probable that this great river discharges itself in Virginia. We are more inclined to believe that it has its mouth in California." The report of a great waterway, as yet unknown to the civilized world, came at a time when the idea of a direct and quick route to the Indies had not been abandoned. That this unknown waterway might be the coveted connection with the far East, was probably the great incentive to the exploration of the Mississippi river at this time. The government at Paris and at Quebec decided that the exploration should be delayed no longer. To this end, Sieur Louis Joliet was commissioned to go upon this expedition and Father Dablon appointed Father Jacques Marquette, the zealous priest at the Mission of the Holy Ghost, to accompany him. It was not a large expedition so far as numbers constitute size, which was sent. Two canoes were manned, each with an Indian oarsman and taking an Indian guide, these two Frenchmen set out to explore the unknown river. Courage and zeal were needed for this undertaking, and the two men chosen were indeed brave and zealous.

A letter written by Count Frontenac, Governor of Quebec, to M. Colbert, Minister of the Navy at Paris, described Sieur Louis Joliet as a man of great experience in these sorts of discoveries, who already has been almost to that.

river, the mouth of which he promises to see. Joliet had previous to this time made several discoveries, among them being that of Lake Erie. Louis Joliet was a man of much learning, having been educated for a priest; but his love of adventure had proven stronger than his love of study and his interest in the life and affairs of the Indian deeper than either, so that life in the wilderness had lured the monk from the cloister.

Father Jacques Marquette, the devout and zealous priest, makes his own record, that upon receiving his appointment to accompany Joliet he was "enraptured at the good news of seeing my design on the point of being accomplished, and myself in the happy necessity of exposing my life for the salvation of all these nations, and particularly for the salvation of the Illini who had very earnestly entreated me to carry the word of God to their country."

These "Illini" were among the different tribes of Indians who traded at the Mission of the Holy Ghost on Lake Superior, of which Father Marquette had charge as he wrote concerning the Mississippi river. It is to this religious fervor that the country north of the Ohio river and east of the Mississippi river is indebted for being made known to the civilized world at this time. It is true that the interests of trade determined this expedition to a great extent, yet it would hardly have been accomplished had it not been for the enthusiasm of the men to carry the privileges of their church to the benighted heathen.

The devout priest who was seeking the salvation of the souls of the redmen to the glory of his church, had braved every personal danger in pushing across the wilderness to the Great Lakes, and it was one of these men who says he "was enraptured at the opportunity for 'exposing his life' in this continued service."

Unlike any other country, America has been conquered by the cross, rather than the sword. Freedom to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience brought the Puritan to the eastern coast; a desire to save the souls of the native, led the Jesuit priests into the wilderness of the Mississippi valley. Joliet and Marquette met at the Mission of St. Ignatius, at Michilimakinac. Marquette had two years previous to this time established this Mission of St. Ignatius. It was not on the Island of Mackinac, but on the point of land west of the island, extending from the north shore into the strait. The place is now called Point St. Ignace. Here the two men made ready for their journey. On May 17, 1673, they left the Mission of St. Ignatius and crossed Lake Michigan to the mouth of the Fox river. Ascending this stream as far as it was navigable, they carried their canoes across to the Wisconsin river. This carrying place, or portage as the French called it, is now marked by Portage City, in Wisconsin. Rowing down the Wisconsin river this little party found themselves entering the Mississippi river—the first white men upon the upper waters of the mighty stream. Their delight is told by Marquette in his Journal as "a joy I can not express."

De Soto had discovered the Mississippi river near its mouth, one hundred and thirty odd years before this time, but as yet Spain had neglected to take advantage of the discovery. Joliet and Marquette, with their Indian oarsmen and guide, explored the river to within a ten days' journey of its mouth, encountering various adventures. When they reached a point at about a league from the

mouth of the Arkansas river, they were satisfied with what they had learned about the great waterway and retraced their steps. They had found that the Mississippi river did not lead through Virginia nor yet into California, but into the Gulf of Mexico. They had also satisfied themselves that it was not the much sought quick way to the Orient.

Returning up the Mississippi, Marquette became too ill to proceed, so they left their boats at the mouth of the Illinois river. Taking the advice of the natives when they were ready to continue their journey, they took the quicker route, going up that river. This change in their plans brought them within the boundaries of what is now the state of Illinois. The coming into this territory is the beginning of authentic history of the commonwealth of which Vermilion County is a part. Marquette makes record of this journey up the Illinois river by saying: "We had seen nothing like this river for the fertility of its land, its prairies, wood, wild cattle, stag, deer, swan, ducks, parrots and even beaver; its many lakes and rivers."

The vast stretch of prairie over which the eye roamed to the sky line, with its waving grass, presented a picture as beautiful and as awe-inspiring as must have been the outlook to the pilgrims in mid-ocean or the first sight of the Great Lakes to the white man. The soft sunshine, the gentle breeze, burdened with the fragrance of innumerable flowers, the gay winged insects, the water fowl, the singing birds, all lent charm to the scene. The buffalo and deer, not yet having been taught to fear the white man, came to the river's brink to satisfy their thirst. It was indeed a goodly land to look upon. These explorers ascended the Illinois river to where Peoria is now located where they found the large Indian village of Kaskaskia. Here they paused, and Father Marquette established a mission among the Indians. This mission, after more than two and a quarter centuries, yet exists, having been moved when the village was moved, to near the mouth of the Kaskaskia (Okaw) river. The Mississippi river changed its course, so that Kaskaskia is now an island in its waters, completely cut off from the Illinois shore. But the mission established by Marquette, remains the same in name and location.

Joliet and Marquette parted company after they left the village of Kaskaskia and Joliet returned directly to Quebec, where he made his report of the expedition, telling the direction and extent of the Mississippi river, as well as telling of the Illini country. The civilized world first learned through this report of the existence of this great waterway, and of the fertile land in the heart of the new continent. The later explorations of Joliet, or missionary work of Marquette, in no way influences the section whose history is here being given. The glowing report of Joliet aroused public interest which crystalized into the subsequent plans of La Salle, who with the invincible Tonti, explored the Mississippi to its mouth a few years later and formally declared the entire Mississippi valley a part of France. The plans of La Salle included a chain of forts from Quebec to New Orleans. To this end he fortified Fort St. Louis (now known by the name of Starved Rock) and also attempted to plant colonies at the Gulf and, but for his untimely death, might have built a permanent New France in America.

The New France, as recognized, included the vast domain north of the Ohio river and east of the Mississippi river. This territory is often spoken of as the country of the Illinois or the Illini, but in reality the country of the Illini was restricted on the east by that ridge which divides the tributaries of the Illinois river from those of the Wabash river. Such being the case, that territory now known as Vermilion County was never a part of the country of the Illini, and only in a general way, as being a part of the country north of the Ohio river and east of the Mississippi, seeks the beginning of its history in the discoveries of Joliet and Marquette. In truth Vermilion County is a part of the Wabash valley, belonged to the Wabash country, and must look for its early history in the story of that section.

Four years before the exploration of Joliet and Marquette, it is said, La Salle set out from Montreal upon an expedition into the far country to the southwest. Unfortunately, the account of this journey is among the records that have been lost since the middle of the eighteenth century. No official account can now be found of the two years following La Salle's leaving Montreal, upon this, his first journey. There is a memorandum in existence which states that "after leaving Lake Erie six or seven leagues distant, he came to a stream which he descended to the River Ohio," but no mention is made of the name of this stream. It is, however, highly probable that it was along the historic Wabash (or Oubache, as the Indians called that river), that La Salle made his way to the Ohio. Later, the French had a favored route from Lake Erie, via the Maumee and Wabash rivers to the Ohio river.

Granted that La Salle paddled his canoe down the Wabash river in 1669, and, by the right of discovery, has the prior claim to this section, and that the Wabash valley was made known through records now lost, conditions here remain about the same. La Salle's discovery made the Wabash valley a part of the same government as had claim to the Illinois country through the explorations of the Mississippi river by Joliet and Marquette.

The later exploration of the Mississippi river by La Salle himself, following in the lead of Joliet and Marquette, put this entire country of the Mississippi valley into New France, and the only question arises is whether history of the section which embraces what is now called Vermilion County, Illinois, begins in 1669, when La Salle is supposed to have discovered the Wabash valley, or in 1673 when Joliet and Marquette are known to have discovered the Illinois country, or yet later, in 1680 when La Salle formally took possession of the country drained by the great Mississippi river in the name of the king of France. But it matters little whether this section belonged to the careless monarch, whose interests in New France it was impossible to arouse, a few years sooner or later, for what possible effect could it have had upon the people whose homes were here at that time? What cared the dusky subjects who roamed the banks of the Vermilion and its tributaries, fought others of their race because of real or fancied wrongs, whether or not far away an indifferent France did or did not own the soil during this decade in the seventeenth century!

The journey down the Wabash must have been similar to that made by Joliet and Marquette, up the Illinois. Vast forests lined the banks, beyond which the grass waved on the Wea Plains and other prairies of Indiana. Singing birds in

the tree tops, wild game coming in places to the river's brink, the ripple of the placid stream—all were the counterpart of that other journey made with the Lilies of France unfurled to the breeze of the new West on the Illinois river.

Whether Vermilion County, as a part of the state of Illinois, or a part of the Wabash Valley, was first explored, the fact is undisputed, it owes its discovery to the French and was made known to the civilized world through the records of the French government.

CHAPTER II.

THE ORIGINAL PROPRIETORS OF WHAT IS NOW KNOWN AS VERMILION COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

THE AMERICAN INDIAN—THE TWO GREAT NATIONS EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER—ORIGIN OF THE IROQUOIS—THE ALGONQUINS THE FRIEND OF THE FRENCH—THE IROQUOIS THE FRIEND OF THE BRITISH—THE MIAMI CONFEDERACY—THE ILLINI NEARLY RELATED TO THE MIAMIS—THE PIANKESHAWS A TRIBE OF THE MIAMI CONFEDERACY—THE HABITS OF THE MIAMIS—THE PIANKESHAWS ALONG THE WABASH RIVER—THE KICKAPOOS—THEIR VILLAGES IN THIS SECTION—THE PEACE MEDAL—THE KICKAPOO TREATIES—THE POTOWATOMIES THE LAST TO LEAVE THIS TERRITORY—THE REMOVAL OF THE POTOWATOMIES IN 1838—THE PASSING OF THE INDIAN.

When the Western Continent was discovered a new race of people was found. As the eastern coast was explored and colonized the natives proved to be quite similar, differing when at all, in degree of appearance and characteristics. Because the discovery of America was made, in although a futile yet an earnest search for a shorter route to India, these natives were called Indians. Later, when it was learned that a new country instead of India had been found, the natives were distinguished by the name of American Indians. This new race was found to inhabit the entire new land from the Gulf of Mexico to the country north of the Great Lakes, and from the Atlantic ocean to the Mississippi river, and westward to the Rocky mountains.

In appearance the people of this newly found race were pleasing. They were tall, straight and well proportioned; of a copper-colored skin, long coarse and perfectly straight hair; strong features with high cheek-bones, and had black, piercing, expressive eyes. Bodily deformity was unknown and, until they adopted the vices of the Europeans, but little diseases prevailed among them. They had vigorous constitutions and astonishing powers of endurance.

One writer in the early times who had lived with them, summed up their characteristics in these words: "They were indolent, taciturn, and unsocial; brave and sometimes generous in war; unflinching under bodily torture; revengeful, treacherous, and morose when injured or offended; not always grateful for favors; grave and sagacious in council; often eloquent in speech; sometimes warm and constant in friendship, and occasionally courteous and polite."

While the American Indian from Florida to the Rocky mountains spoke a variety of dialects, there were, perhaps, not more than eight radically distinct

languages among them. All the races were more or less nomadic in their habits, yet each tribe had its own territory as a habitat. The migration of the American Indian was from the west to the east, and generally, with a tendency toward a southern direction. The white man came into America and went from the east to the west; the red man went from the west to the east.

Nothing is really known of the origin of the race—all theories so far advanced lacked satisfactory substantiation, and become but conjecture. One fact alone remains undisputed, and that is the direction whence they came. In most of the tribes there was a legend, handed down from one generation to another of "having come from the shore of the great sea, far to the setting sun," without doubt meaning the Pacific ocean. As the white man explored the territory east of the Mississippi river, two great families of Indians were found. These families were known as the Algonquins and the Iroquois. They in turn were divided into many tribes or clans, each with a different name. These two families were to the white man, apparently, distinct people. They were antagonistic, and irrevocably sworn enemies. While the Algonquins were the more numerous, the Iroquois were the dominant nation. This, according to Indian tradition, had not always been the case, however. Long before the Europeans came to the new world, the Iroquois were a peaceful people. Their principal village was on the northern side of the lakes about where Montreal is now situated. They made "the planting of corn their business," and were under a sort of subjection to the Adirondacks. Adirondack was the Iroquois name for Algonquin, and was supposed to be the source of all the tribes considered a part of the Algonquin family. The habitat of the Adirondacks surrounded the village of the Iroquois. Naturally the Adirondacks despised the Iroquois who had as their business, work "fit only for women." The Adirondacks delighted in the more manly employment of hunting, and going to war with other tribes.

As time went by, however, the game grew scarce and wandered further, and was more difficult to get and the Adirondacks felt the need of help from the young men of the Iroquois. So they induced these peaceable people to join them in the chase. An unforeseen condition arose. The young Iroquois became more expert than their teachers in the hunt and showed a greater power of endurance of fatigue. This aroused the hatred of the Adirondacks, and one night they murdered the young men of the Iroquois whom they had with them. The chief of the Iroquois complained but they were treated with contempt. The Adirondacks had no fear of the Iroquois, thinking they were but "as women." At last the Iroquois were aroused to action and they determined upon revenge. The Adirondacks hearing this, declared war. The Iroquois were defeated, and forced from their country to the south side of the Lakes. Here they ever afterward lived, but they were a changed people. They had learned to fight, and in time they became a powerful nation. They formed a strong confederacy afterward called the Five and later the Six Nations. Their habitat was through what is now the State of New York. Living as they did in the midst of their old enemies, the Adirondacks, they yet became their conquerors. The Iroquois went east into New England, and west as far as the "Country of the Illini," subjugating

other tribes from whom they constantly exacted tribute. The Iroquois have fittingly been called the "Romans of the Western World."

The Algonquins, through their various tribes, inhabited the vast territory now included in all of Canada, New England, a part of New York and Pennsylvania, all of the States of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, eastern North Carolina north of Cape Fear, a large portion of Kentucky, and Tennessee, and all north and west of these States, east of the Mississippi river.

The early settlers of New England, the Dutch coming to the Hudson river, and the French discovering the St. Lawrence river, all found the Algonquins in possession of this part of the country. Those on the Hudson river early were made subject to the Iroquois. When Champlain established Quebec, he found the Algonquins very friendly. They were as usual making ready to fight their perpetual enemy, the Iroquois. Champlain taught them the use of the white man's arms and himself led them to victory in a memorable battle on the lake since called by his name. This act, simple as it seemed in itself, determined the history of America. The undying hatred of the French, on the part of the Iroquois, was aroused. They became the perpetual enemy of the Frenchman and all of his friends, and interests. Through their compact with the Dutch, which was inherited by their conquerors, the English, the Iroquois were always sworn to the interests of Great Britain, and were ever their allies. They held themselves a steady barrier to French invasion of New England, and were an aid to the colonies on the coast. On the other hand, the Algonquins were as loyal friends to the French, and their good will made the exploration of the representatives of this nation westward possible and their possession of the Mississippi Valley a matter of course.

The territory now known as Vermilion County, Illinois, was the home of the confederacies of the Algonquin family called the Miamis, with later the Kickapoos, and Pottowatomies, with temporary occupancy by scattered bands of Shawnees and Delawares. The eastern limit of the possessions of the Illini was the ridge which divides the waters of the tributaries of the Illinois river from those of the Wabash river. The Miami Confederacy is the earliest known occupant of this section of country. The Miamis were without doubt originally a branch of the great Illinois Nation. Their claim to relationship of the two made by earliest writers is agreed to by no less authority than Gen. William Henry Harrison, whose long official connection with both the Illinois and the Miamis, gives his theories great weight.

The separation of the tribes which took place before the white man explored the upper Mississippi river, and by the time of occupancy seemed to be complete. This separation was, indeed so complete that in the wars waged against the Illini by the Iroquois, the Sacs and Foxes, and other enemies, the Miamis never made offer of assistance, yet there were the best of reasons to believe they were one family originally. Their language, manners and customs were so nearly identical, that little doubt can exist that they were at one time the same nation. According to their own tradition, the Miamis and the Illinois as well, came, originally, from the Pacific ocean. Their first permanent stopping place of which the white man has knowledge, was at the Des Moines river. Here they separated. The migrations of the Miamis from the west of the Mississippi

river eastward, can be followed readily through the mass of records handed down from the missionaries, travelers and officers connected with the French. Their travel extended through what is now Wisconsin, and northern Illinois around the southern end of Lake Michigan, to Detroit and thence up the Maumee river and down the Wabash river and eastward through Indiana, and Ohio as far as the Great Miami river.

Father Claude Dablon made a visit to a Miami village on the Fox river in 1670, and writes of the natives in a letter preserved in the Jesuit Relations of 1670 and 1671. He calls them the "Oumaimi, one of the Illinois Nation, which is, as it were, dismembered from the others in order to dwell in these quarters." He describes the Miami chief in these words: "The physiogomy of the chief, Telmchonia, was as mild and as attractive as any one could desire to see, and, while his reputation as a warrior, was great, his features bore a softness which charmed all those who beheld him. He never spoke to his subjects, but imparted his orders through some of his officers." This pen picture of a man whose subjects, and maybe relatives, lived in this section of country where we now have our homes, is interesting to us, but must not confuse us into thinking his people were without the well known characteristics of the savage of the plains.

The Miami Confederacy consisted of the Miamis proper, the Weas, and the Piankeshaws. This confederacy was known to the Iroquois and was often called "Twight-wees" by them.

The Miamis proper are known to have been at what is now the city of Fort Wayne, in charge of the portage at that place, as early as 1699, and a few years later the Weas are described as having their fort and cultivated fields on the plains below what is now the city of LaFayette, in Indiana. This section is even yet known as the Wea plains.

When the French first explored the Wabash river, they found the Piankeshaws in possession of the land on either side of that stream *from its mouth to the Vermilion river*. A part, at least, of this territory, was ceded to the Delawares, who, in turn, in 1804, made a session of it to the United States.

From the time the white man came into this country of the Illini (or Illinois) its eastern limit was known to be the ridge which divides the waters flowing into the Illinois river from the streams which drain into the Wabash river. This same ridge was the western limit of the country of the Miamis.

There is no room for doubt that the earliest proprietors of the territory which is now Vermilion County, were the Miamis, or, to be yet more explicit, the first people known to have owned these fields and streams, these prairies and timber, belonged to the Piankeshaw tribe, of the Miami Confederacy. The superior number of the Miamis and their great valor enabled them to extend the limit of their hunting grounds eastward into Ohio, and far within the territory of the Iroquois. Unlike the Illini, the Miamis held their own until they were placed upon an equal footing with the tribes eastward by obtaining possession of firearms with which they were able to maintain their tribal integrity and independence. Again, unlike the Illini, they did not keep faith with the French. They traded and fought with the French, English and Americans as their interests or passions inclined; they made peace or declared war against other nations of their own race, as policy or caprice dictated. More than once they compelled

the arrogant Iroquois to beg, from the governor of New York, that protection which they, themselves, had failed to secure by their own prowess.

The Miamis became bold and independent, and did not appeal to the French as an attractive field for missionary work. As a result of this, the Jesuit Relations and pastoral letters of the priesthood have less to say of this Confederacy than of any of the other western tribes, the Kickapoos alone excepted.

Trade with the Miamis was sought with great eagerness, by both the French and the English. This involved wars between the Miamis and the Iroquois and constant reduction of their numbers.

After the French were driven from the Mississippi Valley, the Miamis were compelled to defend their title from the arrogant claims of the British. They took a conspicuous part in the conspiracy of Pontiac. This conspiracy failed, and Pontiac went to Fort Chartres which he kept from the actual possession of the British for two years. The cessation of hostilities, and the transfer of Fort Chartres to the British, was secured through a conference between Pontiac and George Croghan, Department Superintendent of Indian Affairs. This conference was held within the country of the Miamis. Croghan and Pontiac met on the familiar trail, which crosses the southern part of Vermilion County. This trail crossed the southeast corner of the town of Sidell and it is even yet distinctly discernible in the northwestern part of Edgar County where it has been marked by a tablet.

Beside the wars into which the Miamis were drawn, they were greatly reduced in numbers by reason of the ravages of smallpox; whole villages were depopulated by this dread scourge. As the years passed, the Miamis were degraded by the vices of the white man, and became weakened and easily overcome by their enemies. The Kickapoos and the Pottowatomies drove them to the east of the Wabash river before white men came to settle this part of the Wabash Valley.

The early settler came into contact and were better acquainted with these Indians who came later, than with the Piankeshaws, or any other tribe of the Pottowatomies. The Kickapoos were associated with, or were a part of, the Mascoutins, a tribe who had, some time before the appearance of the Kickapoos, as such, in the Wabash Valley, gone to the mouth of the Ohio river. Writers differ in considering the relationship between these two tribes. They are sometimes classed as the same, and sometimes, as two distinct people. Even while they were regarded as separate bands or subdivisions of a tribe, it had to be admitted that their language and customs were identical. They always occupied contiguous villages and hunted in company with each other, over the same country. They were always united in interests. No instance is on record where they were ever arrayed against each other, or where they ever took opposite sides in any alliance with other tribes. Treaties were always made with the Kickapoos when both were involved, and instances are recorded when known Mascoutins signed their names as Kickapoos.

The Kickapoos were connected with the Northwest, being first noticed by Samuel Champlain, in 1612, "residing near the place called Sakinam," meaning the country of the Sacs, which bordered on Lake Huron, in the vicinity of Saginaw Bay. Father Claude Allouz visited "a mixed village of Miamis, Kickapoos

and Mascoutins, on Fox river, in the winter of 1669-70. Like the Miamis, the Kickapoos were not inclined to receive religious impressions from the early missionaries. Tonti quaintly records their ruthless murder of Father Ribourd in these words:—"They carried him away and broke his head." Other instances are on record of their cruelty to the missionaries. Previous to 1718 they had villages on the Rock river, having been driven thither by the scarcity of game and enmity of the Sioux. The Rock river is laid down on a map of La Salle's discoveries as the Kickapoo river—"the Assin-Sepe."

The Kickapoos came into the Wabash Valley as disputers of the Miamis' claim as early, at least, as 1765. The distinction between them and the Mascoutins is inferred from the record made as late as 1815, of the Mascoutins residing on the west bank of the Wabash between Vincennes and the Tippecanoe river, and the Kickapoos living a short distance above them, in several large villages. On the other hand, it is a well-known fact that an important Kickapoo village was located at the mouth of the Vermilion river, a few miles south of Danville, and a large Kickapoo burial ground was to be found a few miles west on the Salt Fork of the Vermilion river.

No instance is recorded where the Kickapoos assisted either the French or British in any of the intrigues or wars for the fur trade, or the acquisition of disputed territory in the Northwest. They early incurred the displeasure of the French, but there is no record that they became the allies of the British on any occasion.

As a military people the Kickapoos were inferior to the Miamis, the Delawares, and the Shawnees, in movements requiring large bodies of men, but they excelled in predatory warfare. Small parties of five to twenty would push out hundreds of miles from their villages and swoop down upon a feeble settlement, or an isolated pioneer's cabin, and make off before an alarm could be given. The Kickapoos were very much attached to the country along the Vermilion river and General Harrison, then the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, had great trouble in gaining their consent to cede it to the United States. They valued it highly as a hunting ground, and also because of the minerals it was supposed to contain. But they were not alone in an appreciation of this territory. The Government was desirous of its possession, and General Harrison was determined to secure it. In a letter dated December 10, 1809, addressed to the Secretary of War, General Harrison expressed his anxiety to have the Kickapoos release their title as high up as the Vermilion river. He particularly coveted the tract "bounded on the east by the Wabash, on the south by the northern line of the so-called Harrison Purchase, extending from opposite the mouth of Raccoon creek, northwest fifteen miles; thence to a point on the Vermilion river twenty-five miles in a direct line from its mouth; thence down the latter stream to its confluence." "This small tract of land (of about twenty-five miles square, is one of the most beautiful that can be imagined. It is, moreover, believed to contain a rich copper mine. The Indians are so extremely jealous of any search being made for this mine that the traders were always cautioned not to approach the hills which were supposed to contain it."

Beckwith's Historic Notes of the North-West (foot-note, page 164), states that there was a mistake made in this letter concerning the mineral in this

mine; that it was not copper but a mineral having something like the appearance of silver. Explorations on the bluffs of the Little Vermilion, in the seventies, resulted in the discovery of a number of ancient furnaces, with the charred coals and slag remaining in and about them. The furnaces were crude, consisting of shallow excavations of irregular shape in the hillsides. These basins were but a few feet across; they too, were lined with fine clay. The bottoms of the pits were connected by ducts, or troughs, also made of fireclay, leading into reservoirs, a little distance lower down the hillside, into which the metal could flow, when reduced to a liquid state, in the furnace above.

The pits were carefully filled with earth and every precaution was taken to prevent their discovery, a slight depression on the surface of the ground being the only indication of their presence. These mines were, from every appearance, entitled to a claim of considerable antiquity, and were probably "the silver mines of the Wabash," of which repeated mention is made by early writers.

The most plausible explanation of the use to which this metal was put was given, at the time the mines were explored by a half-breed Indian whose ancestors lived in the vicinity and were in the secret. He said that, after being smelted the metal was sent to Montreal, where it was used as an alloy with silver and made into brooches, wristbands and other jewelry, and returned to the traders to be disposed of to the Indians.

The territory described by General Harrison, extended into the southeast corner of what is now Vermilion County, and is yet a tract of the same description, for it is one of the most beautiful to be imagined, for, together with the adjoining territory in that part of the county, it makes the richest farm lands to be found any where. This land, although coveted by Harrison, was not ceded to the United States until, at a treaty made at Edwardsville, in 1819. This was ten years after the above quoted letter was written, but, meanwhile, Tecumseh had "taken up the hatchet against the white people" and all Governor Harrison's time was taken in "fighting it out," as Tecumseh said, and securing the Wabash Valley to the white man.

Since the battle of Tippecanoe was only indirect in results of influence to the settlement of Vermilion County, a brief mention of its importance, is only admissible. True it is, it made the occupancy of this territory possible at that time. When making the treaty the Kickapoos claimed the entire territory which they ceded as theirs "by descent from their ancestors, by conquest from the Illinois Nation (probably inferring the Miamis a part of the Illinois Nation) and by uninterrupted possession for more than half a century."

As compared with other Indians, the Kickapoos were industrious and intelligent, and cleanly in their habits. They were better armed and clothed than the other tribes. The men, as a rule, were tall, sinewy and active; the women were lithe, and many of them by no means lacking in beauty. Their dialect was soft and liquid as compared with the rough gutteral language of the Pottowatomies. The Kickapoos lived to themselves and did not, as a rule, mix with the white people; because of this they preserved their characteristics. The vices of the white man were less temptation to them than to other tribes. They were never of great numbers, as compared to the Miamis or Pottowatomies, but their energy was great so that they well compared. In language, manners and cus-

toms the Kickapoos resembled the Sacs and Foxes, whose allies they were generally counted.

The Kickapoos shared the part of the Wabash Valley with the Pottowatomies after the last years of the 18th Century. The Pottowatomies had been neighbors of the Miamis to the north for some time before the treaty of Greenville, in 1795. At this time the Pottowatomies announced their determination to settle upon the Wabash river. They made no pretensions to ownership of that country, and gave, as their reason for taking the Miami territory, that "they were tired of eating fish and wanted to eat meat."

The Pottowatomies had gradually wandered from the Lake Huron country southward, without any fixed land of their own. The other tribes called them squatters. They were of the same family as the Ottawas and Ojibbeways with but a difference of dialect, not a difference of language. Their manners, as well as their dialect, were rough and barbarous, as compared with other Algonquin tribes. They were loyal to the French, maintaining their alliance so long as New France existed in America. When other Indians "as far west as the Illinois" were induced to be bound by the "Silver Covenant Chain" and desert the French at the Siege of Niagara, the Pottowatomies were not counted in the number. After the French were vanquished by the British the Pottowatomies heartily upheld their kinsman Pontiac, in his attempt to recover the country.

The Pottowatomies fought with the British during the Revolutionary war, and in the war of 1812, being a menace to the frontiers of Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania. It was the Pottowatomies who perpetrated the massacre at Fort Dearborn, August 15, 1812. After settling themselves in the Wabash country, the Pottowatomies agreed with the Kickapoos, already there, that they, together, would take possession of the north and west sides of the river, leaving the east side for the Miamis, now grown too weak to resist this arrangement.

This was a hard bargain for the Miamis, but they could make no resistance; they were dealing with a stronger people.

One of these mixed Pottowatomie towns was located but a short distance outside of present-day Vermilion County. The exact location of this town is a matter of record in a speech made by the renowned Indian chief, "Kesis" (the Sun), to General Wayne, when telling of his own village which was "a day's walk below the Wea town on the Wabash." He referred to the village which stood on the site of the Shelby farm near Cayuga, which is yet owned by descendants of the family living in Vermilion County, Illinois. Evidences of Indian fighting have been found in various parts of Vermilion County. The old Baird farm, now owned by John Baird, near Indianola, has given much evidence of a battle having been fought at that spot, but it is impossible to determine whether it was between the Pottowatomies, or the Kickapoos against the Piankeshaws, or was even at an earlier date. The Revolutionary war was concluded without Great Britain making any provision for her Indian allies, who continued their hostilities. No treaty had been made between the United States and the Wabash tribes. The Indians of this territory were a menace to the frontier, and there seemed no help for it. The United States government tried peaceable means to bring an end to Indian depredations, and, failing in this, sent out expeditions into the Wabash country, under General Harrison and then under General Charles

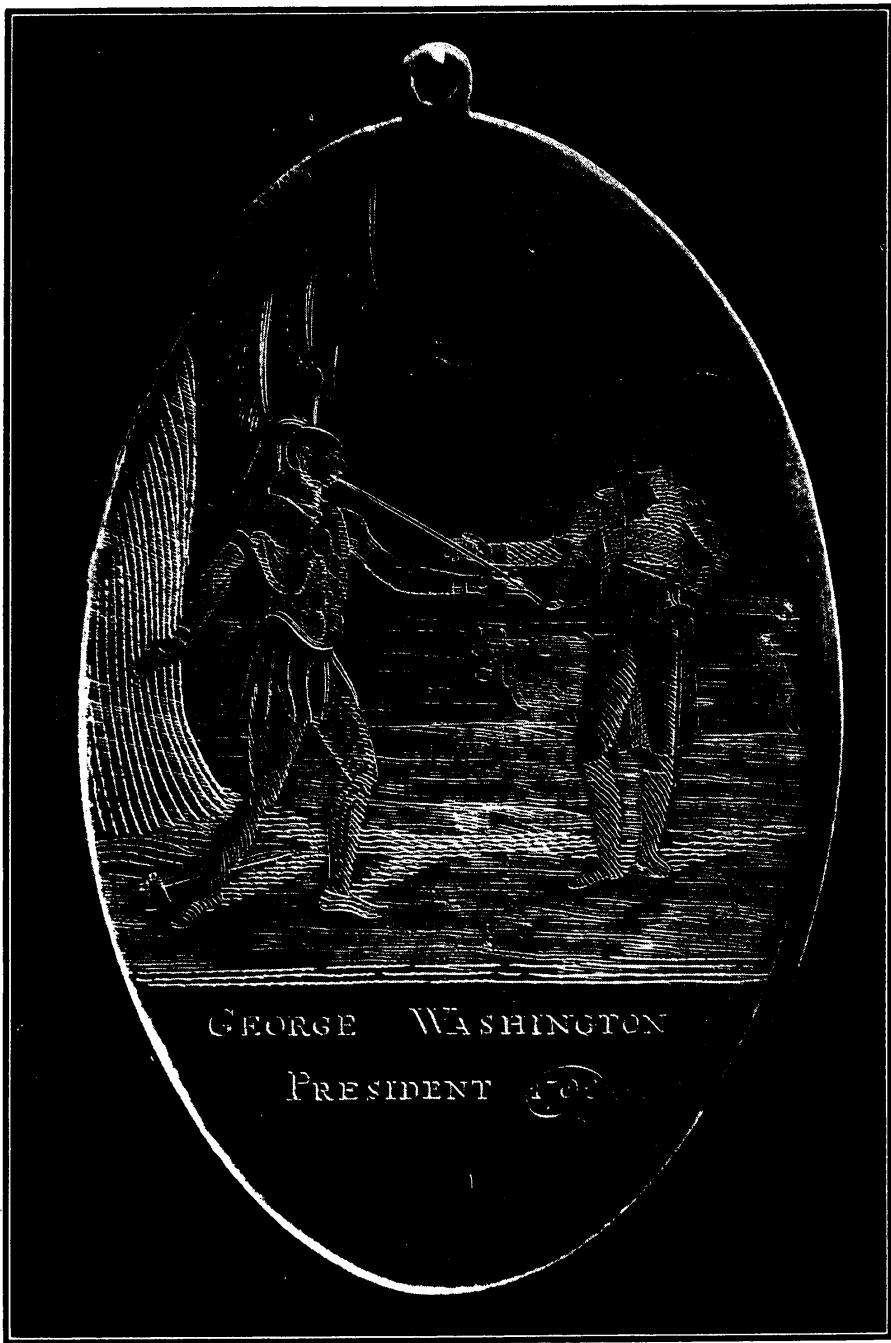
Scott, and last under General Wilkinson, which, in every case, resulted in the burning of Indian villages, the devastation of their fields and the capture of women and children, but not the conquering of the Indians themselves. The prisoners were taken to Fort Washington. Again the government tried to bring the Wabash tribes to a treaty of peace. Grown vindictive and arrogant beyond words, the Indians declined all overtures.

General Putnam, who was the Indian Agent of the Ohio Company, at Marietta, at the hazard of his life, visited the hostile tribes, and finding they would not go to Philadelphia nor Fort Washington, he induced them to meet at Vincennes. Starting from Fort Washington, August 26, 1792, he went to Vincennes, reaching there September 12. He was accompanied by the Moravian missionary, John Heckwelder. They took the surviving prisoners who had been captured by General Scott and General Wilkinson the previous year, with them. There were one hundred forty persons put into the boats and taken down the Ohio and up the Wabash rivers. The Indians who had already come to Vincennes when they reached there, September 12, "were assembled upon the banks of the river, and when they saw their friends approaching," wrote Heckwelder, "they discharged their guns in token of joy and sang the praises of those from whom they had been separated, in terms peculiar to themselves."

The prisoners were at once delivered to their friends. For the next ten days the Indians came daily to make the treaty. By the morning of the twenty-fourth, delegates representing the Eel Creeks, Wea, Pottowatomie, Mascoutin, Kickapoo, Piankeshaw, Kaskaskia and Peoria tribes, had all arrived. Speeches were made by both General Putnam for the United States, and the assembled chiefs and definite articles of peace were concluded. These were signed on the twenty-seventh of September, 1792. This was the first treaty ever entered into between the United States and the several Wabash tribes. It was a treaty of peace and friendship only. General Putnam took many presents with him when he went to Vincennes to make this treaty. Among these were two large white wampum belts of peace with a silver medal suspended to each, bearing the arms of the United States.

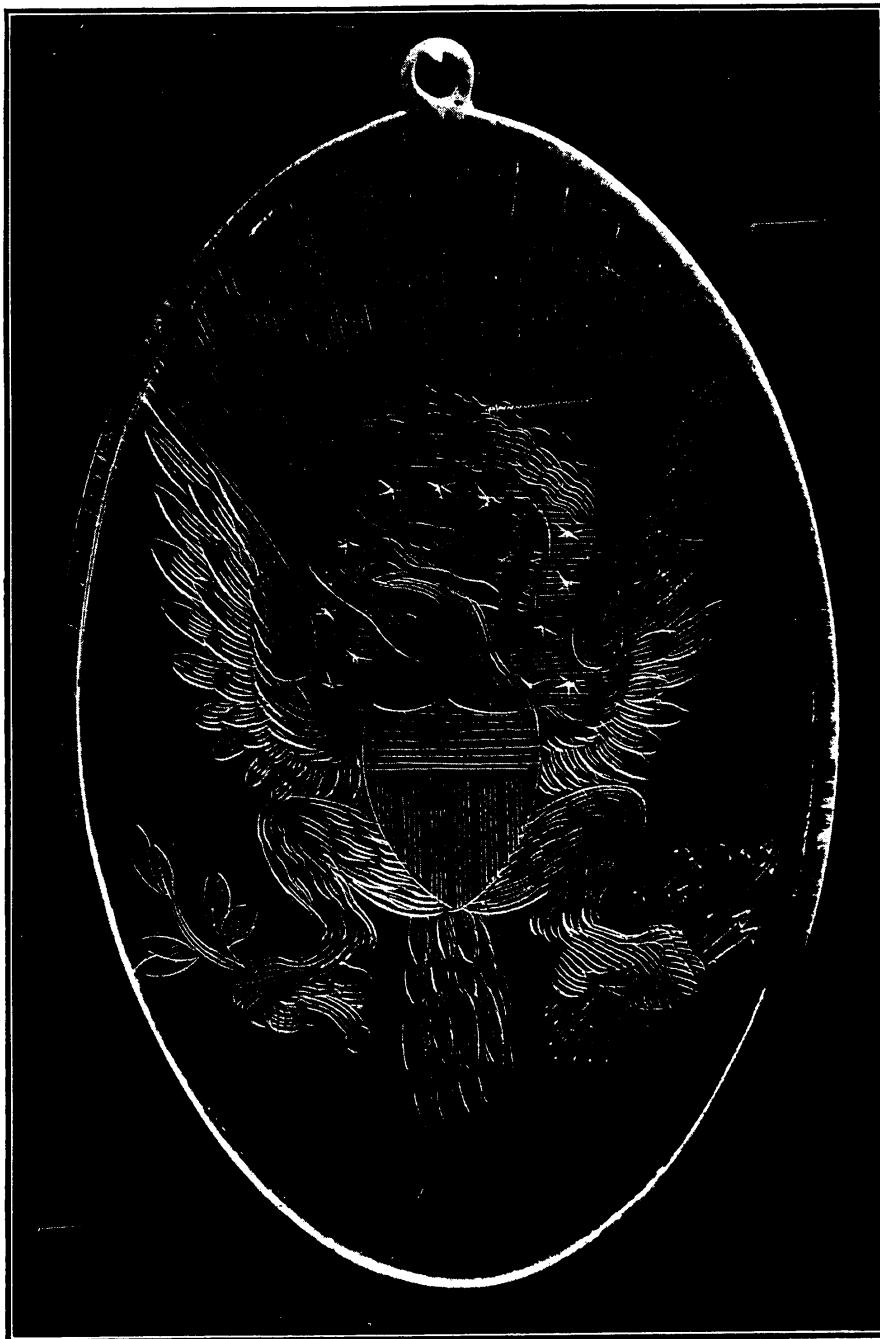
When the chiefs of the several tribes had signed the articles of the treaty, General Putnam addressed them as follows:—"Brothers, listen to what I say: We have been for some days past engaged in establishing a peace and we have succeeded through the influence of The Great Spirit. Brothers, we have wiped off the blood, we have buried the hatchet, on both sides, all that is past shall be forgotten." Taking up the belts, he continued: "Brothers, this is the belt of peace which I now present to you in the name of the United States. This belt shall be the evidence of, and the pledge for, the performance of the articles of the treaty of peace which we have concluded between the United States and your tribes this day.

"Brothers, whenever you look at this, remember that there is a perpetual peace and friendship between you and us, and that you are now under the protection of the United States. Brothers, we will hold this belt in our hands,—here at this end, the United States holds it, and you hold it by the other end. The road you see is broad, level and clear. We may now pass to one and another easy and without difficulty. Brothers, the faster we hold this belt the happier



PEACE MEDAL GIVEN AT THE TREATY OF VINCENNES, SEPT. 27, 1792

Found at the old Kickapoo Indian burying ground near the mouth of
the middle fork of the Vermilion river, four miles west of
Danville. Now in possession of Mrs. Lynne
Beckwith, Danville



REVERSE SIDE OF PEACE MEDAL

we shall be. Our women and children will have no occasion to be afraid any more. Our young men will observe that their wise men performed a good work. Brothers, be all strong in that which is good. Abide all in this path, young and old, and you will enjoy the sweetness of peace." After speaking this way General Putnam delivered the belts.

Among the Indians present was the renowned Pottowatomi chief, "Kesis," whose village was the one mentioned above, located on the site of the Shelby farm, near the mouth of the Vermilion river.

There was an old Indian burial ground, near the mouth of the Middle Fork of the Vermilion river when the first settlers came to this section. This burial ground bore all evidence of having been used by the Indians many years prior to the time of the cession of the territory along the Vermilion river. Any one curious to locate the site of the old burying ground can do so on the bluffs near the mouth of the Middle Fork four miles West of Danville.

There are no signs of its once use as a burial place. It has not had any such use since the removal of the Pottowatomies west in 1838, and few who pass on the road beneath the bluffs every day know that it was ever a burial ground.

It was sixty odd years after the signing of the treaty at Vincennes, that two young men, living on a farm near this burying ground, were walking by the river, when they saw a skull which had evidently been washed out of the bluff. They made search and found a grave from which it had come. Examining the grave, a medal was found. It may be this skull was not found by accident, as this story would imply, but was the result of digging in the grave, seeking treasure. Whatever the cause of finding the medal, the article itself, and its being in a grave in this burying ground, is the matter of interest.

This medal is reproduced in this volume and it can readily be seen to be exactly as the description given by the Moravian missionary, of the peace medal presented by General Putnam to the Indians at the Vincennes treaty in 1792. This medal is of silver set in a rim of the same metal. The engraving is by hand, of course, and is very distinct. It can be studied with little trouble from the illustration. The side upon which is engraved the Coat of Arms of the United States was explained to the Indians by Gen. Putnam in these words:—"Brothers, the engravings on this medal distinguish the United States from all other nations; it is called their arms, and no other nation has the like. The principal figure is a broad eagle. This bird is a native of this country and is to be found in no other part of the world; and both you and the Americans being born in this land and having grown up together with the eagle, they have placed him in their arms, and have engraved him on this medal, by which the great chief, General Washington, and all the people of the United States, hold this belt fast. The wings of the eagle are extended to give protection to all our friends, and to assure you of our protection so long as you hold fast this belt. In his right foot the eagle holds the branch of a tree, which, with us, is an emblem of peace, and it means that we love peace, and wish to live in peace with all our neighbors, and to assure you, that while you hold this belt fast, you shall always be in peace and security, whether you are pursuing the chase, or reposing yourselves under the shadow of the bough. In the left foot of this bird is

placed a bundle of arrows; by this is meant that the United States have the means of war and that when peace cannot be obtained or maintained with their neighbors, on just terms, and that if, notwithstanding all their endeavors for peace, war is made upon them, they are prepared for it."

The other side of the medal needed no interpretation to an Indian. It tells its own story better than any words could. The Indian has thrown his tomahawk, the emblem of war, at the foot of the tree under whose roots it was to be typically buried. With his other hand, the Indian has extended the pipe of peace (after he, himself, had smoked it) to Washington, and he, representing the United States, has reached his hand to receive and smoke. These acts of friendly feeling insures protection to the pioneer plowman and his cabin in the background. The eye in the rim of this medal shows that it has never been suspended.

Since it is believed that Kesis, the great Chief, was buried in this burying ground, it is reasonable to think that this medal was buried with him. The young men sold the medal to Samuel Chester at the time, and he later disposed of it to Josephus Collett of Terre Haute, and it is now in the possession of Mrs. Lynne Beckwith of Danville, Illinois. The Pottowatomies were the last of their race to leave the Wabash country. They were the redmen with whom the early settlers of this section were best acquainted. Whatever notion of the American Indian there has been handed down from one generation to another, in this section, was had from association with the Pottowatomies.

There were reservations made for them in both Indiana and Illinois, but the white man crowded them out, and at last they were sent beyond the Mississippi river.

The final migration of the Potowatomies from the Wabash Valley was under charge of Col. Pepper and Gen. Tipton and took place in the summer of 1838. It was a sad sight, these children of the forest being driven from the homes of their childhood. Bidding farewell to the hills, valleys and streams of their infancy, the graves of their revered ancestors, leaving these sacred scenes to be desecrated by the plowshares of the white man. No wonder the downcast warriors wept—the old men trembled and the swarthy cheek of the youth paled. There were about one thousand persons of all ages in the line of march. Reluctantly they wended their way toward the setting sun, watching their chances to break into the brush and return to their dearly loved homes, saying they would rather die than leave their country. When they reached Danville they halted several days being in want of food. Without tents, and a liberal supply of food, there was much suffering among them. While at Danville they camped on the Dave Fowler farm. During their stay there were many deaths.

The mournful procession passed on across Illinois, without adequate means of conveyance for the weak, the aged and the infirm. Several years later the Miami Nation was removed to their western homes by coercive means under an escort of United States troops. This once proud and powerful nation was far inferior in point of numbers to the Pottowatomies. Their removal took the last of the original proprietors of the section, thenceforth to be known as Vermilion County, Illinois, to beyond the Mississippi river. This left the

fields and plains, the woods and rivers, which had been the red man's home to the use of the white man.

Generations have come and gone since the American Indian has lived in Eastern Illinois. All that is now known of him is through the questionable tales found in books, or worse, the representation of his life as shown on the stage, copied as it is from those of his race west of the Mississippi river.

The American Indian has passed from his old haunts as has passed the buffalo, the wild game, the beaver and even the woods, from the borders of the streams.

CHAPTER III.

PIANKESHAW.

DANVILLE WAS BUILT ON THE SITE OF THE OLD INDIAN VILLAGE OF PIANKESHAW—
PIANKESHAW AN IMPORTANT INDIAN VILLAGE—CHIPPECOKE, THE CAPITAL
SEAT OF THE PIANKESHAW—ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF THE VERMILION RIVER—
EXTRACT FROM THE JOURNAL OF GEORGE CROGHAN—AN ENTRY IN M. GAME-
LIN'S JOURNAL, LOCATING THE VILLAGE OF PIANKESHAW—POTTOWATOMIES
TOLD GURDON HUBBARD ABOUT PIANKESHAW—LIFE OF THE DWELLERS IN PIAN-
KESHAW—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE RACE WHO FIRST LIVED IN DAN-
VILLE—FRENCH TRADERS IN VERMILION COUNTY.

Few people who walk the streets of Danville, the county seat of Vermilion County, Illinois, realize that they are walking upon historic ground of another race; that the present city is the second one upon this site; that long before the white men who are credited with its discovery and settlement had seen this favored location, and other people had an important town established here which attracted notice and comment from early writers.

This Indian village, to which reference is made, is frequently mentioned in early memoirs and treaties, and it is always described in such a way as to leave no doubt of its location.

Mention has already been made of the fact that the Miami Confederacy of Indians were the first known dwellers in the Wabash Valley. After their immigration thither the Miamis proper resided about Fort Wayne on the St. Mary's and St. Joseph's rivers, near their confluence which forms the Miami river. They also lived on the upper Wabash. The Ouatonons, or Weas, as the English called them, lived further down; their principal villages being on the Wea Plains, between what is now Attica and LaFayette.

When the French first came down the Wabash, the Piankeshaws were found on both sides of the river, from the Vermilion down to the Ohio, and westward into Illinois to the ridge which divides the tributaries of the Wabash from those of the Illinois. No claim had ever been made to this territory by any other tribe, nor was made until about 1770, when that part lying west of White river in Indiana, was granted to the Delawares by the Piankeshaws on condition that they would settle on it, and assist in a war with the Kickapoos, which was at that time taking their interest.

At that time the Miamis and the Weas (or Ouatonons) had their habitat separate and distinct, extending from the Maumee and its tributaries through

the course of the Wabash Valley as far south as near Vincennes where Chippeoke, or the town of Brushwood, the ancient Capital seat of the Piankeshaws was located. The bands about Vincennes were called Lower Piankeshaws, while members of the tribe residing higher up and nearer the Vermilion river were designated as Upper Piankeshaws. Later these latter were known as Piankeshaws of the Vermilion, and their villages on the stream were called Vermilion towns.

The Miami name for the river, known as the Vermilion, was Piankeshaw. This word is to be found spelled in many different ways; such as Pyankashaw, Pionkashaw, Peanquichias, and otherwise. This dissimilarity was owing to the different style of spelling by the English, the Americans and French authors; each making more or less successful effort to approximate the sound of the word as the Miami Indian pronounced it. Following the well established rules of Indian etymology, as to the manner of places and things, it may be the tribe living along the Vermilion, were called Piankeshaws from the name of the river, rather than the river being given the name of the tribe; just as the tribes of the Miamis residing at the Wea Plains were called Weas, those at the Tippecanoe river, were called Tippecanoes, and those higher up on Eel river were called Eel Creeks.

Official document covering the treaty of Vincennes (1792), conducted by General Rufus Putnam, to be found at Marietta College, give Piankeshaw as the name of the river now known as the Vermilion.

This name for the river was not the one universally used, apparently, by the Indians. It evidently was a name given by the Miamis, alone. In Colonel George Croghan's journal of 1765, the river is mentioned by the same name it has at present, that of Vermilion, and the explanation made that "it is so called from a fine red earth found here by the Indians, with which they paint themselves." This red earth, a red chalk, generally known under the provincial name of "red keel" was constantly noticed by the early settlers, and is to be seen now along the bluffs of the Vermilion in the shales over-laying the outcrop of the coal. The exposed coal taking fire, burns the shale above, turns it red and makes it soft. Carpenters used it to chalk their lines in early times, and, time after time, successive generations of boys gathered their pockets full and painted their hands and faces with it.

The passion of the Indian for paint, and especially for red paint, made this red earth of importance, and caused them to, according to Croghan in 1765, call the river after the red earth. It is further known that another river by the same name in the state has the same red earth on its bluffs. This same river, which the Miamis called the Piankeshaw, was marked on a map published in the early years of the 19th Century with the name of Red river. About this time English geographies, and not a few American writers, tried to give this river yet another name.

Arrowsmith, who subscribes himself as no less a personage than "Geographer to His Majesty," lays it down on his map frenchified into "*Rejoicing-Jaune*" and in "Emigrants Western Guides for 1817, 1819 and 1821, it is called the "*Rejoicing*" while, in Flint's History and Geography of the Western States, published in 1828, it is called the "*Rejoicing*." However, that name is forgotten;

the name of Piankeshaw was never generally used; and the river which, is the principal one of this county and gave it its name, remains an expression of the Indian's pleasure, and keeps the spelling of the Frenchman. It is possible, that the name of "Rejoicing" was but an expression of the joy the red man felt in finding the means of decoration in the Vermilion earth, and either name would have perpetuated the sentiments of this people who had first possession of its waters. A memoir, or official report to headquarters, made by the French officers as early as 1718, and which lay in the royal library at Paris, France, until transcribed and translated into English by J. R. Broadhead under the authority of the State of New York, contains matter of deep interest concerning the Indians between Lake Erie and the Mississippi river. After speaking of the Miamis, the village of the Ouatonon are described, and the writer tells of the village by the name of Piankeshaw. This is not all the proof that this village was upon the site of present day Danville, nor the most convincing. After the change in the government of the Wabash Valley, in 1759, because of the defeat of the French by the British at Quebec, the Indians became restive. These Indians had always been the friends of the French; no wonder they were suspicious of the British, who had ever been the foe to their friends. The British officers proved to be haughty and overbearing, whereas the French had always been kind and conciliatory. The French had adapted themselves to the ways of the Indians; had taken to themselves wives of the various tribes, and shared their interests. The Englishman was reserved and selfish and wanted the land exclusively for himself.

Pontiac was a great Chief of the Ottawas, and was a man of great discernment. He saw the inevitable result of the coming of the British to his people, and determined to make a bold attempt to hold the land for the red man. His plan failed, but his efforts forced the British to conciliation and diplomacy. George Croghan, an old Indian trader, and a man in whom the Indians had confidence, was sent to make peace where force had failed. George Croghan had spent his life among the Indians, and was well versed in their language and ways and habits of thought. He enjoyed the advantage of a personal acquaintance with many of the chiefs and principal men of the Wabash tribes who had formed strong attachments toward him. He was a veteran up to all the arts of the Indian Council House and had already conducted many important treaties, with the Shawnees, the Delawares and the Iroquois, further eastward. He had fared ill at the hands of the French, whose officers had captured his trade and confiscated his goods. Col. Croghan was closing a treaty at Fort Pitt when he was sent to the Indians of the Wabash Valley. He left Fort Pitt, May 15, 1765, going down the Ohio with two bateaux. He floated down the river to Shawneetown, where he halted at break of day, June 8, and was attacked by a party of eighty Kickapoo and Musquattimes, and two of his men together with three Indians were killed; Croghan himself, was wounded and carried to their village near Ouatonon which was on the west bank of the Wabash river, between Attica and La Fayette. The then went on foot to Vincennes, where they remained several days. Here Croghan made a purchase of "some little apparel" for himself and his companions and proceeded, still a prisoner, in company with his captors, toward their village. They crossed the river at Vin-

cennes, and journeyed over the prairies, their route from the description of the country as preserved in Croghan's journal, being, without doubt, up through what is now Crawford, Edgar and Vermilion counties. Quoting from his journal: "June 17, 1765. At mid-day we set out from Vincennes, traveling the first five miles through a fine thick wood. We traveled eighteen miles this day, and encamped in a large, beautiful, well watered meadow.

"18 and 19.—We traveled through a prodigious large meadow called the Piankeshaws' hunting grounds. Here is no wood to be seen, and the country appears like an ocean; the ground is exceedingly rich, and partly overgrown with wild hemp; the land is well watered and full of buffalo, deer, bears, and all kinds of wild game.

"20 and 21.—We passed through some very large meadows, part of which belong to the Piankeshaw, on the Vermilion river; the country and soil much the same as that we traveled over these three days past. Wild hemp grows here in abundance; the game here is very plenty; at any time in half an hour, we kill as much as we wanted.

"22.—We passed through a part of the same meadow mentioned yesterday; then came to a high woodland and arrived at the Vermilion river, so called from a fine red earth found here by the Indians, with which they paint themselves. About half a mile from where we crossed the river, there is a village of Piankeshaws, distinguished by the addition of the name of the river. We then traveled through a high, clear woody country about three hours, soil deep and rich, then came to a meadow and encamped.

"23d.—Early in the morning we set out through a fine meadow, then some clear woods; in the afternoon came into a large bottom on the Ouiabache (Wabash) within six miles of Ouicatanon (or Ouatonons). Here I met several Chiefs of the Kickapoos, and Musquattimes."

Following the description of the route taken by Col. Croghan in his enforced march from Vincennes, accompanied by his captors, to their villages near Ouatonon, on the west bank of the Wabash river, which we can more exactly locate as being between Attica and La Fayette, there is no doubt that the village, "about half a mile from where we crossed the river," and a three hours' journey through "clear high, woody country and a further half days' journey to reach the large bottom on the Wabash" within six miles of Ouitanon, is at the mouth of the North Fork, the same place where land was given by Beckwith and Guy Smith about sixty years later, upon which to build the county seat of Vermilion County. But one more proof of the identity of this village with present-day Danville will be given here.

In presenting this proof a study of the records of events immediately following the war of the Revolution must be made. Because of the Conquest of the Northwest, by George Rogers Clark, this Wabash Valley was, at the close of the war, a part of a county of Virginia and afterward ceded to the United States. As a part of the United States the Federal Government took charge of it, appointing Gen. St. Clair to be Governor, with headquarters at Fort Washington upon which site is present-day Cincinnati.

The Wabash Indians had taken part with Great Britain in the late war, and still continued sending out hostile parties from this section of the country

against the frontier settlements in Kentucky and Eastern Ohio. Loud complaints were made, and earnest appeals sent to Governor St. Clair to have him make an effort to stop these depredations. To this end Antoine Gamelin, a French trader, started from Vincennes, with speeches addressed by Governor St. Clair to the Indians inhabiting the Wabash and its tributaries. These speeches were delivered at all the principal Indian villages laying near the Wabash, as far east as the Miami town of Kikinggan, near the site of present-day Fort Wayne. An entry in the journal of M. Gamelin kept while on this embassy of Governor St. Clair, is of interest in locating the Indian village of Piankeshaw.

"After leaving Vincennes," the journal proceeds "The second village I arrive at was at the River du Vermilion called Piankeshaw. The Chief, and all the warriors, were well pleased with the speeches concerning the place, but they said they could not presently give me an answer, before they had consulted the Miami Nation, their oldest brethren. It must be observed that the speeches had been there in another hand before me. The first messenger could not proceed further than the Vermilion, on account of some private wrangling between the interpreter and some chief men of the tribe. They desired me to proceed to the Miami town Kikingay and, in coming back, let them know what reception I got from them."

That this peace mission was a failure, does not in any way affect the fact that such a mission included the visit to this Indian village of Piankeshaw "on the River du Vermilion," and is proof of the events of the past which transpired on the land now a part of Vermilion County.

Time passed, the cruel Kickapoos and stronger Miamis swept over this village and, driving out the Piankeshaws, in turn abandoned all claim to the soil, and Nature did her best to win back to herself, this place in the wilderness. A score of years helped in this work, before the busy hands of the white man came into this wilderness, and pushed it aside for the planting of homes representing a higher civilization. The lingering red man did not forget to tell the encroaching white man tales of the pretentious homes of his race on this spot. The Potowatomies delighted in telling their friend, Gurdon Hubbard, who himself had won relationship with them through marriage with one of their number, the stories of the Piankeshaw village, and Mr. Hubbard in turn, told these tales to the men of his acquaintance, so that the picture of the wigwam in the place of the modern house; the warriors and squaws and papoosees in the place of the men and women and children; the games and Indian customs in place of business and amusements of today; becomes a vivid picture.

A little exercise of the imagination can remove all the houses, streets and other signs of civilization in Danville, can destroy the bridges over the Vermilion river and North Fork. With the public square obliterated and the ground westward showing patches of hazel and jackoak, of recent growth; with the northwest part of town, nearly to the bluffs of North Fork, a broad meadow, set in with blue grass, with marks of old corn hills plainly visible over many acres the picture has its true setting. The sky line along the river bluffs, silhouettes a line of stalwart oaks.



OLD ELM IN ELLSWORTH PARK, UNDER WHICH THE
PIANKESHAWS GATHERED

Under the bluff west of what is now Logan Avenue and in the other bottom south of Main street, up to the mouth of North Fork, ancient corn-fields also are overrun with blue grass. Eastward from Vermilion street, is a prairie, with an occasional stunted bush which grows for a season, only to be burned to the ground by the autumnal fires, which sweep through the high grass each year. This is surely a goodly spot. Sheltered on the north and west with a growth of timber its generous soil lies open to the warm summer sun and rainfall. The hillsides on the west and south, hold numerous springs from which pure water bubbles past mossy beds. People this attractive spot with a happy folk. It is home life for a race of children of the forest who have not yet learned to fear the white man's rule.

Tall and lithe, the men are dressed in a garment which extends from their waists to their knees, with moccasins for feet covering, which had been prepared from the buffalo's hide. In the winter, leggings decorated with quills of the porcupine stained in colors of brilliant contrast, together with blankets give the desired warmth. The women wear a garment which would be called at present, a one piece dress. The material from which it is made is woven from the soft wool from the buffalo's hide, or is, perhaps, made from the buffalo's hide itself. When made from woven material, these garments are dyed the most brilliant colors. The women of Piankeshaw are skilled in the choice of material to make these colors and search the bluffs to the west and south, going sometimes a long distance, to find the root or leaf or perhaps blossom that will yield the desired shade or tint. Ellsworth Park held many secrets for them in possible coloring material. The women decorate their own moccasins and do not let their leggings go plain. They are proud of their necklaces, as who would not be, when their value is an expression of the time and care it took to find and assort the clam-shells and other hard substances which comprised them. A head dress, usually, is deemed indispensable by the Piankeshaw woman. Petticoats are worn for warmth during the winter. To make these garments the nerves and tendons of deer are subjected to a process that yields good thread. The wigwams along the bluff on the North Fork were busy places when this thread was being manufactured. The deer was dressed, and the nerves and tendons carefully put aside. They were exposed to the sun twice each day until they were in a state that, by beating, they would separate into fine hairs or threads. These threads were very strong and would hold any garment together.

The women, beside making the garments and doing all the household duties, always carry the game and cultivate the soil. The remains of this cultivation was seen in the corn hills overgrown with blue grass on the fields in the northwestern part of town when first Dan Beckwith and the other early settlers were here. The women searched the fields, which now are the streets and home lots of Danville, for edible roots and herbs, berries and any vegetable growth from which to prepare food. Their wooden dishes and spoons made of buffalo hide, comprised their table service.

All along the North Fork, from the present northwestern limit of Danville to Main street, thence along the banks of the Vermilion river to the extreme limit on the east, and extending back in an irregular line a half mile or more from the bluffs of the two streams, the homes of the dwellers of Piankeshaw

are placed. They are located in reference to the numerous springs, which bubble out of the hillside. These houses are made by driving poles into the ground and drawing them together at the top, over which there is a mat thrown. This mat is made by the squaws, from flags they have gathered from marshy places near the river.

The Piankeshaws are not without weapons by which they can defend themselves when danger comes, although they are not a people who seek war. They use both the bow and arrow, and the club, yet they would rather take to their heels than to face an enemy, at any time. But they are skillful with their bows and arrows, which they tip with stones. Although on the whole, they are peaceful people, sometimes a warrior finds a wrong, either fancied or real, which must need be avenged, and he goes about through the village asking one and another to go with him for that purpose. When the time of starting comes the line of march is made. One is chosen to carry the War Budget.

This War Budget is a package containing something which belongs to each person in the party that represents some wild animal, such as a snake's skin, a buffalo's tail, a wolf's head, a mink's skin or the feathers of some extraordinary bird. This is called his corpenyomer. This package is always considered sacred, and is carried in front in the march. Under no circumstances can it ever be passed. When the party halts, the Budget is laid on the ground in front of them, and no one may pass it without orders from proper authority. The package must not be laid on a log but on the ground. While on the way to meet an enemy, no one is permitted to talk of women. When on the way to meet an enemy with the War Budget, if a four-footed animal is killed, its heart must be cut into small pieces and burned alongside the sacred charge. Care must always be taken never to step over fire, when upon such a journey, nor around it in any way other than the sun travels. When the enemy is to be attacked, each man takes his "Corpenyomer" from the Budget and ties it on his body, as has been directed by his ancestor. The man who takes the first scalp, or prisoner, carries the War Budget upon the return march. When he returns to the village he will fasten it onto his cabin where it stays for thirty or forty nights. The warriors will come and dance about it, and when the one who called the party out to the war sees fit, he will make a feast. On the occasion of this feast, the War Budget is opened and each man given his Corpenyomer. These "Corpenyomers" are prized highly and well cared for. Every month some men of the family sing religious songs all night, and leave an offering of a piece of tobacco or a kettle of victuals. This feast is partaken with much ceremony, a small piece of food is always thrown into the fire before any of it is eaten.

Should a death occur in this village a ceremony of adoption will take place by the grief stricken relatives. The nearest relatives will fast and black their faces in token of respect.

Great care is taken in training future citizens of this first village on the site of Danville. The children are given tasks calculated to develop courage and self restraint. After childhood is passed, a bath in cold water each day is required and fasting from time to time, in accordance with the strength of the individual. When he is eighteen years old, the boy goes into a long fast, with

his face blackened, under the conviction that should he eat while his face is blackened, the Great Spirit would, in some way, punish him.

The moon which shines upon the maid and her lover in the beginning of the 20th Century, as brightly shone upon the same spot when the dusky belle of a hundred odd years listened to the wooing of her fond young brave. The wedding ceremony of those of Piankeshaw was, however more simple. The parents of the youth selected the bride and presents were sent to her. If she accepted him, then her parents dressed her in her best and, procuring a suitable present for him, sent her to his cabin, as they called the wigwams. If, on the other hand, she did not like him, and refused him, the presents were sent back, and that was the end of it. Life was gay, at this village at the mouth of the North Fork, so long ago. Dances, and games were the order for the youth and the Braves.

These people were not without knowledge of the white man. A letter written by M. De Longuell, the French Commandant at Detroit, to his superior officer at Quebec in 1752, states that, prior to 1750, there were French traders established on the Vermilion; that English traders persisted in trading here in spite of the fact that their predecessors had been driven off, two years before. This letter goes on to say that Father De La Richardu, a French Catholic Missionary, had wintered here. A possible tragedy is also on record of the murder of some Frenchmen at a point which seems might have been Piankeshaw. So it is, the old story of man's life, of his loves and his hates, his efforts to higher impulses and his degradation, his pleasures and his distresses, all were here at the time of the possession of the red man, as now, when his white brother lives in the town at the mouth of the North Fork. The Piankeshaws are gone; the race has been scattered and almost destroyed; the white man dominates the Vermilion river, the town of Piankeshaw has given place to that of Danville but human nature is the same at all times and in all places, and doubtless the people of today, do not differ so much from those of yesterday, despite the changed conditions of race and mode of living.

CHAPTER IV.

GOVERNMENT OF THIS SECTION PRIOR TO 1819.

HISTORY OF VERMILION COUNTY ANTEDATES ITS ORGANIZATION—FIRST GOVERNMENT, THAT OF FRANCE—THE PROVINCES OF CANADA—OF LOUISIANA: WHERE WAS THE DIVIDING LINE?—THE SEATS OF GOVERNMENT FOR DWELLERS IN WHAT IS NOW VERMILION COUNTY—A PART OF THE BRITISH DOMAIN—THE ILLINOIS COUNTY OF VIRGINIA—SEAT OF GOVERNMENT AT KASKASKIA—THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY; SEAT OF GOVERNMENT, MARIETTE, OHIO—INDIANA TERRITORY; SEAT OF GOVERNMENT, VINCENNES—ILLINOIS TERRITORY; SEAT OF GOVERNMENT, KASKASKIA—THE COMMONWEALTH OF ILLINOIS—VERMILION COUNTY A PART OF SIX DIFFERENT COUNTIES, WITH AS MANY SEATS OF GOVERNMENT.

Authentic history of Vermilion County antedates its organization, as such, and even its exploration and settlement by white men, by a century and a half.

This is the case because this section of the Wabash Valley, although but a wilderness, and the homes and hunting grounds of the Miamis and Pottowatomie Indians, yet was a part of the great tract claimed by France, and governed by representatives of that European power. From 1682 to 1763, this section was a part of New France.

Now, New France extended from Quebec to New Orleans, and it became necessary to divide it for administrative purposes, so two provinces were made. The northern province was that of Canada, with the capital at Quebec, and the Southern province was called Louisiana, and its capital was New Orleans.

At one time, prior to 1745, the dividing line ran diagonally across what is now Vermilion County, in Illinois, thus making a part of it in one province and a part of it in the other, with the two capitals as far apart as Montreal and Fort Chartres. This division line began on the Wabash river at the mouth of the Vermilion river. It followed the course of the Vermilion river northwest, thence in the same direction to old Fort St. Louis. The site of this old fort is now known as Starved Rock, near Ottawa, in La Salle County. All south of this dividing line was the Province of Louisiana, while all north of it was the Province of Canada. The seat of government of the Canada Province was Montreal, and later, the Post of Detroit, while that of the Louisiana Province was at Fort Chartres, on the Mississippi river.

Two men, living on opposite sides of the Vermilion river (as at Danville and South Danville), at this time, would be obliged to travel many miles, the one to

the northeast and the other to the southwest to transact any legal business. This dividing line ran diagonally across Vermilion County as it is now known, cutting it into two very nearly equal parts.

Since only Indians and the occasional "Cour de Bois" were to be found in this far away part of New France, such an inconvenience was no hardship.

After the French and Indian war of 1763, New France was ceded to Great Britain, and this section, now known as Vermilion County, Illinois, became a part of the British Domain. For some fifteen years its government was vested in an organization or board, known as the "Lord's Commissioners of the Council of Trade and Plantations," or "Lords of Trade." Kaskaskia, the French town, located near the mouth of the Kaskaskia river, and not far from Fort Chartres, was the seat of this government. The British had been obliged to abandon Fort Chartres, and garrison Fort Gage, at Kaskaskia. British rule ended at the end of a decade and a half. It was during the Revolutionary war that George Rogers Clark, himself a citizen of the colony of Virginia, captured this fort and, when peace was declared between Great Britain and the Colonies, this territory was ceded to Virginia and became, for the time being, the Illinois County of Virginia.

The government which followed was by a representative called a County Lieutenant. The seat of government was retained at Kaskaskia. This did not last long. In 1809 another division was made and Illinois Territory was formed.

Illinois Territory had, as its eastern border, the Wabash river, as far as Vincennes, thence north by a straight line to Lake Michigan; its western border was the Mississippi river which was, at that time, the western border of the United States. The southern border of the Illinois Territory was the Ohio river and its northern border was the British Possession of Canada. Its seat of government was again at Kaskaskia.

This division threw this section into the Illinois Territory, with its seat of government, as it had been before, over on the Mississippi river.

Nine years later the Illinois Territory was admitted into the Union with the same eastern, southern and western boundaries, and 42 degrees, 30 minutes, as its northern boundary. This act made the section in whose government we are interested, a part of that commonwealth.

During all this time, this section was yet the possession of the redman with the exception of a small wedge which is in what is now Love Township. This wedge of land was purchased by the United States government through the efforts of William Henry Harrison the same year as that in which Illinois Territory was established, and it has always been known as the "Harrison Purchase."

The power of the Miami Nation had been broken, Piankeshaw had been devastated, the Kickapoos and Pottowatomies had driven the earlier proprietors away, yet the white man had not yet gained possession. The proud Miamis relinquished their claim to their conquerors late in the 18th Century, but it was not until after Illinois became a state, that the Pottowatomies made a treaty with the United States in which they ceded their land. A description of their land which they ceded at this time reads as follows:—"Beginning at the mouth of the Tippecanoe river and running up the same to a point twenty-five miles in a direct line from the Wabash river; thence on a line as nearly parallel to the general

course of the Wabash river as is practicable, to a point on the Vermilion river twenty-five miles from the Wabash river; thence down the Vermilion river to its mouth; thence up the Wabash river to the place of beginning." At the same time the United States agreed to purchase any just claim which the Kickapoos might have to any part of the ceded country below Pine creek.

The next year the Kickapoos, by the treaty at Edwardsville, July 18, 1819, ceded a large section of country between the Illinois and Wabash rivers, including that ceded by the Pottowatomies.

Immediately following this treaty at Edwardsville, another one was concluded at Fort Harrison, on August 30, 1819, between the United States and that particular tribe, or band who, in this treaty describe themselves as "The chiefs, warriors and the head men of the tribe of Kickapoos of the Vermilion," to the end that the United States might be enabled to fix a boundary between the claims of other Indians and these Kickapoos. The claim was further described as follows:—"Beginning at the northwest corner of the Vincennes tract, thence westerly to the boundary established by a treaty with the Piankeshaws on the 30th of December, 1805, to the dividing ridge between the waters of the embrass and the Little Wabash; thence by the said ridge to the source of the Vermilion river; thence by the said ridge to the head of Pine creek; thence by said creek to the Wabash river; thence by the said river to the mouth of the Vermilion river, and thence by the Vermilion and the boundary heretofore established, to the place of beginning."

Beginning with this year (1818) the section, which is now Vermilion County, became a county of the state of Illinois. This form of government lasted four years; then came the readjustment at the end of the Revolutionary war. Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York all laid claim to parts of the territory saved from the British by Clark, which lay northwest of the Ohio river, and due concessions had to be made by these states as well as by Virginia, before congress could provide for the government of the Northwest Territory. In 1787, an ordinance was passed Congress which made this provision. The seat of government of the Northwest Territory was located at Marietta, Ohio.

General Arthur St. Clair was appointed governor of the Northwest Territory. The section now included in Vermilion County remained a part of the Northwestern Territory for fourteen years. At the end of that time the Ohio Territory was formed, which took a part of this Northwest Territory leaving that part which now is known as the states of Indiana, Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin, and this was called the Indiana Territory. General William Henry Harrison was appointed governor, and the seat of government was located at Vincennes, and this section had its capital in what is now the state of Indiana.

Since Illinois became a commonwealth that year, Vermilion County, with no longer any power vested in the Indians, although they had not yet left this section, became a legally bound territory, subject to laws and regulations of the state. The resources were many and varied. The two great commodities so much in demand, salt and furs, were to be found in plenty inside its boundary. The Vermilion Salines were well known and yielded enough salt to supply the region at a fair price. After having had the many and various forms of government, while as yet this section was not known, as it is now, to be Vermilion

County, but was yet a small part of Clark County, it was under the control of the laws of the state, and, as such, in 1819, had fixed obligations to the same government that it has now.

After 1790, this section had been a part of, first, Knox County of the Northwest Territory, then partly Knox and partly St. Clair County of the Indiana Territory, then St. Clair, Madison, Edwards, and Crawford Counties of the Illinois Territory; then a part of Clark County during the first two years of statehood of Illinois, to at last become what it is now, Vermilion County.

CHAPTER V.

EXPLORING THE VERMILION RIVER FOR SALT.

INDIAN TREATIES DETERMINE THE EXPLORATION OF THE VERMILION RIVER FOR SALT—SALT THE DEMAND OF THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY—JOSEPH BARRON'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE SALT SPRINGS ON THE VERMILION—THE NORTH ARM PRAIRIE THE NEAREST INHABITED SPOT—SUPPOSED ROUTE OF THE FIRST EXPLORING PARTY—KNOWN ROUTE OF SECOND EXPLORING PARTY.

The hostile attitude of the Indians toward the white man was a reason that kept the section now known as Vermilion County from being settled until almost a score of years after the beginning of the 19th Century.

Until 1819, when the two important treaties were made which ended the power of the red man in eastern Illinois, this hostility was carried to such lengths that it was impossible for settlement to be made, and indeed no explorations were attempted. This, in spite of the fact that the great demand of the times was salt, and there was every reason to believe that it could be found on the Vermilion river.

This territory was a vast unknown region excepting to the Indian, and through him to the trader and woodsman. One man in particular, had for eighteen years known of the existence of salt in this region, but had made no haste to take advantage of this knowledge without doubt being kept from doing so on account of the hostility of the redman. This was Joseph Barron, the man who was for years the interpreter for Governor, afterward General and at last President Harrison. It has been recorded of Joseph Barron that he could understand and speak all the dialects used by the Indians of the Wabash Valley. He had acquaintance with all those who hunted in or claimed the lands watered by the Wabash river and all its tributaries. He had learned from the Indians of a place on the Vermilion river where there were valuable salt springs, and had even visited the place in company with them, but had let nearly a score of years pass since that visit. His delay of eighteen years in securing these springs tells the condition of the attitude of the Indians to the white man more forcefully than could many words.

The fact of the certainty of valuable salt springs on the Vermilion may have been a strong reason for the treaties made with the Pottowatomies, and the Kickapoos, the one in July, 1819, and the other in August, of the same year. However that might have been, the treaty was hardly concluded at Fort Harrison when Joseph Barron organized an expedition to explore the Vermilion river

in search of salt. This expedition was planned quietly, and only a few people were aware of its arrangement. Barron and his friends were at Fort Harrison and that was their starting point. He knew the direction in which these springs were, and the way was neither a long nor a dangerous one.

The Indians had made their treaties and the wild beasts were not so numerous that they would make a well armed man fearful. Barron knew the way, and each man chosen to go with him was fearless and enured to hardships.

There is no record of the route chosen, and there is no certainty that they went by water; but it is reasonable to assume that, being at Fort Harrison, they came in canoes up the Wabash river to the mouth of the Vermilion river, thence up that stream to the Salt Fork, and found the salt springs without trouble.

There arose a necessity sometime later for an affidavit covering the time of this expedition, and the personnel of this party, and the exact date of their arrival at the springs so that there can be no doubt on any of these points. This record is filed in the archives at Springfield. This party consisted of four white men and as many Shawnee Indians. Two of these men were Frenchmen, possibly Indian traders who shared the knowledge of the existence of the salt springs with Barron. Their names were Lambert Bona and Zachariah Shecott, as the justice of the peace spelled it. This spelling doubtless should be Cicott. The other man beside Barron was named Truman Blackman, and was an unfortunate choice of Barron's.

Assuming that the route chosen was by water, it is not a difficult thing to form the picture of this exploring expedition into the unknown region in which are now the familiar homes of the dwellers in Vermilion County. These four white men, together with the four Indians, began the ascent of the Wabash river in canoes. The Indians had been hired by Barron to go "with him to show him minerals and salt springs, etc., but the white men were interested in the exploration to find what they did not already know. They paddled their canoes up the Wabash river to the mouth of the Vermilion river through a country which was more or less familiar to all.

Barron, and probably the Frenchmen, had all passed that way before, and, for that matter, had some knowledge of the Vermilion river, but there is no reason to think that Truman Blackman had any idea of the salt springs or any thing else on the unexplored Vermilion. These canoes paddled up the Wabash river to the mouth of the Vermilion, and the white men found themselves in the country of the redman now shorn of his power. The old Kickapoo village at the mouth of the Vermilion river was forsaken, and the very trees and stones spoke desertion. Passing that, these explorers paddled up the river between densely wooded banks. The now highly valued farm lands and villages were at that time vast stretches of unbroken prairies beyond banks of the stream whose shallow waters they were paddling. All was silence, save the cry of the wild beast or the call of some bird to its mate. On they went, dipping paddles into the placid waters which had seldom reflected the image of a white man. Up the course of the river they continued their way, passing the site of present-day Danville. The old Indian village of Piankeshaw had completely disappeared; the high bluffs to the south were densely covered with trees and wild vines; the call of the quail, the flash of the goldenrod, and purple aster in the distance, the

hazy sunlight of the Indian summer day, and the dipping of paddles in the water, filled the air, which had echoed the Indian war-whoop, and was to be filled with the sound of the traffic of today.

Wild turkeys were stalking about and wild waterfowl were at the edge of the river; wild beasts were at the bank of the North Fork quenching their thirst; but all these attracted little interest or attention of the men as they paddled past its mouth, bent upon the discovery of the much desired salt springs which they knew were not very far distant. No dust, no smoke, no sound of building suggested the city which a half hundred years later would skirt its banks. This densely wooded tract might have held their interest as a haunt of fur-bearing animals, but for the more to be desired hope of wealth in the Salines beyond.

This was a time when interest in the finding of salt was particularly keen, because of the fact that the Illinois legislature had but recently passed a bill making a liberal law to encourage the discovery and development of saline water. By the terms of this law, any person who made such a discovery had the exclusive right to manufacture salt within a given time and area. These explorers did not stop until their destination was reached. Passing up the big Vermilion after they had passed the deserted Indian villages at the mouth of the North Fork, the long past Piankeshaw, they proceeded through a less wide channel to the Kickapoo village once prosperous and active, now destroyed by the hand of the white man, situated at the confluence of the Middle Fork and Salt Fork where they formed the Vermilion.

Here all was desolation. Unlike the old Piankeshaw, this village had been so recently the home of a living people that evidences of severed ties were yet visible. The once cultivated corn field was yet partially enclosed with a tumbled down fence. Weeds rankled where formerly the Indian squaw had hoed her corn and squashes. All was desolate. All the land marks were found that Barron remembered, and a mile and a half further the springs, themselves, were found as he expected. In his affidavit he locates these springs as situated on the Big Vermilion river, on the north side, about one and a half miles above the old Kickapoo town, and about fifteen or eighteen miles from the Big Wabash River. This same affidavit gives the 22nd day of September, 1819, as the day he reached these salt springs. Having discovered the source of saline water, these men returned to Fort Harrison.

In reality it was these men who discovered this section of country and it is Joseph Barron to whom the people of this territory are indebted for the discovery. It was only through the treachery of one of his companions that Barron was kept from becoming the first settler as well.

Truman Blackman betrayed his leader in this manner: After his return to Fort Harrison, he organized a party without the knowledge or sanction of Barron, and went back to take possession and claim the discovery of these springs. The party thus formed comprised Truman Blackman, his brother, Remember Blackman, George Beckwith, Seymour Treat, Peter Allen, Francis Whitcomb and probably Dan Beckwith. At least Dan Beckwith was one of the party immediately after, and it is probable that he went with them. The two Beckwiths did not start with the others from Fort Harrison, but joined them on the way at Jonathan Mayo's on the North Arm prairie where they were living.

There is no question which route this second party took, for they went by land and probably were the first white men, unless perhaps traders, who explored the land route through this country.

Blackman's party crossed the Wabash river at the mouth of Otter Creek and went in a northwest course through the timber and prairies, keeping the direction with a small pocket compass, until they arrived at a stream supposed to be the Big Vermillion, about twenty-five miles, they inferred, from the Wabash river. Here they camped on October 31st, 1819. Captain Blackman pointed out a smooth spot of low grass ground from twenty to thirty rods across where he said there was salt water. Further investigation proved he was correct, and once more the Vermilion Salines were discovered.

CHAPTER VI.

THE VERMILION SALINES.

SALT WAS ANXIOUSLY SOUGHT BY EARLY EXPLORERS—THE SALINES OF SOUTHERN ILLINOIS—SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN WORKED BY A PREHISTORIC PEOPLE—JOSEPH BARRON, FOR MANY YEARS GOVERNOR HARRISON'S INTERPRETER, VISITED THE VERMILION SALINES IN 1801—AGAIN AT THE SAME PLACE IN 1819 WITH A PARTY TO EXPLORE IT TO AFTERWARD WORK THE SPRINGS—SECOND EXPEDITION TO THE SPRINGS ORGANIZED WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF BARRON—LITTLE EVIDENCE OF ANY PREVIOUS ATTEMPT TO WORK THE SPRINGS TO PROFIT—BLACKMAN TOOK LEASE IN HIS OWN NAME—DIFFERENCES AMONG CONFLICTING CLAIMANTS SETTLED IN 1822—JOHN W. VANCE LEASED THE SALINES IN 1824 AND WORKED THEM TO PROFIT—EVIDENCES OF EARLY USE OF SALINES.

The discovery of salt in Southern Illinois was a great factor in attracting immigration to the territory, in the beginning of the 19th Century. The scarcity of that commodity at this time is evidenced in a book published in 1796, where the statement is made that "there was no salt to be had west of the mountains, excepting at Marietta, and what is for sale here is brought over the mountains, on pack horses, and is sold for sixteen cents a pound."

The earliest known settlement on the Saline river in Southern Illinois, was made in 1800, or at latest date, in 1802. They found abundant evidence of some one having made salt before their coming, but who, and at what time, was more difficult to determine. Many have been inclined to the theory that salt was manufactured in southern Illinois by a people whose history antedates that of the tribes who inhabited this country at the coming of the Europeans. As evidence of this idea, the pottery found by the early settler could be explained in no more satisfactory way than to assume it had been used in this work.

This pottery has the appearance of having been moulded in a basket, or frame work, which has left its impression on the outside of the article. Some are inclined to the belief however, that the pottery was moulded on the outside of a mold, and that the impressions were made by wrapping coarse cloth around the vessels as they were lifted off the mold. This same pottery, or salt pans, was found in abundance both in and around the salt works of Illinois and Missouri, near St. Genevieve. There is a tradition that the salt springs, wells and licks, on the Saline river in Gallatin county, were operated by the Indians and French for many years previous to the coming of the English about 1800. Certain it is that the French understood the salt making process; and the Indians no doubt, knew

where the springs and licks were. An Englishman writing to the Earl of Hillsboro in 1770, in speaking of the region around the mouth of the Wabash and Saline rivers, mentioned the abundance of salt springs in that region. In another description of the region of the Wabash the writer says: "The Wabash abounds with salt springs, and any quantity of salt may be made from them in a manner now done in the Illinois country." This was in 1778, twenty-two years before the coming of the English to these salt works.

The earliest reference in the west to salt making to be found in state papers is in the law of May 18, 1796. In an act of this date it is made the duty of the surveyors, working for the United States and making surveys in the territory northwest of the Ohio river, "to observe closely for mines, salt, salt springs and salt licks and mill seats."

In the winter of 1799 and 1800, Wm. Henry Harrison was the delegate in Congress from the territory of the northwest. In his report Mr. Harrison says: "Upon inquiry we find that salt springs and salt licks are operated by individuals, and timber is being wasted. Therefore we recommend that salt springs and salt licks, property of the United States, in the territory northwest of the Ohio, ought to be leased for a term of years." No definite action was taken upon this by Congress. Upon March 3, 1803, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to lease the salt springs and licks for the benefit of the government. It was in June of this same year that Harrison made the treaty at Fort Wayne, whereby he made the purchase of land, a portion of which is in what is now Vermilion County, known as the "Harrison Purchase." This was two years after Joseph Barron, Harrison's interpreter, visited the Vermilion Salines.

That same summer Governor Harrison leased the Southern Salines to a Captain Bell, of Lexington, Kentucky. By an act of Congress March 26, 1804, all salt springs, wells and licks, with the necessary land adjacent thereto, were reserved from sale as the property of the United States. The Territorial Governor was authorized to lease these salt wells and springs, to the best advantage of the government. During all this time the salt to be found on the Vermilion was not accessible because of the hostility of the Indians who lived along the banks. The Kickapoos had a large village near where the wells were afterwards dug. The treaty of August, 1819, however, extinguished the Indian titles to these lands, and the search for salt was begun.

That the presence of salt was known at that time is beyond question, because of an affidavit made by Joseph Barron to the effect that he was, himself, at the "Vermilion Salines" as early as the year 1801.

But there is another and even better proof of the fact that the springs were known to be found in a letter written by Shadrach Bond, who was governor of the state of Illinois at that time. The letter was written to Wm. H. Crawford and reads as follows:

KASKASKIA, April 3, 1819.

To the Hon. Wm. H. Crawford,

SIR:—It is ascertained that there are valuable Salt Springs upon sections 22 and 23 in township 2, N. of R. 7 E. of the 3rd, principal meridian in this state and (since the titles, for all Salt Springs together with land reserved for the use of the same within this state have been granted to the state), I have the honor

to request that the usual quantity of land may be reserved for the use of the springs upon the afore mentioned sections and as contiguous thereto as may be.

I have the honor, etc.

SHADRACH BOND.

P. S. At the request of Judge Towle I send the enclosed certificate. This letter which, it will be noticed bears date of *April 3, 1819*, shows knowledge of the salt springs antedating the exploration of the Vermilion river by Barron and his company when they reached the springs *September 22, 1819*.

Barron's long connection with General Harrison was such, that had any knowledge of the springs been had, it would have been his as well. Barron was Harrison's interpreter and was well versed in all the dialects spoken by the Indian tribes who lived, hunted or claimed to own the lands watered by the Wabash river and the streams flowing into it.

The extreme hostility of these Indians can be understood in no way better than by the fact that, in spite of the interest shown by General Harrison in other salt springs, these on the Vermilion were left alone. The positive previous knowledge of these springs is proven by the above quoted letter and again by the fact that it was less than a month after the treaty was made that Mr. Barron was again on the spot prepared to locate them. He took with him three white men and two Shawnee Indians whom he (Barron) had hired to show him minerals, etc. Whether he took the white men to help him, or was going to share the profits of the expedition, is a little uncertain from the text of the affidavit on record. This affidavit, after making oath of his going to the salines in 1801, goes on to state that he was again at the same "salt spring situated on the Big Vermilion river, on the north side, about one and a half miles above the old Kickapoo town, and about fifteen or eighteen miles from the Big Wabash river, in the county of Clark, state of Illinois, on the 22d day of September, 1819, in company with Lambert Bona, Zachariah Cicott, and Truman Blackman, together with four Shawnee Indians whom I had hired to go with me and show me the minerals, salt springs, etc.

This party duly located the springs and returned to Fort Harrison that Barron might make the necessary record of the discovery. A recent law of Illinois gave the discoverer of salines the right to manufacture salt within a given area. While Barron was perfecting his arrangements, Captain Blackman organized another party to go on an expedition to these springs and take the credit of the discovery already made. This expedition was kept a secret, from all but the ones interested. Seymour Treat, Peter Allen, Francis Whitcomb, and Captain Blackman's brother, Remember, comprised the party when they left Fort Harrison, but the two Beckwith brothers, Dan and George joined them at the North Arm Prairie, where they were living with Jonathan Mayo. It is thought that these five men crossed the Wabash at the mouth of Otter Creek, in the latter part of October and struck out in a northwest course through the timber and prairies keeping the direction with a small pocket compass.

When they came to a stream, supposed to be the Big Vermilion, they camped. This was October 31, 1819. They inferred they were about 25 miles from the Wabash river. Here Captain Blackman pointed out a smooth spot of low ground about twenty to thirty rods across, where he said there was salt

water. There was no vegetation growing there and little trace of people ever having used the water. Peter Allen in his affidavit testified that there were "some few places where the Indians had sunk curbs of bark into the soil for the purpose of procuring salt water." Two or three of the men were set to work with spades to dig in the soil and, by going two or three feet into the saturated ground, saline water was procured. This water was boiled down in a kettle they had brought with them for the purpose, and they found that about two gallons of water made four ounces of good clear salt. An experimental well was dug a few rods from the former, and the water was found to contain a larger per cent of salt. The agreement was made that Blackman should recognize Treat, Whitcomb and the Beckwiths as partners in the discovery of the salt springs and each should pay his portion of the expenses. Whitcomb and Beckwith were left in charge so that no one could come and claim possession. Blackman had learned a lesson from his own treachery of Barron. These men were to go on in the manufacture of salt while the others returned to Fort Harrison to procure tools and provisions as well as to move Treats' family.

In the latter part of November, Treat returned, coming up the Wabash and Vermilion rivers in a pirogue, with tools, provision and his wife and children. The men were good axe-men and a cabin was soon built so as to give Treat's family needed shelter. While the settlement was thus made, the development of the salt works was not so easily accomplished. Blackman had proved as dishonorable in the case of the second party as he had toward Barron.

Notwithstanding the promise to include the others in the profits of the discovery of the salt springs (which was after all not theirs, but Barrons) Blackman took the lease or permit to manufacture salt in his own name. Complaint was entered by the other men as well as by Mr. Barron, and some three years passed before the difficulty was adjusted. Another letter from Governor Bond gives one reason, at least, for the delay.

To J. B. Thomas, N. Edwards, and D. P. Cook:

KASKASKIA, Dec. 20, 1819.

On the 3d of April last I wrote the Secretary of the Treasury that Salines had been discovered upon sections 22 and 23 in township No. 2 N. Range No. 7 East of the principal meridian and requested that the usual reservations of land for use of the same might be made. I have not received the answer of the Secretary. Will you have the goodness to communicate with him on the subject and let me know the determination of the Government. A valuable salt spring has been discovered upon the Vermilion river in the eastern part of the state and I have received several applications to lease it. The lands about have not been surveyed and I can not lease until some reservation of land from public sale shall be made for its use. Will it not be possible to obtain a reservation before the surveys are made? Please to give me an early answer.

I have the honor to be Gent. Yrs. &c.,

SHADRACH BOND.

The gentlemen addressed in this letter were representing Illinois in Congress at that time. The examination of these salines was not made until the following year, however. It was August 28, 1822, before the President approved the nec-

essary reservation, and even then the land could not be leased because of the fact that it was found to be on a section 16, all of such number being set apart for school lands. This complication called for the following letter from Gov. Coles to the members of Congress.

To N. Edwards, J. B. Thomas and D. B. Cook:

Gentlemen.—In the year 1819 a saline was discovered on the Vermilion river in this state, which was examined the ensuing year in conformity to the instructions received from the commissioner of the General Land Office, by Col. Th. Cox, the Register of the Land Office at this place who reported that "from all appearances there was little reason to doubt of its being saline of more than ordinary value," and recommended that the Govt. should reserve from sale and appropriate for the use of the Saline a Tract of Land which "should extend two miles on each side of the creek, & about ten miles in length, extending about six miles below Blackman's wells." Since Col. Cox made his examination and report, the lands in that district of country have been surveyed and the Salines have been found to be in section *sixteen*, in township 19, N. of Range 12 W. of the principal meridian. In a letter addressed by Mr. Meigs to Govr. Bond dated August 28, 1822, he says: "The President of the U. S. has approved of the reservation suggested by Th. Cox who was appointed to examine those salines in 1820," and adds that "Mr. Kitchell, the Register of the Land Office at Palestine, has been requested to designate, according to the best of his Judgment the lands alluded to in Mr. Cox's report by section, Township & Range and to exempt them for sale." This Mr. Kitchell informs me he has done but has suggested a small alteration in the reservation as proposed by Mr. Cox. In the letter above referred to Mr. Meigs says "as Section on No. 16 in township 19 N. of Range No. 12 W. of the section principal Mn. is covered by a salt spring I would suggest that the Secretary of the Treasury is at present absent from the city, that you (Gov. Bond) make a selection of a section in the same township, for the purpose of education and report the same, to the Register of the Land Office at Palestine who will reserve the same from sale until the decision of the Secretary of the Treasury shall have been obtained."

In accordance with this suggestion Gov. Bond authorized Mr. Kitchell, the Register of the Land Office at Palestine to select another section in lieu of section 16, who selected and reserved from sale section No. 28 of the same township for the purpose of education.

With a knowledge of these facts, but without knowing whether the proper sanction had been given to the exchange of the 16 section or of a more formal approbation of the President to the reservation, as designated by Mr. Kitchell, I have been induced by the earnest solicitation of the parties claiming to have discovered the Saline who have been applying for a lease the last three years, to lease it (viz: the West half of section 16, and the East half of Section 17) to them for the term of four years under the provision of act entitled "An act to encourage the discovery of salt water."

I have thought proper to state these facts for your information & to enable you to have perfected the title of the State to the Reservation in question and

the proper sanction given to the exchange of the 16th section; and I am the more particular in calling your attention to them as doubts are entertained by some whether Legislative provisions may not be required in one or possibly both cases.

Permit me also to call your attention to the fact that proper titles have not been received for the grants of Land which the Federal Govt. has made to this State for the use of Salines & for the location of its seat of Govt. By having Patents made out & forwarded to this office you will render us acceptable service to this State and a particular favor on your fellow citizen.

EDWARD COLES.

That Gov. Coles was a man who would not work a hardship to any one is shown by the way he treated this complicated matter. A selection from a letter written by him dated May 11, 1823, will explain the whole thing. This letter was written to W. H. Crawford, the Secretary of the Treasury, and after reference to the letter written him by Gov. Bond and the suggestion of Mr. Kitchell in selecting another section to take the place of the one covered by the salines yet was set apart as school land, all of which he says, "I presume has been reported to you," Gov. Coles goes on to say: "The object of this letter is, to obtain from the Govt. the express designation and formal reservation of lands for the Vermilion Saline, and its consent to the exchange of the 16 section and to the selection which has been made of section 28 in the same township for the purposes of education.

"Attention to this subject has become the more necessary as relying on the Government fulfilling the declarations and suggestions of Mr. Meigs, *I was induced in December last to yield to the importunities of the persons who claim to have made the discovery of the Salines*, and who had been for several years waiting impatiently for the Lands to be surveyed (during which time some of them had been making salt in a small way), to grant them a lease for four years, on condition of the working and improving the saline."

During this interim of waiting for a lease to be given several wells were sunk at the salt works. Whitcomb and Beckwith, together sunk one to the depth of fifty feet, drilling mostly through solid rock and at their own expense. The salt was excellent in quality, purity and strength. Great expectation arose regarding these salt works in the Wabash valley. It was at this time in the infancy of the salt works that the letter written Gov. Bond by James B. McCall was sent and at the time that nothing seemed possible to be done to make a lease of the springs. He wrote: "The people of the eastern section of your state are very anxious that the manufacture of salt might be gone into. Appearances at the Vermilion Salines justify the belief that salt may be made north of this sufficient for the consumption of all the settlers on the Wabash, and much below the present prices. Nearly all the salt consumed above the mouth of the Wabash is furnished by Kentucky, and the transportation so far up the stream materially enhances the price, and in the present undeveloped state of the country as to money, prevents a majority of the farmers from procuring the quantity of this necessary article that their stock, &c., requires."

This letter was written by Mr. McCall from Vincennes in a futile effort to have the Salines developed. The date was June, 1820, six months after Gov. Bond wrote his second letter to the members of Congress in which he expressed an anxiety to know the determination of the Govt. upon the subject of these Salines. In this letter he asks: "Has the Gov. established any general rules upon these subjects? What evidence will be required of the discovery of a salt spring? An early answer as will suit your convenience will be thankfully received."

Continuing the correspondence between Gov. Coles and W. H. Crawford, Secretary of the U. S. there is a letter, a part of which refers to this subject and is as follows:

EDWARDSVILLE, Illinois, July 19, 1823.

Sir—I had the honor to receive by the last Mail your letter of the 12 Ult., giving the sanction of the President of the U. S. to the reservation made by J. Kitchell of the forty sections of land for the Vermilion Salines and approving the substitution of section 28 in township 19 N. of range 12 W. (you state 10 W., but this I presume must be a mistake) for the purpose of education, in lieu of the 16 section in the same township, on which the Vermilion salt springs are situated. I am with great Respect and esteem yours,

EDWARD COLES.

The following Spring the Salt works were leased to John W. Vance and then, for the first time, they were worked to their full power. Mr. Vance brought twenty-four large kettles from Louisville, in a bateau, down the Ohio to the mouth of the Wabash and thence up that stream to the Vermilion as far as the mouth of Stony Creek about four miles southeast of Danville. The water was low and the channel was obstructed by a sand bar at the mouth of the creek, so the boat was abandoned and the kettles were hauled by ox teams to their designation. The capacity of the springs soon justified the increase of the number of the kettles to eighty, each holding 140 gallons. A furnace was built of stone at the bench of the hill near the wells, and these kettles were set in it in a double row. It took 100 gallons of water from the wells to make a bushel of salt. From 60 to 80 bushels were a good week's run. The state only kept the salt springs until 1829 when in accordance with the following instructions the land was declared for sale. This letter from Gov. Reynolds tells its own story:

To Amos Williams and William Reed.

Gentlemen:—You are by these presents, required to proceed in conformity to the provisions of "an act providing for the sale of the Vermilion Saline reserve, and appropriating the avails thereof," approved January 19, 1829, to advertise the said Saline lands, and to take such other steps as may be necessary to the full and complete execution of the duties imposed on the Register and Receiver by the said recited act.

Respectfully yours,
JOHN REYNOLDS.

The use to which the proceeds from the sale of the Vermilion Salines was put is stated in another letter written the governor of Indiana, dated Dec. 29, 1832.

After reciting the joint resolution of the general assembly of Illinois in regard to the improvement of the Wabash river he goes on to say: "Some years since the legislature being well satisfied of the importance of the improvement of the navigation of this river, appropriated the money arising from the sale of the first ten thousand acres of the Vermilion Saline lands. This sum amounts to \$11,985.16, and is now ready to be applied on that object for which it was appropriated." He goes on to urge Indiana to contribute a sum equal to that, etc.

Although the Salines passed out of the ownership of the state in 1829, the salt works were an industry for many years afterward. The wells were abandoned and the works closed between 1848 and 1850. G. W. Wolfe, of Catlin, is the only living man who worked in them. When a boy of 18 his brother Isaac operated a well for two years. The young man pumped water for 25 cents per day and boarded himself. The stock of the well was made from hickory tree, through which a hole had been bored. It stood 25 ft. above ground and the pumper stood on a high elevation and pumped water into a huge trough that carried it over the kettles quite a distance away. Three hundred strokes of the big heavy handle were considered one man's task before he was permitted to rest, day in and day out. The most salt that could be made at that time was seven bushels per day and the price had been reduced to 50 cts. per bu. At this rate there was not profit enough in the works to have it worth while to keep them up. When the springs were first opened the brine yielded 1 bu. of salt to 170 gallons of water and made 40 to 50 bu. of salt per week. Later a cavity of 18 in. was found from which flowed a much stronger brine 100 gallons of which yielded a bu. of salt. The production became 120 bushels per week.

The salt sold readily at the salt works for from \$1.25 to \$1.50 per bushel. Much of it was taken down the river in pirogues to supply the country there. A great deal of it was taken away in wagons and much of it was taken on horseback in sacks by people who were too poor to own a team.

People came from as far as the settlements at Buffalo, Elkhart Grove, the Sangamon and Illinois rivers and from the neighborhood of Rockville and Rose-dale Indiana. This prosperity continued until the discovery of great quantities of brine upon the Kanawha river and the completion of a government pier at the mouth of the Chicago Creek, making a practical harbor, where vessels could safely enter, made competition which could not be met at the Vermilion Salines. The works were finally abandoned, the buildings being vacant, were destroyed, and, at last, the very existence of this, at one time most important industry of eastern Illinois, is forgotten and by many can not be located. The settlement about the old salt works was long ago completely obscured, and now it is almost impossible to exactly locate the old wells themselves, without an appeal to the few residents of the county who had some one of the past generation tell about it, so completely has the change been made. Following the direction given by one who yet knows the location of these wells, and going a half mile west of the crossing of the Middle Fork, into the bottom, near the north bank of the Salt Fork, between the cultivated fields and the river, there is nothing remaining to show where this once great industry was located. All trace has been effaced, and, strange to say, this is the work of the great rival industry—the coal operations. Vegetation covers this spot where the wild animals came to get the

necessary saline matter for their health; where the Indians and the French traders who came to them for their furs long before the white man came for the salt; where the white man sought wealth for himself and convenience for others. The Indians who were here when Major Vance came told him that the French traders and the Indians made salt at these springs for at least seventy or eighty years before they were developed by the Americans; and they told him, they "had no recollection of the time, it was so long ago, that our people commenced making salt here." Lost is every sign of the well-worn trail of the buffalo and other wild animals which were at the coming of the white man found converging at this brakish ooze from many directions. Even the testimony of its having been the resort of an abundance of game, by the quantity of broken arrow heads to be found in the locality for a half hundred years after Major Vance came, is no longer to be found. Grain is reaped on the spot where the buffalo and wild fowl roamed to satisfy their desire for salt; the farmer sells the produce of the soil from the land which yielded the salt manufacturer his wealth, and even the memory of Mother Bloss "who was the last to cling to the produce of the salt works," is dim at best in the minds of the people who pass this historic spot.

Had it not been for the finding of salt on the Vermilion River, the history of Vermilion County would have differed greatly.

It was salt and furs that prompted the settlement of this section. Any other river would have offered the furs, but at that time the salt was worth more than any other thing. It was worth more than any precious metal and of itself, induced settlement of this region as nothing else could have done. The fur bearing animals along the banks of the streams brought the trader; these in turn were driven away by the white man seeking salt and disappeared; the salt attracted the early settler and drove away the trader; this industry yielded all trace of its being to the later means of wealth in the region when the coal interests obliterated all signs of the former source of wealth.

Surely the way of life comes by abandonment.

CHAPTER VII.

UNITED STATES LAND SURVEYS.

PLAN OF SURVEY OF THE EXTENSIVE TERRITORIES OF THE UNITED STATES—THE “HARRISON PURCHASE”—THE LATER SURVEY.

The system which governs the survey of the territories of the United States is a peculiar one. It is based upon a plan which makes a division of the land into squares of uniform size, so arranged that any tract of 160 acres, or a “quarter section,” may have its distinct designation and be readily found upon the map, or recognized upon the ground by the marks the surveyors leave. Appleton’s American Encyclopedia describes this plan clearly and concisely as follows:

Each great survey is based upon a meridian line run due north and south by astronomical measurements, the whole extent of the survey in these directions, and upon a “standard parallel” or base line, running east and west, similarly established with great accuracy. Parallels to these lines are run every six miles, usually with the solar compass corrected by frequent celestial observations, and thus, as nearly as the figure of the earth admits, the surface is divided into squares of six miles north and south and the same east and west, each one containing thirty-six square miles. The territory is further divided into sections by meridians and parallels run at every mile; while the half mile is marked on these lines by setting what is called a “quarter post,” the points are established for the subdivisions into quartersections.

The squares of thirty-six square miles are termed townships, often contracted into “towns;” and each line of them east and west is numbered either N. or S. from the base line, and each line of them N. and S. is termed a range, and either numbered E. or W. from the meridian. The N. and S. lines bordering the townships are known as range lines, and the E. and W. lines as township lines. Each survey is designated by the meridian upon which it is based, and of these principal meridians there are six designated by numbers, and eighteen by special names. The first meridian adopted for these surveys was the boundary line between Ohio and Indiana; the second through Indiana on the meridian of 86 degrees 28 minutes, west from Greenwich; the third through Illinois, beginning at the mouth of the Ohio river; the fourth north from the mouth of the Illinois river; the fifth north from the river Arkansas; the sixth on the 40th parallel of longitude.

After a township is determined the sections of it are numbered beginning with the northeast corner, running thence across and back until the 36th is reached in the southeast corner.

Because of the conquest of the Northwestern Territory by George Rogers Clark, and the addition of this land north and west of the Ohio river to the United States by surrender of her rights on the part of the commonwealth of Virginia, there remained but satisfactory treaties to be made with the Indians to open the country to the use of the white settler.

William Henry Harrison was appointed governor of the territory of Indiana at the time of its organization, in 1800, and not only that but he was made general Indian agent for that territory which extended to the Mississippi river on the west, and to the line of the state of Ohio on the east. This territory held the most numerous and most populous Indian tribes west of the Mississippi river.

William Henry Harrison served his country in many and various ways, and at last was given the highest honor the nation can confer upon any one yet nowhere did he render greater service than in the official dealings he had as superintendent of Indian affairs. He extinguished the title of the Indians to a greater part of the territory in Indiana and Illinois and in all his dealings with them his conduct was marked by a kindness and fair dealing which won him their confidence and esteem. His correspondence, both official and private, well shows that he had a tender regard for, and understanding of, the unfortunate race and a desire to protect their rights against the designs of the unscrupulous white man. At the same time he was as anxious to shield the white man from the aggressions of the Indian. It is said that Governor Harrison, while in this official capacity, was acquainted with almost every prominent chief of the many tribes within his jurisdiction, and by his tact and honest dealing he attracted many of the leading savages to bonds of closest friendship.

It was during his term as superintendent of Indian affairs that he was instrumental in securing the treaty by which the coveted strip of land, now known as the Harrison Purchase, was ceded to the United States. This land, a portion of which lies within the boundary of what is now Vermilion County, was long coveted by Harrison, but it was not until the treaty held at Fort Wayne, September 30th, 1809, that it was obtained. This land was run out in 1810, but, because of the trouble with the Indians at that time, nothing more was done then.

This preliminary survey was made by John McDonald, of Vincennes, who was probably the first man who ever set a surveyor's compass thus far up the Wabash. Events quickly followed which led to the battle of Tippecanoe and the war of 1812, during all of which time the enmity of the savages kept the settlements of southern Illinois and Indiana in constant peril and held back immigration. After the close of the war the Harrison Purchase was surveyed and the hardy pioneer took possession.

This, however, opened up but a small portion of what is now Vermilion County. It was not until the treaty of 1819, made at Edwardsville, Illinois, on the thirtieth day of July, between the United States and the Kickapoo Indians, that the territory therein described of which Vermilion County is a part, was surveyed and opened to the occupancy of the white man.

The territory ceded at this time was bounded as follows:—Beginning at the northwest corner of the Vincennes tract (about twenty miles northwest of Vincennes), thence northeasterly to the dividing line between the states of Indiana and Illinois, thence along said line to the Kankakee river; thence with said river to the Illinois river; thence down the latter to the mouth; thence with a direct line to the northwest corner of the Vincennes tract, the place of beginning. The language of his treaty recites that, "said Kickapoo tribe claims a large portion by descent from their ancestors, and the balance by conquest from the Illinois nation and undisputed possession for more than half a century."

This new territory was duly surveyed and became the undisputed property of the white man. When this survey was made the fact was discovered that there was a discrepancy between it and the survey of the Harrison Purchase, of three-quarters of a mile. Because of this fact, there is a dip of that extent in the lower part of not only this county but of those south as far as the territory of the Purchase goes.

THE HARRISON PURCHASE.

Any map of Vermilion county shows an odd extension of irregular shape on the south side, very near to the eastern border. This extension looks as though a wedge-shaped piece of land had been attempted to have been driven into the county, and did not get entirely in. Following the lines marking the east and west boundaries of this wedge, they are found to meet at a little east of Ridge Farm. The area included in this boundary is that part of the Harrison Purchase which falls within Vermilion County. When William Henry Harrison, who was at that time the Superintendent of Indian affairs of the Indiana Territory, had arranged the purchase of the land he so much desired for the United States and had concluded the treaty with the Delawares, the Kickapoos, the Pottowatomies, the Miamis and the Eel River Indians, at Fort Wayne, September 30, 1809, he came back to locate the new possession. He and the selected Indians met at a certain rock in a grove a little to the east of what is now Ridge Farm. Knowing nothing of the use of the compass, the Indians stipulated that the line bounding the east of the tract should run in the direction of the sun at ten o'clock in the morning, and that the western boundary line should run in the direction of the sun at one o'clock in the afternoon. The agreement was that such territory as fell within the boundary of the extent of a man's riding in two days and a half, would be included in this purchase. All the requirements were met and, it is said, that on the return trip, the grove from which the riders started was their pilot back. It was the only grove of trees in that part of the country and it safely piloted them back, and was for that reason called Pilot Grove.

The west line of this tract of land extends south and west, passing through Marshall, the east line crosses the Wabash at the mouth of Raccoon Creek, below Newport, Indiana, and continues north and east of Terre Haute. The easterly line of this survey has always been called the "ten o'clock line" and the westerly boundary the "one o'clock line" by old settlers and early surveyors. Near the north side of the Harrison Purchase lay a very fertile section which early attracted settlement, and was known as the North 'Arm Prairie. This was the source of the early settlement of Vermilion County. On account of the

difference in the survey of the Harrison Purchase and the later U. S. survey of three quarters of a mile, the boundary lines of Vermilion and Edgar Counties on the south, and Edgar and Clark Counties on the north, have always been irregular.

SECOND SURVEY.

That small portion of the "Harrison Purchase" which extended into Vermilion County was the only part of this territory which was surveyed up to 1821. After the treaty made at Edwardsville, July 30, 1819, which forever extinguished the claim of the Indians, the United States surveyors came. Unlike their predecessors, the Indians, their work was to be permanent; it was to last through all time, and to be a law to all future dwellers in the land. The lines, as then fixed and marked by these surveyors, are the lines which now divide the townships and farms of the county and which determine its boundaries, and the location of its public roads. A detailed account of the first surveys of Vermilion County has been secured from the General Land Office at Washington, and is as follows:

Beginning with Tp. 23, R. 14 W. it is found that E. Steen recorded survey in November 18, 1822.

- Township 22, R. 14 W. is the same.
 - Township 21, R. 14 W. is recorded by John Messinger, June 13, 1821.
 - Township 20, R. 14 W. is recorded by James Thompson, August 23, 1821.
 - Townships 19, 18, and 17, R. 14 W. are the same as Tp. 20, R. 14 W.
 - Townships 23 and 22, R. 13 W. are recorded by E. Steen, November 18, 1822.
 - Township 21, R. 14 W. is recorded by J. Messinger, June 13, 1821.
 - Township 20, R. 14 W. is recorded by Beal Greenup, July 5, 1821.
 - Townships 19, 18, and 17, R. 13 W. are recorded in the same way.
 - Townships 21, 22, and 23, R. 12 W. are recorded by E. Steen, November 18, 1822.
 - Townships 17, 18, 19, and 20, are recorded by Joseph Borough, September 12, 1821.
 - Townships 21, 22, and 23, R. 11 W. are recorded by W. L. Hamilton and Elias Rector, December 3, 1822.
 - Townships 17, 18, 19, and 20, are recorded by J. B. McCall, November 12, 1822.
- In making these surveys these men marked the section corners by throwing up mounds of earth around stakes which had been charred in the camp fire, and driven into the ground, and they were left so well marked that other surveyors easily found them after many years.

CHAPTER VIII.

EARLY MILITARY INVASION OF VERMILION COUNTY.

INVASION BY SPANISH TROOPS—OBJECT OF THIS MARCH ACROSS THE STATE OF ILLINOIS—EVIDENCE OF THIS COMPANY OF SOLDIERS CROSSING VERMILION COUNTY—Illinois Rangers—THE COMMAND UNDER GEN. SAMUEL HOPKINS—GEN. HOPKINS' ARMY A BAND OF UNDISCIPLINED MEN—REGIMENT, A MOB ON RETREAT—CANNON BALL FOUND IN BLUFF OF MIDDLE FORK RIVER—WHAT DOES IT PROVE?

After the close of the Revolutionary war, there was an invasion of the Northwest Territory made by Spanish troops who crossed the state and came into what is now Vermilion County. The point toward which these troops were marching was the British fort at the mouth of the St. Joseph river near the south end of Lake Michigan. Whether any more important results were contemplated than a temporary possession of this fort, has never been known. The land west of the Mississippi river, since known as the Louisiana Purchase, at that time belonged to Spain. St. Louis was its capital. It was from this point that the invasion was made.

On January 2, 1781, a small army of perhaps one hundred and fifty men under a Spanish officer crossed the Mississippi river on their way to march across the state of Illinois. This army was about equally divided between white men and Indians, while the white men were about half Frenchmen and half Spanish soldiers. Their objective point was the nearest fort which yet floated the flag of Great Britain. This was old Fort St. Joseph, located in southern Michigan. The only possible motive for this expedition was the hatred of the Spanish for Great Britain, and this was an echo of the trouble in the old country between these two, at that time, important European powers which were at war with each other. The march was started in mid-winter. Since the waterways were frozen, the march must be made by land, and since they did not dare venture on the prairies because of the extreme cold winds and the danger of losing their way, their line of travel was along the banks of the streams. It is not exactly known what trail they took, but it is agreed by all writers that they left the state at about where Danville now is, going thence in a northerly direction, to South Bend, Indiana. This distance of four hundred miles in the dead of winter must have occasioned much suffering. Although this coming of a foreign people had no effect upon affairs of this section, a natural interest in them makes a record of their after course admissible here.

This impoverished Spanish army was under command of Don Eugenie Pourre. They surprised Fort St. Joseph, and captured it without trouble. Hauling down the flag of Great Britain and hoisting that of Spain, they took up their triumphal march back to St. Louis, whence they sent word of the captured territory to Spain. It took a year to get the report to Spain, and no important results were ever recorded of this expedition. It might be that this was one link in a chain which Spain was forging to gain possession of more land in America; it may be that Vermilion County at that time really stood in danger of becoming a part of Spain in the new world, and had it not been for the clear vision and firm stand taken by Jay, Franklin and Adams this heroic march across this section would have proven a decisive act to that end.

As a proof that this particular section lay in the way of this march, the finding of two cannon balls in a valley a few miles west of Danville, has been cited. These cannon balls found some years ago about where the old Kickapoo village once stood, were in the range of any small piece of artillery planted on the nearby hills, and they are considered by some writers to be a relic of this expedition, but it seems with little reason, a more reasonable accounting for their presence is the fact of a later invasion of the section by Gen. Hopkins' army.

It must be remembered that, at the close of the war of the Revolution, and until after the war of 1812, the northern and western frontiers suffered a great deal at the hands of the Indians who were instigated to utmost cruelty by the remnants of the representatives of Great Britain. Although defeated at the first war Great Britain was not convinced that America was a lost province, until after the second war. The Indians in the Wabash valley were particularly hostile. Western Indiana and eastern Illinois comprised a section where life was always in danger. The massacre at Fort Dearborn occurred less than two months after war had been declared with Great Britain in 1812, and aroused the people of the Illinois Territory. Governor Edwards gathered and organized a force of Illinois Rangers at Camp Russell, near Edwardsville into two regiments, placing these troops under the command of Col. Russell of the regular army.

Another available force was the two thousand mounted riflemen of Kentucky who were under the command of Gen. Samuel Hopkins, a veteran Revolutionary officer. These troops were in camp at Vincennes. To effect the best results it was agreed that the forces should act in concert to the end of destroying Indian villages in this terrorized section. Gen. Hopkins was to move up the Wabash river to Fort Harrison, burning Indian towns and driving the refugees before him. Then he was to cross the Wabash river into Illinois Territory, march across the Grand Prairie to the Illinois river at Peoria Lake, where he would be met by Gen. Russell and Gov. Edwards, the united forces to annihilate the Indians along the Illinois river. The plan was a good one for the men who were hunting what they considered wild animals that were a menace to the life of human beings. However, this campaign has gone down in history as a cruel attempt to wanton murder of many who were perfectly innocent, and is equaled only by records of revolting massacres on the part of the wildest savages themselves. The unnecessary cruelties perpetrated at La Pe, reflects anything but credit to the Illinois Rangers. La Pe was a French and Indian village, upon the site of which the present city of Peoria is built. Its people were in no

way hostile. Yet the traders, voyageurs, Indians and even the agent, who was a loyal and confidential officer of the government, were all compelled to watch their village as it was burning, and then to march many miles from their homes to be left to wander back to their desecrated town, and accept what remained of it as best they could. This is but one instance of this onesided warfare. General Hopkins was chagrined because of the refusal of his troops to proceed after the fourth day's march, yet that disgrace was not more lasting than was the other obedience to orders which in themselves were a reflection on the manhood of the commanding officers. Had Gen. Hopkins and his men gone on and participated in the cowardly conduct of the Illinois Rangers, history would have given them an even less glorious place.

This army under command of Gen. Hopkins was composed of an aggregation of undisciplined men, enlisted as they believed to defend their own borders of Kentucky alone. Discontent arose before they left Vincennes at the idea of going into the interior of the territory, and it increased as they proceeded until, at Fort Harrison, some of the men broke off and returned home. After this, harmony appeared to prevail until they reached the Grand Prairie, when the silence necessary to an army in an enemy's country was broken, the abundant game tempting the men to straggle, and a constant firing ensued in spite of the commands of Gen. Hopkins himself. It was the rainy season, there were no competent guides to be had, they lost their way, and confusion prevailed only short of insubordination. When they encamped for the night of the fourth day out in a grove of timber affording water, the Indians in front set fire to the prairie grass which compelled the soldiers to fire the grass around the camp for protection. This was the last test of the endurance of the troops, and the officers determined to disobey the orders of Gen. Hopkins, and return to their homes. They agreed to his dictated order of return march, he, thinking he could destroy some Indian villages on the way, but the men broke through all restraint, the regiment became a mob, and each man chose the way he desired. The actual line of march taken by these troops is determined only by the direction and the distance known to have been traveled. Knowing the direction of these troops and the distance traveled, the decision of whence came the cannon balls found on the bluffs of the Middle Fork in 1869 is more readily made.

Judge Cunningham, in his history of Champaign County, gives as his opinion, and adds reasonable proof, that the grove with water "which fixed their camp on October 19th, was the Big Grove on the Salt Fork timber, and that the prairie, which then skirted it, was the scene of the brave old General's discomfiture." That being the case, there is little doubt that the old Kickapoo village within "one and a half miles" of the old salt springs, was devastated by these very troops. While cutting down an abrupt bluff of the Middle Fork of the Vermilion river, ten miles west of Danville for the passage of the Indiana, Bloomington & Western Railway in 1869, the workmen took from the loose shale composing the bluff, two cannon balls of iron, each about three inches in diameter, which balls were in the possession of the late Hon. H. W. Beckwith previous to his death. There was no one able to account for their presence in that bluff. The only reasonable assumption appears to be that these balls were thrown from light field pieces which Gen. Hopkins' army carried with them.

The only other armed force which ever passed this way was the Spaniards who came in 1781. If this army did pass near the Indian village it is hardly possible that it carried guns of sufficient caliber to have thrown these balls where they were found. Gen. Hopkins made his campaign in the early autumn when transportation across the country was comparatively easy, the distance from Fort Harrison, his base of supplies, being not more than eighty miles. His object was the destruction of Indian villages and the Kickapoo village was here where the cannon balls were found. Furthermore, General Hopkins had a force of 2,000 well-armed and mounted men while the Spanish force did not exceed 150 men and officers combined, who were on a long winter march and were provided, we must conclude, with nothing to impede the work in hand, which it must be borne in mind was to surprise and capture a force much smaller than their own, protected only by a weak stockade.



HOUSE BUILT BY FRANCIS WHITCOMB
Still standing in Catlin

CHAPTER IX.

FIRST SETTLEMENTS.

THE FIRST SETTLEMENT WAS MADE AT THE SALT SPRINGS—THE NEXT WERE MADE AT BUTLER'S POINT AND JOHNSON'S POINT—BROOK'S POINT—MORGAN'S—THE M'DONALD NEIGHBORHOOD—YANKEE POINT AND QUAKER POINT—THE LITTLE VERMILION—VERMILION AND ELWOOD—WALKER'S POINT—DANVILLE; WHEN SETTLED—THE LE NEVE SETTLEMENT—SETTLEMENTS ON THE MIDDLE FORK OF THE BIG VERMILION—MOTIVES FOR SETTLEMENTS—DIRECTION WHENCE SETTLERS CAME.

The first settlement made in Vermilion County was at the Salt Springs. This settlement was made while yet the springs were a part of Edgar County. Joseph Barron discovered the salt springs on the Vermilion and returned to Fort Harrison to take out necessary papers that he might immediate develop them. While he was gone, Truman Blackman, who had been one of his party organized another party and made an expedition to the same place that he might claim the discovery. When Blackman himself returned to make out his papers, he left two men to stay in possession until the third could come back with his family and make a settlement. Francis Whitcomb and the two Beckwiths, who were left at the springs were all single men and can not be counted as settlers until after the coming of Seymour Treat who was gone after his family.

In the later part of November, 1819, Seymour Treat arrived at the Springs with his wife and family, bringing his household goods, the first settler of what is now known as Vermilion County. Seymour Treat had been here before, he having been one of the party who came with Truman Blackman, and returned to Fort Harrison for his family and tools to develop the salt works. He came up the Wabash river to the mouth of the Vermilion river and thence to the springs in a pirogue. This way had probably been the one taken by Barron, and avoided by the second exploring party, perhaps because of the fear of their expedition being discovered.

The first thing to be done upon the arrival of Treat and his family was to get some place where they could have shelter. The Beckwiths and Whitcomb were all good axemen and with their help it was not long before a good cabin was put up. This, the first house built in this section, was constructed of small logs. It was about fourteen feet square with one room. Thus the first settlement was begun and Seymour Treat, Francis Whitcomb, and the two Beckwiths were the first settlers. Treat afterward moved to the site of what was later

Denmark and building a mill there became the first settler of what, for a time, was a very important settlement and came very nearly being made the county seat.

These first settlers of what is now Vermilion County came from the South, Treat and Whitcomb from Fort Harrison and the Beckwiths from the North Arm Prairie, where they were living with Jonathan Mayo. These two young men came from New York State three years previous to this time, just as the Harrison Purchase was being surveyed, and located for two years in Vigo County, Indiana, coming to the North Arm Prairie in 1818. The two young men and Francis Whitcomb were better enabled to endure the hardships which they found in this part of the country than were the women and children. With their nearest neighbors on the North Arm Prairie some forty miles away, the loneliness was more than can be imagined. The men could hunt and fish and find adventure in the wild country surrounding them, but the women and little children were left to work as their only way of passing the time, or to the more wearing idleness which gave opportunity to grieve over broken home ties, in the more densely populated old home towns.

The year after the settlement was made at the salt springs, James Butler came to the point of timber near where the Catlin Fair Grounds were later located, and entered land. Two or three of his neighbors came with him from Clark County, Ohio, and also took up claims. Johnson built his cabin on the right hand side of the road leading west of Catlin and on the east side of the branch which was called by his name. Here he put in a crop and the next spring returned to Ohio to fetch his family to their new home. It was a lonely place to build a home and it took courage for a woman to take her little children into this wilderness. Their nearest neighbors were at the Salt Springs. Even at that place there were but few people. The men who first came out with Butler from Ohio lost courage and refused to return with him, preferring to stay in their old homes. Life in new settlements was bad enough when several families united in forming a colony, but when one family left their old home and settled in a strange place alone, it took great courage. A half dozen years previous to this time Butler had left his boyhood home in Chittenden County, Vermont, to locate in Ohio and had never been satisfied, so that this opportunity to go yet farther west pleased him. Illinois was a new country, having been a commonwealth but two years at this time. But the loneliness and uncertainty of a life among the Indians in this far away place beyond civilization, in spite of the treaty now in force, were more than the friends of Butler could face, so it was but the one family who made this settlement at Butler's Point.

Within two or three years Butler's Point became an important settlement. Robert Trickle, John Light, Asa Elliott and Harvey Luddington (the latter from the salt works) all came to this settlement before Butler had been here two years, and this settlement was conspicuous in the affairs of the earliest days of this section. About the time Asa Elliott came Francis Whitcomb moved from the Salt Works settlement to the nearby place where Catlin is now located, married and made it his permanent home, living there until late in life when he moved yet further west. About two years after the Butler's Point settlement was assured, a little clearing in the timber some six miles west of the Salt Works



THE WOODIN HOUSE IN CATLIN

was made by Lewis Bailey. Bailey sold this land to Harvey Luddington in a short time. The little stream nearby was known as Luddington's branch for years, but afterward, as Stony Creek. Later, when Mr. Walker opened a farm up the creek near the present town of Muncie, the place became known as Walker's Point, but was never a promising settlement. The same year James D. Butler built the first cabin which was the beginning of Butler's Point. Henry Johnson began a settlement two miles west of present day Georgetown by building a cabin on section 36 (18-12), afterward calling it Johnson's Point.

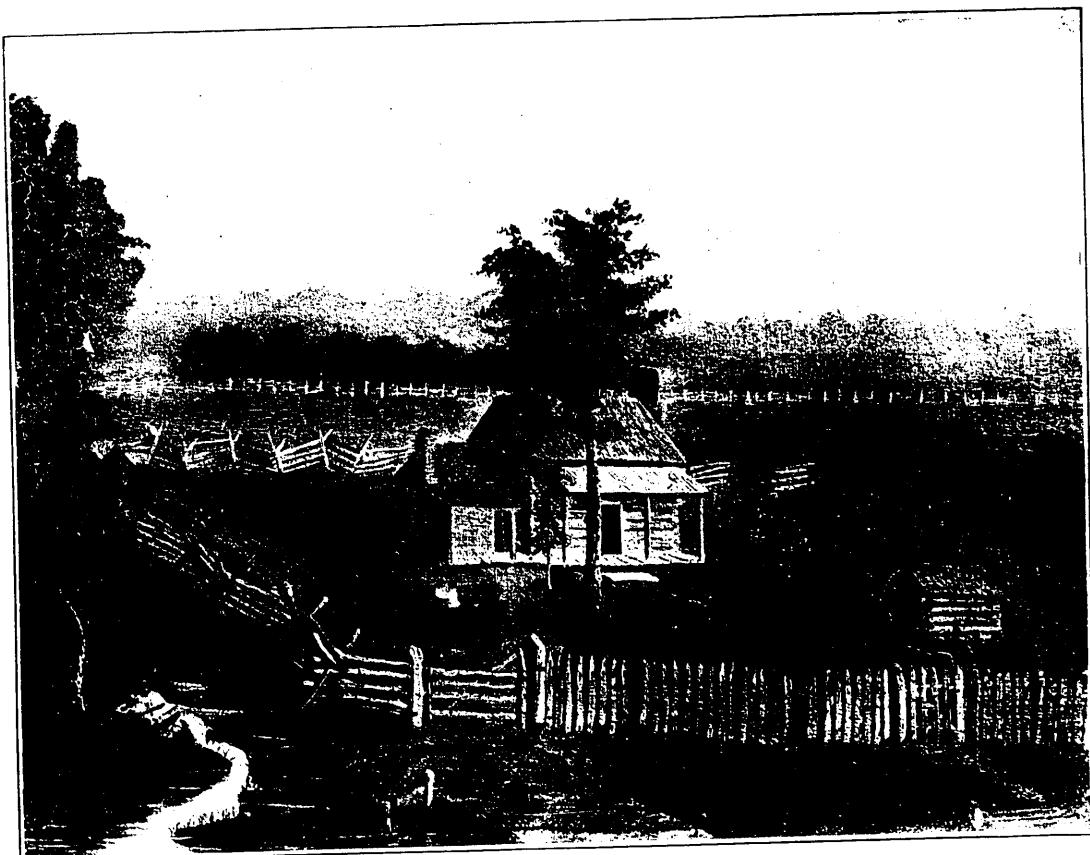
Henry Johnson was a man of sterling character and, as a neighbor always held out a helping hand. Absolom Starr, Henry Johnson's brother-in-law, joined him the following year. Also another brother-in-law by the name of Barnes came to this settlement. Jotham Lyons took up land just west of Johnson's and John Jordon settled a little to the east. Absolom Starr came from Palestine, Illinois, where the land office was located. He selected a piece of ground which he thought he wanted and went back to Palestine where he raised corn and wheat enough in the season of 1821 to last him and his family as flour and meal for a year. Few pioneers came into a new country better equipped for the first year's living. He brought his wife and four children to Johnson's Point and built them a little cabin. A letter written by Henry Johnson addressed to William Lowery, the member of the legislature from Clark County at that time, and yet preserved, fixes the date of the beginning of this settlement beyond a doubt. The letter is dated "Achilles Township, November 22, 1822." In it the statement is made that Johnson "had a knowledge of this township since October, 1820." This letter goes on to describe "Achilles township," which evidently embraced the whole territory of Clark County watered by the two Vermilion rivers, and extending as far north as the Kankakee river.

John Hoag and Samuel Munnell began a settlement north of the Little Vermilion, the year Henry Johnson settled south of that stream. This settlement was just southwest of the present village of Indianola. William Swank came to this section in 1820 and his farm embraced a part of the present town of Indianola. Alexander McDonald came here in 1822. He, with his father-in-law entered much land around here and this place was long known as the McDonald Neighborhood. A settlement was begun at what was long known as Brooks' Point, the same, or the year following the beginning of Johnson's Point. Benjamin Brooks came from Indiana and chose a place on the Little Vermilion for his future home. Returning to Indiana for his family, a Mr. Spence took this land in his absence. Mr. Brooks was very much disappointed, and had it not been for Benjamin Canady, who had just come from Tennessee, he would have been in a sorry plight with his family and no land upon which to build a cabin. Benjamin Canady was a tinker and peddler and had land further north which he let Mr. Brooks have, and this point of timber became the well known Brooks Point during the first years of the life of Vermilion County. The site of old Brooks Point is now known as Kelleyville. While Benjamin Brooks was in Indiana, Bob Cotton and Thomas O'Neal came to this same section. Thomas O'Neal came from Nelson County, Kentucky, and lived at Brooks Point. His son James O'Neal was the first white child born in the territory that is now Vermilion County. It, however, was a part of Edgar County at that time,

and for three years afterward. He lived in the Brooks Point neighborhood for three years and then entered 80 acres of land on the Big Vermilion, near where the Kyger mill was later a landmark. A neighborhood, first called Morgan's, and afterward McHenry, was settled south of Brooks' Point. Subel Ellis, James Ogden and John and Lewis Ritter, were in this neighborhood. Jacob Brazleton settled just north of them. Achilles Morgan, with his son-in-law, Henry Martin, came into what is now Vermilion County five years before it was organized as such, and after stopping at one or two points, located about three miles west of Georgetown. They came from Virginia and his other daughter with her husband George Brock visited them shortly and also located at the same place. The name of Achilles Morgan is associated with public affairs of the county in the '20s and '30s, and his descendants have left their impress upon its development. He was one of the first three county commissioners.

Soon after the first settlement at the Salt Springs, Mr. Starr, an uncle of Absolom and Barnett Starr, who were well known and pioneers of the county, bought land in the then northern part of Edgar County, but later he came to the southern part of Vermilion County. He bought eight hundred and eighty acres of land through which the Little Vermilion river flowed. Mr. Starr lived in Palestine where the land office was located and he bought much land for speculative purposes. This particular land he traded to John Myers for the eighty acres of land he had in Ohio. John Myers was better known in his day as "Injun John" and was, as may be inferred from his nickname, a man of strong characteristics. On his way out here Myers offered his brother-in-law a quarter section of this land if he would come with him. This his brother-in-law Joseph Frazier agreed to do. The particular tract which Frazier received is now a part of the well known Sconce farm. A year later Simon Cox came to this section and took up land. This was in 1822. Later he and Myers commenced to build a mill. First they tried a water mill, and they put in steam, but as neither were practical millwrights, they did not succeed in this enterprise. Peter Summe assisted in building this mill. It was located about a mile south of what today is Indianola and formerly was Chillicothe. Moses Bradshaw came to this neighborhood about the time Myers and Frazier came. He stayed here but a short time, however. The Richmond family lived here one winter and summer and then moved on.

The beginning of the settlement of Vermilion, now known as Vermilion Grove, was the cabin built by John Malsby in 1820. To be sure he abandoned the house and returned to his old home in Richmond, Indiana, so that the following winter, when Mr. Haworth came with his young family he found shelter already provided. Mr. Haworth had left Tennessee three years before to get away from the institution of slavery which he hated, and had spent the interim in Union County, Indiana. He entered several hundred acres of land about Vermilion, but did not hold it for himself nor sell it at high price; rather, when anyone came along whom he thought would be a desirable neighbor, he sold his land cheap and on time payments, if so desired. In this way he lay the foundation for a community of good people. His uncle, George Haworth, soon



THE BOGESS HOUSE IN EARLY TIMES

came to this neighborhood, and together with his brothers and their descendants, have made the name a familiar and respected one in this part of Illinois.

Henry Canady with his five sons came from Tennessee in the autumn of 1821, the same year that Mr. Haworth came. But they became discontented and returned to their old home in the Spring. They did not stay, however, but by Fall they were all back this time to locate permanently. When land came into market Mr. Canady entered about two sections and sold it out at congress prices with interest. This selling of small tracts of land to different owners by such men as Mr. Haworth and Mr. Canady, cut a part of that section of the county into small farms which could be cultivated more thoroughly than larger farms, and opened that region more quickly than any other. These small farms were later bought up by John L. Sconce, John Sidell and other large owners who have turned them into vast estates. These first settlements in what is now Vermilion County, but which were made before the county was organized as such were few and all lay along the two Vermilion rivers, the Middle Fork and Salt Fork of the Big Vermilion and the two Stony Creeks. Along the Little Vermilion the points of timber running out into the prairie were first chosen, and Yankee Point, and Quaker Point, became well known settlements. The first named settlement, that of Yankee Point, was so named because Mr. Squires settled here at an early day and being from the east his "yankee" ways were more noticed since he was the only man who had not come from the South.

Quaker Point was settled by those who belonged to the society of Friends or Quakers. This settlement was also called Bethel. The early settlers clung to the timber for a decade. They were afraid of the prairie, were sure no one could live away from the timber, and that the prairie was fit only as a range for their cattle. The early settlements were all made about the same date, that is, in 1821, or 22, or 23. They were at the Salt Springs, Butler's Point, Johnson's Point, Brooks' Point, Vermilion, Elwood, Yankee Point and Quaker Point. The McDonald neighborhood, Morgan's and near what is now Indianola. The settlement at the mouth of the North Fork of the Vermilion river was not made until after the county was organized and a county seat was contemplated. There was not any settlement at this place but land had been entered, and the location of the county seat was desired and secured in spite of the fact that promising settlements had been made in other parts of the newly organized county. It was not until January, 1827, that the selection was made of the land donated at the mouth of the North Fork of the Vermilion river, as the future county seat of the newly formed Vermilion County and its settlement begun. This was two years after a settlement had been made to the north by John LeNeve, and a number from Ohio and Kentucky. The beginning of this settlement was made by Obadiah and John LeNeve, who came from Lawrence County (it was then Crawford County), Illinois, provided to make their future home in this section. Their first house was primitive in the extreme, being but a square laid up with logs and one half covered with puncheons, although the entire structure was chinked and well filled with pulled grass. This cabin was built in the winter of 1824 and 1825. In 1828 Samuel Copeland began a settlement west of here and the same year Mr. Partlow with his family of four sons came to the Middle Fork of the Big Vermilion river to make a new home. He came from Kentucky.

The majority of the settlers of Vermilion County came from the South. Some came from Ohio and a few came from further east yet, but they were not many. Those who came first and settled Salt Springs developing them were from the North Arm Prairie, and those following and settling in other sections came from that section, and yet further South. Unlike many new countries the most of these pioneers were law abiding men and developed into good citizens. The large numbers of adherents of the faith of Friends made the material from which to secure the very best people possible for a growing country.

Many of these pioneers came from Tennessee and North Carolina, because they were anxious to escape the hated institution of slavery. Many came from Ohio where they had paused for perhaps a generation on their way west from Virginia or some other eastern locality. Many others came directly from Virginia. They came by way of the Ohio and Wabash rivers and they came through the country on horseback or with ox teams. The motives which brought them were as various as were their direction from their old homes. Not all came to escape a hated institution in their old homes as did the Haworths and the Canadays who settled and developed the peaceful valley along the Little Vermilion river; some saw a future through the salt industry or the fur trade and later in the fertile land that was theirs for little more than the taking; and yet others were filled with the passion for adventure alone. Such was the diverse material which went into the foundation of Vermilion County and made indelible impress upon its institutions.

CHAPTER X.

TRAILS AND EARLY ROADS.

ORIGIN OF THE MODERN ROAD—FIRST THE BUFFALO, THEN THE INDIAN, THEN THE PACK-HORSE—THE DANVILLE & FORT CLARK ROAD—THE OTTAWA ROAD—HUBBARD'S TRACE.

The modern road, which leads from place to place and makes speedy travel possible, is an evolution of the trail of the Indian which, in turn, was the evolution of the track made by some wild animal. The instinct of all animals is to go from one feeding spot to another, and to the best and nearest drinking place, with as little expenditure of time and energy possible. To this end there is no forest so dense, nor plain so wide, that does not show the paths of the wild beasts which inhabit it. The buffalo made the first roads, or paths, or trails, as you choose to call the tracks he left as a guide to his almost equally untamed successor in ownership of the wilds—the American Indian. Before the time roads were determined by legal proceedings, convenience in travel directed them. The Danville and Fort Clark road was surveyed and laid out as a legal road about 1834 by an act of the Legislature, but it did not owe its origin to this legal action, for it was traveled many years previous to this date.

In 1828, at its September session, the Board of Commissioners entered an order appointing "Runnel Fielder Supervisor of the Fort Clark road from the Salt Fork to the western line of Vermilion County." The same order allotted all the road work due from residents in townships 19 and 20, in Range 9 and 10, to this piece of road. But even this order, of a date so early as it is, was not the origin of this well known road. The exact origin will ever remain unknown, but it is safe to surmise that, as long ago as the buffalo roamed this country it was his path leading from river and grove to the East to river and grove to the West, passing the spot where his need for salt was met in the springs located near the Salt Fork of the Big Vermilion river. Later the Indian followed the same path for the same purpose. Indian villages were located along the lower Vermilion river, the inhabitants of which were intimate friends of the Indians in the Kickapoo village at what is now known as "Old Town Timber" in McLean County. These Indians chose frequent intercourse and naturally made a trail along the old buffalo track. Indeed, this tract must have been used before these Kickapoo villages were located, because the Piankeshaws probably knew of the direction of the salt water, when they were in possession of this territory, and

were attracted thither, while their village was located at the mouth of the North Fork of the Vermilion. This trail was probably followed by Gen. Hopkins and his soldiers, and maybe by the Spanish troops, although that is not credited by many. This was by no means the only, nor the first trail which went through Vermilion County. The oft times traveled trail which led from Kaskaskia and Fort Chartres to Detroit, passed across the southwestern part of the county. This trail can yet be discerned in Edgar County, to the south. The region of Vermilion County was the center of Indian trails, diverging to the south, the west, the southwest, the east, and to the north. The early comers into this section found a well defined road from east to west, crossing what is now Vermilion County, which each year showed more and more evidence of travel, as it was used by pioneers in going from Ohio to the then "West." This road crossed the Big Vermilion river at near the mouth of the North Fork, and crossed the county, leaving it at where the line of Champaign County makes the eastern boundary. At the point of leaving the county, the Salt Fork of the Vermilion river crosses the line a little to the northeast of the present village of Homer. The highway was the well known "Fort Clark Road," over which the great tide of immigration passed from the states east of the Ohio to the section known as the "Military Tract," the name of the lands lying in the western part of Illinois, between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. This "Military Tract" comprised the lands given the soldiers of both the wars of the Revolution and that of 1812. There are places along this long since abandoned road that yet show its direction. These are great gullies, which were worn, first by the hoof of the buffalo, and afterward by the oxen and wagon of the pioneer, but it takes the practiced eye to distinguish these places and the old Fort Clark road is practically lost. It long ago was changed from the northern route to the southern way, and the highway going in the same direction, is known as the Danville and Urbana road.

This road runs to the south of the old one but is very much the same which was traveled in the long ago through Vermilion County and which is referred to in the following description of a traveler in the early twenties: "After safely crossing the state of Indiana, then a wilderness, I entered Illinois where Danville now is near to where I found a small settlement and some friends. I made a short stay at these Salt Works and then took a more northwest course, to strike the Illinois river, my map and compass my only guide. I put up usually, where night found me. Striking a light with my flint, steel and punk, I wrapped myself in my blanket, and with the broad earth for a bed, slept soundly. My horse became very cowardly so that he would scarcely crop the grass, which was his only sustenance; he would keep close to me, following me wherever I went and sleeping at night by my side, and would not leave me at any time. With no well defined road, only the Indian trail through high grass and bushes, over the broad limitless prairie, or along the timber belts, occasionally meeting a party of Indians with whom I conversed only by signs, it is not surprising that horse and rider should be lonely, suspicious and fearful." Such was the way along the afterward "Fort Clark" road which was the most direct connection of the east and the west. The writer of this experience goes on to tell of his leaving the Salt Works of the Vermilion, and finding no white man until he reached Dillon's Grove in Tazewell County. Later, a road from the east to

Ottawa, called the "Ottawa road" was built through Vermilion County, passing to the north of Danville on the way to Chicago. It was a state road and within the memory of many citizens, it was marked with milestones. This road went direct from Danville through Denmark and had a branch to the east, north of Danville which led through Newell township and carried trade to Covington, Indiana. This road was probably the developed trail from Fort St. Louis to Vincennes and Fort Detroit which converged at Danville. The north and south road known as the "Hubbard Trace" was a very important highway for years.

The American Fur Company had stations along the way of the country between the Illinois and Wabash rivers as early as about 1785. They had trading posts on the Iroquois, the Little Wabash, and the Embrass rivers. In 1824 Gurdon Hubbard was put in charge of the company's trade in this section and soon abandoned the trading posts on the Illinois river, doing away with trade by the river and introduced pack horses to cover the way between Chicago and the southern extreme of the territory. This way or trail from Chicago went directly to the Salt Works and thence south, so it is seen that the Hubbard Trace (as it was called) was to the west of Danville, instead of being the old direct state road. This road was the one most frequently traveled to the north or the south, and the old "Fort Clark" road was the one used in going to the east or west, during the early days of Vermilion County. And together with the Ottawa road met all the requirements of travel of that day.

CHAPTER XI.

PIONEER LIFE IN VERMILION COUNTY.

FOOD—SHELTER—CLOTHING—EARLY CONDITIONS AND CUSTOMS—MEANS OF TRAVEL—SICKNESS—PROVINCIALISMS.

When the pioneer came to this section of the country he found an abundance of food, which could be secured with little effort upon his part. Wild turkey, prairie chicken, quail and deer were plentiful and so tame as to be shot from the cabin door. The rivers were stocked with fish, and the wild ducks and other water fowl frequented their banks. Although mills were not numerous, the corncracker mill of James Butler's was not out of reach of anyone in the county, and it was in operation as early as 1823.

The ingenuity of the early settler, however, was great and even could overcome the scarcity of mills and produce material from which to make the ever-present corn cake, and the "journey board" was given use in the baking of the "journey (johnny) cake." There was an abundance of wild fruit—berries, grapes and plums—and along the Little Vermilion, persimmon and pawpaw trees. All this for the first year's of coming. It was not long before the grains and cultivated fruits were a part of the daily food, since the fertile land responded quickly to cultivation. The pioneer woman responded with as ready service in the preparation of this food. There was much rivalry in the skill of the women who came to the county in these early days and excellence was coveted and secured by the most of them. To be called a good cook was praise that was appreciated, and to be the best cook in the neighborhood was a distinction devoutly to be desired. The abundance of food naturally led to, perhaps, over-feeding, but it also developed the talents of the women in providing their tables with a quantity that has made Illinois and Indiana famous for many and varied dishes. Each woman vied with her neighbor to have more food upon her table and the gatherings of any kind were opportunities to exhibit her power to this end. Where there was such an abundance there was little suffering from lack of food as in sometimes the case in new countries.

Corn was eaten in various ways. The cake then served was "pound cake" with cornmeal used instead of wheat flour. Mush and milk was a common dish for supper; an old settler in telling of this once said, that one should have one foot in bed and the other ready, so that as soon as he had finished his supper he could go to sleep. Green corn was boiled and roasted, and frequently constituted the entire meal. Hominy, known as lye hominy, was prepared by soaking

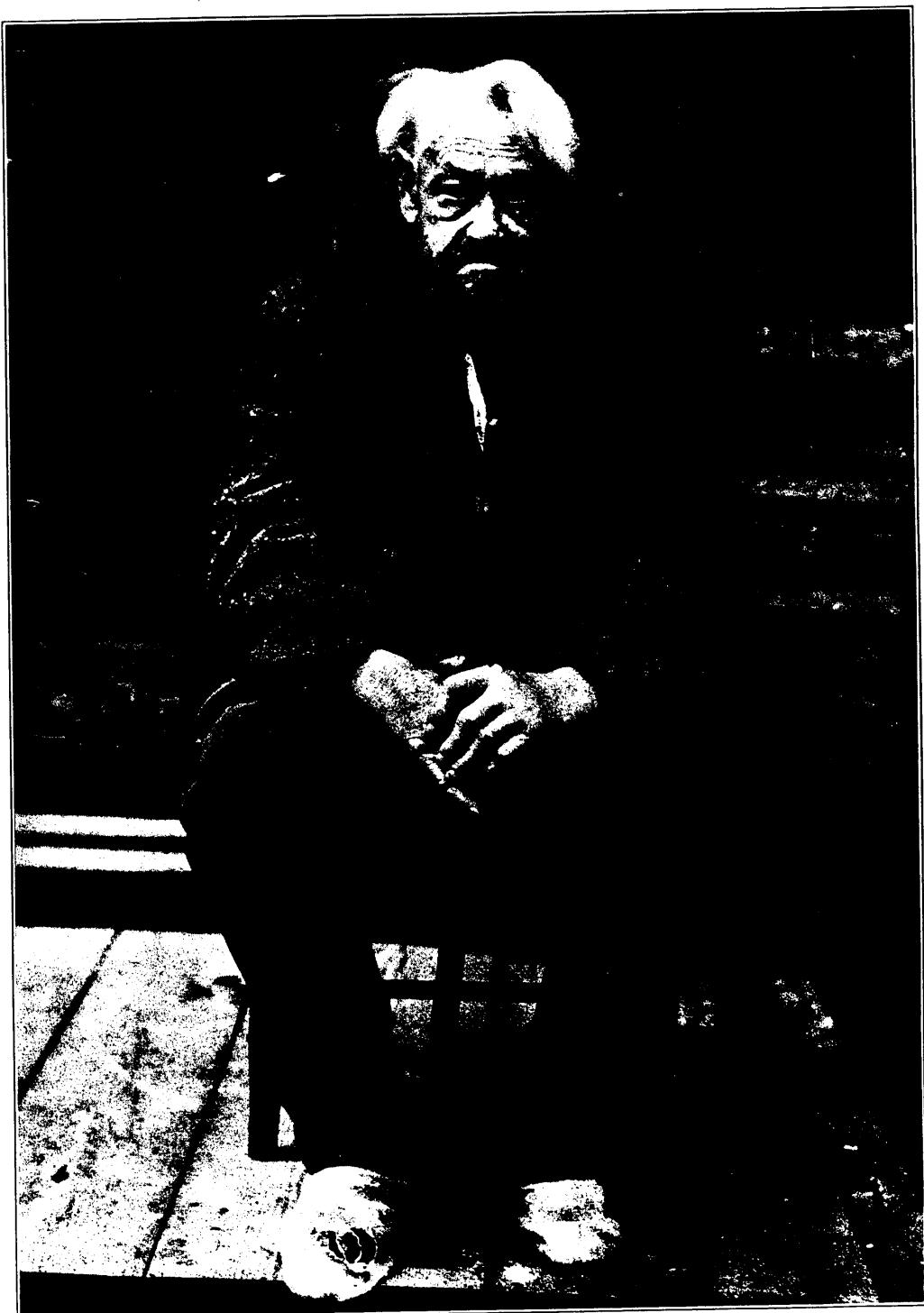
the corn in lye made from the wood ashes, until the husk would readily leave the grain, when it was pounded in a mortar and thoroughly broken. The mortar was made by hollowing a solid, dry stump or log, either with adz or by fire. The pestle was made of wood. The cracked corn was of two grades, large hominy and small hominy. Add to the large hominy and small hominy, the large pone and small pone, Johnny cake, hoe cake and dodgers, dumplings and fried cakes, and the use of corn is not yet exhausted. For drink the pioneer sipped his bread coffee, crust coffee, meal coffee, and potato coffee, sassafras tea, spicewood tea, beech leaf and sycamore-chips tea. Their vegetables were potatoes, pumpkins, turnips and for early use, greens or weeds.

A description of the way in which the women prepared a meal as given by Judge Davidson, in telling of early times many years ago, is interesting. He says: "The fireplace was about eight feet in the clear. The kettles were hung over the fireplace to a strong pole, raised so high above the fire as not to ignite, from heat and sparks, and whose ends are fastened in the chimney. The kettles were suspended on trammels, which were pieces of iron rods, with a hook at each end. The uppermost one extended from the pole nearly down to the fire, and with one or more short ones, the kettles were brought to their proper height above the coals. Wooden hooks were used until iron ones were obtained. A long handled frying pan was used in which to fry meat. The women held the frying pan while the meat cooked and she cooked also. A more convenient utensil was a cast-iron, short handled, three legged spider, or skillet which was set upon the coals on the hearth. Turkeys and spare-ribs were sometimes roasted before the fire suspended by a string, a dish being placed underneath to receive the drippings. To care for this meat was often the man's work on a day when he was not otherwise busy, and it is told by a devoted daughter who loved to recall his doings how he (father) would attend to the roast on Sunday."

There was little greater effort required to furnish shelter. All material was easily procured. To be sure, these houses were of the most primitive character. A very common style of house, and one that could be easily constructed with tools no more complicated than an axe and, perhaps, an auger, was the cabin built wholly with the material to be found in the timber. A description of a house built of such material is given by Judge Cunningham in his History of Champaign County, and as it is as good a picture of a dwelling on that side of the county line and is painted with well chosen words, it serves this county as well. "Small logs, or poles, suitable to build a house large enough to accommodate the family needing it, were cut and hauled to the site chosen for the future home. Notching the ends of these logs, with the help of his neighbor or, maybe, an Indian, they were rolled the one above the other on the four sides of the building, until the suitable height of wall was obtained. Across the building at intervals of three or four feet, other logs or poles were laid, until a foundation for the roof of the loft had been prepared, having in view, all the time, symmetry and smoothness of the upper room. The ends of this building were then carried up a suitable height, for the upper room, when they were, by shortening each successive log, gradually drawn to an apex. Again, logs or poles were laid from gable to gable, for the support of the roof, to be made of boards or 'shakes,' of suitable length, split from some nearby oak tree. In the absence, or impossibility

of getting nails with which to fasten the roof, boards, logs or poles were cut of suitable length and laid lengthwise of the building, upon each successive course of the roofing material. The necessary doors and windows were formed by cutting spaces through the log walls, in suitable places and of suitable size. Doors and window shutters were made from split clapboards and hung on wooden hinges. These windows sometimes were covered with paper which had been well greased so as to make it, somewhat transparent. Floors were made of puncheons split from trees, one side of which was hewed to a plane surface for the upper side of the floor, while the other side was notched to the log sleepers, upon which the floor rested, the edges of each puncheon being lined and straightened so as to fit its neighbor. In this way a solid and durable floor could be made with no tool other than an axe, and an adz, to level and smooth off after the floor had been laid.

A floor could be made of white ash or oak, which after the necessary wear from the feet of the dwellers in the cabin, presented no mean appearance when sanded and kept clean. For a ceiling above, a ready and excellent expedient was always at hand. In summer time the bark of the linden tree readily cleaves from the trunk in sheets as long as the ordinary cabin, and of a width equal to the circumference of the log from which it is taken. Enough of this to furnish the ceiling of an ordinary cabin could be peeled in an hour or so. Placed upon the beams which had themselves been peeled before being placed in position, the inside of the bark turned down, with poles for weights on top to prevent curling, a ceiling at once tight and elegant enough for a fairy castle was had, which time and smoke from the first place would color most beautifully. A fireplace was made by building a chimney against one end of the cabin, using boulders and mud which made a cement. This wall against one end of the cabin was six or eight feet wide and as high. On top of this wall the chimney was built. This chimney consisted of four walls, three or four feet square of sticks split from the oak, the interstices being plastered up with common clay. Often, however, for want of stones out of which to make the back of the fireplace, it was made of clay by first setting firmly in the ground, where the chimney was to stand, posts or puncheons of the shape the fireplace was to take, and filling the enclosed space with moist clay firmly pounded down. When thus built a sufficient height for a fireplace, the chimney was topped out with sticks and clay, high enough to secure a good draught for the smoke, when the wooden moulds in which the fireplace had been set were burned away with a slow fire, and the chimney was complete. The opening upward, formed by the chimney, served the double purpose of letting out the smoke and letting in the light when the window and door openings were closed to keep out the cold. Many yet living will remember having often seen, hung up on the crotches of trees set up, so as to reach out over the opening in the chimney above the house, the family supply of meat—hams and side meat—placed there to be cured and smoked for the next summer's use. Every one who has used it thus cured, remembers with pleasure the delicious flavor given by the smoke from the fire of hickory wood below. After the cabin had been completed, and as winter approached, the cracks between the logs were chinked, by the insertion between the logs on the inside of triangular prisms split from the linn tree and fastened in their places with wedges driven behind



SAMUEL LENOVER
Aged One Hundred and Eight years

them into the logs, the outside cracks then being tightly daubed with mud. This process was technically called 'daubing.' "

As time passed the buildings improved. In the building of these better houses the logs were usually hewn upon two or four sides, well notched at the corners, so as to fit each other closely, the cracks between the logs being well pointed with lime mortar. Glass and sash for the windows, lumber for the doors and floors, with an attic chamber, nails for the roofs and brick for the chimney, made the houses comfortable and inviting. Such houses were occasionally, at a later day, covered on the outside with sawed weatherboarding, and painted. Such was the house of William Golden, at Yankee Point, which was further improved by a coat of red paint. As the facilities for obtaining material increased, the buildings grew more pretentious. The first planed floor in Danville was in the house built by Dr. Fithian, and as he did not come to this county until 1830, the town had been for a half dozen years with puncheon floors. A building is yet standing at the edge of Catlin which is made of the bricks, burned in the Twenties, by Francis Whitcomb, also one on the opposite side of the road constructed entirely of brick which was made at not much later a date. The clothing was in most cases decidedly "home made." Not only the garments were cut and put together at home, but the material of which they were fashioned was a product of home industry. A few sheep to furnish the needed wool, a patch of flax to yield the linen for wear in the summer months, and the skins which the hunter secured and cured for head and foot wear, gave an abundance of material for personal adornment. The women took pride and pleasure in carding and spinning, and weaving, as well as in sewing and knitting and coloring this material. To excel as a spinner, whether on the little wheel, where the flax was made into thread for the linen, or on the less difficult large wheel, where the wool threads were made to weave into heavier cloth, was a pride. Standing by the "big wheel" and with measured tread walking back and forth with a definite object in view of completing a given amount of work in a given time, the girls grew into graceful womanhood. The large families, which was the rule at that time, made it possible for this work to be done in the household. There was no question of woman's rights because woman's duties filled her time, and her importance in the household was evident.

She was in evidence in the preparation of the food, for the home, in the entire manufacturing of the clothing, and could well leave the provision of shelter to the men. This mutual interdependence of men and women in a new country tends to bring out the best characteristics in each. When the flax was grown it must be pulled, rolled, broken, scutched, swingled, and hatched before it was ready to be spun. In rare cases this work was done by the women, but generally the hardest was done by the men. It was work which required great strength and was better fit for men to do. When the flax was ready the spinner began her work. After it was spun into threads the weaver took it and employed both skill and strength in her work. When there were several daughters in a family the spinning was often done by one, the weaving by another, and the meals prepared by yet a third. There were many homes at present where a piece of cloth, the product of a grandmother's skill in weaving or spinning, is proudly exhibited. One who distinctly remembers the time of spinning of flax, and has

seen all the implements used in the preparation of a garment from the time it is in the stalks of the plant, kindly furnishes the following information:

"In an early day in this country flax was raised in great abundance, and from it was fashioned all the household linen, and much of the wearing apparel. To those who have known little in regard to its use or manner of preparation such knowledge will be of interest and to those who remember handling the flax, a few words on the subject will recall days long gone by. The flax seed was sown not later than the first of May and, being of speedy growth, when the season was favorable, the crop was harvested in August. The gathering time was called 'flax-pulling time' as it was gathered in the hand and pulled or jerked from the ground by handful and spread out on the ground in the field in rows to 'cure' before placing in bundles in the 'flax pen' where the rotting process was accomplished. My recollection of this pen is that it was built of rails on four posts about four feet high, had a rail floor and no cover. This last was that the flax might have the full benefit of the weather, it requiring both the rain and the hot sunshine to complete the rotting process which was essential. I can remember how, after days of warm sunshine, when there were indications of approaching rain, the family would rush to the flax-pen, and each lend a helping hand in turning the flax over that it might all be exposed to the weather. After the rotting was complete the flax was taken to the break which, in primitive times, was a rudely constructed contrivance for breaking the woody inside fibre. This break was made of several hickory slats, fastened together at each end with pieces of wood, and hinged in such a manner that one end could be raised and lowered between other similar slats, which were stationary and some distance apart. At one end of the top set of slats was fastened a handle, which had to be used vigorously during the flax breaking process. After the breaking was complete it was taken to the scutching board which was a very smooth hardwood board placed upright with the lower end fastened securely in a heavy block of wood. In the top end of this board was a large notch or curve, which was made to hold a handful of flax while it went through the scutching process. This was accomplished by means of a scutching knife, which was also made of hardwood, was about nine inches wide and perhaps twelve or fourteen long and very thin. The handful of flax (quite a bunch of it) was thrown across the scutching board, held in the left hand, while the right hand wielded the knife vigorously to loosen and dislodge the woody fiber. After this it was taken to the hatcheling board on which was securely placed a board with two sets of hatchels, one coarse and one fine, made of wire and much after the same plan as those used in carding machines of modern factories. After the flax had been drawn through these many, many times, until all the fiber had been removed, each bunch was twisted into a hank of silky texture and was ready to be spun into thread by the industrious, thrifty housewife on the little spinning wheel, and made ready for the crowning feat which was accomplished with the help of the family loom. It was woven into cloth ready to be made into articles for household use and for garments for different members of the family. Many were the dextrous achievements of our grandmothers in this line all of which, of course, had to be done by hand, as at that early day the wildest imagination had never dreamed of a sewing machine."

The garments at that time varied little in cut. The women's dress did not change so often and men wore the same cut year after year. But if the fashion of the garment were not so complex, and all the work was done by hand the stitches which put them together were most carefully taken. With a sewing machine and its product never having been seen, the fingers did better work. A piece of sewing which has escaped the destruction of the passing years is found to be firmly put together and the stitches as accurately taken as any machine could make. The skill in sewing as well as the superior strength of the material and thread makes these old garments worth preserving.

At that time the shoes were made at home, but were generally the work of some one man who had learned this trade in Ohio, or Kentucky, or some old home whence he had come to the new country. These shoemakers would go from one house to another and fit out the family with shoes while there. The caps worn were made from the skin of the coon and were popular head covering, not only because the skins could be easily obtained but these caps were a very comfortable protection from the weather.

The women knit the stockings in the long winter evenings, and in this knitting many a woman found a means of expressing, all unconsciously, her secret love of the beautiful. Although there was no necessity of doing more than procuring a material which would make strong and warm foot covering and to knit it in the regular way, a knitter could, if she so choose, color her yarn after she had woven it as fine as she cared to do, and knit it in as fancy stitches as she pleased, making even so prosaic a thing as a pair of stockings, a "thing of beauty." The woods were full of dye stuff which the lingering Indian squaw could teach the woman desirous to learn the art of producing brilliant coloring. Some beautiful coverlets made by the women of early day in Vermilion County are yet well preserved by their descendants and illustrations of these are given in this volume.

The large number of Friends who came into Vermilion County kept their peculiar dress, procuring the material therefor in the same way. Their garments were fashioned from a material of different color but it was the product of their own industry, just as was the material which fashioned their neighbors' clothes.

While the cabin was all busy within, without there was no idling. The spinning wheel was the stringed instrument upon which the women played and they made every house a woolen factory, but the industry was not all found inside the cabins. The wooden-mould plow was busy. As description of which, the iron part was a bar two feet long, with a broad share of iron welded to it. At the extreme part was a coulter that passed through a beam six or seven feet long, to which there were attached handles of corresponding length. The mould board was of wood, split from a winding piece of timber, or hewed into a winding shape in order to turn the soil over. The triangular harrow or drag, was also an early implement. It consisted of two pieces of timber about six feet long and five inches square, hewed, before the day of mills, and later sawed. The end of one was framed into the end of the other, forming an acute angle, the two sides kept apart by a crosspiece of timber framed into the others near their centers, all forming the letter "A." Before iron came, wooden teeth were used, but the prevalence of roots destroyed them rapidly, so that iron teeth, twice as heavy as

those now used, were obtained as soon as possible. The farming went on slowly and arduously these days before modern improvements were made.

While amusements, as we consider such, were unknown to the pioneer, it must not be assumed that he had none. There were many sources of recreation not known to those who never get from the irksome jars and annoyances of a dense population. In the first place there is a release from restraint, a sense of wild freedom peculiar to the frontier that is exhilarating and enjoyable. There is no doubt that the Indian in his native wilds; the Arab coursing over the sands of the desert; and the pioneer on the broad, unoccupied prairie, breathe a fuller inspiration, have a brighter vision, drink in with a keener relish the beauties of nature, and have a consciousness of a more noble existence, a higher ideal of living and a presence of an Author of all that lives as cannot come to the jostled crowd breathing the smoke and offensive odors of the populous city or even town. Then too, the occasional social pleasures of pioneer life were better enjoyed. A visit to a neighbor settler after weeks or months of absence was an occasion of pleasure which is less intense when the going could be repeated every day. At such visits experiences were related, family history given, news from distant friends exchanged, crop prospects and newcomers were discussed, and plenty time was accorded to these social calls to insure friendships cemented as is impossible in these days of hurry. These visits were made regularly, and were a subject of conversation during the life of the people as happy experiences. This same cordial friendly feeling is rare to find today, and will never return, to a more densely populated country.

There was an abundance of game which made hunting great sport for the men; then there were the log cabin raisings, and the shucking bees, the quilting parties and the churchgoing. If a man had a cabin or a barn to be built, his neighbors expected to help him. They would come from far and near, and this was an occasion for the women to show excellence in the food provided. An occasion of this kind is described in a history of Champaign County written by Judge Cunningham, and as there were guests present from Vermilion County, and doubtless returned the hospitality of the occasion, it is of interest in this connection.

It was a barn that was to be raised on the farm of Henry Sadorus in 1832. This was to be a double barn; that is, there were to be two rooms separated by a threshing floor, but a roof covered it all. The whole building covered ground thirty by sixty feet. Invitations were sent out to neighbors as far away as what is now Monticello, and was even sent to Eugene, Indiana.

In three days' time the men had finished the barn. It was built of straight ash logs, with a roof of split boards, held in place by weight poles. The threshing floor was of split puncheons, so well lined at the edges and smoothed down with the adz as to make it perfectly tight. Within the cabin the women were busy quilting two bed quilts, and preparing the food for the crowd. As evening came on the work was all put away, and the rooms cleared for the dancing. The music was a fiddle in the hands of a master fiddler named Knight, who lived in Danville.

The husking bees were occasions of great fun for the young people. The corn was taken to the barn, and great effort was made to excel in the work.



GROUP OF OLD SETTLERS TAKEN AT OLD SETTLERS' PICNIC IN LONG
GROVE, IN AUGUST, 1897. MOST OF THESE PIONEERS
ARE NOW DECEASED

Proud was the man who could husk the most ears in a given time. Boys and girls competed and if a red ear was found the frolic grew more or less boisterous, because that was the occasion when the girl was kissed. But of all the social gatherings, the camp meeting was the best. It was looked forward to as a time of greatest social enjoyment as well as of intense interest. As a social factor, as well as religious leader, the itinerate Methodist preacher was a boon to the frontier giving occasion for the people to come together in their quarterly meeting and camp meetings.

Vermilion County was fortunate in having a large number of the Society of Friends among the early settlers. The Quaker Quarterly was a happy occasion for the young and old people alike. Court week was a source of recreation to many of the early settlers, whether they had business at the county seat or not. Wolf hunts were made occasions of healthy sport, and even yet stories of wolves are told at Old Settlers' meetings, as personal experiences. One prominent early citizen of Vermilion County, who was the father and grandfather of many who have since been history makers in this section, took advantage of a characteristic of wolf nature and saved his flock of sheep one night in the long ago. The sheep were penned up in an enclosure built against the cabin, "because," his son says, "wolves would not kill sheep if so penned up. They wanted them out in the open, where they would run and the wolves chase them." Being so penned up on bright nights when the moon was shining the owner of them who, by the way, was a gentle natured Quaker, was awakened by the baying of wolves quite near, and looking through the cracks of the cabin he saw a wolf on the top of the rude fence with which he had enclosed the sheep. Reaching for his trusty rifle, he shot not only that one but the others as they approached, without leaving his bed.

It has been said that there were more homesick women than men in the early settlements and doubtless Vermilion County was no exception to the rule; and this was largely due to the fact of more provision being made for amusements for men than for women. True it is that the home duties kept the women from as much relaxation as the men had, but they were not entirely deprived of the social amusements. In the first place they had the pleasures of their homes, and the care of their children free from the obligations of the wearisome demands of society, and then they were not lacking in intercourse with their fellows. A quilting bee brought the women of the neighborhood together, and usually lasted all day, the guests sometimes coming before breakfast and staying until dark. But the women find it hard, usually, to break home ties and unless, as in the cases where many of the family came together, the old home drew her back with more force than it did the man. The young women had their amusements at the "shucking bees" and at dances, although they had to ride sometimes a long way to reach the frolic. They usually rode on the same horse as their escort, sitting up behind him.

The early settlers of this county met two dread diseases when they reached the Wabash valley; one was what was called Milk sickness and the other was the prevalent fever and ague of the place. When memory recalls the genuine Wabash fever and ague, a wonder arises that the people had the courage to remain in a section that carried such a perpetual illness. The fact that it being so common an affliction was not considered of as much consequence as it otherwise

would have been, makes it no less an unbearable condition of affairs. Miasma has been the foe of the pioneer all the way across the continent, and the Mississippi valley has harbored this element and yielded up the sacrifice of its best citizens during the years of its early settlement. The courage to meet the wild beast in the new country; to endure the privations and sacrifices of frontier life is one thing; but to bravely accept the terrors of the certainty of returning fever and chills, requires a fortitude that is a wonder. In the season which, for the fortunate was only the fall and spring, the day dawned but to bring a "shake" to be followed by a raging fever. Yet these conditions were met with scarce a murmur by the pioneers of this section of the country.

The provincialisms were more noticeable in manner of speech than elsewhere. Carelessness of talking is to be expected where there is no more restraint than is to be found in a new country. With the careless speech of parents children had no model and grew up to think provincialism the correct form. The peculiar speech of the slaves in the south was caught by the men and women who later made their homes in southern Illinois and handed down to their children to be cherished and made a part of their conversation until the settlements from Kentucky and Virginia revealed the origin of the neighborhood. This peculiarity of speech from those born in the southern states has awakened discussion as to whether it is the result of mingling with the slaves or whether the accent of the slave is not the result of living with the southern people. Who can tell the origin of the southern tongue, since the African did not bring a language with him but used the one he found here. Whether the one or the other is the correct notion, the fact remains that the speech of Vermilion County savored of the dialect of the region from which the early settlers came, and the turn of the words as well as the tone of voice all testified to the old Virginia or Kentucky home whence they came. A "bucket" was never a "pail" as it was to the few eastern men and women who came into this section. These people of Vermilion County never "guessed;" they always "reckoned." They were "powerful weak" and "mighty porely" and "peared like couldn't gain no strength," but with all were a kind hearted, generous, whole souled people who are dear in their provincialism, and cheerfully burned their rag in a saucer of grease for light, set the houses on corner props and let the swine live underneath, and looked upon the newcomer from the more cultured east with frank admiration and gave a helping hand where it was needed.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF VERMILION COUNTY.

COUNTY ORGANIZATION IN ILLINOIS DATES BACK TO 1779—THE COUNTY OF ILLINOIS—ST. CLAIR AND RANDOLPH AS COUNTIES OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY—KNOX COUNTY—KNOX AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES—MADISON COUNTY—EDWARDS COUNTY—CRAWFORD COUNTY—CLARK COUNTY—EDGAR COUNTY—VERMILION COUNTY—REDUCED TO PRESENT LIMITS—BELONGS TO SECOND CLASS—GOVERNMENT OF THE COUNTY—TOWNSHIP ORGANIZATION; WHEN EFFECTED—ORIGIN OF NAME OF VERMILION COUNTY.

After the conquest of the country northwest of the Ohio river by George Rogers Clark in 1778, the Commonwealth of Virginia held it as its own and called it the county of Illinois. This territory was duly governed as such with the county seat at Kaskaskia, the former Capital of both French and British Government in the Illinois country. Capt. John Todd was appointed "County Lieutenant Commandant," but the machinery of this government was never effectually set up, and it soon ceased to run. After concessions asked and granted by all the new states of the young Republic, Virginia surrendered all claims to the general government in 1784, and congress, sitting under the articles of confederation, passed "An Act for the government of the territory of the United States northwest of the Ohio river." Under this ordinance Gen. Arthur St. Clair was appointed governor of the territory and in 1790 organized, by proclamation, the county of St. Clair, named in honor of himself. This proclamation was issued April 27, 1800. The boundaries of this first county can be seen by drawing a line from the mouth of the Little Mackinaw in Tazewell County to the mouth of Massac creek in Massac County. All the territory included within this line on one side and the Mississippi and Illinois rivers on the other, constituted St. Clair County. But this county was small compared with another which was created by proclamation, June 20 of the same year. This was Knox County and included about half the state of Illinois, the whole of Indiana, that part of Ohio west of the great Miami river, and the greater part of Michigan, and a considerable part of Wisconsin, as these states exist at present. It will be remembered that the settlements in the Illinois country were along that part of the Mississippi river in what was later known as the American Bottoms, and about Vincennes. St. Clair County was organized to meet the wants of the former and Knox County was organized to meet those of the latter. October 5, 1795, St. Clair County was divided by the creation of Randolph County in the southern part, doubtless to

accommodate the sparce settlements along the Ohio river which were made after the Revolutionary war was over.

February 6, 1801, William Henry Harrison, then Governor of the Indiana Territory, of which the territory now known as Vermilion County, Illinois, is a part, issued his proclamation continuing the counties of St. Clair and Randolph as counties of Indiana Territory but changed their boundaries and enlarged their areas. Up to this time the entire territory north and west of the Ohio river belonged to the Northwest Territory, but it now had been divided by the taking of what is now the state of Ohio and making therefrom the territory of Ohio. All the remaining territory was called the Indiana Territory and William Henry Harrison was made Governor of it. In the change of boundary lines of the then existing counties in the western part of the Indiana Territory, Randolph County was bounded on the north by a line drawn from a point on the Mississippi river about nine miles south and one mile west of the present town of Waterloo, east to a line drawn north from the "Great Cave" on the Ohio which can now be located as near the village of Cave-in-Rock, in Hardin County. This line was also the southern boundary of St. Clair County, whose eastern boundary angled to the northeast from this point to the mouth of the "Konomic river" or as sometimes called the "Kalamik" or "Calumet," a small stream flowing into the southern bend of Lake Michigan in Lake County, Indiana.

All east of this line was in Knox County. Drawing this line on a map, it is readily seen the territory now Vermilion County, Illinois, by that division lies partly in St. Clair and partly in Knox Counties. The line passes directly through what is now Danville. A later proclamation of Gov. Harrison readjusted the division line between Randolph and St. Clair Counties, but made no change between St. Clair and Knox Counties. This division line remained unchanged until after the organization of the Territory of Illinois in 1809. After the division and organization of the Territory of Illinois in 1809, Nathaniel Pope became secretary and acting governor of the new territory. He at once issued a proclamation continuing St. Clair and Randolph Counties without change of boundaries except that the eastern boundary of each was continued to the eastern boundary of the territory, now the eastern boundary of the state of Illinois.

This gave to Randolph additional territory on the east and to St. Clair, a triangular strip along the southern part and took from it a triangular strip from the northern part of its eastern side, and eliminated Knox County from Illinois Territory. By this change of boundaries the territory now Vermilion County was altogether in St. Clair County, with its county seat at Cahokia on the west side of the state opposite, and a little lower than St. Louis. To go to the county seat would require a journey of nearly two hundred miles.

Since the settlements in Illinois Territory were altogether in the southern part of what is now the state, the division into counties at this time was of necessity to help the people of that part of the territory. So it was that, when Ninian Edwards became governor, he created three new counties in the region bounded on the south and west by the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. A line drawn east from the Mississippi river to the Wabash river along the southern boundary of what is now Madison County was about the northern boundary of settlements, and such a line was made the southern boundary of the new county of Madison. Thus it was

that the territory now Vermilion County became a part of Madison County, with county seat at Palestine, on the Wabash river.

This proclamation of Gov. Edwards was the last in which counties were created in that way. In this year Illinois was raised to the second grade of territorial government, and the creation of new counties and the alterations of county lines devolved, thereafter, upon the territorial legislature. On November 20, 1814, the territorial legislature passed a bill dividing Madison County, and creating Edwards County on the east side thereof. This act made the territory now Vermilion County within, and subject to, the government of Edwards County, with the county seat yet at Palestine. However, there were none within this territory other than the Kickapoo and Pottowatomie Indians to be affected by the change. The year 1816 saw Edwards County very much restricted, and the territory lying north of the line dividing towns 3 and 4 north and east of the third principal meridian, became Crawford County, and the now Vermilion County, inhabited as it was yet with the red man, was in the new County of Crawford, with county seat some miles further up the Wabash at Aurora. There was no change for three years or until the treaty of Edwardsville, in 1819, when Crawford County in its turn was restricted and the new County of Clark was made from its northern part. Clark County was created March 22, and extended from the third principal meridian to the Indiana state line and from its present southern county boundary to the Wisconsin state line on the north. The county seat remained at Aurora.

Although in 1821, Clark County was restricted to make room for Fayette, the division did not effect the section which was being settled about the Vermilion Salines.

This division of Clark County was made because Vandalia had been chosen for the future seat of government of Illinois, and it was considered necessary to surround it with a suitable county. Clark County at that time comprised the present Counties of Clark, Cumberland, Coles, Douglas, Edgar, Champaign, Vermilion, Iroquois, Ford, a part of Livingston, Grundy, Kendall, Kane and McHenry, with all of Kankakee, Will, DuPage, Cook and Lake.

In 1823, Clark County was much reduced in area. It included its present territory and that of Cumberland County, together with about one-half of Coles County. Of its remaining territory the present County of Edgar was created with the same boundaries as it now has. The unorganized territory to the north and west of it was temporarily attached to it for judicial purposes. The early years of settlement on the Vermilion and its tributaries included this period, when this territory was temporarily attached to Edgar County with Paris as county seat. Three years later the population of these settlements had so increased that a new county was created from a part of this "attached" territory and Vermilion County came into being.

By Section I, of the Act of January 18, 1826 (Laws of 1826-7, page 50), it was declared that all that tract of country within the following bounds, to-wit: "Beginning on the state line between Indiana and Illinois, at the northeast corner of Edgar County (the act organizing Edgar County fixes the northern boundary by a line running east and west between townships 16 and 17; thence west with the line dividing townships 16 and 17 to the southwest corner of the township 17 N. of R. 10 east; thence north to the northwest corner of township 22 north;

thence east to the Indiana state line; thence south with that state line to the place of beginning," should constitute a separate county called Vermilion. This description would hold good for Vermilion County as it is now with the exception that it extends the line on the west ten miles into Champaign County and falls short of its northern boundary by six miles. By the seventh section of the act referred to "all that tract of country lying east of R. 6, east of the 3rd principal meridian and north of Vermilion County, as far north as the Illinois and Kankakee rivers" is attached to Vermilion County for judicial purposes. This denotes the restriction of the attached territory of Edgar County to that which was located directly on the west that is now all of Douglas County and that portion of Coles County which was not included in Clark County.

The territory which adjoined Vermilion County on the west at that time but later became Champaign County, and all the country north of its boundary, was temporarily attached to Vermilion county for judicial purposes. The date of the organization of Vermilion County was January, 1826. This attached territory remained the same until January 15, 1831, when Cook County was formed and took a large part of it off. The much discussed question of whether Chicago was ever under the government of Vermilion County can very easily be settled. It has always been a favorite tradition among the older settlers that at one time Chicago was a part of Vermilion County and many are the tales told in evidence of this belief. [This too although one at least of the writers of the history of the county flatly contradicts any such thing.] This idea of Chicago being at any time a part of Vermilion County, comes either from the fact that when Vermilion County was a part of Clark County, all of the territory north of the present southern boundary of that county was a part of it, and Chicago was included in the aforementioned "territory north", or that it is not understood how the northern boundary was changed even before it became attached territory to Edgar County. Clark County, before its limits were restricted, covered all the country from its southern boundary to the Wisconsin state line, but when Edgar County was created the territory north and west of it was attached thereto, but it was bounded on the north by the Illinois and Kankakee rivers. To be yet more exact, the northern limits of this attached territory was a line drawn from about where the city of Kankakee is now located, straight north to a point due east of the southern boundary line of Kane County, and there turned and continued further east to the state line. This line, together with the Illinois river, furnishes the eastern and southern boundary of the territory attached to the new county of Fulton, and restricted, materially, the attached territory of Edgar and later Vermilion Counties. Examining the territory below this line it is evident that Chicago was never within the limits of Vermilion County, and yet, this area does include a part of the present Cook County, and a portion of the southern part of Chicago, and of course was at one time under the government of said county. The taxes Sheriff Reed paid out of his own pocket rather than collect, were doubtless levied on that portion of what is now Cook County, lying south of the line drawn north of Fort Dearborn.

In 1833, Champaign County was created from unorganized territory west of Vermilion County and also, a portion of the same. This reduced Vermilion County on the west ten miles its entire length. The same year Iroquois County

was created and the act extended the northern boundary of Vermilion County six miles, making it what it is now.

It was while Vermilion County was a part of Clark and the county seat was at Aurora that the first permanent settlement was made at the Salt Springs, on the Vermilion river. Vermilion County was created January, 1826, and its seat of justice was located at the mouth of the North Fork of the Big Vermilion, in January, 1827.

For the purpose of the regulation of official fees and salaries, the counties of Illinois are divided into three classes: Those of not more than 25,000 population are of the first class, those of more than 25,000 population belong to the second class, and those of more than 100,000 population belong to the third class. Cook County is the only one in this class in the state. Vermilion County had a population, in 1900, of 65,635, and the last census (1910) gives it.

The powers of a county as a body politic and corporate are exercised by the county board which in counties under township organization consists of the supervisors from the several townships of the county. Vermilion County voted township organization in 1851.

Vermilion County was so named from the river of that name which in its principal branches flows through the county and takes its peculiar spelling.

CHAPTER XIII.

PHYSICAL FEATURES OF VERMILION COUNTY.

TOPOGRAPHY — DRAINAGE — RELIEF — PRAIRIES — RIDGES — VALLEYS — GEOLOGY
—ROCKS SELDOM APPEAR AT SURFACE—COAL-BEDS—MORAINES—VERMILION
COUNTY BELONGS TO THE ILLINOIS GLACIAL LOBE—THE CHAMPAIGN MORAINES
—OIL WELL DUG AT DANVILLE WATER-WORKS—WELL DUG FOR SAME PURPOSE
AT DANVILLE JUNCTION—ALTITUDE—EXTREME WEATHER EXPERIENCED.

Vermilion County is located on the eastern border of Illinois about half way between the northern and southern boundary of the state. It is rectangular in shape being 22 miles in width, and 42 miles in length, embracing 880 square miles, or 562,200 acres of land. It lies between the parallels of latitude 40° to 41° north and in longitude 87° to 88° west.

The most of it lies within the so-called "Danville Quadrangle" which extends but one and one half miles beyond the eastern boundary of the county. Vermilion County is drained by tributaries of the Wabash river, which in turn drain into the Ohio river, and thence into the Mississippi river. The Vermilion river drains the entire territory of Vermilion County, with the exception of a small part in the south and east borders. When it is said that the Vermilion river drains the entire county, no account is made of the separate forks, but it is assumed that the Vermilion river includes all the North Fork, the Middle Fork, and the Salt Fork.

The Salt Fork of the Big Vermilion river runs through the center of the county, while the Middle Fork, which runs more to the northwest, joins it and forms the Big Vermilion proper. The North Fork runs from the north and northeast and empties into the main stream at where Danville is located. The Little Vermilion flows easterly through the southern part of the county. In its beginning this stream is little more than a prairie drain, but as it flows on down, it grows of more importance. When the early settlers first came they found from one to three miles of timber lining the bank. Both Middle and South Forks had much timber along their banks for a dozen miles above their union in the Big Vermilion, but toward their source there were never more than scattering groves. There are high banks and bluffs along the streams after they enter the timber, with bottoms wider where they have cut through the softer beds of rock, and narrower where they have encountered the harder sandstone. The surface of the county is quite diversified.

The prairies or level surface of the county is relieved by ridges which rise above the general level and river valleys cut into the plain. Prairies are prominent south and west of the Vermilion river, and east as far north as Danville. A small area of prairie is to be found in the vicinity of Batestown and Hillery, and to the north and west of there the surface extends into a broad expanse of prairie.

A low, broad ridge crosses the prairie from the northeast to the southwest. The elevation is ninety degrees above the prairie in the vicinity of Danville. As seen from the south this ridge is prominent, but from the north it appears nearly on prairie level. The valleys, carved by the Vermilion river and its forks cross both prairie and ridge. These valleys have destroyed valuable farming lands and prove barriers to transportation, but on the other hand have opened excellent geological sections in which are shown beds of coal which makes this region important economically. These valleys are generally broad, but as observed above, sometimes swell into broad amphitheaters a mile or more in width where they have cut through the softer beds of rock. These valleys vary in depth from 50 ft. to 100 ft. with steep walls sometimes precipitous. The prairies have a black, dense, mucky soil, of variable depth, underlaid in some case by a tough brown-clay subsoil. It is admirably adapted to cultivation and is but little affected by wet weather, or drought. Good supplies of water are obtained at from fifteen to fifty feet. The northwest part of the county is included in the famous artesian region of Eastern Illinois, and wells sunk in this part of Vermilion County yield a never-failing supply of water at a depth of thirty to one hundred feet.

Rocks in the soil seldom appear at the surface. They are generally so deeply covered with clay and sand that their presence is not appreciated. Only drilling will reveal them. South of the latitude of Danville, rocks may be seen in bluffs along streams, in almost perpendicular cliffs of shale or shaly sandstone. These perpendicular cliffs often reveal coal beds. The entire rock series belong to a portion of the geologic column known as Carboniferous system. Beneath the coal bearing rocks are the heavy beds of limestone. The coal bearing rocks occupy a broad, shallow, syncline, the center of which is some distance southwest of Danville. The Rock formation have a very gentle dip southwesterly toward the center of the basin.

The history of this rock formation is easily read in these bluffs. After the carboniferous rocks were deposited in some body of water, the crust of the earth was raised in the Appalachian region, and this area became dry land. In this condition it was subjected to the varying vicissitudes of a land surface for many geological periods, but there is little to show the changes through which it passes. Before the advent of the great ice sheet this section was reduced to a gently rolling country with a relief of less than 200 ft. with broad valleys and gentle slopes, whose typography resembled that of southern Indiana beyond the limit of glacial ice. That there was not one ice advance but several is proven in the presence of Moraines, or massive ridges of drift built up by the ice at its margin. These ridges recur at frequent intervals as in passing north from extreme edge of given sheets of drift, and marks places of halting, and perhaps of readvance which interrupted the melting away of the ice field.

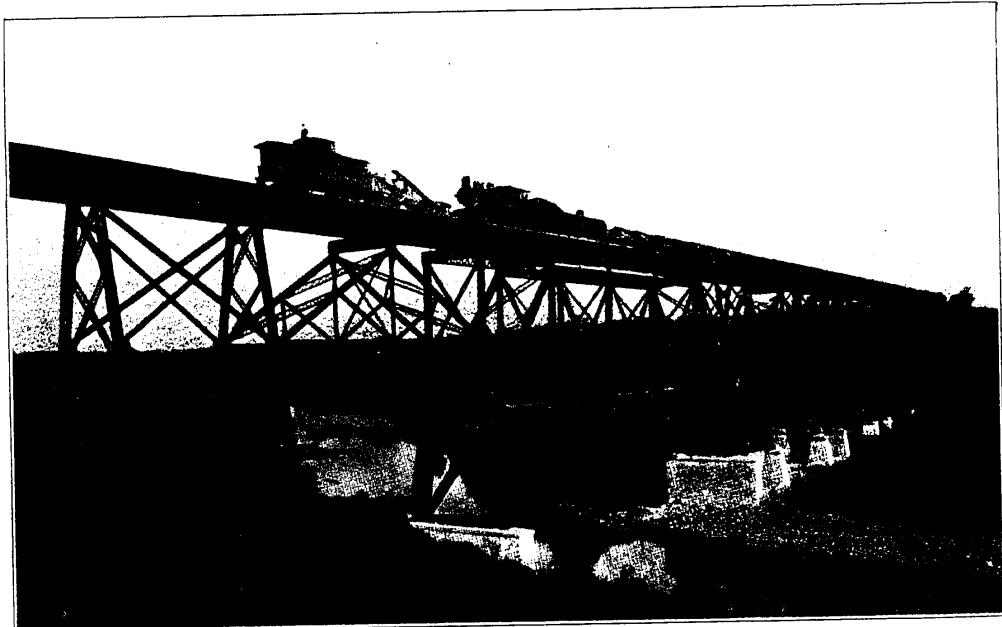
The Morainic ridges have in some cases been formed in rapid succession and constitute a Morainic system. In Illinois there is a decided tendency to such grouping of Morainic ridges. The sheet of drift formed by each of the ice invasions, the soils and weathered zones, formed between the drift sheets and the Moraines, and morainic systems, of each drift sheet, have received geographic names from the locations where they are well displayed, in conformity with the prevailing custom of naming the indurated rock formation. Vermilion County belongs to the Illinoian drift sheet which extends, apparently to the glacial boundary in western Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois and forms the eastern border of the driftless area in southern Wisconsin and northwestern Illinois. This area extends but a few miles west of the Mississippi river. In this region it apparently composes the basal portion of the drift. Beside its geological location in the Illinois glacial lobe, Vermilion County is also known as a part of the Champaign Morianic system. This system includes a series of small drift ridges that are ill defined the nearer they approach the Danville Quadrangle. It is doubtful if the oscillations of the ice front were of great consequence in this region. It is believed that several systems did not have rhythmic development, the halts seem to have been irregular.

All the rocks at the surface in this region belong to coal measures. Vermilion County is but a very small part of the famous Indiana and Illinois coal field and it does not, in its entirety, belong to this coal field. It is but the extreme northwest border of the coal field. The coal production of Vermilion County will receive due attention in another chapter of this volume.

In about 1886 a notion became popular that oil could be found in the vicinity of Danville, and two attempts were made to discover that source of wealth. Two wells were sunk, and although no oil was discovered these two occasions of deep drilling furnished information upon which to base an idea of the geologic formation of this region. Records were kept, and have been preserved, as follows:

The well drilled at the Water Works records conditions as follows:

	Thickness of stratum in ft.	Depth in ft.
1. Soil	10	10
2. Soapstone	285	295
3. Coarse sandstone	10	305
4. Soapstone	10	315
5. Sandstone	100	415
6. Soapstone	15	430
7. Gray sandstone	10	440
8. Blue sandy shale.....	80	520
9. Quartz or pebble rock.....	10	530
10. Sandy shale	145	675
11. Hard gray limestone	30	705
12. Sandstone	30	735
13. Blue clay shale	30	765
14. Pebble or flint rock	30	795



BRIDGE ACROSS THE VERMILION RIVER NEAR DANVILLE
HIGHEST BRIDGE IN ILLINOIS

15.	Hard blue shale.....	90	885
16.	Gray sandstone	40	925
17.	Hard blue shale	45	970
	Light green shale	30	1,000
18.	Black slate	75	1,075
19.	Limestone	74	1,149

And the well drilled at the Junction makes the following record:

		Thickness of stratum in ft.	Depth in ft.
1.	Glacial drift	175	175
2.	Hard slate and coal	6	181
3.	Drab soapstone	20	201
	Dark blue soapstone	42	243
4.	Coarse white sandstone	10	253
5.	Coal	6	259
6.	Blue clay or soapstone	75	334
7.	Hard flinty rock	2	336
8.	Dark blue slate	35	371
9.	Brown soapstone	20	391
	Red clay	11	402
10.	Soft white sandstone	68	470
11.	Red clay	20	490
12.	Coarse brown sandstone	27	517
	Fine brown sandstone	40	557
	Fine white sandstone	30	587
13.	Dark blue clay	73	660
14.	Hard pebble rock	10	670
15.	Fine white clay	36	706
16.	Hard pebble rock	6	712
17.	Dark blue shale	96	808
	Soft light blue shale	65	873
	Soft dark blue shale	18	891
18.	Red shale	62	953
19.	Light green shale	57	1,010
20.	Hard gray limestone	25	1,035
21.	Black slate	90	1,125
22.	Hard gray limestone	51	1,176
	Coarse soft limestone	10	1,186
23.	White and dark limestone	160	1,346
	Soft white limestone	12	1,358
	Light and dark limestone	342	1,700
24.	White limestone	35	1,735
	Clay shale	110	1,845

Some years ago the Illinois State Laboratory of Natural History at Champaign, Illinois, issued a bulletin giving a list of altitudes in the state. From this

publication a correct idea of almost every point in Vermilion County can be obtained. This result of a complete and careful survey of Vermilion County can be had as follows:

Town	Location by R. R.	Elevation above the sea by ft.
Allerton, C. & E. I. R. R.		710
Alvin, C. & E. I. R. R.		662
Archie, C. & O. R. R. R.		665
Armstrong, I. C. R. R.		708
Bismarck, C. & E. I. R. R.		667
Brewer, C. & E. I. R. R.		647
Catlin, Wabash R. R.		668
Chaneyville, L. E. & W. R. R.		722
Comfort, C. & E. I. R. R.		692
Danville, C. & E. I. R. R.		597
Danville Junction, C. & E. I. R. R.		611
Diamond Mines, C. C. C. & St. L.		640
East Lynn, L. E. & W. R. R.		693
Fairmount, Wabash R. R.		655
Fishers, C. & E. I. R. R.		670
Fithian, C. C. C. & St. L.		663
Georgetown, C. C. C. & St. L.		672
Grape Creek, C. & E. I. R. R.		538
Henning, I. C. R. R.		695
Hillery, C. C. C. & St. L.		631
Hooperston, C. & E. I. R. R.		716
Humrick, T. St. L. & K. Cy.		645
Indianola, C. & E. I. R. R.		674
Locetts, C. & E. I. R. R.		688
Mission Mines, C. C. C. & St. L.		635
Muncie, C. C. C. & St. L.		642
Oakwood, C. C. C. & St. L.		646
Potomac, I. C. R. R.		682
Rankin, L. E. & W. R. R.		716
Rayville, I. C. R. R.		689
Ridge Farm, C. C. C. & St. L.		685
Rossville, C. & E. I. R. R.		702
Sandusky, C. & E. I. R. R.		721
Sidell, C. & E. I. R. R.		680
Thomas, I. C. R. R.		702
Tilton, C. C. C. & St. L.		649
Vermilion Grove, C. C. C. & St. L.		661
West Newell, C. & E. I. R. R.		687
Westville, C. & E. I. R. R.		669

Bixby, at elevation of 730, Blount at one of 75, Blue Grass at 703, Charity at 760, Glenburn at 600, Henrietta at 690, Higginsville at 630, Hope at 740. Mis-

sion Fields at 607, Pilot at 730, Snider at 680, and Vernal at 670, were all observed by I. J. Stoddard, the other observations made by him were as follows:

Sec. 32, T. 23 N., R. 13 W.....	770
Sec. 32, T. 23 N., R. 12 W.....	750
Sec. 25, T. 23 N., R. 11 W.....	670
Sec. 33, T. 18 N., R. 13 W.....	680
Sec. 34, T. 18 N., R. 14 W.....	690
Sec. 13, T. 18 N., R. 11 W.....	650

By the above record it is seen that the highest point in Vermilion County is at Sec. 32, T. 23N., R. 13W., and the lowest is at Grape Creek, where it is but 538 feet above the level of the sea while at Danville it is but 59 feet higher. At Charity the elevation but 10 feet lower than at the highest point and at Hope it is not much less since it is 740 feet.

Vermilion County is not subject to extremes of weather as is found in some sections. There are some instances on record, however, of extremes which bear notice. One of these is the deep snow of the winter of 1830-31, which gave this season the reputation of being one of great severity, and occasioned much suffering. This snow, however, did not all fall at once but was the accumulation of many falling the one on top of the preceding one. These were repeated over and over again without any melting of the snow until the ground was so completely hidden that there was great suffering in consequence. The cattle could not receive the care needed and hundreds died in consequence. This was the winter in which the elder Partlow died and his sons became so discouraged that they went back to Kentucky. The deer were driven away to seek food or were starved in such great numbers that they were never so plenty in this region. Another extreme of weather is recorded in the "cold Tuesday" of December 16, 1836. Enoch Kingsbury wrote a letter, sometime in the fifties, telling his remembrance of that day which has been preserved and is hereby given entire.

"The weather on Monday, December 16, 1836, was quite warm and fast softening the heavy snow. On Tuesday it began to rain before day and continued until four in the afternoon, at which time the ground was covered with water and melting snow. All the small streams were very full and the large ones rapidly rising.

"At this crisis there arose a large and tumultuous looking cloud in the west, with a rumbling noise. On its approach everything congealed. In less than five minutes it changed a warm atmosphere to one of intense cold, and flowing water to ice. One says that he started his horse into a gallop in the mud and water and on going a quarter of a mile, he was bounding over ice and frozen ground. Another says that in an hour after the change he passed over a stream of two feet deep on ice, which actually froze solid to the bottom and remained so until Spring. The North Fork where it was rapid and so full of water as to overflow its bottoms, froze over so solid that night that horses crossed the next morning, and it was thus with all the streams.

"Mr. Alvin Gilbert, with his men, was crossing the prairie from Bicknells (about where Rossville is located now) to Sugar Creek, with a large drove of

hogs. Before the cloud came over them the hogs and horses showed the greatest alarm and an apprehension of danger. As it actually came upon them, the hogs refusing to go any further, began to pile themselves in one vast heap as their best defense on the open prairie. During the night half a dozen of them perished, and those on the outside were so frozen they had to be cut loose. About twelve others died on their way to Chicago in consequence of their being badly frozen, while many others lost large pieces of their flesh.

"Mr. Gilbert and his men rode five or six miles distant, all of them having fingers, toes or ears frozen, and the harness so frozen that it could not be unhitched from the wagon, and scarcely from the horses.

"Two men riding across the same prairie a little further to the west, came to a stream so wide and deep they could not cross it. The dreary night came on, and after exercising in vain, they killed one horse, rolled his back to the wind, took out his entrails, and thrust in their hands and feet, while they lay upon them. And so they would have used the other horse, but for the loss of their knife. Mr. Frame, the younger and more thinly clad, froze to death, before morning. The other mounted the other horse and rode over the ice for five miles but was badly frozen before he reached a house.

"How general the change was is not known, but the Illinois river, as two men in a boat were crossing it, froze in and they exercised to save their lives until the ice was thick enough to bear them up. The dog that was with them froze to death. Another evidence of unusual weather is recorded in about the same year, as the time the trees were all killed by unexpected extreme cold in the spring. The same thing occurred in 1910, seventy-five years afterward. It is, of course, only a coincident that it is at the date of the return of the Halley's comet. Another extreme of cold was in the sixties at the first of January.

CHAPTER XIV.

EARLY GROWTH.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONERS' COURT AT THE RESIDENCE OF JAMES BUTLER—AMOS WILLIAMS APPOINTED CLERK—AT THE SECOND MEETING THE COUNTY WAS DIVIDED INTO TWO TOWNSHIPS—FIRST GRAND JURY—WILLIAM REED APPOINTED ASSESSOR—AT NEXT SESSION CERTAIN PROPERTY WAS TAXED—COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED TO LOCATE COUNTY SEAT—PROVISIONS OF THE ACT ESTABLISHING VERMILION COUNTY—LOCATION OF THE COUNTY SEAT AT THE SALT WORKS—MAJOR VANCE REFUSED TO GIVE UP LEASE—NEW COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED TO LOCATE COUNTY SEAT—DENMARK DESIROUS OF ITS LOCATION THERE—GUY W. SMITH AND DAN BECKWITH GIVE LAND AT MOUTH OF NORTH FORK OF THE VERMILION RIVER—PRESENT LOCATION SELECTED—LOTS SOLD APRIL 10, 1827—NAME OF THE NEW TOWN—FIRST PUBLIC BUILDING THE STRAY POUND—FIRST COURT HOUSE—NEW COURT HOUSE BEGUN IN 1832—NAVIGATION OF THE BIG VERMILION RIVER—RAFTS AND FLAT-BOATS CARRIED PRODUCE DOWN THE VERMILION RIVER—CONDITION OF DANVILLE AS LATE AS 1836—DENMARK—NORTHEAST PART OF THE COUNTY—THE FERRY ACROSS THE BIG VERMILION—PRODUCE HAULED TO CHICAGO—COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS—GROWTH OF DIFFERENT SETTLEMENTS.

The official life of Vermilion County began at Butler's Point, by the holding of the first Commissioners' Court at the residence of James Butler, March 6, 1826. Two members of this Court, James Butler and Achilles Morgan, were present. The third member, John B. Alexander, was not present until the second session of the court. These Commissioners had been elected under the enabling act of the state legislature for the organization of Vermilion County. This Court appointed Amos Williams, Clerk, and Charles Martin, Constable. John B. Alexander had just come from living in Paris, in Edgar County, where Amos Williams had served the county acceptably as clerk, and it doubtless was his adaptability to the duties of this office known by Mr. Alexander that he was made clerk of Vermilion County. A man who could write the clear hand and make the neat showing of his books as the records of his term testify to this day, was unusual, and desired in public office. At the next meeting of the court held at the same place less than two weeks after, the county was divided into two townships. The portion south of town 18, was called Carroll township and that north of this line was to be called Ripley township. Why this division, is unknown and cannot be ascertained. Township organization itself originally was an institution of New England, and was not adopted in Illinois until after the northern part of the state was settled with people from the east, and their influence could

be felt. Maybe this division was due to the influence of James Butler, who was lately a citizen of Vermont.

A grand jury was selected at this second meeting of the Court. The names on record comprising that first Grand Jury are as follows: John Haworth, Henry Canady, Barnett Starr, Robert Dixon, Edward Doyle, John Cassidy, James McClewer, Alexander McDonald, Henry Johnson, Henry Martin, Jonathan Haworth, William Haworth, Jacob Brazelton, Peleg Spencer, Sr., Isaac M. Howard, Robert Tricle, John Current, John Lamm, Francis Whitcomb, Amos Woodin, Jesse Gilbert, Cyrus Douglass, Harvey Luddington and George Beckwith. William Reed was appointed assessor.

At the next Commissioners' Court, June 5, 1826, an order for the payment of \$1.00 was granted in favor of Charles Martin for his attendance at the March term of Circuit Court as constable. This was the first money paid out by the county. At this session, certain property was made subject to a tax of one per cent. This property included "horses, and cattle over the age of three years, watches, clocks, pleasure carriages and stock in trade."

September 4, 1826, a new Commissioners' Court was organized. The members newly elected were Achilles Morgan, Asa Elliott and James McClewer. The next meeting of the Court was yet held at the residence of James Butler. It was on December 11, 1826. Here the record shows that "William Reed, this day appeared in Court and produced his tax book, by which the levy of the year 1826 appears to be \$205.59 in state paper, on which he claims a deduction for delinquents of \$7.03 and also 7½ per cent for collecting (\$14.89) leaving \$183.07, which is equal to \$91.83 in specie."

On the first Monday of June, 1827, the Commissioners met at the house of Asa Elliott and on the first Monday of September following, the Court met at the county seat at the home of Amos Williams in Danville. The second section of the act for establishing Vermilion County, made provision for the location of the county seat, by appointing "John Boyd, and Joel Phelps, of Crawford County and Samuel Prevo of Clark County, as Commissioners to meet at the house of James Butler on the second Monday of March, then next; and, after taking oath for a faithful discharge of their trust, to examine for, and determine on, a place for the permanent seat of justice of the county, taking into consideration the convenience of the people, the situation of the settlement, with an eye to the future population and eligibility of the place." The act further required that "the owner of the land selected as the County Seat should donate and convey the same to the county in a quantity not less than twenty acres in a square form, and not more than twice as wide, to be laid off in lots and to be sold by the County Commissioners for the purpose of erecting public buildings. In case of refusal of the owner to donate the required land the Commissioners were required to locate the County Seat, on the land of some other person who would make the donation contemplated by the act." A further provision was made that, in the event the County Seat was located within the bounds of the Saline reservation, on the Big Vermilion river, the County Commissioners should, as soon as practicable, purchase of the state, the quarter or half section designated for the use of the county. The Saline Lands had, by act of Congress become the property of the state. The same act provided

also that "all Courts should be held at the house of James Butler until public buildings should be erected for the purpose, unless changed to another place by order of the County Commissioners."

These three Commissioners met, made a superficial examination of the county and sent in a report. They had located the County Seat some six miles west of the North Fork of the Vermilion river and back a distance from the Salt Fork. The selection was a most unfortunate one. The surface of the ground here was cold and flat clay, which made drainage difficult if not impossible. Wells could hardly be dug and a city never could have been built upon such a site. There surely was little thought spent in its selection. Fortunately Major John Vance had leased the Salt Works for a term of years, and refused to yield his rights. The citizens of the entire territory, now Vermilion County, were dissatisfied, and sent a remonstrance to the legislature, coupling with it a prayer for the removal of the County Seat to a more favorable location. Because of this plea, the General Assembly of 1826-27 passed an act December 1827, which in its preamble reads: "Whereas the seat of justice of Vermilion County has been located by the Commissioners appointed at the last session on land which was then and is now, leased by the Governor for a term of years to certain persons for the manufacture of salt; and whereas, the said lessees are unwilling to surrender the same or any part, for the use of the county, in consequence of which, no improvements can be made thereon, and the citizen having petitioned for its removal, and for remedy whereof, it was enacted that William Morgan, Zachariah Peters, and John Kirkpatrick, of Sangamon County, be declared Commissioners, to explore the county and designate the place, which, on being located should forever remain the permanent seat of justice of Vermilion County."

Up to this time no settlement had been made on the Big Vermilion river at the mouth of the North Fork, on the site of the old Indian village of Pianke-shaw. Denmark was an ambitious town to the north and was desirous for the County Seat, and would have secured it could the Commissioners have agreed.

This land at the mouth of the North Fork, had been entered by certain people among them being Dan Beckwith, who lived at the Salt Works and was one of the men who claimed its discovery. Guy Smith was another who had entered land at this place. Together these two men made an offer to donate to the Commissioners, the required amount of land and after due deliberation this offer was accepted, and the location was decided in the report sent in by the Commissioners, dated January 31, 1827, that in their opinion, "the lands donated by Guy W. Smith and Dan W. Beckwith, near the mouth of the North Fork of the Vermilion river, was the most suitable place in the county for such county seat." Guy Smith's donation was 60 acres and Dan Beckwith's 20 acres.

The report of these Commissioners being accepted, the deed conveying the donated land was executed by Guy W. Smith and Dan Beckwith, and the board of County Commissioners ordered the land surveyed, and laid off in town lots. The survey was made by Dan Beckwith, who was the County Surveyor, and was laid off in town lots. According to instruction, there were one hundred lots. April 10, 1827, was the day upon which the lots were to be offered for sale. The sale had been advertised in the Intelligencer, published at Vandalia and an

Indianapolis paper. They were the nearest papers to be found. The sale was an odd sight. The bluffs along the rivers and Stony creek were a mass of under-brush. There was no sign of a prospective city, and many amusing stories are even yet told of killing rattle snakes on the day of the sale.

The fact of the appointment of Amos Williams as clerk of the court the year previous to this sale has already been mentioned. During this year the friendship between him and Dan Beckwith had grown and possibly been made more deep because they had married sisters. How be it Amos Williams and Dan Beckwith were devoted friends and it is reasonable to assume that they found opportunity to help each other when the county seat was being located. Amos Williams lived at Butler's Point the year after he became the clerk of the court but they saw much of each other and together planned to secure the location of the seat of justice where it was placed. Dan Beckwith was a man tall of stature and of commanding presence while his friend was a small man with a serious view of life. Although the one man stood physically above the other he was very apt to defer to his opinion and consider his wishes, acting on his clear and just decisions. The two men were together the day of the sale, as was apt to be the case when opportunity made such companionship possible. The advertisement in the Illinois Intellegencer brought many to bid on the lots. Beside this word had been passed around throughout the country, each man telling his neighbor, and many present made the bidding lively. Harvey Luddington acted as auctioneer. Forty-two lots were sold for which the county received the sum of \$922.

The lots averaged about \$22 each. Since these lots were largely in the vicinity of the public square, it is a matter of interest to compare these prices with the value of the same lots at the present time. After the town was surveyed the county commissioners, who at that time were Achilles Morgan, Asa Elliott and James McClewer, with Amos Williams as clerk, proceeded to discuss its name.

Amos Williams talked the matter over with Dan Beckwith, so the story runs, when Williamsburg, Smithville and other names were mentioned; all at once Amos Williams turned to his stalwart friend and, laying his hand on the tall man's shoulder said, "Dan, it shall have your name. Why not? You have done all the work. We will call it Danville." And Danville it became and has always remained in honor of the man, not so much who had the land to give for its location but who had the friendship of a man whose sentiment caused him to perpetuate the memory of his friend by naming the new town for him.

The public building in the county was the Stray Pound. This was erected in December 1827. It was built 40 ft. square, of good sound white oak, posts 4 by 8 in. set firmly 2½ ft. in the ground. The enclosure was 6½ ft. high, made "in such a manner as to keep out hogs, etc." Phillip Stanford erected this enclosure at a cost of \$99.3¾ to the county. Amos Williams was appointed keeper of the Stray Pound.

The next public building was the jail. It was built of heavy oak timbers, 17 by 29 ft. The space of the interior was divided into a criminal department and a debtors' department. This jail was located on the block southeast of the Public Square. Court met at the house of Amos Williams until the county



FIRST STORE BUILDING IN DANVILLE
PALMER NATIONAL BANK BUILT ON SITE OF FIRST STORE

bought the log house built by Reed which stood on a lot now occupied by the Woodbury drug store on the south side of West Main street near Vermilion. This building was one story high, with a space for a low attic above, about 16 ft. square, made of heavy logs, hewn inside and out. The county bought this with the expectation of fitting it up for public use. The plan was not carried out, however. In the latter part of 1828, proposals were solicited for the building of a temporary court house, and also proposals for the building of a permanent court house. Hezekiah Cunningham bought the building on the Main street lot, together with the lot, and agreed to provide the county for the term of two years (unless the new court house could be built before that time), with a place for holding court, in the upper story of the large frame building he and Murphy had erected on the southwest corner of the Public Square. In December, 1831, notice was given that bids would be received at next term of court for a court house. The new court house was begun in 1832. Gurdon S. Hubbard was the contractor.

The selection of the site of Danville as the county seat attracted settlers to this place, but not until its resources in coal land, and the railroads were established were its possibilities as a future city revealed. Situated as it was a dozen miles from the Wabash river, there was no water way to connect it with markets no matter how much could be raised to market. Attempts were made to utilize the Big Vermilion river but to little purpose. An act of Congress late in the twenties declared this river navigable as far as the range line, one and one-half miles west of Danville, but it was impossible to prove this by the river itself. Mr. John Coleman had built a mill dam at Eugene, Indiana, and when the Illinois legislature determined upon improving the navigation of the Big Vermilion, the Court of Vermilion County made the following order which is recorded in Book A, in the County Records of 1829, page 80:

"Ordered, that the Clerk of this Court inform John M. Coleman, of Vermilion County, Indiana, that the obstruction of the navigation of the Big Vermilion River, by his mill dam, across said stream is much in damage, of the citizens of this county, and as the legislature of the state have appointed funds for the improvement of the navigation of the Big Vermilion River, within this state, therefore it will be necessary for you to cause a good, safe and convenient passage at your mill, up and down said stream within six months of the date hereof, otherwise the legal course of law will be resorted to; and that Peleg Spencer be the bearer of this notification." Mr. Coleman refusing to do anything, William Kidd and James Clyman were authorized to proceed against him by an indictment and prosecution in the courts of Indiana. The following year they were authorized to "use such measures as they may think advantageous to the county and the citizens thereof."

Nothing was done, however, and the year following this the county offered a premium of \$50 to the first captain who should land a steamboat opposite the town of Danville. A suit was instituted in the Indiana Circuit Court, by agents of the county and the next year Gurdon S. Hubbard, with two other men waited upon the Indiana legislature relative to the same matter. All that ever was accomplished, however, was a decree to the effect that Coleman should make a

lock for the passage of flat boats and barges through his dam. Not being particularly inclined to accommodate those who had given him so much trouble, he merely filled the conditions of the decision by making a lock of his flood gate, which was quite a narrow passage and ran under his mill.

For several years rafts and flat boats were passed down the river from Danville to the Wabash, passing the narrow boats through the lock in the dam, when the water was too low to pass over the dam in safety. These boats were built about 60 ft. long. They were manned by a steersman and two oarsmen. They were loaded with produce and taken to New Orleans, and sold, boat, cargo and all for what they might bring. The cargo consisted of flour, corn, pork and live hogs and poultry, hoop-poles, baled hay and, in short, any thing salable. The hogs and poultry were not fully fattened when put on board, but became so on the trip, which lasted about six weeks. This time included numerous stoppings at points along the Mississippi river, for trading with merchants and planters. When the boats and cargo were sold for what they would bring, the men returned, some on foot, some having bought mules or horses, but all taking care in choosing their route. Great precaution had to be taken lest the traveler fell into the hands of the banditti which infested the banks of the river, and to the end of avoiding trouble, every one kept well back from their haunts. Many men who lived in Vermilion County and the adjoining counties in Indiana, have proudly told of their experiences on trips to New Orleans and return. The last boat that passed out from Danville was in 1852 and was sent out by Colonel Gilbert. In this way a market was made for produce that was to be sold here. That which was to be brought in must come from the east and had to be carried by way of the Ohio river to the mouth of the Wabash river, thence upstream to Perrysville or perhaps Covington, Indiana, and be hauled from the river to Danville. The navigation of the Vermilion river was never satisfactory other than on paper. In 1836, two Chicago men, Amando D. Higgins and Marcus C. Stearns, began a speculation in Vermilion County, based upon the navigation of the Vermilion river. They entered some land and bought other at a nominal price and proceeded to lay it out in town lots, recording it as "Vermilion Rapids."

This plat was made to show both sides of the river and the stream appeared to be about ten rods wide at this point. To know the exact location of this town, it is needed to understand that it is now known as Higginsville, in Blount township. The "rapids" were the main feature of this speculation since much matter could be made of the fact that no boat could pass beyond them. The impression was given that the Vermilion river was a water-way of importance and was navigable to this point, but beyond this the "rapids" kept boats from going. That this town would be at the head of navigation of the Vermilion river, that along the river front of this town, boats could take on the produce of the rich farming lands for miles around, and to this town the merchandise of foreign lands would be brought. The promise of direct communication with New Orleans, Cuba and all the ports of Europe, seemed reasonable when this prospective city was viewed from paper. The rapids, unless removed by government authority and appropriation, would always remain a barrier to extending navi-

gation further up stream. "Vermilion Rapids" promised to be the head of navigation for all time.

This might have netted the speculators much money had the plat been put upon the market sooner, just as many no more to be commended speculations did. The platting of this town was done just before the financial crash of 1837, and by the time Mr. Higgins reached New York, the land was utterly valueless. The account of this speculation only finds a place in this chapter on account of the stress put upon the navigation of the Vermilion river years after it could be depended upon even in places where there was some water. It is not an instance of early growth.

A number of buildings were put up within the county seat in the years immediately following its location. These were at best but primitive log cabins. The location of Danville admitted of no other source of livelihood than trade with the Indians. Gurdon Hubbard had the principal trade, while Dan Beckwith and James Clymer carried on a more limited barter of this kind. A small space around what was made the Public Square was cleared of hazel brush, and rattlesnakes, but outside of this, the dense brush covered the entire territory up to the timber along the Big Vermilion river on the south, the North Fork on the west, and Stony creek on the east. So destitute of means to get a living in the immediate surroundings were the people in this town which was made the county seat before it had even come into existence, they were drawn away from home to find work elsewhere; cutting hazel brush and killing rattlesnakes were neither lucrative employments. Henry Harbaugh is one of the oldest men in Vermilion County, claiming to have been born in 1804. He came to Danville first in 1836 and gives a vivid picture of the place at that time. He is yet, in both body and mind, well preserved and recalls affairs of the county at that time, clearly and accurately. He tells how he left Cincinnati by the steamboat "Utah, which was bound for Perrysville, Indiana." He came down the Ohio river to the mouth of the Wabash river, and thence up that river to Perrysville. Here leaving the boat, he walked across to Danville, Illinois. The impression made upon him by Vermilion County's seat of justice is well given in his own words:—"Well, Danville was a poor town. It was the miserablest town I ever did see. I did not want to stay here. Why nobody wanted to stay here. There was nothing but hazel brush. Many of the cabins which had been built were abandoned, while those who owned them had gone to the edge of the timber to herd their stock and raise something to eat. Danville was most all hazel brush and deserted log cabins."

Mr. Harbaugh goes on to tell his eagerness to leave Danville to the extent that he continued his walk two miles along the North Fork to Denmark, a town up that stream which ten years before this time had been a competitor of Danville in determining the location of the county seat. It was a promising town at the time of the fight for the honor, but had not grown much during the interim, and now was found to be the resort of rowdies. The public house which yet carried the sign of good food was nothing but a bar, and its patronage was a set of rowdies. Mr. Harbaugh's experience at this place was such that

he found that flight was the better part of valor, and he hastily took himself on toward the prospective town of "Vermilion Rapids," afterward the better known town of Higginsville.

At that time the town was only in prospect built, as it proposed to be on a great scale, but its fame had spread abroad and here Mr. Harbaugh located and spent his life.

Denmark had its beginning as a town in about 1823 or 4, when Seymour Treat built a mill at that place. The exact time of building this mill is not known, but record is made that in 1826, the mill had been running for several years. This was a saw-mill and a corn-cracker combined. Treat was also a blacksmith at Denmark. The prosperity of Denmark did not outlast the first decade of life in Vermilion County.

It was in 1828 that the first settlement was made in the northwest part of the county. This settlement was made by Mr. Partlow, with his son-in-law, Asa Brown, who came from Kentucky. There were four sons, all of whom were married, who came with their father. These sons were Samuel, James, Reuben and John. They built a cabin at what was afterward known as Merrills Point and the sons took up land to the south at where Armstrong was located. John and James were licensed preachers. They brought a number of cattle with them and every thing looked promising when the second year was a most severe winter. This was the winter of the deep snow when one snow was not melted until another came, until the amount on the ground was a matter of record.

Mr. and Mrs. Partlow, the father and mother, both died and the others became discouraged. The snow was so deep that the cattle died from lack of food and care, there was no way to reach a market, and the sons all went back to Kentucky as soon as the weather permitted. Asa Brown, the son-in-law, alone remained in this first settlement. They returned later, however.

In 1827, the Juvinalls and Morgan Rees settled just south of the Partlows and with others coming, partly, at least, settled this part of the country. Among these new comers were the McGees and Stephen Griffith. Samuel Bloomfield, who had come into the county in 1823, and settled at Quakers Point, moved to this neighborhood on the Middle Fork, in 1829. He had entered a farm in this more newly settled part of the county and left the older farm to improve the new one. In 1828, Absolom Collison came into this neighborhood. He was a friend of the Juvinalls, coming from their old home in Ohio. Mr. Chenowet came into this neighborhood the same year and the following one, his daughter Mary became Absolom Collison's wife. The Atwoods came to a point further down the river, in 1829. Although no permanent settlement was made nor any town established, these families coming into the northeast part of the county gave impetus to its growth.

Samuel Copeland came to the Middle Fork in 1828, and settled further to the south than did the Atwoods when they came the following year. When he came he found Ware Long living to the east of him in the timber. Soon Amos Howard, Mr. Shoky and Mr. Priest came and settled to the south of Copeland, forming what was long called the Howard neighborhood. John Johns settled

about three-fourths of a mile northeast of Copelands. Later Copeland's son married John Johns' oldest daughter. In 1828, Daniel Fairchild and his five sons, Timothy, Zenas, Orman, Lyman and Daniel, together with his married daughter, Mrs. Blevens, came to the Middle Fork and located two miles northwest of Samuel Copeland. The father was very old, nearly blind, and lived but a short time after moving into this neighborhood. The sons and daughter, however, were all married with young families, and they took their place making a lasting impress on the community. The waning interest in the production of salt was the reason that newcomers were not attracted to the region of the salt works, which had been the source of employment to a large number in the early twenties. Mr. Lander and Mr. Shearer were in the neighborhood of the later well-known J. R. Thompson farm, some time previous to the coming of William Smith, in 1830. A Mr. Progue settled about this time further to the west, near the county line. Mr. Brewer lived further down the creek and close to what was later Conkey town, Stephen Crane had settled. About the year 1827, Jesse Ventres and James Howell came from Kentucky into the neighborhood which was afterward Newtown. Mr. Ventres bought a piece of land half a mile southeast of Newtown from Mr. Indicut, who is supposed to have come to this locality at perhaps a time not far distant from the discovery of the salt springs. The year after Jesse Vantres came, John Cox from Big Sandy made him a visit. He left his son with Mr. Ventres.

A ferry was established across the Big Vermilion, in 1828, the court granted license for the same and fixed the following lawful rates:—"For crossing man and horse, $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents; wagon and horse, $18\frac{3}{4}$ cents; wagon and two horses or oxen, 25 cents. Persons going to mill, one-half rate." Solomon Gilbert built the mill this same year. He built the log tavern in 1827.

John Payne came from Indiana to Butler's Point, in 1827. His son-in-law, John Thompson, came with him and settled one mile northeast of Catlin. Charles Caraway came from Virginia in 1824. Noah Guyman, with his wife, who became the best known and best loved woman in this section of the country, for years, came on foot from Ohio, in 1830.

James Stevens came to Brooks' Point, in 1826. Isaac Gone had come a year previous to this time. John L. Sconce came from Kentucky, in 1828. John Cage and James Graves with his two sons, O. S. and L. H. came about this time. Daniel Darby set up a wagon shop near here about this time. The post office was established in Georgetown, in 1828. The mail route ran from here by way of Carroll, an office in the McDonald neighborhood, to Paris.

William Swank took up his residence in Vermilion County in 1823. He came from Putnam County, Ohio. His farm occupied the present site of Indianola. Aaron Mendenhall came from Greene County, Ohio, to Vermilion County, Illinois, in 1824. He brought his fifteen year old son John with him. The Community of Friends which settled early about Vermilion, was strengthened and increased in numbers in the years immediately following the establishing of Vermilion County, by others of this faith coming from North Carolina and Tennessee. Their life was calculated to form a high standard of living and their influence was long a strong factor in the development of Vermilion County.

Dr. Thomas Madden and Dr. Thomas Heyward were practicing physicians in this county prior to 1828. J. B. Alexander, together with his son-in-laws, Alexander McDonald and I. R. Moores, entered land which afterward was known as the McDonald neighborhood, in 1822. Mr. Alexander, himself, did not make this section, which was then Edgar County, his home, until after it became Vermilion County. He was very prominent in the early affairs of the new county. The settlement in the southern part of the county was strengthened in 1824 by the coming of Abel Williams. He was a most remarkable man and one who would be a help to any neighborhood. He came from Tennessee. The same year brought Robert Dickson from Kentucky with his four sons. Silas Waters and George Barnett came from Kentucky the same year. Thye Makemson and family first came to Vermilion County in the fall of 1828 and located one and a half miles north of what is now Oakwood. The family consisted of Thos. Makemson, a revolutionary soldier, and his five sons, Andrew, David, Samuel, John and James. They lived together until after the death of the father, when they were scattered. William Craig became a resident of this neighborhood in 1829. The first attempt at settlement on the North Fork was made in 1824. In the fall of 1823, Obediah LeNeve came through this part of Edgar County on a trip he was making on horseback to select a location of a home. The land in the region now known as Newell township, took his fancy and before he returned to his home he took the number of the tracts he desired with an idea of buying them. At a public sale soon afterward he bought them and before Christmas of that year he and his brother, John LeNeve, came overland from Vincennes to this new home. Reaching here in safety, they found the Indians friendly and soon had a cabin built on the land. Soon Ben Butterfield came and occupied the cabin until the following fall. It must be remembered that this was the year before Danville was contemplated. This location became a popular one and a large number of people came, mostly from Kentucky and Virginia.

Joseph Gundy began improvement in what was afterward Myersville, in 1827, but did not fetch his family until the following year. Luke Wiles settled on the other side of the river the same year. He came from Indiana. John Woods, a native of New York state, came to this part of Vermilion county as early as 1828. His father-in-law, Supply Butterfield, came about this time.

The first settler in the western part of the county south of the salt works was Thomas Osborn, who, in 1825, built himself a little cabin a mile or two northwest of what is now Fairmount. There he fished and hunted until the game began to grow scarce when he moved further west. A year or two later, James Elliott, James French and Samuel Beaver came to the same neighborhood. Beaver was a tanner and owned and worked a small tanyard for some time.

Henry Hunter took up a claim in 1828, just north of what is now Fairmount, but sold it in 1833 to Jennings. Mr. Stewart took up land nearby in the same year but died in 1833. He was buried in the Dougherty burying ground, his being the second grave. Thomas Redman and Joseph Yount came to this neighborhood in 1828, from Ohio. The next year John Smith opened a farm near by. W. H. Lee settled a little further to the east in 1829, and Wil-

liam Hardin settled here at the same time. These people are all supposed to have come from Ohio. In taking a survey of the growth of Vermilion County in the decade immediately following the first settlement within its borders, it must not be forgotten that these years included but three years of its official life as a county separate from Edgar. So it is that a survey of conditions in the last days of the twenties, while the section has been attracting settlement for ten years, yet the county has counted its existence but since 1826.