

Pulaski County Historical Society

An Almost Forgotten Pulaski County Tragedy of the Late 1840s

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Archival Corner	2
Court House Ornament	2
Asylum for the Poor	3
Commissioner's Record Book	3
Star City 150th	3
Upcoming Events	4
Pavers are in!	4



DEAD MAN'S HOLLOW

This article was in the Winamac Democrat Journal dated Friday December 17, 1915

Nearly everybody has heard of "Dead Man's Hollow," the wild ravine just beyond the Walters river bridge, where in 1848 a man, John Turner, with a loaded wagon, team of horses, fell into the great depth of the ravine. He was fatally crushed under the load. Tradition has it that the team ran off the rudely constructed temporary bridge. His body was buried in the old graveyard on this side of what used to be called the bayou, which in the early days was made the resting place of the pioneer dead. The ground is marked by many headstones, one of which locates the burial spot of John Turner, the victim of that accident.

Interest in the tragedy was revived by a letter just received from Mr. Turner's grandson, Austin L. Ridge of Bloomington, Ind., to Mr. Frank Downs, who lives in the neighborhood, in 1915. Following is a copy of that portion of the letter giving the particulars of Mr. Turner's death. We are indebted to T. B. Hedges for the privilege of copying from its content:

Bloomington, Ind. Dec. 10, 1915.
Mr. Frank Downs:

Dear Sir, Having got your address from the postmaster at Winamac, I would like to ask a favor of you. May 3, 1848, my grandfather, John Turner was killed near where you live. He was moving from Monroe County to Starke County to enter land. As I have the story, he was driving through with a four-

horse team, and reaching the bayou just south of the Tippecanoe River; the horses got scared and backed off the culvert. Some of the tools fell on him. He was taken to the top of the hill where a log cabin stood. He lived three days and died. They took him back on some high ground and buried him where there had been some two or three buried before. His brother afterwards took a tombstone there for the grave. Now, I wish to know if the cemetery is still there, and if his grave is still marked. I will be thankful to you for any information as to the condition of his grave, etc.

Yours respectfully,
Austin L. Ridge.

In the following week's paper dated December 24, 1915 was this additional article.

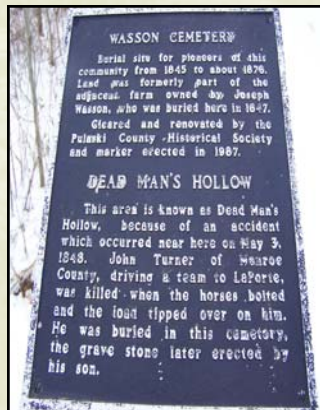
Mr. Frank Tunis, who read our sketch of

"Dead Man's Hollow" last week, says he visited the old graveyard there, and found the tombstone marking the grave of John N. Turner "about 20 feet from the westside and about the middle of the yard." It had fallen but on the upturned side was still legibly marked, "John N. Turner, born Sept. 28, 1801: died May 3, 1848." This corresponds with the data given in the published letter of Mr.

Turner's grandson. Mr. Turner, as related last week, was crushed beneath his loaded wagon, which the four-horse team backed off the rude bridge that spanned the chasm, May 3, 1848. The tombstone was erected by his brother.

On the 13th of August 1847, Elijah T. Oliver and his wife Catharine Oliver deeded this cemetery in the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of section 30 in Harrison Township to the Pulaski County Commissioners. This cemetery is still under the control of the Pulaski County Commissioners through the Harrison township trustee and is a quiet well kept resting place for these Pulaski county pioneers.

Note: After studying the area in question I think the Walters river bridge mentioned early in this article is actually the Walker-Woodruff Bridge over the Tippecanoe River, which we now know as the Woodruff Bridge. It would fit then that the bayou and ravine mentioned as being further south might be where the Mill Creek runs to the Tippecanoe River. One can surmise the rudely constructed bridge was perhaps a bridge over Mill Creek. The old Chicago State Road ran through the area passing through Star City and Winamac and it stands to reason this would have been the road used to travel from Monroe County to Starke County.



ARCHIVAL CORNER

Textiles are a part of our daily lives. They are the clothes we wear, the blanket you wrap yourself in on a cold winter nights, a wedding gown, grandfathers WWII uniform or the rug your great grandmother made using a loom. Many of these objects are of personal and historical value to you and your family. So how can you save these precious items for future generations?

Caring for textiles can be challenging yet rewarding. Textiles include tapestries, clothing, rugs, samplers (or sewing pieces), upholstered furniture, quilts or basically anything made of natural fibers such as wool, cotton, silk or linen are considered textiles. Today, textiles also include synthetic fibers such as rayon. Depending on what your textile is composed of will determine what is a threat to the textile and what is the best way to preserve it.

If the textiles are made of animal fibers (such as wool) in high humidity, the object can absorb water and then the fibers will lose strength. Textiles made of plant fibers can be deteriorated by acids and can also be sensitive to humidity. The great-

est enemy that textiles face is light. The worst form of light for textiles is natural daylight which can cause textile dyes to fade and for the objects to become brittle. Other threats to textiles are humidity, fluorescent lamp light, air pollution, insects (such as moths and carpet beetles), objects being left out on display for too long, being in wood frames for an extended period of time and clothing sitting on hangers for long periods of time (to name a few).



A crape jacket that is tearing.

If you want to display your child's baptism dress or great grandmother's hankies, the best thing to do is consider how you want to display these objects. Usually people like to frame them

or put them in shadow boxes, which is good. Keep in mind that these objects should stay out of direct sunlight or should be framed with Plexiglas. Plexiglas contains a UV filter. Make sure the backing of the frame is of archival board which helps absorb and release moisture depending on the environment.

If you want to preserve your textiles or put them in storage, make sure it is climate controlled. Archival boxes are a great way to store your clothing and come in various sizes.

They are made out of archival board and it is recommended that you wrap your clothing in unbuffered tissue paper and lay objects as flat as possible in the box. You can order archival supplies online very easily.

If you are going to hang clothing as a form of storage, make sure you use a strong, padded hanger. The closet should be dry, cool and dark. It should also be free of bugs. Some textiles store very well hung while others do not. Make sure to check the condition of the objects before you decide to hang them for a long period of time. The objects should also be covered with a dust cover. This can be a bag made of cotton muslin fabric or plastic dry cleaner bags as long as they have no ink printing on them. If they do, the ink can rub off on your other clothing.

Military uniforms are cared for in the same way but each uniform should be preserved in its own archival box with matching accessories such as gloves or a hat. The Pulaski County Historical Society is home to many wonderful military uniforms that are all in need of their own archival boxes so we can better preserve them for future generations. If you have donated a uniform in the past, please consider donating so we can properly care for the uniform. It is a great way to continue honoring a loved one. Please contact Natalie Federer at nfederer@purdue.edu or 219-567-9494 with any questions.

COURT HOUSE CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

The 1st Christmas ornament in a series of historical buildings is the Pulaski Co. Courthouse is on sale for \$5.00 from the PCHS.

The Court House was completed in 1895 and cost approximately \$50,000.00. The courthouse was just recently acknowledged on the Historical register. The ornament was made exclusively for

the Pulaski Co. Historical Society by Ms. Bryn Zellers of Winamac.

It is made out of an acrylic material and laser engraved. This ornament will appear on the Christmas tree in the Indiana State Museum along with an ornament from 1 local artist in each county. We are very blessed to have such talent in our county.



ASYLUM FOR THE POOR

SPECIAL TERM OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 27th 1865

At a special term of the Board of Commissioners of Pulaski County, Indiana, said Board having been convened by the Auditor of said county for the purpose of purchasing a farm for an Asylum for the Poor of said county, met on the 27th day of March, 1865, pursuant, Michael Kleckner, Jacob Byers, and John Decker, Commissioners and G. T. Wickersham, Auditor, of said county, when the following business was had.

It is hereby ordered by that Board that they consider it advisable to do so, and that they now proceed to purchase a farm suitable for an Asylum for the Poor of said county, and after some time spent by the board in examining the several proposals for the sale of farms and of personal examination of said farms and tracts of land, and after mature deliberations in the premises, it is ordered by the Board that they accept the proposal of James Boyles, and that they do hereby purchase from said Boyles his farm consisting of about 165 acres, situated in the south west quarter and in the north part of the south east quarter of section fourteen in Township thirty north, of Range two west, for the sum of Six Thousand dollars, upon the following terms, to wit:

One thousand dollars is to be paid upon the execution and delivery of the Deed for said land, Nine hundred and fifty four dollars on the first day of April

1866, nine hundred and fifty four dollars on the first day of April 1867 with interest. And for the remainder of said purchase, to assume the payment of five several promissory notes secured by a mortgage on said land, executed by said Boyles to H. J. M. Porter, the first one of said notes is due Jan'y 1st 1866 for one thousand dollars, with 7 percent interest from date.

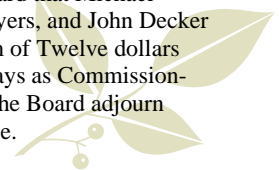
The other four notes are for four hundred dollars each and are dated Oct. 13th 1864 due in two, three, four and five years, respectively, from sale with interest payable annually. And when said Boyles has said lands properly surveyed so as the same can be properly described by meets and bounds and upon his executing a good and sufficient warranty deed except as above for the same to the Board of Commissioners of Pulaski county and upon his delivering the same to the Auditor of said county said Auditor shall deliver to said Boyles the said order upon the Treasury for \$1000, order to the Treasurer to deliver to him the Bonds herein after ordered to be issued for the deferred payments.

The said Boyles is to deliver possession of said premises by the 15th day of April 1865 and the Board assumes the payment of the taxes thereon for the year 1865. And for the purpose of paying the said payments to said Boyles due on the 1st

day of April 1866, and on the 1st day of April 1867, It is ordered by the Board that there be the following Bonds of said County issued, to wit: one Bond No. 25 for five hundred dollars, due one the 1st day of April 1866, with six percent interest and one Bond No. 26, due the same time for four hundred and fifty four dollars. April 1st 1867 for five hundred dollars. And the Auditor of said County is ordered to prepare Bonds of the description aforesaid properly filed of signed, sealed, registered, stamped and delivered to the Treasurer in complete form for the use of said Boyles for the purpose aforesaid.

Ordered by the Board that the Winamac Democrat office is allowed three Dollars for printing posters for proposals of Poor Farm.

Ordered by the Board that Michael Kleckner, Jacob Byers, and John Decker be allowed the sum of Twelve dollars for services four days as Commissioners. Ordered that the Board adjourn until court in course.



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**COMMISSIONER'S RECORD BOOK B
 May Term 1841**

Ordered that on the payment by Andrew Keys of three dollars into the county Treasurer, license be granted to him to establish a ferre across the Tippecanoe River opposite the Town of Winamac, and he shall constantly keep a good and sufficient skiff or canoe for the purpose of carrying over foot man; one flat boat for the purpose

of carrying over wagons, horses, and cattle.

The ferre rate to be as follows to wit; wagon and two horses (25 cents), for each additional horse (6 ¼), for one horse and wagon (18 ¾), for each horse and man (12 ½), for foot man (6 ¼), for each head of cattle (6 ¼), for each head of sheep and hogs (2 cents).

**Star City Sesquicentennial
 Update**



Star City School

The Star City Sesquicentennial Committee is busy planning Star City's 150th birthday celebration that will take place July 31, Aug. 1 & 2, 2009. If you are interested in volunteering, send an e-mail to starcity150@pwrct.com or contact Kent Schultz at 574-595-7353 or Natalie Federer at 219-567-9494.

Federer
10215 W 300 S
Francesville, IN 47946

PAVERS ARE IN AT OPERA HOUSE

Numerous Historical Society volunteers came together this summer (on one of the hottest days of the summer) to lay the brick pavers in the sidewalk outside of the Vurpillat Opera House.

Brick pavers are still being sold for \$75 each which includes a personal message of 3 lines of 13 characters which are engraved on the paver. You have the choice of red or buff colored bricks.

Order forms are available at the ExPress office, Pulaski

Journal, First National Bank of Monterey, Pulaski County Library along with many others.

A special thanks to Alex and Troy Haschell, Jack Krasner and Lynn and Steve Morrison for their time and efforts in laying the bricks.



U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

Winter wonderland will be December 6 from noon till 8:00 p.m. The Historical Society will be helping with a number of events and the County Museum will be open from 4 -8 p.m. The museum will be hosting a "History of a postcard" exhibit that examines the history of postcard making while displaying postcards and cards donated by local residents.

Annual Meeting: January 21, 2009 at the Highway building. The meeting will start at 6:30 and the Extension Cords will be performing.