

WHITEWATER VALLEY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Box 941

Connersville, IN 47331

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COMING EVENTS

WVGA Meetings
September 18 – stone cleaning at City Cemetery
October 16 & November 20 Trinity Episcopal
Parish House 6th & Eastern at 7:30 p.m.
No Meeting in December

FAVORITE WEBSITE

Several counties have their marriage records (in various formats) microfilmed. This microfilm is often available at the Indiana State Library, as well as through Family History Centers.

Here are some on-line sources that you may want to check.

ALLEN COUNTY

www.friendsofallencounty.org

Allen County marriage index early 1990's to present (click on "Fort Wayne and Allen County, IN Databases" section.)

BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY

www.bartholomewco.com/archives/index.php

LAKE COUNTY

www.rootsweb.com/~innwigs/

Northwest Indiana Genealogical Society – Index to Lake County marriage books for 1837-1920 (click on "online Archives" section.)

MARION COUNTY

www.civicnet.net/apps/civil/marriage/index.jsp
Marion County Clerk's Office – Marion County marriage index 1925 – present.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

www.cdpl.lib.in.us

Crawfordsville District Public Library – Montgomery County marriage index 1888-1941 (click on "Local History Department" section)

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

www.rootsweb.com/~insbags/

South Bend Area Genealogical Society – St. Joseph County marriage index 1927-1954 (click on "Maps & Databases" section)

VANDERBURGH COUNTY

www.willard.lib.in.us

Willard Library – Vanderburgh County marriage index 1920-1979 (click on the "Search Databases" or "Genealogy" sections)

VIGO COUNTY

<http://marriage.vigo.lib.in.us/marriage/>

Vigo County Public Library – Vigo County marriage index 1914-1951

WAYNE COUNTY

www.co.wayne.in.us/marriage/retrieve.cgi

Wayne County Clerk's Office – Wayne County marriage licenses 1811-1903

QUERY

DOOLITTLE – looking for burial place of Fannie DOOLITTLE 's grandparents, Joel and Sarah DOOLITTLE.

Fannie's grandparents & family on 1850 Decatur Co. Census: Joel 49 (blacksmith), Sarah 46, Leland 23, Joel F. 13, Sarah E.10, Margaret 4.

1870 census, Fayette Co, Fairview, Groves PO (Fannie and her family)

Joel 33 (blacksmith), Lucinda 30, William 9, Frank 6, Fannie 9/12

Lucinda and Joel Franklin who went by Frank, maybe to distinguish himself from his father Joel (also a blacksmith) had two more children, Emma born 1875 and John born 1879. Joel Franklin died in December 1879 and is buried in Shelby Co. John Oscar died in Indianapolis in 1963, Fannie died in 1953, Lucinda died in Indianapolis in 1923. I can't find the older Joel and Sarah DOOLITTLE in 1860. Sarah appears again in 1870 and then in 1880 in Rush County. I don't know where Fannie's grandparents Joel or Sarah are buried.

Kate Renner

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DAWSON (Mathias, Richard, Saul, George, Obadiah, William, Ede, Joseph) in Fayette and Wayne Counties early 1800's. Moved to northern Indiana in 1830's.

RATHBURN, Eliza married Richard Dawson in Fayette County 1827. In Fayette Co 1820's to 1830. Moved to northern Indiana with rest of family.

ASHER (John, Washington, Isaac, Cornelius, Thomas) Located in Union, Franklin, Fayette and Wayne Counties early 1800's. Moved back and forth between counties – also Rush and Delaware counties then moved in late 1840's to Iowa.

MANLEY, Isabelle married John Asher in 1813 in Franklin Co., In

CUNNINGHAM (James married Catherine Miller and Nancy Miller – sisters in Union Co. Was in Union County early 1800's, moved to LaPorte Co but was back in Union Co by 1860 – intertwined with Dawson.

MILLER AND SNYDER Union County – moved to northern Indiana – LaPorte, St. Joseph, etc.

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CLEANING TOMBSTONES

Old tombstones are fragile works of art. No matter what you are doing to a stone, you need to use the most gentle technique. Remember you are working with historic family monuments, mostly over 150 years old. They do not have to look new. It comes as a big surprise to people who think of masonry as the most durable of materials to learn that the marble, granite and limestone of old grave markers is far softer and more porous than one would think.

1. Evaluate the condition of the stone. Do not attempt to clean if it exhibits any cracks, flaking, scaling or eroding granular surfaces. Gently tap surface with your finger to determine if there are any underlying hollow areas. If it sounds hollow, do not clean.

2. Use the least aggressive method of cleaning – sometimes warm water works best. It doesn't take hard scrubbing.
3. Before using cleaner on stone, test in a small inconspicuous area of the stone.
4. Clean from bottom to the top to avoid streak staining on stone; especially on large stones.
5. Take a nylon putty knife and remove as much lichen as you can.
6. Using a spray bottle filled with 1 part clear ammonia and 4 parts of water, spray a section of the stone. Clean with a nylon scrub brush. Popsickle sticks, old denture brushes and a cuticle stick work well to clean inside the letters and numbers.
7. Rinse with lots of water – water in a clean weed sprayer works well. Do not allow cleaning solution to dry on the stone.
8. For stubborn stains such as black from pollution, you may need to clean, rinse and then clean again.

NEVER USE

1. Wire brushes, metal instruments, steel wool
2. Any cleaner other than water or ammonia/water mixture. (that includes soap, detergent, Clorox, Formula 409, Spic and Span.)
3. High pressure washer
4. Do not use ammonia/water solution on bronze government markers

Other items you want to think about are: gloves, sweatband, insect repellent, gardeners knee pad, and water bottle for you.

The best advice is DON'T DO ANYTHING YOU CAN'T LIVE WITH LATER

Items needed for cleaning:

1. Nylon putty knife set
2. Nylon brushes such as tile and grout brush, and stripping brush. Be sure and get brushes with handles. Also denture brush works well.

3. Popsickle sticks, cuticle sticks or toothpicks
4. Spray bottle with ammonia mixture
5. Sprayer for water

Before you clean any tombstone, you may need to get permission from the board or whoever is in charge of the cemetery. This depends on the cemetery and the county in which it is located.

FROM THE FILES

Connersville Daily Examiner May 19, 1896

Jurors Drawn

Jury Commissioners George M. Sinks and Austin Ready drew the following named persons to act as jurors at the coming term of court:

Grand Jury – W. E. Heron, Mart Meyer, S. H. Helvie, Martin Stevens, John M. Whiteford, Fred Trusler.

Petit Jury – George Messersmith, John T. Manlove, Tobias Smith, Sam Shortridge, John Ayers, Tim Green, John H. Mason, Robert Franklin, Joseph Worsham, Samuel Turner, Ed Bundrant, Silas Martin.

The grand jury will probably not be called, this being the off term of Court.

THE CURSE OF ELM FARM

(Bob Alloway has submitted the following article. It was a letter transcribed many years ago by Marie Pressler.)

During the late forties and the early fifties what is known as Elmhurst, or Elm Farm, together with considerable surrounding acreage, was the property of Samuel W. Parker, one of the most prominent lawyers of Indiana, later Judge of the Circuit Court and prominent in the affairs of Connersville, well known in all the surrounding counties and, in fact, over the entire state. He was a leader of a group that was responsible for the building of the Whitewater Canal from Hagerstown to Cincinnati and which for many years was the main artery of commerce and travel between these points. He was a man of considerable wealth, prominent in society and entertained his friends in extraordinary style. He is said to have been an agnostic, was cynical,

sarcastic and violent of temper. On account of the fact that he would shed tears most abundantly when occasion demanded, he was almost sure to obtain a jury's sympathy for his client and a verdict to his liking. As a judge he was harsh, unyielding as to points of law and following the strict letter of the statutes. Entire disregard of all forms of religious worship and his eagerness to defend his agnostic ideas were his weakness and regardless of time or place he took advantage of every opportunity, many times publicly, to deny the existence of a Supreme Being. Attorneys in his court were allowed considerable latitude in the examination of witnesses and testimony was carefully watched and weighed by him.

His home, purchased from United States Senator Oliver H. Smith, its builder, was one of the most elaborate in Eastern Indiana, being modeled after the White House at Washington. The natural beauty of its location was equaled only by its architectural perfection and its artistic furnishings and decorations.

He was a lover of fine horses and no small part of his fortune came from the sale of pedigreed stock. Horse barns of the latest design and the employment of skilled horsemen brought to the farm a reputation that was more than statewide. A perpetual supply of water of enormous volume flowed from the hillside near the residence and for a period of nearly a hundred years this spring has never been known to show any decrease of its enormous supply. At one time in addition to supplying water for domestic and farm requirements, it supplied a large artificial lake on the premises.

While the Whitewater Canal was State property, built from the proceeds of the sale of bonds authorized by a special act of Legislature, Judge Parker purchased and owned a considerable amount of the bonds, which were to be retired as profits accrued. A part of the canal was diverted from its original survey that it might be built through the Parker farm.

In the same house there lived another brilliant lawyer, Judge Parker's brother-in-law, Caleb B. Smith, without doubt one of the most able attorneys of his time. His practice was statewide and he was one of the few Western lawyers who were admitted to the practice in the Supreme Court of the United States at Washington. He

and Judge Parker were law partners, occupied the same offices as well as the same house and it is related that they held joint interest in a number of enterprises, including the farm, the canal and others.

James C. McIntosh was a younger man but a very successful lawyer, keen, shrewd and a very eloquent speaker. His part in the event which follows was a minor part, yet he cannot well be omitted from the story.

The actual facts surrounding the scene which follows will, perhaps, never be known as they are not of record and merely tradition must be resorted to as to what really happened. This tradition has now been handed down to the fourth or fifth generation and allowance must be made for "color" given the story from much telling.

It is related that a trial was being held in Judge Parker's court at which a negro witness was about to relate certain facts. When directed to stand and be sworn he made a request that he be allowed to place his hand on the open Bible while taking the oath. This was not an unusual custom but was not in common usage. The unusual part of the request was that it had been made by a negro. The lawyers who were to examine him were Caleb B. Smith and James C. McIntosh. Judge Parker informed the witness that he would be sworn in the manner prescribed by the Court and Smith, who incidentally, did not share his brother-in-law's agnostic ideas, thinking to explain matters in a way that would avoid argument, stated that a Bible was not available. He directed him to stand and be sworn, at the same time making a move as to lift him from his chair, in which gesture he was joined by McIntosh. The aged negro remained seated. Both lawyers asked that he be held in contempt of court, a process that the witness did not understand nor could he comprehend the meaning of their request. Judge Parker did not immediately rule on the motion, but rising from his seat, berated the negro, ridiculed his profession of religion and termed his request as a silly and stubborn superstition. He opened a law book, placed it before the witness and told him sarcastically that if he must swear on a book to

use that. He took two quill pens from the desk, placed them in the form of a cross on the book saying "There is what you call a crucifix, a meaningless emblem of your blind faith and in line with your ignorance and superstition. That should satisfy you." The negro remained silent and unmoved. Parker's violent temper was now in control of him and he demanded of him what a Bible or the absence of one meant to a d_____ n_____ witness and proceeded to condemn what he called religious superstition founded on a book that was a remnant of the ignorance of the Dark Ages, again saying, "Tell me what a Bible means to an ignorant n_____ like you." Expecting no answer, he sat down. The negro stood erect before the Judge and said "Your Honor, the absence of a Bible in your court has been explained by you, yourself. To me, the Bible means "The Great Truth, the basis and foundation of all law, the inspired Word of God directed to man regardless of their color or class. What it tells me, sir, it tells you in the same language. It tells me that God is not mocked, that denial is death and that the sins of the fathers shall be visited on the children even to the third and fourth generation. This denial of God will bring upon you, sir and all your possessions and on all those who follow you sorrow, death and destruction." Pointing his finger at each of the three, he raised his hands above his head and dramatically shouted, "God is not mocked. What you have sown, than shall you also reap."

The process of the trial, its outcome, and whether the testimony of the negro was finally secured are not related to this story but Parker's outburst and the negro's reply were much discussed topics and in the language of that day it was a common remark that Sam Parker and all his belongings were under a curse and that the warning was directed to Caleb Smith and James McIntosh also.

The tradition is set aside at this point and what follows is fact. All the succeeding events here related are matters of record or are within the memory of the present generation. The events are in proper sequence, first as to the three principals in the court room scene and finally the events relating to Elm Farm. (to be continued in next issue)

