

Henry County

Reminiscing With Millville

The First One Hundred Years



Millville Centennial

September 24 and 25, 1954

DEDICATION



This book is kindly dedicated to Dr. J. A. Tully, now of New Castle who for over a half century (1902 - 1954) 17 years at Millville and 35 years at New Castle, has ministered to the physical wants of the citizens while in our midst and continued after moving to New Castle.

BIOGRAPHY

His biography follows: Dr. John A. Tully was born May 1, 1876 in a log cabin one mile west of Middletown, Indiana. The third child born of a family of six children. The parents were Alfred T. Tully and Alwilda Morgan, who were both born and reared in West Virginia and came to Indiana in 1873.

Dr. Tully attended district school in Harrison Township and Cadiz High School. He taught in both Harrison and Greensboro townships, entered medical school at the University of Louisville in 1898 and graduated in 1901.

In November 1898 he was married to Grace Weesner and to them two daughters were born: Marcella, (now Mrs. Floyd Hutchison of Elkhart)

and Halcyon, (now Mrs. George Stout of New Castle)

In June, 1902, Dr. Tully came to Millville and remained there until March, 1919, when he moved to New Castle.

Dr. Tully's services to his friends who are a legion in this community have been of immeasurable worth to all of whom he came in contact. After leaving Millville, distance or weather conditions, day or night were no barrier for his calls. Besides a physician he has been a friend, neighbor and an exemplary citizen of the community.

We still consider Dr. Tully as one of the outstanding physicians to be remembered.

Millville's Geographical Location

The legal geographical description of Millville, located in the N. E. 1/4 of Section 15 and the N. W. 1/4 of Section 14, Township 17 N., R. 11 E., was laid out and platted by John Minesinger, Deputy Surveyor, December 4, 1854 from the lands belonging to the estate of John Hershberger (deceased) and contains 8 lots.

The village takes its name from a mill which stood nearby just east of where the present elevator stands. When the Panhandle Railroad was completed to that place owned by John Hershberger, the railroad established a station there and called it Millville.

THE HISTORY OF MILLVILLE

In compiling the history of Millville at this time and knowing the numerical status as 150 at one time, 114 in 1880 and 113 in 1950, never been incorporated and seemingly a genuine case of undergrowth; yet quality must have priority over quantity in attempting to put on a Celebration. As planned, one might ask in utter despair in this paradoxical situation "Why a Centennial?"

To put your minds at ease it has not always been thus. I think we can show you that through the years she has reared a family of citizens and citizenry of which we are not ashamed. When the odds were against her with no fault of her own an outstanding village in civic, professional, industrial, railroad shipping facilities, and last but not least, in church circles, so that we today can pay a living tribute to her memory as a memorial in the form of a Centennial. She is still situated within 1/2 mile of the center of one of the richest townships in the county, 6 miles from the County Seat, an hour's drive from the State Capital and a stone's throw from the Wilbur Wright Homestead. The Wilbur Wright Memorial may be a new milestone and is making rapid strides in becoming one of the outstanding shrines, so that who knows in 2054, generations unborn, Millville may become such a valuable suburb to the Wright Place that one will say, "Why that little Burg a 100 years ago did not have enough energy or people to put out a fire," but that party did not know that Millville did have a fire truck in 1954.

Millville Saved

In 1827 the Burg of Chicago, now Chicago Corner, mushroomed with great anticipation on becoming a great center with 20 houses, a postoffice, a tavern, a blacksmith shop, 2 stores, 2 hotels, a church and cemetery. When the railroad routed through the Hersherberger Estate one half mile to the north, Chicago was nipped in the bud. Millville started on its own as a shipping point, having the trade of Blue River and Stoney Creek Townships on the north and Dudley on the south.

In all of Liberty Township, one could see droves of hogs coming down the roads, driven on foot by the happy farmers into the stock pens that had been provided by the railroad. These were cared for by Wisheart and Kent who had the first elevator. The first depot was seen built along the west side of the road south of the crossing. This later burned down about 1892. A second depot which stood from where it was moved in 1932 to its present location adjoining the elevator on the north. William Wisheart was the purchaser with consideration of about \$50.00. William Botlser was among one of the first depot operators assisted by Roy Shepherd. Jess Lester, Harvey Ballard and Sharkey Earl Wilkinson and Mrs. Roy Shepherd cared for it about 2 years until it was closed around 1932. The stock pen facilities were cared for in the early days by Wisheart and Sons, then later by Ed and

Will Wisheart, and Frank Harris. The farmers seemed happy as they put hogs on the scales at 6c per pound. Later when the neighboring town had railroad facilities of their own, paved roads and trucks came into use, the trend was to larger towns and the stock pens were discarded.

Church

About 1882, the New Light Christian Church having had an organization for several years at Chicago Corner, sold the building to the Hooverites and erected a building in Millville. This was on the left just south of the present Earl Gephart residence and at a cost of \$1000.00. When the membership began to wane, the building was sold for \$350.00 in May 1943 and razed to the ground. At the insistence of George Kelley and the church Board of Trustees, \$300.00 was equally divided and given to the Batson and Chicago Corner cemeteries. Many donors of the church had been buried there. Thanks to you, George.

Some of the original families around Millville were the Baileys, Werls, Walkers, Lindleys, Woods, Batchfields, Birds, Wilsons, Mays, Brumbacks, Forkners, Eachelmans, Snyders, Staffords, Gerdons, Charmnesses, Falks, Hatfields, and Barkuses.

The Ladies Aid was organized about 1908 at the home of the late Grace Tully with Ara Wilson as the first president. Among the first members were Ara Wilson, Grace Tully, Mollie Bird, Sally Worl, Mae Wisheart, Della Kindley, Effie Wisheart, Pearl Fadley and Effie Worl. The Sunday School was also organized with the late Robert Land as a strong supporter and Superintendent. Among the pastors and not in the exact order, were McCullough, Love, Bennett, Hoefler, Frazer, Kershner, Byrkett, Parr, Melle, Shafer, Cress, Johnson, Mrs. Treber, Hance, Crampton, New House, Bertsch and Mrs. Stanley. Later, many of the members of the church moved their memberships to Mooreland and Hagerstown.

Schoolhouses

The first schoolhouse stood where Earl Gephart now lives and is now his garage in the rear. This was vacated as school purposes about 1890. (No date when built) Some of the early teachers were Allen, Wisheart, Hoover, Forkner, Adams, Hanna, Paul, Batchfield, Keel, Guyer, Dagherly and Alice Guyer. A 2 room brick building was erected south of the railroad in 1893, on land donated by the late James A. Stafford. Ed Brumback taught the last school in this building and the first in the next one. In 1913 it was enlarged when some high school subjects were taught. The high school classes were abandoned in 1915. In 1939 1940 the school was practically rebuilt and enlarged to the present building. Here are some of the school teachers but not a complete list. Eilar, McShurley, Smith, Griffin, Macy, Woolard, Netz,

Frank Barkus
William Dinkins
Walter Barkus

B.F. BARKUS WITH ROBINSON
GO-OUT-FIT MILLVILLE IND.

Liberty
Township
Firetruck
And
Some of the
Volunteers

ALL
PROCEEDS
of the
CENTENNIAL
TO GO TO THE
FIRE DEPT.



Ulmer, Fadley, Bridges, Hutchinson, Rinehart, Rowles, Filler, Greene, Dickerson, Lake, Jones, Brant and Coble and Brumback. Some of the hack drivers were Sherry, Tucker, Yauky, O'Neal. Keeling, Larson, Hoover, Kelley, Gephart, Stohler and Blevins. The present janitor at the Millville School is Summitt Taylor.

Physicians

Among the physicians were Schefield, Isaac Mendenhall, J. S. Stafford (1867-1900), J. A. Tully (1902-1919) and J. C. Hardesty (1882-1901)

Stores

The first store was opened by Hood & Beckett. James A. Stafford had a store just north of the railroad. Other stores operated where the old I.O.O.F. hall now stands. Owners were Hayes, Forkner & Co., McClean, Gephart, Wischert, Stohler, Crandall, Yauky, Walread, Cremer, Cress, Stauble, Howren, Wiker, Wadman, Wise, Laboyteaux, Brumback, Modlin, Wantz, Wright, Hoover & Keever, Frank Gephart, and Neff. The only store owner today is George Kelley.

Elevators

The first elevator in 1873 was owned by S. D. Wischert and later in 1880 by Wischert & Kent. Later it was owned by S. D. Wischert and Sons until 1910. Sam Wischert died in January with the elevator being sold to George Bowen. It burned July 30 of this year. It was rebuilt with a dwelling nearby. In September 20, 1912 both burned. The ground was then sold to Wischert Brothers, Ed & Will who built the present structure. Later Ed quit the business and Will continued until 1945. The elevator was sold to the Mooreland Grain Company and continues today as the Millville Grain Company. The operation is under efficient management of John Jordan and his excellent helpers. They do a thriving feed, grain and coal business so that the combined receipts of both elevators exceeded half a million dollars the past year.

Phone Company

In February 1901 the Millville Telephone Co. was organized with 18 charter members. All are now deceased. They were John Allen, Pres.; Joe Bird, Secy.; Martin Worl, Treas.; J. C. Hardesty, John Myers, John Bird, Willard Myers, Frank Nichols, S. D. Wischert, J. A. Stafford, William H. Hoover, David Kutz, Will Wischert, Daniel Steveland, A. E. Pierce, James A. Pierce and Ed Pierce

The first telephone operator was Miss Glenna Paul with the switchboard being in Dr. Stafford's office south of the railroad on the east side of the street. This later burned down. Later the company with the charter members built the present exchange. Some of the operators include Angie

Daniels, Mrs. Lew Gephart, Pearl Fadley, Pauline Stauble, Garnett Boyd, Thelma Reneau and the present Sarah Neal. The business was sold out to the New Lisbon Telephone Co. in 1952. The company has about 175 telephones.

Blacksmiths

The blacksmiths came at an early date with two shops across the street from each other south of the I.O.O.F. Hall. H. Eschelman had the one on the east side next to the Drug Store and both burned down at different times. A shop was also located south of the railroad which still stands but is not operated today. Pleas Lester built and operated a shop that is now owned by the Millville Grain Co. and is situated by the old town pump. Some of the smiths were Eschelman, Ferris, Brown, Cregan, Gilbert, Lester, Neff, Raffenberg, Dill Bros., Wood and White.

Post Office and Post Masters

The first post master was Andrew J. Cramer, June 7, 1855. Others include Hood, Forkner, Wischert, Brown, Conway, Smith, Burr, Howren, Stafford, Sharkey, Bolser, Welker, Bunner, Neff, Crandall, Bushing, Fadely, Miller, Smith and Clausen. Ed Wischert was the last postmaster when the post office was discontinued in 1920 and put on a New Castle rural route. The postoffice was usually in a grocery store.

Druggists

Howren, Schefield were the first druggists followed by Modlin, Martz and Veach. The store was on the east side of the street adjacent to the blacksmith shop.

Saw Mills

The first sawmill stood in the east part of town as previously stated. This was owned by John Hershberger who was killed there soon after the town was laid out. The west end mill was first operated by Welker & Ferris and later bought by Barkus. It burned in 1938. Barkus had at one time, with Joe Bird, operated a sawmill in connection with the old tile mill northeast of Millville. Barkus also operated a cider mill and threshing machine outfit for a number of years. A wagon shop was here a number of years but the owner is unknown.

Barber Shop

This was operated on a small scale by Charles Cartwright, Lester Boys, Noah Kindley and Clyde Laboyteaux. The new Knotty Pine barber shop in the north part of town is operated by Mr. Biedel.

Dressmakers

Millville was not void of the feminine sex playing her part of the game. They were the Mrs. Bushing Modlin, Belser, Eshelman, Forkner and Foulke.

Trustee and Assessor

Of all the township trustees and assessors only one lived in Millville. It was Douglas Bosler—trustee and assessor.

Carpenters

Earl and Lewis Gephart represented the carpenters. John Hutchinson took care of digging the graves at Batson cemetery for some time.

Butcher Shop

Alfred Welker, Riley McShirley were the first butchers and Frank Nichols, Robert Land and William Dinkins the last. Riley McShurley was the famous auctioneer the latter part of the nineteenth century. The painter and paper hanger trade was followed by Clay Lester, Clyde La-boyteaux, Robert Gordon and sons.

Chicken Buyers

This was represented by Alfred Walker, Harry Falck who was killed in the 1911 tornado, and Burley Batchfield. All are deceased. The tile mill just outside the town was operated by Eli Gephart and Jesie Bird, 1880-1900. Tile ditching was done by Jody Runyan and Frank Goar.

Shoe Shop

The shoe repair business was taken care of by John Brunner who was also a local preacher.

Justice of the Peace

Alfred Welker and John Brunner kept order. John Wood was supervisor.

Section Men

Austin Coine, Ben Runyan and William Weaver took care of the hand car.

With its passing in 1928, the motor car took over. In the latter part of the century, the railroad ran 10 to 12 passenger trains daily, including 4 mail trains and freight trains in proportion. With the coming of the diesel engines, longer trains could be drawn and there were less number of train. The Millville Section Car Division was later combined with the New Castle Division.

A creamery operated around 1890 and did a lucrative business for quite awhile and then located elsewhere. Stock was sold for the drilling of a gas or oil well but after going about 700 feet with no results, it was abandoned. A churn, chair and swing factory, under the management of Bert

Wilson of Cambridge City and Emery Modlin, Pres., turned out a good product with ready sales in the early 90's. It later burned down. Sam Bolser took care of the veterinary business. The well across from the elevator is the same one that was first dug, but has a different pump.

Late Addresses

In 1952 a Volunteer Liberty Township Fire Truck Co. was organized with headquarters at Millville. Herschell Coy was fire chief and Richard Maddy treasurer. The original truck, costing \$1000.00, has been rebuilt into a water carrying capacity of 750 gallons with necessary hose. The truck has a \$3,000.00 cost value paid for by donations from the worthy citizens of the community. The present personnel are: James Foulke, Fire Chief; Herschell Coy, Vice-Pres.; Florence Bertsch, Treas.; Thelma Reneau, Secy.; Advisory Board: Robert White, Joe Hutchens, Harold Williams, Carl O. Dell, Alonzo D. Myers, John A. Snyder, Alva Hall. The present volunteers are Lloyd Reneau, Ralph Stauble, Eugene Brown, Walter Cox, Fred Harrison and John Jordan. The boys are doing a splendid job and are to be commended for their willing efforts. The truck answers as an assistant to either Mooreland or New Lisbon Fire Departments. It is housed in Cox's Garage and is always ready to go. The boys are badly in need of rubber suits and the net proceeds from this Centennial are to be used for the boy's outfits and fire equipment.

Stock Buyer

Everett Cross has been our local live stock buyer for many years. He recently moved to town and is ready at all times to care for the needs of the farmers of their stock. He can be depended upon.

Lodge and Hall

The I.O.O.F. Lodge was organized June 4, 1896 in the elevator with 23 charter members. Only two members are now living: Henry Gephart and Ralph Neff. The other members were: Will Bolser, Elmer Byerley, Hiram Eschelman, Harry Falk Sr., Frank Flemming, Andrew Gephart, Eli Gephart, Henry Gephart, J. C. Hardesty, Sam Hoover, Sam Haberland, Jacob Hershberger, Monroe Hoover, E. L. Kent, David Kutz, Levi Keever, James May, Ralph Neff, Henry Replogle, S. D. Wisheart, J. A. Stafford, Jacob Williams, and E. S. Wisheart.

At one time the lodge numbered about 190 members. This lodge merged with the New Castle Chapter August 4, 1930. In 1897 the lodge built the Hall from native timber donated by the members. This was erected on the same spot where it now stands but was enlarged later. This lumber was sawed at the Bird & Barkus Sawmill northeast of Millville at the old tile mill. About 1950 they sold the Hall to Cecil Rhodes for 1000.00

Garage Grocery and Elevator

With Walter Cox as local garage operator, we can recommend him to the people of the community for all auto ills.

George Kelley, our genial and accomodating family have been here in business for 28 years and is the only person that is in the grocery business in Millville today.

As mentioned before the elevator's business is probably second to none in the county. It is a real live wire.

On The Side

With 40 different organizations, industries and businesses started a century ago, 4 have survived. We have always had a railroad, an elevator, a schoolhouse and a grocery. Mrs. Ruth Rinehart has taught for 31 consecutive years in the Millville School. Dr. J. A. Stafford was postmaster three different times. Of the 10 suicides in the township since 1898 — 4 have been in Millville.

Reminiscing

Frank Barkus would start his sawmill on Saturday afternoon and run the rest of the week.

Frank Nichols refused to sell a soup bone to a stranger saying he would have to save it for a customer.

Sherd Kindley would loaf in Stafford's store and tell Mrs. Stafford he thought a person ought to get married young and have a family coming on.

Carrie Yauky drove the school hack for 18 years. When it was icy she would have to get the horses shod and take the kids in the auto.

Bog Gordon would not let the phone company stretch a wire across his garden because it wasn't safe.

The kids, big and little, would turn out galore when a medicine show would come to town at the "opera house" just back of the I.O.O.F. Hall.

A man would get out of his buggy and hold his horse while an auto went by. Generally the man was scared worse than the horse.

Hogs would be driven across the railroad into the stock pens and everybody would holler "Soo-Y"

Everybody would try the scales to see if they balanced right.

We enjoyed the threshing "settling up time" and had plenty of ice cream.

The farmers would come in the store in the Fall, sit around the stove, spit tobacco juice all over the floor and swap big corn shucking stories.

Aldona put sugar in his oysters instead of salt at A. F. B. meeting in the Hall.

Sammy Wells of Petersburg would drive to the cross roads north of Millville, hitch his horse, walk to Millville in order to save paying 3 cents at the toll gate.

Wagon loads of apples would be lined up out to the main street awaiting their turn at the cider mill.

John Wood could be heard singing a mile away.

John Hutchinson would be asked where he was going to dig a grave and he'd say, "Down in the graveyard".

Sarah Hutchinson was operaed on for appendicitis at the age of 75.

Mr. and Mrs. John Miller run a tavern and livery stable for traveling men back of where Ralph Stauble lives now.

Jaimes Laboyteaux kept stable horses in the same barn.

Johnny Worl got lost in the woods east of Millville.

Frank Barkus's truck was hit by the fast train and after he got out, he still had his pipe in his mouth.

How easy Sam Wischart would pour wheat in the tester when testing it.

On Halloween the boys would put rail fences across the road.

Summit Taylor's father sold a bunch of western horses in the old Stafford barn lot.

How the women of Millville kept the moral standards by letting them know they were not wanted.

How we used to lock the teacher out at Christmas Time to make him treat.

The stores would be kept open until 9 o'clock.

On election time they would be up nearly all night counting the ballots.

How bad Aldona was scared the first time he talked over a telephone and it was to a woman.

When the old depot burned after night, 2 women remembered 2 barrels of oil in the depot and rushed in, rolled them out down the road all the way to road 38.

Top left to right — Pennsylvania Railroad
Station — Barkus Cider Mill.

Second Row — Millville Main Street VTVR — The
old Stafford Store

Third Row Laboyteaux Store and Creamery —
The Millville Christian Church.

Fourth Row — The second Millville school —
Local men about 1918

