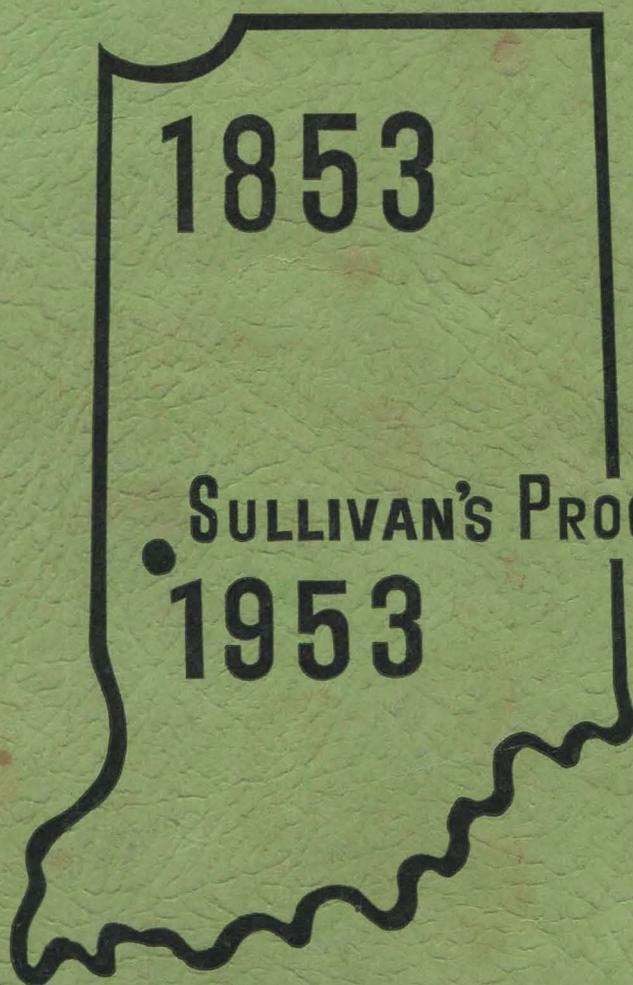


SULLIVAN'S CENTENNIAL



CELEBRATION

September 12th to 19th

Souvenir Program

Price 50¢

EARLY HISTORY OF SULLIVAN

For many years many Indian tribes surrounded what is now Sullivan and the early Indian Territory. They pitched their teepees beside the waters of Busseron and Buck Creeks and used this land as a hunting ground. As early as 1679 LaSalle made his first trip into the Mississippi Valley and pushing on finally made his way into the land known to-day as Indiana. It is that the area around Sullivan County was greatly influenced by the French; for the French obtained lands from the Indians by the Treaty of 1742. This was Point Coupee, a mile above the mouth of Busseron Creek—the southwest corner of the present Gill Township. So it is to LaSalle we pay the honor of opening Indiana to civilization. But in 1763, with the Treaty of Paris the French relinquished possession of the lands to the English. There was then a tightening down, English oppression grew and in 1775, the Revolutionary War.

Our ancestors of America and the Indiana Territory were determined to throw off the mantle of persecution and declare themselves a free nation. The American Freedom was no accident of nature, but was gradually won by generations of hard working and adventurous people. Years passed and after the Battle of Tippicanoe, General Harrison concluded a treaty with several Indian tribes. Shortly thereafter the James Ledgerwood family came into Sullivan County. Then slowly into the wilderness came other settlers and with the determination to conquer this wilderness. Sullivan soon began to grow rapidly.

In the year 1842 we find in Sullivan about four log cabins. The County records brought here in 1843 gave quite an impetus to the little village. A two-story frame Court House was built on Washington Street and a two-story solid log jail and jailer's residence on State Street on Lot No. 66 on which the present brick jail stands.

On a very cold January 4, 1843, a daughter, Mary J. was born to Hugh S. and Francis Orr. The first child born in this town.

Also in 1843 we find James Whitcomb making the first political speech, since he was a candidate for the Governorship and the first election was then held in 1844.

As a town grows, business grows, and these early merchants, John Bridwell, Maj. Isaac Stewart, Christison and Crowder and the Weisard Bros. kept little mixed stocks of dry goods, groceries, boots, shoes, hats, hardware, clothing, and drugs. As the town grew we soon found many men building one-story frame residences on Section Street. These with a very few others, and a few eating and drinking houses was Sullivan in 1848.

On December 8, 1853 Sullivan was incorporated by the Act of the County Commissioners, William Beard, Levi Maxwell and Jacob Hoke. As for a catalogue of the town officers, that can not be given, for the early town records are lost or misplaced. The population at this time was 350. One might have seen Mr. Sanders M. Howard, the first Post Master, delivering the mail and carrying it in his hat.

Near the center of the original plot of the town of Sullivan was the Court House square, surrounded by an iron fence. In the center of this was the Court House with an elevated foundation of solid stone. The cupola on top of the Court House was 120 feet in height, which under favorable circumstances could be seen from Merom, nine miles away.

The E. and C. Railroad, later the E. and T. H. and now the C. & E. I. was completed from Evansville to Terre Haute in December 1854. They ran a mail train North and South each day and a freight train North, Monday, Wednesday and Friday and South, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturdays.

EARLY HISTORY, Continued:

The first school building was erected by the County under the old seminary law. Mr. A. J. Mails taught the first school in this building teaching for some two years. As time passed on, their need for a bigger and better building grew and then a new school building, called the Central School was erected in 1872 as a cost of \$25,000. It was a three story building with the capacity for 600 pupils with Professor W. T. Crawford in charge. When the school year closed the Principle and staff organized for a term of normal training.

In a short span of a few years many businesses started such as the first planing mill, Proprietors J. F. Hoke and A. B. Stansil; the first woolen factory; The Merchants and Exchange flouring mill, The Marble and Granite works and two carriage factories, E. J. C. Hilderbrand, Proprietor of the one in the South and J. H. Welling, in the North.

Rost and Heiny were shop proprietors of the stationary and portable engines, mill machinery, reapers, mowers and threshers.

In early history there were only two Dentists listed; Dr. W. T. Allison and Dr. William Bucher.

It is impossible in a sketch of this kind to give every business the notes and description to which it might be intitled. Most of the business firms mentioned herein were in good two-story brick buildings, inclosing the square on the north, west and south.

There were a number of saw mills in the vicinity. The first was on the brow of the hill on North Section Street. An inclined tread mill run by ox or horse power.

The first banking done in this town was done in the fifties by one or more of the merchants, who issued a limited quantity of "shinplasters", owing to the great scarcity of small change at that time.

This money, if such can be called, circulated quite readily, first at par, but later at a steadily increasing discount. It was convenient, however, even if it was dangerous to handle, for it could not be told at night that it would be worth a picayune the next morning. Much of it was never redeemed and was a loss to its holders. The Sullivan County Bank, the oldest institution of the kind in the county, was situated at the South-west corner of the square.

One of the most remarkable men that ever published a paper in Sullivan County was John W. Osburn. He has been termed often as the pioneer editor of the Wabash Valley. In 1817 on a trip of about two months he wended his way from New York State to the new state of Indiana. After having charge of the "Western Sun", the first paper published in Indiana, and in 1823 issuing the first number of the Terre Haute Register, upon the breaking out of the war of the Rebellion in 1861, Father Osburn, as he was then called, took his place in Sullivan, publishing a small war campaign paper called "Stars and Stripes".

The "Sullivan Democrat" was started in August 1854. Then in 1867 the Sullivan County Union was started. It's offices were over the Sullivan County Bank. In 1883 Mr. U. Coulsen purchased the Union after it had changed hands two or three times.

The Sullivan Times newspaper occupied the second floor of the Masonic Building. The Times was started by George W. Basler as "The True Democracy", February 4, 1878.

One coal shaft opened near the E. and T. H. Railroad Depot, by Howard Brothers. They reached two veins of coal at 210 and 260 feet. It was soon discovered there was an almost inexhaustible mine of wealth in the coal beds underlying almost this entire County.

EARLY HISTORY, Continued:

Where ever there were men and women to be saved there went the inevitable Circuit Rider, with his saddle bags, Bible and hymn book, carrying words of cheer and comfort to the believer and forgiveness and peace to the repentants. So when the people of Sullivan concluded to build a town and make it the County-seat, and build a house as a Court of Justice, the fathers of the Church concluded to build a house and proclaim from its Alters mercy to dying men. So under the superintendence of the Rev. James R. Williams a good frame church was erected on the west side of the public square. Prior to this, the little band had been worshipping in private homes. Then in not the too distant future there were several houses of worship. The Baptist in 1854, Presbyterian in August 1857, the Christian Church in 1866 and in the years 1867 and

1868, under the supervision of Father McCarty, who was visiting Sullivan as a missionary, a Catholic Church was started.

Time marched on and Sullivan continued to grow and prosper. During these years the people mixed fun with their hardships of building a town. In 1917 the First World War called many Sullivanites and the town sacrificed many of their men and boys, but then came Peace. Hardly before the rejoicing was over, the Wall Street Crash hit and Sullivan along with many other towns bore her share of hardships.

This history of Sullivan gives the reader something of the background of the men and women who settled and developed this land of ours. Let us hope that we can show such a progress in the next One Hundred years.

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Sullivan, Indiana

"Character Sketches"

OF WELL KNOWN CITIZENS

S. A. White . . . Born in Vigo county, Indiana, 1849. Raised on a farm. Came back to Sullivan in 1884 after being in business in Petersburg, Carlisle and Terre Haute. Has since been one of the leading druggist of Sullivan.



J. R. Riggs . . . Born in Shelburn, Indiana, Feb. 17, 1865. Married Miss Bessie C., daughter of M. T. Lewman, Sept. 11, 1895. Moved to Sullivan, 1879. Graduated at the Sullivan High School, 1882. Elected County Auditor, 1894.



Dr. J. M. Billman . . . Born in Coshocton County, Ohio, 1864; came to Sullivan county 1866. Graduated at the Indiana Ophthalmic College, 1894. Married Miss Zetta, daughter of T. J. Wolfe.



Orion B. Harris . . . Born in Knox county, Ohio, April 15, 1859. Graduated at Kenyon College 1885. Came to Sullivan county same year and commenced the practice of Law, and 1893 formed partnership with Wm. T. Douthitt. Firm known as Harris and Douthitt.

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Sullivan, Ind.

Dr. G. G. Billman . . . Born in Sullivan county, 1868. Raised on his father's farm. Graduated at the Indiana Dental College in 1891. Married Miss Belle, daughter of Martin Campbell, 1892. Has since practiced his profession in Sullivan, East Side of Square.



John T. Hays . . . Was born in Beaver county, Pa., Nov. 11, 1842. Graduated at Iron City Commercial College, Pittsburg, Pa. Graduated at Mt. Union College, Ohio. Was Superintendent of Public School at Sullivan, Indiana, in 1872 and '73, since which time he has been engaged in the practice of Law in the same office that he now occupies.



John S. Bays . . . Born in Greene county, 1850. Attended the State University from '67 to '69, law school same place from '71 and '72. Admitted to the bar 1870. Married Miss Hettie G., daughter of John Fenton, 1876. Came to Sullivan county, 1874, and has since been one of the leading Attorneys of the State.



G. W. Leach . . . Born in Grant county, Indiana, 1848. Came to Sullivan county, 1863. In business in Sullivan since 1872. Owns 500 acres of land situated in various parts of Hamilton Tp.; also owner of the Blue Bull Stock Farm, where he keeps a number of noted race horses with records from 2:30 to 2:10.

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Edward H. Hoke
L. Paul Poynter
Winfield S. Wolfe
Charles H. Edwards
Woodson Moss
John W. McCloud
John Ersinger
Eirrelle E. Chaney
Roy H. McClanahan
Charles D. Hunt
Herman H. Smock
J. Harry Thompson
William T. Douthitt
John W. Garner
Lee F. Bays

John L. Bays
John W. Lindley
Charles M. Eaton
George C. Liebert
Neville Crowder
A. R. Martin
P. L. Reid
W. M. Lucas
Robert P. White
Harry O. Mahley
J. Irving Holcomb
Oscar M. Patten
C. Ernest Cowles
Edgar R. Riggs
James Harvey Gordon
James H. Mayfield
William H. Hays

Charles F. Batey
Walter G. Scott
William H. Hill, Jr.
Richard L. Bailey
Julius Hatry
Jess W. Mahley
Carl F. Briggs
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Jack C. Smith.....Loyal Knight
Wendell Cox.....Lecturing Knight
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Robert H. Crowder.....Treasurer
Ralph Shepherd.....Esquire
Jasper N. Ridge.....Tiler
John Wees.....Inner Guard
Richard Kerlin.....Chaplin

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