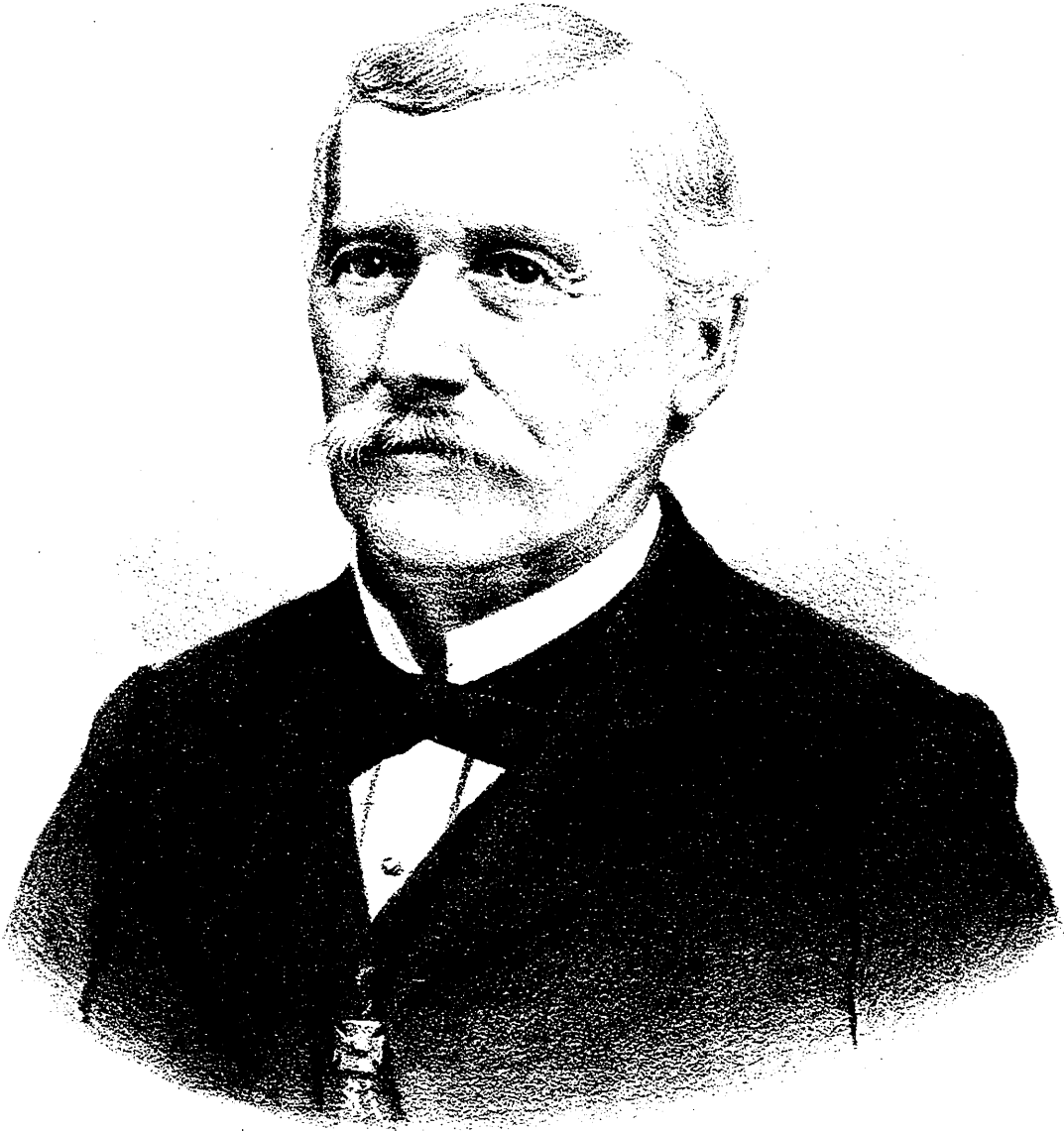


POLITICAL ORGANIZATION.

THE formation of the county, as noted elsewhere, was accomplished without much effort, the interests of the three counties conspiring to aid in the division. This being fixed, the organizing act of the Legislature provided that on the third Monday in June, just two weeks later, the people should meet at their various polling places and vote for a site for the county-seat. On this subject there was a wide diversity of opinion, and the two weeks intervening between the elections were spent by a considerable number of the citizens of the new county in electioneering for the various sites proposed. Matthews' Mill, or Fransonia, was proposed by T. J. Decker, an influential citizen and first collector of the county. Fairview was presented by James Ruark; the old village of Watertown, by Amos Bullard; Olney, just west of the site of the present village of that name, by Judge Aaron Shaw, and a site by Benjamin Bogart, just east of the present county-seat. The places thus offered in competition had little to offer save a fair plat of ground, and the influence of the friends of the situation. It was not long before the general sentiment found expression in favor of a central locality, and Fairview and Fransonia never stood equal with the others in the race. In pushing the interests of his site on the east side of the Fox River, Judge Shaw was indefatigable. He had large posters printed, the town named Olney, and the advantages of the location concisely placed before the public. Watertown, while making less of a figure in the canvass, was really the strongest candidate for the coveted honor. It had been platted early, and lots disposed of to various individuals all over the county. In this contest, every lot owner was an active partisan for the selection of this village, and in the end only fell short of victory by a narrow vote. All this became apparent to many citizens before the vote occurred, and considerable effort was put forth to avert the location of the county-seat so far to the west of the center, and in the vicinity of the river where it was thought the village might prove unhealthful. Bogart, in the meanwhile, desiring to limit the number of places to be voted on, lest by some accident one of the more remote points should be selected, agreed to submit the advantages of his site, with those of Olney and Watertown, and withdraw, if a committee of three should so decide. After an examination, a majority of the committee selected, decided against



John Kuster

Bogart's place, and the latter was withdrawn, though much to the dissatisfaction of a large number of the voters, and it was freely hinted that it was not an unbiased judgment. Determined not to be thwarted in that way, certain of the people of the county approached William Elliott to offer a site, and to Barney and Lilly. The latter persons made up their minds very soon, and thirteen acres were offered as a donation to the county in case the seat of justice was placed here—the present site of Olney. Just before the day of election, Judge Shaw, observing that the real contest was between Watertown and the Barney-Lilly donation, withdrew his site, and these two, with Fairview and Fransonia, entered the final contest. There were but three polling places for this election, the west precinct voting at John Jefford's, near Watertown, the south precinct at Fairview, and the north precinct at Brinkly's, in the present township of Claremont. It was decided very early in the day, that Fairview and Fransonia were out of the race, and a good deal of interest was manifested by certain of the citizens. Messengers were sent on fleet horses to ascertain the vote of the various polling places, and in the afternoon it was discovered that Watertown was developing unexpected strength. John Wolf was one of the active ones in this election, and riding to Fairview, he explained the situation, and secured the votes of the clerks and judges for the Barney-Lilly donation. This, with other votes secured at the last moment, defeated Watertown by barely nineteen votes. The next important question to decide, was the name of the new county-seat. Messrs. Samuel R. Lowry, James Laws, and Joshua L. Johnston, the temporary County Commissioners appointed by the organizing act, were confused by the number of names presented and pushed for recognition. The decision finally lay between Farmington and Olney, the name adopted by Judge Shaw for his site. The Commissioners, unwilling to decide, left it to the crowd that had assembled, and Olney was fixed upon, and became the name of the new county-seat.

Minor Divisions.—Until the following regular August election, the affairs of the county remained in *statu quo*, the temporary Board of Commissioners having authority only in canvassing and providing for the vote on the county-seat and the election of county officers. In August, however, the following list of county officers was chosen: County Commissioners, Lot Basden, Amos Bullard, and Hugh Calhoun, Jr.; Recorder, M. B. Snyder, Probate Justice of the Peace, R. B. Marney; Treasurer, W. H. Reed; A. F. David, Surveyor, and J. F. Reed, School Commissioner. The first records appear as follows:

“At a County Commissioners’ Court, begun and held at the house of Benjamin Bogard, county of Richland, and State of Illinois, on Monday, the 23d of August, A. D., 1841, were present Lot Basden, Amos Bullard, and Hugh Calhoun, Jr., Esquires, County Commissioners, who after having been duly qualified, proceeded to business. Ordered, there being no Sheriff, that Lewis Sawyer, a Constable of said county, act as Sheriff to this court. Ordered, that Morris B. Snyder be appointed Clerk *pro tem* to this court. It being determined by lot, Lot Basden is to serve three years, Amos Bullard, two years, and Hugh Calhoun, Jr., one year, as County Commissioner. Morris B. Snyder, who had been elected Clerk (probably Recorder) of this court, now here presented his bond for the acceptance of the court, which was ordered to be received and spread upon the records of this court, and in open court he was qualified as the law directs, etc. (Here follows his bond in the sum of \$100, with S. R. Lowry and John Snyder, Jr., as securities). Ordered, that the lots in the town of Olney, Richland County, be sold on the 20th of September next, and that the Clerk give notice that the said lots on that day will be offered for sale, and sold on the following terms, to wit: purchasers will be required to give bonds with approved security, payable, one-third in six months, one-third in twelve months, and one-third in eighteen months. Adjourned to court in course.

“September term, 1841. At a County Commissioners’ Court began and held at the house of Benjamin Bogard, in Richland County, on Monday, the 6th day of September, A. D., 1841, when present Lot Basden and Hugh Calhoun, Jr., Esquires, County Commissioners. Ordered, that Lewis Sawyer act as Sheriff to this court. Ordered, that the county of Richland be laid off into Justices Precincts as follows, to wit: First, to begin at Fox River, two miles north of town line between Townships 3 and 4, thence north to Fox River; thence with Fox River north to the county line; thence east with said county line to the northeast corner of the county; thence south with said county line to the southeast corner of Section 24, Township 4 north, of Range 14 west; thence west with said section line to the place of beginning, to be called Troy Precinct. Second, to begin at the northeast corner of Section 25, Township 4 north, of Range 14 west, thence running south with the county line to the southeast corner of said section; thence due west with said section line to Fox River; thence up Fox River to the southwest corner of Troy Precinct, to be called Olney Precinct. Third, beginning at the northeast corner of Section 25, in Township 3 north, of Range

14 west, thence with the county line to the southeast corner of the county; thence with the county line to Fox River; thence up said river to the southwest corner of Olney Precinct, to be called Parker Precinct. Fourth, to begin at Watertown, on Fox River, thence west with the State road to the county line; thence north with the county line to the northwest corner thereof; thence east to Fox River; thence with Fox River to the place of beginning, to be called North Precinct. Fifth, beginning at Fox River on the State road, thence west with the State road to the county line; thence south with the county line to the southwest corner thereof; thence east with said county line to the Fox River; thence north up Fox River to the place of beginning, to be called South Precinct. Ordered, that the above precincts be general election precincts. Ordered, that all elections for Troy Precinct be held at the house of John Allen; for Olney Precinct, at the house of Benjamin Bogard; for Parker's Precinct, at Fairview; for North Precinct, at the house of Wright Mash; for South Precinct, at the house of William Holbrook. Ordered, that the judges of election shall be for North Precinct, James Nelson, James Coghill and Arvin Webster. For South Precinct, James Elliott, J. R. Lewis and Henry Taylor. For Troy Precinct, John Allen, John Lamb and McIntyre Ryan. For Olney Precinct, Joseph Bunch, William Tarbox and William Elliott. For Parker Precinct, George Higgins, J. H. Reed and George Mason. Ordered, that the following trustees of school lands be appointed: For Township 4 north, Range 9 east, Arvin Webster, James Coghill and John Graham. For Township 4 north, Range 14 west, Thomas Utterback, John Allen and Charles Stuterville. For Township 4 north, Range 10 east, Richard Phillips, Joseph Bunch and George McWilliams. For Township 3 north, Range 14 west, J. H. Reed, Canada Clubb and Stephen Gardner. For Township 3 north, Range 10 east, J. L. Johnson, John Nelson and Erastus Ruark. For Township 2 north, Range 10 east, Elcana Richards, John Walker and James Parker, Jr. For Township 2 north, Range 14 west, William Higgins, Thomas Spencer and Daniel David. For Township 3 north, Range 11 east, Henry Calhoun, James Thrapp, Sr., and William Perry. Ordered, that the Overseers of the Poor in the various precincts shall be as follows: Troy Precinct, John Cotterell; Olney Precinct, Bryant Bullard; Parker Precinct, James Parker; North Precinct, James Nelson; South Precinct, Joseph Gardner, Sr. Ordered, that a scrawl be adopted as the seal of this court. Ordered, that the town of Olney be laid off into lots, accord-

ng to the plat of Lot Basden. [The first money order was made in this term in favor of the judges and clerks of the previous election. Then followed the selection of grand and petit jurors and provision for the first jail, and besides the location of a road and the granting of a few licenses, this covers the business of the first year of the County Commissioners' Court of the new county.]

The precincts of Richland County have been subject to comparatively few changes. In March, 1844, the original precinct of Olney was extended to a north and south line, three miles west of Fox River, beginning at the southwest corner of Section 17, thence west with said line to the southwest corner of Section 13; thence north six miles; thence east to the Fox River. In December, 1852, Claremont Precinct was formed with the following boundaries: Beginning at the northwest corner of Section 30, Township 4 north, of Range 14 west, thence east to the county line between Richland and Lawrence counties; thence south six miles; thence west six miles to the southwest corner of Section 19, Township 3 north, Range 14 west; thence north to the place of beginning. In June of the following year, a mile off the west side of this precinct was added to Olney, and in September a mile was added off the south side of Troy Precinct. In September, 1853, on petition of Lemuel Truitt, Noble Precinct was formed, beginning on the section line at the northwest corner of Section 30, Township 4 north, Range 9 east, thence on said line east to the northeast corner of Section 26, Township 4 north, Range 9 east; thence south to the southeast corner of Section 14, Township 3 north, Range 9 east; thence west to the county line; thence north with said line to place of beginning. There were thus seven precincts when Jacob May and a large number of other citizens of the county petitioned that the matter of township organization be submitted to the people. The matter came up at the election of November, 1858, and was adopted by a vote of 838 to 376, out of a total of 1,280 votes. According to the provisions of the general law, Messrs. John M. Wilson, O. P. Heisland and Sylvester Utterback were appointed commissioners to divide the county into townships. The county embraces about ten sections in Range 8 east, and the entire Ranges 9, 10 and 11 east, the latter consisting of but a single fractional section in width, and Range 14 west. Of these ranges, Townships 3 and 4 are found entire, with five tiers of sections in Township 2, and two tiers of sections in Township 5. Township 2, in Ranges 8 and 9 east, has but three tiers of sections. The width of the county covers nineteen sections,

and in the division into townships the committee, with the design of making the outlines of each township as regular as possible, ran north and south lines on the line between Ranges 9 and 10 east, and between Ranges 11 east and 14 west. Of the east and west lines, the upper one goes due west through the county, six miles from the northern boundary. The second one forms the southern boundary of Olney and Claremont townships, seven miles south of the upper line. The division line between Noble and Decker townships was placed a mile further north. The county was thus divided into nine townships, and were first named as the precincts had been, beginning in the northwest corner and proceeding from north to south, as follows: Boone, Noble, Jackson, Douglas, Olney, Madison, Troy, Claremont and Bonpas. Parker Precinct had been changed in 1848 to Fairview, and South or Brown's Precinct to Southwest, and North to Northwest Precinct. Under the new nomenclature, Parker appears as Madison, the South as Jackson, and the North as Boone, while Douglas and Bonpas were new. This list was further modified by the Board of Supervisors, by changing the name of Boone to Denver, Jackson to Decker, Douglas to Preston, and Troy to German, which leaves the townships as they are now found. In 1878, there was manifested a strong dissatisfaction with the way county affairs had been managed, and on petition the question of returning to the old form of organization was submitted to the people, and township organization was annulled. The County Commissioners elected, divided the county into six assessment districts, but left the voting precincts unchanged save the Olney was divided into two, East and West precincts. In 1880, however, a return to township organization was made, and the old arrangement was maintained.

Denver Township contains just the area of a Congressional township, thirty-six sections, but made up from Townships 4 and 5, in Range 9 east. This township forms the northwest corner of the county, and was originally principally prairie land, with some open timber skirting Sugar and Harrison creeks. Since prairie fires have ceased to run, the young growth has rapidly sprung up, and this township is now well wooded. Onion Hill, in this township, is the highest point in the county, and a land-mark for some distance about. The upper end of Fox Prairie and Ten Mile Prairie are the names of the open lands, the latter being largely settled by Germans. The settlement of this region was not early, Harrison Graham, in 1842, being about the first in the township. During the succeeding ten years others gathered in, among whom were Jesse Toliver, Peter

Wachtel, Joseph Spencer, Wesley Nelson and William McCarty. It is a good agricultural section, and is not subject to overflow, the streams being very small. Wakefield, in the northwest corner, and Wilsonburg, close to the southern border, are small hamlets.

Noble Township, next south of Denver, in the western tier of townships, contains about forty-two sections, six of which are in Township 3, Range 8. The surface of the township was originally high, rolling prairie, with timbered bottoms along the Fox and Big Muddy rivers. The Evans family were the earliest settlers, who came here in 1818. L. L. Allender, who had a ferry across the Muddy on the old "trace road," was an early settler, and Gilmore, the Sheriff of Clay County in 1841, was another. Lemuel Truitt, James Braughton, Alvin Webster, William Elliott and Owen Coats were among the early and prominent citizens of the township. Wheat and corn, upon the prairie and bottom lands respectively, are sure and profitable crops. Noble village is the second village in the county. Glenwood is the name of a village that once caused some excitement, but was never more than a paper town.

Decker Township forms the southwest corner of the county, and is composed of some thirty-five sections. Five sections are in Township 2, Range 8, and form the irregular western boundary along the Little Wabash and Big Muddy. The Fox Prairie covers about ten sections in the central part of the township, the rest of which is covered with heavy timber. The bottom lands are extensive and subject to overflow, some of them being comparatively worthless. Among the earliest settlers were Eli Craft, David Bates, Taylor, George Poff, Hughs, Jordan, and Thomas J. Decker, after whom the township was named. The latter was the first Collector of taxes, and an influential citizen. An early grist mill was built near Fransonia by John Matthews, and gave name to an early polling place, and a competitor for the location of the seat of justice for the county. Jeremiah Lewis, a local preacher, introduced the experiment of silk raising in this township, but the worms did not thrive, and the effort finally failed. Fransonia is a hamlet on the Fox River, in the northeastern part of the township.

Preston Township embraces the area of a Congressional township in Range 10 east and six sections of Range 11 east. It is six miles north and south by nearly seven miles east and west. It is bounded by Denver on the west, by Jasper County on the north, German on the east and Olney on the south. Fox River flows southward through the central part, and the timber skirting its banks and those of its

tributaries, covers the larger part of the township. The Grand Prairie extends into the township on the eastern side, and has an area here of some fifteen square miles. It is a well improved and well-to-do farming region, and produces the usual cereals equal to any other township. Among the early families were those of James Quales, Wheeler, John Underhill, George McWilliams, Henry Swallen and John Phillips. These families were principally from Kentucky and Tennessee. In 1838, a considerable emigration from Ohio settled here, and occupy the eastern side. Dundas is the name of the railroad station and post-office in the northern central part.

Olney is located in the center of the county and has the largest area of any township in the county. Fox River runs from north to south along the western part, while its branches cross the township from the eastern side. The timber which skirts these streams divides the surface of this part of the county into little prairies of a few miles square. The country is under a good state of cultivation, and all improvements are in an advanced state. The interest of the township, however, centers in the city, which occupies a position a little north of the center. Among the earliest settlers were Morehouse, Bogard, Elliott, Nelson, and others already mentioned elsewhere.

Madison Township occupies a place in the central tier of townships, south of Olney. The central part of this precinct was occupied by the Sugar Creek Prairie, some twenty square miles in extent, while the rest is covered with the timbered bottoms of Fox River and Sugar Creek. George Ward and William Richards were early settlers. James Parker, Sr., a comrade of Daniel Boone, and an old Indian fighter, was also one of the early settlers. Among others were William Nash, Daniel Williams, John Rogers, Matthew Duckery, James Sharp, James Enson, Curtis Rose, Abraham Morrell, Thomas Mason, Lloyd Rawlings, John Wolf, and others. Shadrack Ruark first projected the village of Fairview. He was the pioneer of Ohio emigration to this county, and a man of considerable influence. Parkersburg is a small village in the southeastern part of the township, and Fairview is another on the northeastern corner.

German Township forms the northeast corner of the county, and embraces an area of thirty-six square miles. Grand Prairie extends into the western side, and Stringtown Prairie into the eastern side of the township. The central part of the township is high and was originally covered with timber, but much of this has been cleared off and replaced by good farms. Among the first settlers were Samuel Butler, John Cotterell, J. H. Jones, Thomas Utterback,

Joseph Tague, William Crabtree, and John May. The latter was a veteran of the war of 1812. John Bush and J. L. Allen were a little later in the settlement. About 1840, the German emigration from Stark County, Ohio, began to fill up this township. Among this inflow of population were the families Clepper, Haus, Spitz, Snider, Stirchi, Jaggis and Eyer. This nationality has increased until it is the largely predominating element there and gave name to the township. This township is one of the most prosperous agricultural townships in the county.

Claremont is next south in the eastern tier of townships. It is one of the later precincts formed, but was one of the earliest settled. William Laws, Willis Blanchard, Bryant Bullard, Richard Brinkley, Lot Basden, Canada Clubb, Jacob and William Coanour, and the Calhouns were among the early residents of this part of the county. Cristy Prairie extends into the northeastern part and is divided by the Bonpas Creek from the Calhoun Prairie, which extends southward along the western side of the township. The two branches of the Bonpas rise here, and mark the site of the timbered portion. A blue-limestone quarry is found in the township, just south of the center. The village of Claremont ranks third among the towns of the county, and is situated on the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad, just north of the center of the township.

Bonpas Township forms the southeast corner of the county, and was originally heavily timbered. It is watered by the river from which it takes its name, and the surface, somewhat broken in places, is generally rolling, and is especially adapted to growing wheat and clover. It is now generally well settled, and cut into small farms, which are under a good state of cultivation. It was the site of one of the earliest settlements, but when the prairies became better understood, the more open townships attracted the immigration, and Bonpas suffered considerable neglect. During recent years this has somewhat changed, and this township is well settled and is rapidly being cleared up. The first settlers were William and George Higgins, Reason Ruark, Joseph Spencer, Medad, Simmons, Beard, Benjamin Bunn and others. The first water mill in the county was built here, and before the building of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad, this township furnished the coal and stone for the county principally.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

The duty of providing a place for the County and Circuit Courts to do business in, was an early and pressing one. Although it was

provided by the organizing act that the proportion of the current tax levy derived from Richland County should be paid into the treasury of the new county, the amount thus made available was very small, not reaching over \$200, a sum wholly inadequate for the building of such modest structures as satisfied the tastes and business of even that day. The money to be derived from the sale of the property donated was subject to an indefinite delay, and the amount was in a still more perplexing doubt. The first Commissioners met in the nearest available cabin, that of Benjamin Bogard, located just east of the present village of Olney, on the "trace road." Here the regular Commissioners held forth until the latter part of 1842. The west room of Bogard's cabin was obtained for the use of all County and Circuit Courts, for a rental of \$1 per month, the county furnishing the stove for heating purposes. In September, 1842, the Board of Commissioners and the leaders of the Methodist Church just formed here, got together and agreed upon another substitute for a court house." It was agreed upon and recorded that "lot No. 4, in Lilley's donation in the town of Olney, be granted to the Methodist Church on condition that the superintendent appointed, or who undertakes for said church, shall have erected on said lot a meeting house, to be of hewed logs, 20x24 feet square, nine rounds high, to be finished by the third day of November next, for the use of the county to hold all the courts of the county in until the county builds a court house, for which use the county will make a deed for said lot to said church, and it is expressly understood that the said church is to keep the said house in good repair, and the county is to repair all damages that may be done in holding courts in said house." This cabin was constructed and served the various needs of the community, as meeting house, court house and schoolhouse, and still stands neglected and going to ruin opposite the depot of the Peoria, Decatur & Evansville Railroad Company. The church seems to have fulfilled its part of the contract, save perhaps in the "rounds high," which now appear to be only eight, instead of the nine stipulated. Two small windows on either side, admit the light, while a single door in the end admitted the people who were wont to gather here for business or worship. It is yet in condition to last for many years with some judicious care, and it would seem no more fitting tribute could be paid to the memory of the pioneer and his times, than to preserve so long as possible this ancient landmark.

In December, 1843, a new court house was projected by the

Board to be forty feet square and two-stories high. The contract, which is very explicit and covers several pages of the record, stipulates that the building shall be a frame building, the first story twelve feet high and the second the same; "the foundation to be well laid with solid rock, one foot under ground and half a foot above the ground, making a wall eighteen inches high and one foot thick;" to be weather-boarded with poplar plank, seven inches wide, and one-half inch thick; to have three outside doors and thirty-two windows of twenty-four lights, 10x12 inches; for which the contractors were to receive orders on the county treasury, to be paid out of the proceeds of the "donation lots, moneys from Lawrence County, or elsewhere." Asa H. Beard and W. H. Reed were the contractors, and the sum agreed upon for the work was \$3,025. This structure was erected on the public square, but it was the middle of 1847, before it was finished. The first contractors failed and a new contract was made with Beard and Henry Spring to finish it. When finished the building was of the pattern very common at that time, a sample of which may still be seen in the court house at Toledo, Cumberland Co., Ill. The lower story was devoted to the court room, which was entered at doorways on the east and west sides of the building. The Judge's seat and desk was in the center of the south side, with benches at right angles on either hand, and seats parallel with the judicial bench in front, for the bar. A row of posts supported the upper story, and a balustrade to divide the sacred precincts of the court from the audience. The separation between these two parties was further marked by broad aisle leading from one door to the other. A doorway in the north side led to an enclosed entrance from which the upper story was reached by a flight of stairs. The upper story was divided on the east side into three equal rooms, and the west side into two equal rooms, with a hall ten feet wide between the two sides, running north and south. These were occupied by the county officials. A cupola, twelve feet square, and twelve feet high surmounted the structure. Two windows on a side lighted the court-room and twenty-four were disposed above, all of which were supplied with green "venetian shutters." The building was painted white and when first constructed was an ornament to the town which early gained a wide reputation for its neat appearance. In 1854, a bell was added to the court house fixtures, at a cost of \$70. In the following year the public square was enclosed by a "paling fence," in style, strength and finish similar to some citizen's fence which had attracted the Commissioners' eye. The court house thus pro-

vided served the county over thirty years. It was repaired at a cost of something over \$1,000, during this time, and in 1859 was supplemented by a fire-proof building for the offices of record and the Treasurer. By this time the records of the county had grown to a large bulk, and that such important papers should be left to the uncertainties of a frame building was considered too hazardous. The Board accordingly let the contract for the construction of the fire-proof building to Quarterman and Jobs for \$1,535. This was a one story brick building, about 15x40 feet, provided with iron shutters and doors, and was situated on the public square, a little north of the present east gate. This building is still serving for office purposes on the corner of the square immediately south of its original position. With this addition, the old court house served with general acceptance until 1873. In this year a new building was projected and the whole cost fixed at a sum not to exceed \$40,000, but this sum was subsequently reduced to \$25,000.

In March, 1874, the Board of Supervisors examined the plans of various architects, seven competing plans being presented. Considerable care was taken to select a plan that could actually be carried out with the proposed outlay of money, and architects were called in to examine the specifications, and lawyers to examine the arrangements of offices, etc. The plan of J. C. Cochrane, of Springfield, was adopted, and the contract subsequently let to Barlow and Gaddis. On the 18th of July, 1874, the corner stone was laid with impressive ceremonies. The fire department, city officials, Masonic and Odd Fellows Fraternities, and large numbers of the citizens united in a procession, and on reaching the site, the corner stone was laid, according to the ritual of the Masonic Order, by John Gunn, Esq., assisted by William Newell, chairman of the Board of Supervisors of the county. Addresses were made by Gen. E. Bowyer, Judge Shaw and Mayor J. M. Wilson. In this stone a variety of documents were deposited. A remarkable feature of the structure is the foundation, which is five feet thick and composed of short plank laid up with cement. Upon this foundation, at the surface of the ground is laid the brick which narrows in ten courses to the thickness of the walls. The general style of architecture is Italian, and that of the details, Tuscan. The material is brick, with stone trimmings, the roof covered with slate and tin and the cornice of galvanized iron. The form of the building is that of the Greek cross, the extreme length, east and west, or the main street front, is 106 feet and 65 feet in the north and south direction. A portico

46 feet long, finishes the north front; the roof of which is supported by eight stone columns in couplets, standing on solid stone pedestals. This portico stands twenty-four feet high, is crowned with a classic balustrade, and projects fourteen feet from the wall-line. At each of the corners of the buildings are pilasters, three feet wide, with Tuscan caps supporting the main cornice. The cornice of the main part of the building is described as 'the cantilever style,' and that of the wings, modillion. The building is surmounted by a dome seventeen feet square, with massive base, and on each of the four sides are projecting porticos, with two pilasters of the Corinthian order. Upon the summit of this dome is a flag-staff twenty-two feet high. The height of the walls of the main building is fifty-two feet, to the top of the dome, 122 feet, and to the top of the flag-staff, 144 feet. The entrances are from the north and south, where admittance is gained by double doorways to large corridor, ten feet wide. Another corridor of the same width crosses this at right angles, in the center where a rotunda, twenty-six feet in diameter, is formed. From the east and west corridor, on either side of the building, are flights of stairs, five feet wide, leading to the second story. The first story contains the offices of the county officials. The west wing affords a room 18x38 feet, which is occupied by the County Clerk. This is supplied with a fire-proof vault, 10x15 feet, and two stories high, affording a floor space equal to 20x30 feet, and is lighted by a small square window. This is off the southeast corner of the office. At the northeast corner of the room is a private passage way, used as a toilet room, and affording access to the Treasurer's office, a room eighteen feet square, and provided with a vault and the common furniture of a bank. On the south side of the east and west corridor, an office corresponding in size and general location to the Treasurer's office, is a room assigned to the County Surveyor. The east half of the building is arranged similarly. The Circuit Clerk occupies the large office in the wing, and the smaller offices are occupied by the Sheriff and County Superintendent of Schools. Each of these offices is supplied with fire-proof vaults, the smaller offices are each lighted by windows from two sides, while the larger offices are lighted from the three sides. The court room occupies the second story of the main building, extending north and south. This room is lighted by three large windows at either end, and is entered from the landing at the head of each flight of stairs, by double doorways. The room is 43x62 feet, and is twenty-six feet high, furnishing an auditorium capable of

seating 300 people. The Judge's seat and bar is in the south end, with ample provision for jury, witnesses and professional attendants upon the court. Behind the Judge's seat is a screen, ten feet high, the center of which is a large panel of dark wood, while the wings are paneled with figured glass. This softens the glare of the light admitted by the three windows in the south end. The upper story of the west wing is occupied by rooms for the grand and petit juries and witnesses. The three rooms over the Circuit Clerk's office are assigned to the Board of Supervisors, library and consultation room and the Judge's private room. This division is only theoretical, however. The Library consists of a few volumes of State reports, seldom consulted, if the dust affords any criterion, and the room is chiefly used as a lumber room for the storage of sundry political paraphernalia. The other rooms are occupied by the various juries, the Board of Supervisors using the ample quarters of the County Clerk for its sittings. The offices are neat, convenient and attractive in appearance, and the court room and retiring rooms might be so, if the same care and taste had been expended upon them. The walls of the first story rooms are neatly calcimined, while the upper rooms are left in their original state, while seamed with many a crack and disfigured in places by the vandal work of the unscrupulous scribbler. The retiring rooms are scantily furnished and the floors uncovered. The cellar, provided with furnace and piping, at a cost of \$829, is left in the unfinished condition the builder left it. In 1878, a clock was placed in the dome at a cost of \$500, the city paying one half of the expense. The entire cost of the building, exclusive of the fixtures last mentioned, was something over \$37,000, the specifications of the original plan calling for wood being replaced by stone, which was undoubtedly a valuable modification. The public square is now nicely graded and sodded, the old practice of raising hay having given way to the more enlightened method of lawn cultivation. The whole is surrounded by an iron fence, upon a stone foundation, presenting a *tout ensemble* equaled by the public of few county-seats in southern Illinois.

A jail was evidently considered a necessity much earlier than a court house, or a substitute was much less easily found. Accordingly, in September, 1841, a jail was projected by the Board of Commissioners, to be located on the lot which is now occupied in part by the engine house. The plan was unique and can only be properly given in the language of the record. It was provided: "the foundation to be seventeen feet square, by digging out the earth eight

inches deep, which is to be next laid with solid rock, sixteen inches deep, eight inches above the surface of the ground; floor to be laid on the rock, the full size of the jail, of hewn timber one foot thick; wall to be composed, first story of three thicknesses, second story of one thickness, of hewn timber; to be two-story, of eight feet each story, the inner thickness to be of hewn timber one foot square, to be eight feet long, the outside wall to be of timber of the same thickness, and three walls to be seventeen feet long, and two walls to be twenty-five feet long, the vacancy between the walls to be filled with square timber put in perpendicularly; second floor to be laid with square timber one foot thick, and dovetailed in half through the outer wall; third floor to be laid with timber eight inches thick, all the timbers to be of good, solid white oak, the roof to be put on with joint shingles in a workmanlike manner. The intention of the long timbers is for an additional jailor's room, all to be done in a workmanlike manner. Two doors to be cut as the building is raised, two and a half wide, six and a half feet long, and to be cased; the windows to be put on the outside, two in each room; eight bars of iron for the windows, two in each window, let into the center of each log, to be squared equal to the case of the window; doors to be cased with three inch timber; the size of windows in lower room to be 6x8 inches, in debtor's room, 6x10 inches." This description without the aid of punctuation or capital letters was the text by which the first stronghold of the county was built. The jailor's room was never built, and as constructed it was just a two-storied box with an ante-room from which entrance was gained to the lower room, and the upper story reached by a flight of stairs. Otherwise the specifications were followed, and a reasonably secure jail built. Wood, however thick, does not seem to be adapted to the retention of determined prisoners and escapes were not unheard of here. Some cut their way through to the debtor's room above and thence through the roof. Others tunneled through the bottom, and one, less fortunate, attempted to get through the small opening in the door used to pass food through, and only failed after getting his head and one arm through. At this juncture he lost his support, and was found in this awkward situation, half dead, by the jailor in the morning. In March, 1856, a new jail was projected, to be of brick, about 20x40 feet, one-half to be devoted to the prison, and the other as a jailor's or sheriff's residence. This still remains on the corner of Market and Mulberry streets. The cells were formed of brick, lined with wood, and this sheathed with sheet iron. This

proved a very insufficient restraint to prisoners, and criminals charged with heinous crimes were chained to make them secure. Digging out through the floor was frequently successful, and digging a hole through the brick wall under the window sills, another easy means of escape. In December, 1868, a committee was appointed to correspond in regard to iron cells, and in the following year, two of these improved boxes were placed in the upper apartment, at a cost of \$1,458.20. The building was originally constructed by Lutz & Cain, a firm that changed to Cain & Hayward before the building was completed at a cost of \$3,790.

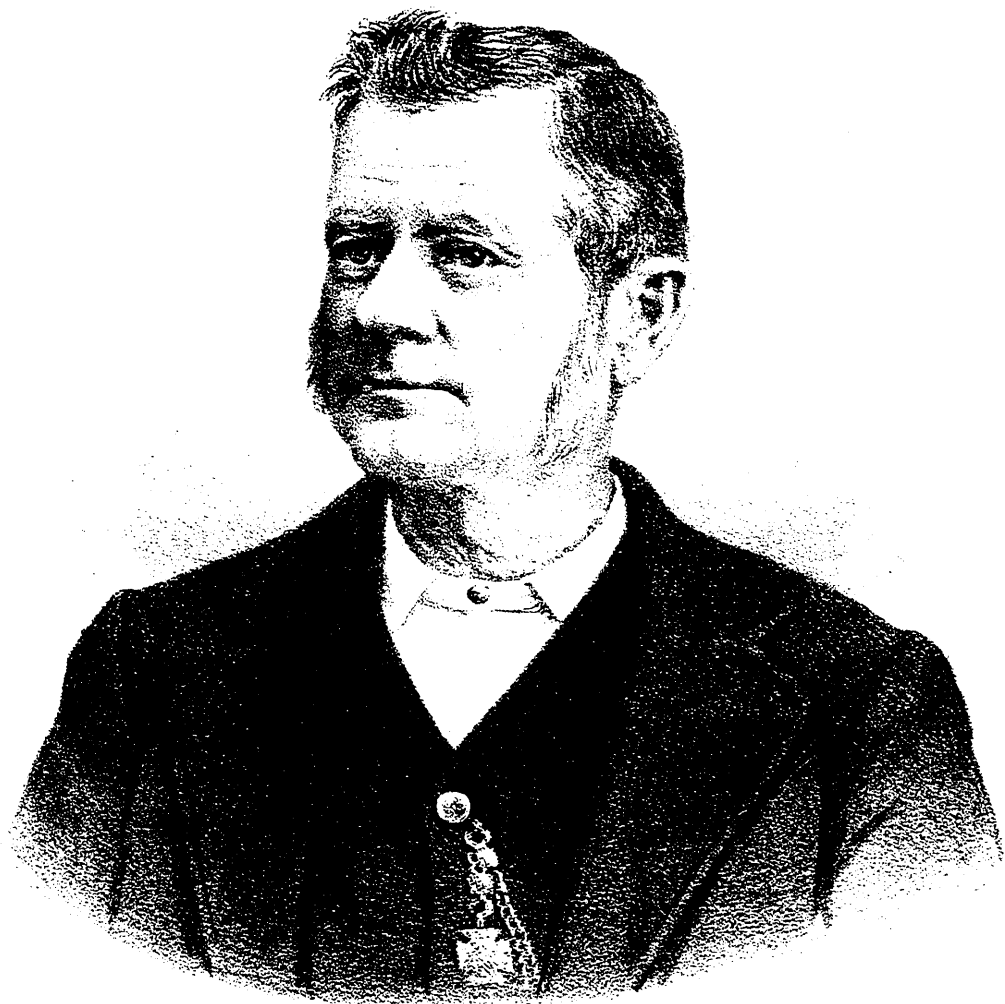
The care of the poor has been a prominent question before the executive board of the county, and has taken on all the various phases common to the smaller counties. Up to 1859, sundry individuals cared for the poor persons in their neighborhood and were paid by the county as it saw fit. This was carried to the extent in some cases that a man was occasionally paid for the care of his poor relation. On the change of organization, the Board of Supervisors passed the following order: "That the keeping and taking care of the poor and paupers of Richland County, Ill., be let to the lowest responsible bidder, for the term of one year commencing on the first day of January, 1860, the contracting parties to have the sole care and attention of boarding, clothing, nursing, medical attention, and, in fact, all charges of every description, chargeable to the county for said poor or paupers; the party contracting to take said poor or paupers' property or effects, the poor or paupers to be delivered to the contracting parties at their place designated in the contract, and the contracting party to pay the expense incurred in the delivery by any overseer of the poor in any of the townships in the county; the contracting party to receive pay by the year, let the number be whatever it may, more or less, the price to be no more nor less than the amount agreed upon for any number that may come to his charge from said overseers of the poor, and remain in said charge as poor or paupers, and shall receive quarterly payments as per said contract." It was further provided that the contracting party should give a bond with approved securities for the faithful performance of his duties under the contract, and that one bid should be reserved for the county. John D. Richards was the first purveyor to the poor under this arrangement, and received \$586.50 for his services. The price paid was subsequently reduced as low as \$360 and \$397, but this was the lowest point. In 1865, the price paid was \$750, and \$1,000 in 1866, \$801 in 1868, and \$1,200 in 1869. In 1868, after the

regular committee had examined the condition of the poor, they included in their report a recommendation that a farm be purchased for the care of the poor. The prospect seemed to be that the number would so increase that the plan in operation would prove impracticable. A special committee was appointed to consider the matter and the result was that in March, 1869, a farm was purchased. The land is situated four miles east and a quarter of a mile north of Olney City, and consists of 167 acres. It was purchased of Nicholas Sterchi, at \$27 per acre. The farm had a fair story and a half frame house on it and out buildings, and these have served the purposes of the county until now. A keeper is appointed each year at a salary of \$1,200 per annum, and the product of the farm accrues to the benefit of the county.

COURTS AND CRIME.

The lack of anything like caste in the early days robbed the early courts of much of the moderate dignity that now attaches to them. The surroundings were of the "homespun" character of the whole society here, and the easy way in which the official rank was worn made everybody "free and easy," save when within the actual clutches of the law. Of this Mr. J. M. Wilson writes :

" Circuit Court week was the great holiday for the men, and the court and bar of fifty years ago had vastly more of consequence in the eyes of the backwoodsman than it has to their successors. Traveling on horseback over a wide, extended circuit, extending from Gallatin, including White County, on the south, and Danville on the north, to the center of the State on the west, their progress was somewhat after the fashion of the early English judges. At each county-seat, judge and lawyers, some three or four, put up at the same hotel and held a grand reception on the first evening of their arrival; were called on by all the leading men of the county, and were all eminent in their profession. The old lawyer was ever a man of education and a gentleman, and the old judges, such as Wilson and Breese, have no superiors since their day. There were no pettyfogging shysters at the bar; self-interest never swayed them from the truth. Bat. Webb and Gen. John Robinson, U. F. Linder and O. B. Ficklin, and Charles Constable, together traveled the circuit. Each had their peculiarities, but all were able lawyers. There were but few cases of murder. In 1833, one Ledbetter was hung in Carmi for the murder of his brother in Gallatin County, whence a change of venue was taken to White County. An immense con-



M. M. St. John

course from all the adjacent counties witnessed the execution. Most of the criminal cases were for counterfeiting and hog stealing. There were some peculiarities in the old judges and court proceedings that, to say the least, would be novel now; as instance: Once, in 1830, during the progress of a trial at old Maysville, a chap filled with whisky and fun galloped on all fours across the courtroom in front of the Judge, Wilson, kicking and neighing like a horse. The Judge ordered the Sheriff to put that horse in the stable. The Sheriff, after a struggle, captured the would-be equine, telling the Judge there was no jail, when the Judge said they must build one. The Sheriff swore he would not hold him till that was done, and turned the fellow loose. On one occasion during the progress of a trial, whilst an eminent attorney was addressing a jury, a man breathless with haste, rushed into the court house and proclaimed aloud that two celebrated bullies were going to fight, and were then stripping for the contest. Off helter skelter went the crowd, jury, witnesses and lawyers, followed by the Judge, calling, 'Sheriff, adjourn the Court!' The Sheriff yelled, 'Court is adjourned!' as he leaped out the court house door. This was in Hamilton County; Ellic Grant was the Judge, and a good one, too. On a certain occasion in Richland, when court was holden in the little old log house nearly opposite the depot of the P., D. & E. R. R., one Wilson Nash persisted in wearing his coon-skin cap regardless of the repeated cry of 'Hats off in Court,' whereupon Lewis Sawyer, the Sheriff, made a sweeping stroke with his cane to knock the cap off, but striking too low, knocked Nash heels over head.

"There have been but few executions in southern Illinois in the last fifty years, one in Wabash, one in Lawrence; and one man, Jeff White, was hung by a band of lynchers, in Richland. We, as a rule, have always had a law-abiding people, who are innocent of the blood-curdling atrocities we read of in other parts of the country."

It should be added that Richland County has not been free of murders. At an early day one Gatewood got into an altercation with one Brimberry. In the course of the wrangle, Gatewood threw up his gun to shoot his opponent, when Brimberry rushed between the men and received the fatal shot. Gatewood fled, and was never brought to justice. More recently, a case of indefensible homicide brought out the only manifestation of "lynch justice" the county has ever known. Two farmers had had some difficulty, when they met on the farm of the aggressive party. After ordering the man off the premises, where he was engaged in threshing, the proprietor

of the farm went to his house and returned with a gun, and without further parley killed the man. The murderer was arrested and brought to the jail, where he remained two or three days. In the meanwhile the report became general that a prominent attorney had taken his case to defend, and that he felt confident of securing his acquittal. This brought out a mob from the country, neighbors and friends of the murdered man, and the criminal was taken to a tree in the court-yard and hung. Others charged with murder have been disposed of by the courts in the county, but none have been judicially hung. The early crimes were principally counterfeiting, horse stealing, hog stealing, and assault and battery.

The machinery of justice was set in motion in the fall of 1841, the first grand jury being composed of the following citizens: John Cotterell, Thomas McCarty, Daniel Wheeler, Samuel R. Lowry, — Carnahan, J. F. Reed, George McWilliams, Stephen Gardner, Thomas Lewis, Thaddeus Morehouse, Joseph Bryan, George Higgins, Thomas Parker, Elcana Richards, Enoch Stites, John Heep, John Matthews, John Brown, Henry Taylor, L. L. Allendar, Elijah Nelson, Arvin Webster, Orran Coats. The first petit jury was composed of McIntyre Ryan, Samuel Butler, John Allen, Thomas Ellingsworth, Daniel Ripple, T. W. Lilley, Hiram Barney, Jr., William Perry, Matthew Elston, William Coanour, William Leathers, William Lampkin, David Walker, John Price, Andrew Britton, William McWilliams, James Nelson, John Jeffords, F. B. Parker, James Cheek, S. W. Graham, George Smith, Wright Mash and James B. Shields.

COUNTY OFFICIALS.

The Commissioners elected in 1841 were Lot Basden, Amos Bullard and Hugh Calhoun, Jr. By lot it was decided that the length of term of each one's office should be in the order named, the longest first. In 1842, Hugh Calhoun, Jr., was re-elected; 1843, Elijah Nelson; 1844, Samuel R. Lowry; 1845, Canada Clubb to succeed Lowry, resigned, and Elcana Richards for regular term; 1846, James Cheek; 1847, Joseph Harmon; 1848, John D. Richards. In the following year the new constitution was framed and adopted, the election changed from August to November, and the County Court established. This court consisted of a County Judge and two assistants, who were *ex-officio* justices of the peace. Upon this court was conferred all the powers of the county commissioners, and upon the county judge, the probate business formerly devolving upon the probate justice of

the peace. The members of the court held office for four years, and were all elected at the same time. In 1849, A. Kitchell was elected County Judge, and N. D. Jay and S. R. Lowry, associates. In 1851, Elcana Richards was elected to succeed Jay, deceased. In 1852, J. D. Richards was elected County Judge to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Kitchell. In 1853, the following members were elected for the regular term: J. D. Richards, County Judge; Miles R. Yocum and D. W. Blain, associates; 1857, John D. Richards, County Judge; D. W. Blain and Henry Peebles, associates. In 1857, township organization was voted by the people, and the following Board of Supervisors elected: D. W. Blain, from Olney Township; James Adams, from Boone (Denver); H. L. Carson, from Jackson (Decker); W. R. Williams, from Noble; Jacob May, from Claremont; T. S. Smith, from Bonpas; Christian Jaggi, from Troy (German); James Kinkade, from Douglas (Preston); Milton Eckley, from Madison. The records of the county are not sufficiently explicit to add to the list of supervisors of the county. But one place in the records of twenty-five years does the name of the supervisors appear with the names of the townships which they represented, and the task of deciphering this relation is of a more extended nature than the importance of the result would warrant.

The Treasurers of the county have been, W. H. Reed, elected in 1841; M. C. McLain, in 1845; Jonas Notestine, appointed December 10, 1846, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of McLain; M. Stauffer, elected in 1847; Joshua Smalley, in 1849; William T. Shelby, appointed March, 1852, in place of Smalley, deceased; T. L. Stewart, elected in 1855; R. B. Marney, 1857; T. T. Smith, 1859; D. D. Marquis, 1865; John Kuster, 1869; George D. Morrison, 1873; John Kuster, appointed in 1874 to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Marney; Frank Gillaspie, in 1877, who is the present incumbent.

The Circuit Clerks have been, J. M. Wilson, appointed in 1841; M. B. Snyder, elected in 1849; John Wolf, appointed March, 1859, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Snyder; G. W. Morrison, elected November, 1859, to serve out the unexpired term of Snyder; John Wolf, elected in 1860; C. W. Cullen, in 1864; Aden Knoph, in 1868; Thomas Tibbett, in 1880, and is the present Clerk.

The county clerks until 1849 were elected recorders and were appointed clerk to the County Court by the county commissioners. M. B. Snyder was the first and only Recorder of the county and Clerk of the County Court from 1841 to 1849; Jacob Hofman, from

1849 until 1861; W. T. Shelby, from 1861 until 1865; J. R. Johnson from 1865 until 1869; W. T. Shelby, from 1869 until 1882; John Von Gunten from 1882, and is the present County Clerk.

The Sheriffs of the county have been: Lewis Sawyer, appointed in 1841, and subsequently elected until 1848; J. H. Parker, elected in 1848; R. B. Marney, in 1850; J. H. Parker, in 1852; McIntyre Ryan, in 1854; Horace Hayward, appointed to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Ryan, May, 1855; J. H. Parker, elected in 1856; W. T. Shelby, in 1858; T. L. Stewart, in 1860; William Coventry, in 1862; T. L. Stewart, in 1864; Archibald Spring, in 1866; M. M. St. John, in 1868; Hiram Sharp, in 1872; J. J. Richey, in 1878; Archibald Spring in 1882, and is the present incumbent.

The office of county judge, as at present constituted, dates back to 1857 for its origin. Previous to 1849, the somewhat similar official was the probate justice of the peace, and from 1849 to 1857, the county judge acted also as county commissioner, and has been classified elsewhere. R. B. Marney was the first and only Probate Justice of the Peace for Richland County, from 1841 until 1849. In 1857, John D. Richards was elected and served until 1865; James Wright, from 1865 to 1869; John D. Richards, from 1869 to 1873; H. Hayward, from 1873 to 1882; F. D. Preston, from 1882, and is now the Presiding Judge.

The Surveyors of the county have been: A. F. David, elected in 1841; John Wolf, in 1846; A. B. Webster, appointed in March, 1849, to fill vacancy occasioned by resignation of Wolf; John Wolf, elected in 1851; John Reasoner, in 1853; Isaac Barnes, in 1855; A. Jenkins, in 1865; I. Barnes, in 1869; Thomas Humbert, in 1875; J. H. Clark, in 1879, and is still in office.

The office of county superintendent of schools dates its origin to 1865. Before this, the corresponding official, with somewhat less duties, was the School Commissioner. The gentlemen who have filled this position are: J. F. Reed, elected in 1841; A. L. Byers, in 1847; Daniel Cox, in 1849; A. H. Baird, appointed in 1850 to fill vacancy; J. H. Gunn, elected in 1853; William Warfield, in 1861; Jacob Hofman, in 1864. As County Superintendent of Schools, W. H. Williams, elected in 1865; J. C. Scott, appointed October 19, 1867, in place of Williams, removed; W. W. Carnes, appointed March 23, 1872, in place of Scott, resigned; J. J. Coons, elected in 1873; R. N. Stotler, elected in 1882, and is the present official.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

The social development of a community is the true measure of its progress. Individuals may acquire wealth and renown without virtue, but the community has a longer life, and success in the end depends upon the moral sentiment, and the culture which is a necessary outgrowth of such sentiment. The relation of the physical features of a country to such development is an important one, and he who would learn the hidden causes that make or mar a nation must seek in these "the divinity that shapes our ends." In these physical features are stored those potent industrial possibilities that make the master and the menial in races. From the fertile soil comes fruit-laden, peace-loving agriculture; from the rock-bound stores of mineral wealth springs the rude civilization of the early days on the Pacific slope, or the half-savage clashing of undisciplined capital and labor in the mining regions; from the rivers rises, fairy-like, the commercial metropolis, which, "crowned with the glory of the mountains" and fed with the bounty of the plains, stands the chosen arbiter between the great forces that join to make a nation's greatness. The influence of this subtle power is felt everywhere. Here it spreads the lotus plant of ease and binds the nation in chains of indolent effeminacy; here among the bleak peaks of a sterile land,

"The heather on the mountain height
Begins to bloom in purple light,"

a type of a hardy and unconquered race; there it strews the sand of desert wilds, and man, without resource, becomes a savage. This factor in society is marked even in the smaller divisions of society, and stamps the mark of destiny upon the single community. The early people of Richland County were fortunate in two respects. Here were brought together emigrants from all sections of the nation. The native of Kentucky, Tennessee and the States further south met the descendants of the pioneers of Ohio, New York and New England. The social customs of either section modified the other, and while the amusements and incidents of public occasions took on much of that boisterous character common to southern Illinois, they lost much of the most objectionable features earlier than many surrounding communities.

EARLY ROADS.

Another influence in this direction was the fact that through Richland County lay the great thoroughfare in this section of the

State from east to west. This gave facilities for coming in contact with the outside world, and brought the habits and customs prevalent here in sharp comparison with more advanced communities elsewhere. In this way roads became mighty agencies in the problem of civilization, and railroads, by cheapening the cost of travel and stimulating the industry of a community, foster the best elements of development.

The thoroughfare referred to was the regular successor of the old Indian trail which led from Bear Grass, now the site of Louisville, Ky., to Cahokia, on the Mississippi River, near Saint Louis. Indian trails were the only certain guides to the earliest travelers in this country, and soon became marked by the wagon tracks of the whites. This trail followed the most direct and available route between the two points, so that there was little inducement for the early settlers to change its location, and for some time it was made a mail route for the settlements that gathered near it. About 1835, however, the road was regularly laid out and worked by the general government between Vincennes and Saint Louis, and at this time was varied somewhat to enter the villages or nuclei of settlements that were growing into importance a little off the old line. Through this county the original trail passed a little south of Olney and Claremont, and the government survey brought it north so as to pass through these towns. Up to 1824, the mail was carried along this route on horseback, but at this time this primitive method was superseded by two-horse vehicles, Messrs. Mills and Whetsel being contractors. In 1828, these were succeeded by the regulation four-horse stages, which continued to ply the road until the location of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad in 1852, marked the approach of a new era in traveling. These stages were fitted out with all the luxuriance of the time. The winding horn announced the approach of "the mail," the horses' plumes touched the romantic hearts of the young, while the dexterity of the various drivers and the gossip of the travelers afforded the issues for the wordy wars which took place about the fire-place of the tavern or elsewhere. But with all these accessories "staging" was rather a prosaic matter to both driver and passenger. During a large part of the year the travel was slow and laborious, and it was no infrequent thing that the stage was fixed in the mud and abandoned, the trip being completed in some farmer's wagon which the driver secured. Horses were changed every ten miles, and one stage made the trip from Vincennes to this county, where it was met by another vehicle, which made another third of

the distance between the two terminal points. The end of this Vincennes division was at different points in the county at different times, sometimes at the Fox River, at Olney, or just east of town. In addition to the stage line, there was a large traffic on this road which brought considerable revenue to the county. Saint Louis was the great market for all this region, and the trace road was crowded with teams, at certain seasons, hauling produce to market. There were certain market days on which teamsters planned to reach the city, and the caravan approaching this destination would stretch out for miles on the road. It was no uncommon thing to find from fifteen to fifty teams resting at some of the early taverns along the road, and subsequently large numbers would "put up" for the night. This gave a good market for all the surplus corn in the neighborhood, and a sale for other products, for many of these teamsters were hucksters on their own account.

The early roads, running north and south, were a road extending *via* Palestine to Terre Haute, one running to Carmi and one *via* Newton to Charleston. Local roads, some laid out by regular process and others by general use, united the various settlements in the county. Road-making was a large part of the business of the early commissioners, and vacating and re-locating roads was as frequent as the establishment of new ones. Most of the early roads ignored section lines and ran the most direct route that was available from point to point. When the country became more thickly settled this plan was found to interfere with the convenience of farmers whose lands were purchased according to the lines of survey. It was consequently easy to get the requisite number of signers to a petition for a change of road. This has been continued until, with few exceptions, the roads are all run on the section lines and are found a mile apart, running each way. A few are found to wind about to reach the most available ground, and some are yet but little more than the woodman's trail through certain timbered portions of the county; but in the main the roads are regularly on section lines. In quality the roads of the county are poor. The soil is especially adapted to the retention of water, and mud places an embargo on traffic for several months in the year. The cost of bridges in the county is not large when the number of streams is considered. The Fox requires four, one of which is upwards of a hundred feet long. There are some dozen bridges, over thirty feet long, in the county, and all are constructed of wood and uncovered.

The settlement of the country and the increased amount of labor

expended on the highways has greatly improved them over what they were thirty years ago, but the scarcity of good, road-making material has obliged the Road Supervisors to resort to corduroy plan. Small poles are cut and laid closely together across the track. These become bedded and are not so rough as a stranger to them would suppose, and they have the merit of keeping the vehicle on the surface. In 1850, a plank road was talked of, and the County Court passed the following resolution on the subject: "Whereas, by an act of the General Assembly of the State of Illinois, entitled, 'an act to provide for the construction of plank roads', by general law, approved February 12, 1849, it is provided that the County Court may agree to the use of any public highway in the county by any plank road company for the construction of a plank road; and Whereas, it is represented to this court that steps have been taken for the formation of a plank road company to construct such roads in this county, and it is probable that such companies when formed will be desirous of using some of the public highways; therefore, Resolved, that deeming it of importance to the county to encourage internal improvements by private enterprise of whatever character, and especially the construction of plank roads, and that every aid should be extended by the County Court within its jurisdiction, and without involving the county in debt for the success of the improvements whereby the property of the county, real or personal, will be greatly enhanced in value, and the county revenue consequently increased, the industry and enterprise of our people stimulated to new life, their condition bettered and the markets and goods' prices brought nearer home by the aid of these roads, emigration to the county encouraged, and the discontent of our present population allayed, this court, therefore, cheerfully invites the enterprise on foot, and hereby cheerfully tenders to them the use of any public road within the county, over which this court has any jurisdiction, for the construction of plank roads in accordance with the act above named." It was further provided, that written permission would be given when a formal request was made. This action was published in all the papers near at hand, and the county assumed the intense attitude of "Barkis is willin'," but no one ever came forward to claim any rights under this *pronunciamiento*. It is quite probable that something might have been accomplished in this way had not the subject of railroads been agitated very soon after this, and a road actually located through the county.

RAILROADS.

The general improvement system of the State in 1837, included the building of sundry railroads, but with a short sighted view the system contemplated the improvement of State cities to the exclusion of foreign towns. The natural laws of trade, however, were not to be trammelled by such prejudices, and several roads were projected to cross the State from East to West and to terminate in Saint Louis. Among these was the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad. The application of this company for a charter was stoutly resisted and several times defeated. In June, of 1849, a railroad convention was held at Salem, to take into consideration the grievances of the people in the counties to be benefited by its construction, and at least four thousand earnest men assembled, over a thousand of whom were delegates. Judge Kitchell and others represented Richland County. An address was adopted, and a committee appointed to present it to the Governor. A special session of the legislature was called, and after strong opposition, a charter was granted, in 1851. The larger part of the capital invested was from the East, though Page, of Saint Louis, was an important member of the syndicate and a heavy loser in the final construction of it. In 1852, the line was located and the County Court proposed to submit to the voters of the county the proposition of subscribing \$50,000 to the capital stock of the company on several conditions, viz.: "1. No bonds to be issued to the company until the company has expended in the construction of the road in the county an amount of money equal to the amount of bonds asked to be issued. 2. The county not to issue more than one third of the amount of subscription each year. 3. The railroad company to issue to said county stock equal in amount to the bonds issued, said company to pay to the county six per cent interest on said stock, to be paid half yearly. 4. The rate of taxation for county purposes is not to be increased for the purpose of paying interest on said bonds, and the County Court is not to issue any bonds to said company if any higher rate of tax than is now assessed for county purposes should be required to pay the interest on the county bonds. 5. The County Court shall have authority to make any arrangements they may think proper and for the best interests of the county with either the railroad company or individuals, for the payment of the county bonds, and the interest, or either, without using any funds or revenues of the county, and in doing so, said County Court may dispose of the railroad stock, but never at less than par value, and only so as to

save the county from all loss." Such "ironclad" conditions are rarely accepted by railroad corporations and these were promptly rejected and were never submitted to the people for acceptance. In October, however, a proposition was made to subscribe \$50,000 of stock to the road, the bonds of the county to run thirty years at seven per cent., to be expended only on the construction of the road in the county, and the company to pay six per cent. interest upon the stock or such other rate in lieu of cash, as might be agreed upon. This was ratified by the people, on December 6, 1852. The road was rapidly pushed through, the line passing just south of Olney. Judge Kitchell was a director of the road at that time, and he offered to the contractors a one-half interest in his first and second additions to the city and \$3,000 in cash, if the line was deflected north sufficient to pass through this property. This arrangement was made and the variation begins at Claremont village and ends just west of Noble. The road was completed from Vincennes to Saint Louis, in 1855, the first through train passing through Olney on the 4th of July, in that year. This road was a valuable acquisition, but the course of the company's practice has been of the most arbitrary and tyrannical. For years it was the only outlet for the county's product, and the company did not hesitate placing a tariff that almost shut the business men in from the markets of the country. After railroads reached Vincennes from other points the dealers were in the habit of using the Ohio & Mississippi to that point, and thence eastward on other lines. At first, this road refused to deliver freight to competing lines, and then raised the local tariff to such an exorbitant rate as to force the shipper to submit to the high through rates, but this was met by the other lines by a reduction of their rate in proportion to the Ohio & Mississippi's raise. The people became clamorous for another road to compete with the "O. & M.," and car rates to New York dropped from \$80 to \$40 at once. The management of this road in Richland County has been marked by a grossly tyrannical and arbitrary spirit, and its whole course in the matter of locating its line and doing business throughout the State has been such as to justify the bitterest opposition. The county paid nothing toward its construction, however, which may be a small solace to their feelings. There was such a demand for the stock that the company did not need the assistance of the county in disposing of it, and so no call was made for the bonds subscribed. The road passes from east to west through the county, crossing the townships of Claremont, Olney and Noble.

Peoria, Decatur & Evansville Railroad.—About the time of the completion of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad, a new road was projected from Mattoon to Grayville, on the Wabash River. A charter was not secured, however, until February 6, 1857, and up to 1876, little more than the preliminary surveys had been accomplished. A part of the original plan was to secure an outlet through Indiana, and the Mount Vernon & Grayville Railroad Company was the name under which this part of the road was incorporated. To the construction of this road the terminal county had voted a large subscription, which was subsequently diverted to the building of a new court house. The first spike had been driven on this division of the road in the early part of 1871, and some five miles constructed and ironed, but the action of the people with regard to the subscription caused the work to be discontinued there. In March, 1872, the two companies were consolidated under the name of the Chicago & Illinois Southern Railroad Company, and about the same time this new organization was consolidated with the Decatur, Sullivan & Mattoon Company, which had been formed under a charter obtained in 1871. With all this activity in the transfer of franchises and change of names but little or no progress was made toward the realization of the desire of the people. From time to time many flattering statements and satisfactory promises were made. In 1874, finding that the last consolidation had so involved this part of the road with the other parties to the consolidation as to probably defeat the construction of the line, proceedings were brought in the Jasper County Court, and thence to the Federal Court, to annul the consolidation, and on May 5, 1876, such a decree was granted. Work was at once begun on this middle section of the Grayville & Mattoon Railroad, and thirty of the ninety-three miles proposed were graded in this year. In the following year the road reached Mattoon, and the whole line completed from Grayville to the proposed northern terminus.

The people of Richland County were very much interested in the building of this road, and as early as 1857, appropriated \$250 to pay for the preliminary survey through the county, but this not being used, \$300 was appropriated in May, of 1866, and subsequently the county voted \$150,000 to aid its construction. In 1868, \$50,000 more was voted for this purpose, making a total sum of \$200,000 which the county proposed to invest in the capital stock of the company. It is not necessary to rehearse the record on this point; the conditions were much easier than those proposed to the "O. & M." road, as the people

having had experience with "King Stork," desired a quick relief. It was provided, however, that the subscription should be paid only as the road was built through the county. The distance through the county was divided into four parts, and when one part was finished and laid with iron of a certain weight, then the proportional part of the subscription was to be paid in bonds of the county as agreed upon. One of the prime considerations in the minds of the people in voting for the subscription, and especially so large an amount, was to secure its early completion and thus free them from the grasp of the railroad monopoly which existed. In 1871, tired of the delays, the Board of Supervisors appointed a committee to investigate the whole matter and report to the Board. In November, this committee reported as follows: "It is no discourtesy to those gentlemen to say that their information was meagre and unsatisfactory in the extreme to both them and us, and the conduct of the contractors compelled your committee to the conviction that the Board of your county had been pledged to parties whose responsibility was wholly uncertain, from whom no sufficient guarantees have been received and upon whose pleasure alone depended the timely completion of the road." It was further estimated that owing to the decline in prices the subscription of the county was sufficient to build twice the distance required, and it was recommended that action be taken in reference to the prevention of issuing and paying any bonds to the road. The Board took prompt action upon this report and formally voted to rescind the subscription.

It is impossible to scrutinize the action of the county's executive Board in this matter without indulging in the suspicion that there was a lamentable lack of wisdom. The Board was constantly in that attitude of "vowing they would ne'er consent, consented." As early as 1868, committees had been appointed to inspect the road, and another to sign and issue bonds, and in 1870, an agent had been appointed to vote with the directors of the road. After rescinding the subscription these officials would of course be voted out of being, but in June, 1872, the Board is found formally assenting to the consolidation. In April, of 1875, the matter of withdrawing from the subscription to the road, was submitted to the people, and aid to the road was withdrawn by 700 majority. In June, 1875, the Board, with strange inconsistency, ordered blank bonds prepared, as one division of the road was nearing completion, though it was provided that they should not be issued until the committee of inspection should report. In the following January

the Board gave notice that the county would issue no bonds to the road until obliged to do so by the court of last resort, whereupon they were sued in the Lawrence County Court, defeated, and refused to appeal it. The second division was finished September, 1876, the third division in the spring of 1877, and the fourth in the following June. For the first three divisions after the decision of the court, the bonds were issued without protest. On receipt of notice of the completion of the fourth and last division of the road in the county, the Board examined the road and passed the following order: "The Board of Supervisors, as a committee, having inspected the fourth and last division, through the county, of the Grayville & Mattoon Railroad report the same constructed as per contract and provisions of the vote for stock subscribed and recommend the issuing and delivery to the Grayville & Mattoon Railroad Company the \$50,000 worth of county bonds as provided heretofore in said vote," etc. This report swept away the last leg that resistance had to stand on, and yet at the next meeting, September 11, 1877, the Board declared, "Whereas, the \$50,000 of Richland County bonds issued for capital stock of the Grayville & Mattoon Railroad were illegally procured, the same being obtained through fraud and misrepresentation," therefore, the vote taken at the last meeting be rescinded, etc. In the following January, fearing, doubtless, that this last named action did not cover the whole ground, the Board attempted to wash their hands of the whole matter by another sweeping fulmination, as follows: "Be it ordered by the Board of Supervisors of Richland County, that this Board rescind all orders heretofore made authorizing the issuing of bonds to aid in the construction of the Grayville & Mattoon Railroad, if any such order has heretofore been made; and they hereby repudiate any action of any officer of said county who has received the stock of said railroad in payment for said bonds, if any such stock has been heretofore issued by said railroad to said county, and it was further declared that the county disowned all stock and disclaimed all privileges under any of these repudiated transactions. An agreement was at once entered into by the Board with Messrs. Wilson and Hutchinson, attorneys, to fight the payment of the bonds issued, principal and interest. It should be said in this connection, that from first to last there has been great changes in the membership of the Board, and that the presumption of dishonest dealing on the part of certain of those who have been members, is so strong that expatriation has been deemed necessary. Every device has been resorted to in order to avoid the payment of the bonds, and the matter

has finally been adjudicated in the United States Supreme Court. In October, 1883, the committee appointed to take this matter in charge, report the result of the contest through the papers as follows:

“In view of the fact that the people of Richland County will sooner or later be compelled to make arrangements to pay off some of the railroad bonds, and are now on the point of being compelled by the courts to pay certain judgments rendered for accrued interest on these bonds, we take this method of addressing our people, and impressing upon them the necessity of using their best judgment as to what is best to be done in the premises. We will state as briefly as possible the history of the litigation of these bonds.

“George W. Ballou & Co., after about three years of litigation, obtained a judgment against the county, which was finally affirmed in the Supreme Court of the United States. There were three other suits against our county in court at the same time. These were brought by J. I. Case, Joseph Curtis and the Bank of Montreal. To save the costs of taking all of these cases to the court of last resort, it was agreed by our attorneys (Wilson & Hutchinson) that the Ballou case alone should be taken up, and that the others should abide the decision in that case. The consequence is, that final judgments were rendered against us in these four cases, amounting to about \$19,200. These are absolutely final, and further litigation concerning these cannot be had. Since that time other interest coupons have become due, and within the last month final judgments have been rendered against us in the Circuit Court, in favor of George W. Ballou, for about \$29,000, and six other cases in favor of J. I. Case, James Curtis, John F. Zebley, Thomas B. Slaughter and the Bank of Montreal. These judgments aggregate, including Ballou's new judgment, about \$60,000. The interest now due on all these bonds amounts to a little over \$117,000. And these judgments are all for portions of that interest. All the coupons are for \$35 each, and bear six per cent. interest after due.

“In July last, a suit was commenced against the county in the name of the United States of America, on complaint of Ballou, to compel the levy and collection of a tax to pay Ballou's first judgment, and a peremptory writ of *mandamus* was awarded in that case. Three other *mandamus* suits were commenced on petition of the other creditors, with the same result. They did not get service on these writs on the Board of Supervisors. And now a new *mandamus* case has just been commenced to compel the Board to meet and