

Notes on the History  
of Moultrie County and  
Sullivan, Illinois

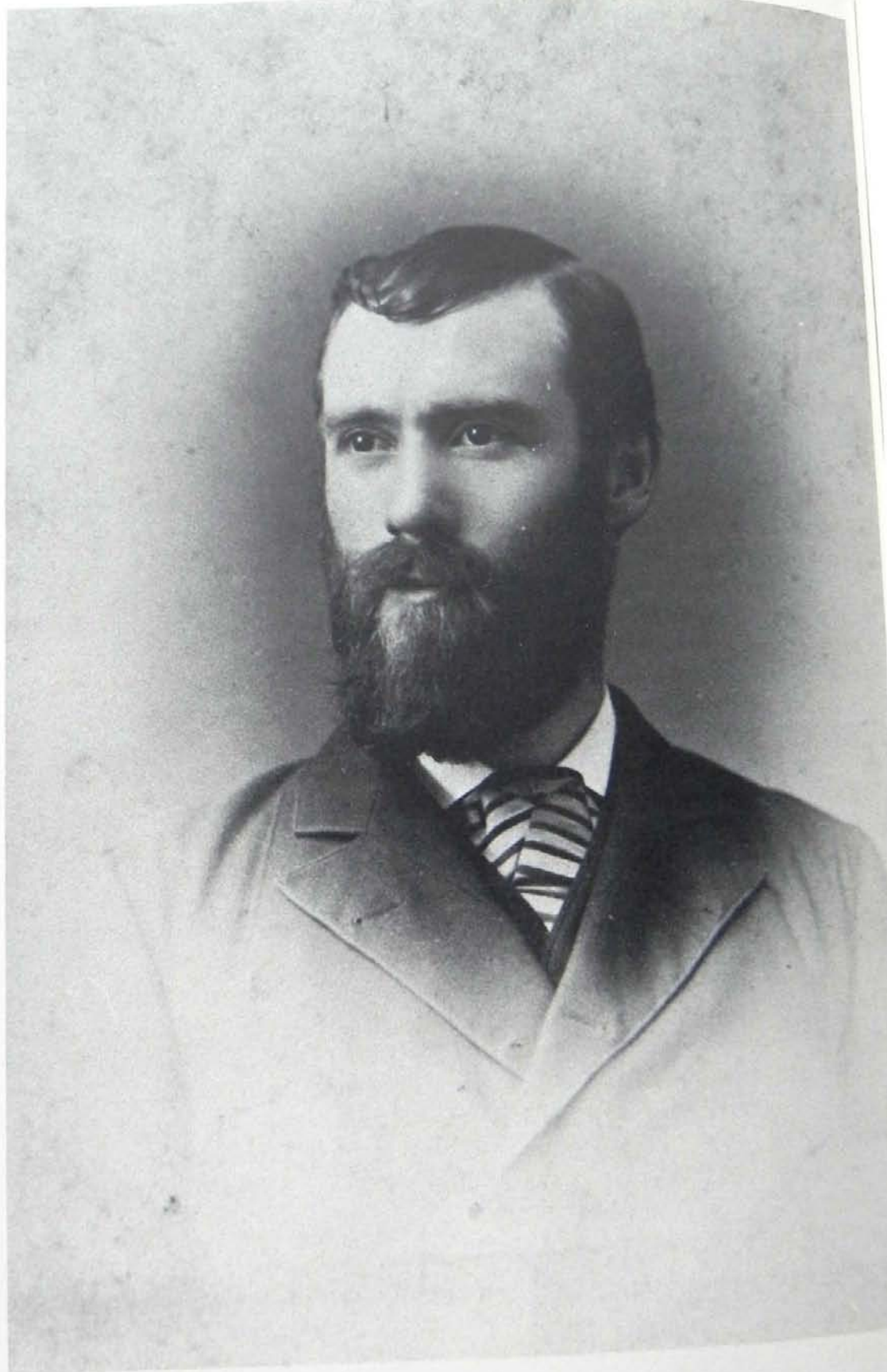
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I. J. MARTIN

*Edited by R. Eden Martin*

SULLIVAN  
1990



*Ivory John Martin, c. 1890*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Preface   | 1  |
| 1. Notes on the History of<br>Moultrie County     | 6  |
| 2. The Lincoln-Douglas<br>Speeches in Sullivan    | 35 |
| 3. Notes on the History of<br>Sullivan            | 43 |
| 4. Notes on the History of<br>Sullivan Newspapers | 82 |

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Ivory John Martin

Map of Moultrie County

## PREFACE

The fragments of Moultrie County and Sullivan history published here were written by my grandfather, I.J. Martin. I.J. was born on November 7, 1859, near Sullivan on a farm in Whitley Township. His parents, John Neely and Rachel Elvina Martin, gave him the name John Ivory, but when he was 19 years old he inverted the order of the two names and thereafter was known as Ivory or I.J.

Among his early memories, I.J. remembered his great-grandfather, James Scott Martin, who was born about 1779 in North Carolina. John and Isabella (or Sarah) Scott Martin and their young son, James Scott, moved into central Kentucky about 1780 and lived there until 1797, when they moved to Logan County in southwestern Kentucky. The Martin family remained there until 1817, when they moved to southern Illinois. The Martins settled first in what was then Crawford County and later became Clark County. In 1830, James Scott Martin and his family moved to a place on Kickapoo Creek in Coles County, not far from Charleston. Three years later, in 1833, they moved again -- this time to Whitley Township in what is now Moultrie County. In 1838, his son's family -- John and Ann Neely Martin -- followed him, also settling in the Whitley community. John was a farmer, and he and his family were members of the Lynn Creek Baptist Church. John (1803-1856) was the father of John Neely Martin (1833-1923), and the grandfather of I.J. Martin (1859-1953).

I.J. Martin also remembered the Civil War -- he had uncles on both sides. He remembered the concern family members felt when Union soldiers stationed in Mattoon made night raids into Moultrie County, occasionally entering the homes of Democrats, seizing guns, and searching for

evidence of disloyalty to the Union. He also recalled hearing the news of the assassination of Lincoln.

By the time he was 14 years old, I.J. had become a serious reader -- a habit he cultivated throughout his life. In 1876, five weeks before his 17th birthday, he began teaching school at the old Wade School in North Okaw, Coles County. He taught until 1883. In the spring of that year, he became Deputy County Clerk of Moultrie County and moved to Sullivan, where he lived the rest of his life. In April 1885, he became editor of the *Sullivan Progress*, with which he remained associated off and on until 1919. From 1920 until 1927, he assisted two of his sons -- John Eden Martin and Joel Neely Martin -- publish another Sullivan newspaper, *The Herald*.

I.J. married Rose Eden, daughter of John Rice Eden and Phoebe Roxana Meeker Eden, on June 30, 1886. John R. Eden, also a resident of Sullivan, had been the unsuccessful Democratic candidate for Governor of Illinois in 1868. He also served four terms in the United States House of Representatives -- having been elected in 1862, 1872, 1874, and 1876.

In 1899 I.J. acquired an interest in the Moultrie County Abstract Company, where he continued to work until 1941, when he was almost 82 years old. It was in this business that he had occasion to review many of the early property records which reflected some of the history of the settlement of the county and the development of Sullivan.

A life-long Democrat and admirer of William Jennings Bryan, I.J. was the unsuccessful Democratic candidate for Congress in 1910 in the district that included Sullivan. In 1912 he attended the Democratic Presidential convention in Baltimore that nominated Woodrow Wilson.

As a result of his interest in politics, his activities as a newspaperman, and his access to the early land records of the county, I.J. was in an ideal position to observe public activities in Sullivan, to learn about the settlement of the county, and to discuss the history of the area with his father-in-law and others of the preceding generation. Also, he had what he described as a good, retentive memory.

In the mid-1920's I.J. wrote two fragmentary pieces on the early history of Moultrie County. Later, after he had retired, from 1940-1950 -- at a time when he was 80 to 90 years of age -- he wrote several additional papers. One was an extensive manuscript on Martin family history, which has been published privately for the family. He also produced other short pieces -- on county and city history, and on the Lincoln and Douglas speeches in Sullivan during the Senate campaign of 1858. He also wrote short notes on the history of newspapers in Sullivan.

I.J. Martin was not a historian. He did not perform research in original records and secondary sources with a view to discovering what happened and why, and then writing up the results of that research for general consumption. A review of his writings leaves the impression that he was less interested in expanding the scope of what he knew than in preserving in written form what he had learned in the course of his many decades of active life in politics and in the newspaper and abstract businesses. Also, given the circumstances in which he wrote most of his "historical" materials -- including his age at the time -- he did not have either the ability or available source materials to check many of the details of his story.

Thus, I.J.'s recollections set forth in these Notes are bound to be inaccurate in certain respects. Indeed, in



preparing these materials for publication, the editor has discovered occasional inconsistencies in names or dates. Where an inaccuracy was apparent, it has been corrected. But it is likely, if not certain, that others have survived undetected. This should not be surprising. Most people do not remember all significant details of conversations or events that occurred just weeks or months ago. How much more difficult is it to remember such details from conversations or events that occurred a half century or more in the past. The difficulty is compounded when the effort of memory is made by one who has crossed the threshold of the ninth decade of life.

Why then publish these Notes at all? The answer, at least to me, is clear. I.J. Martin, although not a historian, was a newspaperman by experience and a scholar by temperament. He read a vast amount, and remembered far more of what he read than most people. The marginal notes preserved in the books which were in his library reflect the quality of his memory. Thus, to note that his memory was imperfect, particularly when he was a very old man, is far from suggesting that what he remembered was not worth preserving. Each reader will form his own opinion; but my belief is that in the general outlines of his story, and in most of the details, I.J.'s writings are probably accurate. Also, he was in a position to have seen and heard much about Moultrie County and Sullivan history that is not recorded anywhere else. A good example of this is his recounting of the controversy over the street lighting contract and the municipal electricity system in Sullivan during the 1890's and the first three decades of this century. Thus, whatever may be the errors in detail, his writings are worth having by anyone interested in our local history simply because there is not likely to be a more accurate source for much of the story he has told.

I.J. Martin died on April 8, 1953, at the age of 93, leaving many children and grandchildren. Two overlapping lifetimes -- his and that of his great-grandfather, whom he remembered -- spanned virtually the entire history of the United States up to that time.

R. Eden Martin  
May 17, 1990

I have been writing a few notes on the people who were pioneers in the settlement of Moultrie County. My memory goes back to a time about 40 years after the date of the first arrivals, and I have talked with some of them. I have known personally all of our county clerks and all of the judges but the first. The first circuit clerk had moved away, and the second had died before I became aware of things. I have had other sources of information, and I have a good memory. So I think I may be able to produce something that will be interesting and perhaps important.

Illinois had been a state of the Federal Union eight years before any permanent white settlement was made in what is now Moultrie County. The first permanent settlement was made in the year 1826, just a hundred years ago, by John Whitley and his family.

There had doubtless been temporary settlements of roving hunters and adventurers before that time. Fifty years ago there could still be seen the remains of the hearth and stick chimney and foundation logs of a cabin in section five,

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\*I.J. Martin's papers contained several writings relating to the early history of Moultrie County. Two of these were printed in the *Sullivan Herald* about 1926 under the title, "The First Permanent White Settlement in Whitley Township." The other papers are handwritten notes, evidently written about 1950 when I.J. was 90 years old. These several papers have been edited into this single set of "Notes".

southeast of the Waggoner church. The oldest inhabitant of that day could not remember the cabin, and it may have been a hundred years old at that time -- its occupants gone and forgotten before the Whitleys came.

The river on the north had been explored and named long before. The explorers were not settlers, although at the mouth of the river at its junction with the Father of Waters, the French had made a settlement about 1688, in the same century as the Jamestown and Plymouth settlements, and only a few years after Penn and the Quakers founded the City of Brotherly Love.

Both the French and English adopted the Indian name for our river, but the weird French spelling makes the name of the two ends of the river look like two entirely different words. The Indians called the river "Kaw-Kaw" and anyone who has ever heard the call of the crow knows what the Indian word means, and any one who can remember the flocks of black-feathered birds that used to infest the groves knows why the name was given to the river. The English shortened the name to "O Kaw", while the French from the beginning called the river Kawkawkiah, and you know how they spelled it and how wretchedly some of our school teachers pronounce it.

The same muddling occurred with the name of the little river that rises a few miles southeast of us. Our teachers fifty years ago told us to call it Embarrass, but our fathers who knew the river gave us the correct name -- "Ahmberrawh." One wonders why the map-makers do not use English instead of French spelling for the beautiful Indian names scattered over our state -- names imitated from bird songs, rather than the guttural growls of our ancestors of northern Europe. Don't let the teachers teach our children to say "Cass-cass-ki." The English rendering of

Okaw is near enough to the Indian name, but if the French name is used, pronounce it as the French did -- "Kaw-Kaw-Kiah."

Although our settlers did not get here early enough to name the river, they gave names to our smaller streams. The two head branches and the main channel were named Whitley Creek, and the second family to arrive gave their name to Waggoner Branch, which flows into Whitley Creek near its junction with the Okaw. The other two branches of Whitley Creek were named for the kind of trees that clustered along the banks, although the Crabapple and Linn (or Linden) trees have perhaps all disappeared. Fifty years ago anyone acquainted with these streams would have known why they were so named.

The Whitley family made the first permanent settlement in what is now Moultrie County at the east end of Whitley Township, at a point where the timber extended into the prairie. This point was called from that time Whitley's Point. This settlement was made in the year 1826. The family consisted of John Whitley, his wife, and their six sons -- John, Sharp, Mills, Randall, William, and Josiah -- and their families. At the time of their settlement, all of John Whitley's sons were married except Josiah, and at least one daughter had a husband, Samuel Lindley, who was a member of the little settlement. They settled along or near the Old Whitley Road that still runs in a few places on the same line upon which it did one hundred or more years ago. Uncle Gilbert Waggoner once said, "It was there when I came and must have been there before the Whitleys." Who laid it out and first traveled it is a pre-historic mystery.

The government was not selling land here then, and so the Whitleys just settled. What was the use of buying land, anyway, when one had the whole out-of-doors. The first land

patents were issued in 1830, and John Whitley, Sr., Sharp, and William Whitley each entered the eighty acre tracts upon which they had settled. Mills Whitley sold his homestead rights to Samuel M. Smysor, who took out a patent in 1831. I believe Mack Garrett now owns the Mills Whitley eighty acres. I have not been able to find any other land entries of the Whitley family nor of Samuel Lindley. The most important thing, perhaps, that Lindley did was to go down to what is now known as the Whitfield farm with his ox teams and break out some prairie land for the Waggoners.

The Whitleys have not received as much attention as they have deserved, mainly because the family moved away after a few years' residence. However, they were real men, energetic and enterprising, even if they were not impressed with the value of the land. When they came here they were still in Fayette County, but their settlement was included in the new county of Shelby, organized in January 1827. At the first election, John Whitley was elected one of the three commissioners to manage the affairs of the new county. His son, Mills Whitley, was a member of the first grand jury and Sharp Whitley was on the first petit jury.

John Whitley erected the first mill -- a horse power concern -- we have not been told how the power was applied to turn the burrs, but he made it go.

Isaac Waggoner and his sons and daughters with their families came from North Carolina in March 1828 and formed a larger community than that of the Whitleys. They settled a few miles west of Whitley's Point, and the little creek near their settlement is still known as Waggoner branch. It flows into Whitley Creek near its junction with the river which was known as the Okaw. The Waggoners' big time is coming at their centennial reunion at Wyman

Park in Sullivan sometime in 1929. The Waggoners will gather from all parts of the continent. Their slogan is "once a Waggoner, always a Waggoner." No matter if a daughter changes her name, her children will all be Waggoners. The other name simply doesn't count.

The Whitley settlement is considered permanent because it remained after others came, but the Waggoner families were in another sense the first permanent settlers; and they share with the Bones, who came to Marrowbone Creek a little later in the same year, the honor of being the oldest continuous settlers in Moultrie County.

The Waggoners were a more quiet folk, and it is not surprising to learn that they did not quite approve of the sporting proclivities of the Whitleys. It was, perhaps, John Whitley's reputation as a horseman and his race horses and hunting hounds that secured his election as County Commissioner. After the Waggoners came, it was getting a little crowded, as they, like the Whitleys, had some half-dozen families. So many people would frighten the deer and make other game more shy, if not less plentiful. Perhaps other things were irritating. Anyway, there was trouble and there is a tradition that some of the Whitleys and their friends made a menacing visit to the Waggoner settlement. There was no fighting, but they separated without reaching an amicable agreement. I have heard Uncle Gilbert Waggoner say, "The Whitleys were a rough set -- a bad lot." Their ways of life were different, and the two families didn't understand each other. The Whitleys, doubtless, were brave, strong, active and restless. Some of them went to Missouri and others to Texas, where they probably fought for the independence of the Lone Star. But John Whitley, Sr., was getting along in years, and he made a short move up the river into Coles County, where he passed the remainder of his life. They were "rough and ready", but I believe Uncle

Gilbert was too severe in pronouncing them "a bad lot." They were the typical pioneers -- the advance guard of civilization, and their kind made the frontiers safer for those who came later.

Judge W.G. Cochran has kindly furnished us with a copy of the *Lovington Reporter* of January 5, 1912, in which is an article contributed by him on the early history of Moultrie County. Judge Cochran's family settled near Lovington in 1849. He was then old enough to learn and remember the events of that day, and he also learned by tradition and reading much of our earlier history.

He called attention to the fact that after the organization of the Northwest Territory by Congress, the word "Illinois" was dropped from the legal designation of the territory, and was not restored until 1809 when the Indiana territory was divided and the name Illinois given to the domain now included in our state. By the way, this name also shows the confusion of combining French spelling and English pronunciation. It is generally pronounced in a way to suggest the clatter of a worn out car on a rough road (an ill noise). The University people have tried to get back to the old name by writing it Illini and accenting the second syllable when an accent on the first would be nearer the Indian name. The French got the name from the Indians and called it Eelnwahy, and of course spelled it Illinois. Then the English, our ancestors, came along and mispronounced it.

Judge Cochran's article shows that he had a broad and accurate understanding of the early history of our county. He recites the organization of the county, location of the county seat, and other items of interest. However, we are under great obligation to him for a copy of a letter written by Mrs. Martha Scott, a daughter of Amos Waggoner and wife of Andrew Scott. Her branch of the family has been



prominent in the affairs of the County. Her father was for awhile on the Board of County Commissioners. Her husband held positions of honor and was the contractor who built our first court house. Her oldest brother John was nominated for Circuit Clerk in 1852, but was defeated by the friends of the old circuit clerk who bolted because their favorite was not renominated. (As we are talking now of a great pioneer woman and her family, we are hurriedly glancing a little ahead.) Another of her brothers, Joseph H. Waggoner, was elected Circuit Clerk twelve years later and served sixteen years. A son, Andrew E.D. Scott, was County Treasurer ten years, and another son, Louis K. Scott, served eight years as County Clerk, and had been renominated for another term, but died before the election.

Mrs. Scott was five years old when her family moved to a point near the Whitley settlement in the spring of 1828. We select the following portions of her letter:

"I suppose you know our grandfather's name was Isaac Waggoner and grandmother's name, before she married, was Emsey Holyfield. I think I can name every one who was along: Grandfather and Grandmother, Uncle George and Aunt Patsy\*, and their four children, Alvin, Robert, Celia and Sally. Our father, Amos Waggoner and Narcissa, his wife, and their three children, Martha Jay, Isaac Vestal and James Monroe. Then Uncle Noah Webb and his wife Polly, and their two little girls, Synthia and Jemima. Uncle Gilbert and Aunt Patsy, they had not been long married, were both young. Aunt Patsy was about 14 years of age, I think -- a

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\*I.J. Martin wrote in the margin of his transcript of this letter that Mrs. Scott had erred as to the name of George's wife.

slim bit of a girl. Uncle Elisha had no family and Aunt Emsey, a girl sixteen or perhaps not so old as that.

"We had one large crooked bed wagon, either four or six horses, I do not know which. I think Father and Uncle Elisha did most of the driving of the big wagon. They had a saddle on one of the horses that was hitched to the wagon and rode it and drove the others. Grandfather had a carry-all for him and Grandmother to ride in; sometimes they would take some of the children to ride with them. This was the only wagon there was in the company, but there were some extra horses.

"I remember Uncle Gilbert had a beautiful bay horse and he and Aunt Patsy rode. Father had one mare along. Mother would ride it sometimes. I do not remember whether there were any other horses along. I do know there was a good deal of walking done.

"We did not meet many travelers, no railroads then, and but few other good roads. Once in a while we would meet the stage coach with a few people in it. They traveled in a hurry and sounded their bugle in time for us to give them the road.

"One afternoon Father and I were walking some distance behind when two men came up with us who had been out shooting. One had a duck and some squirrels and he handed them to me saying, 'Here, sis, I will give these to you.' I would not take them until Father told me to. I was proud of my game. When we came up with the wagons they had stopped to camp for the night. We had duck and squirrels cooked for supper.

"We crossed the Ohio in a horse ferry boat, crossed over from Kentucky into Illinois, some distance above Mt.

Vernon, Illinois\* -- seems to me like they called it Ford's crossing. The river was about a mile wide. (Probably an overflow, or a child's exaggeration.) I was afraid, and I remember Grandmother was crying while in the boat.

"Pretty soon after we landed in Illinois, Grandfather was taken sick with bilious fever and got so bad we had to stop two or three weeks at Hogs Prairie.

"Finally we landed on Whitley Creek, Shelby County, Illinois, I think about the last of April 1828. There were few people there at that time. The Whitleys were there, and a few others. The country was wild, a few little cabins with two or three acres in cultivation, land was not in market yet.

"We thought the prairies never would be settled. Grandfather lived in a little cabin on the place where Mr. Little lived afterwards. The first year after that he settled across the branch southeast of there. Uncle George settled on the place he lived on until he died. Father got a cabin just a little north of the little branch north of where the Evans girls live now. I think he bought the claim (brother Ned was born at that place), split boards to cover the cabins, weighted them down with poles; nails were a scarce article then; split logs hewn smoothly on one side made the floors -- a log or two sawed out of the side -- and made the windows; door shutters were made of split boards, and the fire place was made of dirt pounded in hard; the chimney was made of mud and sticks.

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\*I.J. Martin added a marginal note: "Mrs. Scott has the name of the wrong town, as Mt. Vernon, Illinois, is not near the Ohio River."

"Deer and turkey were plentiful. Father would go out early of a morning and bring in a turkey, or perhaps kill a deer, and they trapped all the prairie chickens they wanted. Hogs fattened on mast, acorns, hickory nuts, hazel nuts, haws and other things. Meat was very cheap. We raised all kinds of vegetables, but had no fruit for years except the wild fruit, blackberries, wild strawberries, plums and wild crab apple."

The Waggoners had come from North Carolina through Tennessee and Kentucky into Illinois, a long trip for such a primitive way of travelling. (The other day, a dirigible covered about the same distance from Norfolk, passing over Sullivan to Belleville, in a few hours time.)

Mrs. Scott also mentions the arrival of the second group of Waggoners a few months or a year afterwards. She thinks it was two or three years, but that is the memory of a child of five to whom time moves very slowly. In this second group were John (known and remembered as Uncle Jackie), his family and his son-in-law, Harmon Smith and their family; also Isaac Waggoner, Jr., and family, Joel Waggoner and family, and William Walker and family. Mrs. Walker was a daughter of Isaac Waggoner, Sr. We are informed that Joel was dissatisfied and returned to North Carolina.

Isaac, the patriarch of the family, had seven sons who came to Illinois, and six remained as permanent settlers. He had five daughters, the three named above, Mrs. Webb, Mrs. Walker, and Emsey (who became the wife of Gideon Edwards), and two daughters, Mrs. Nancy Carrol and Mrs. Susan Harding, who remained in North Carolina.

In 1829 and 1830 there was a great immigration of settlers, mostly from Kentucky and Tennessee. There were some from Ohio and other Eastern States. Noted families who came in these early immigrations were the Smysors and

Monsons to the Whitley and Waggoner neighborhoods. Other early settlers in the south part of the county were Wright Little and Adam Hostetler. The Purvis and Bolin families settled further north in what is now East Nelson Township. Kellar, Thomson and Dawson were prominent settler families in the north part of the county. Other famous names there are Cochran, Foster and Gregory. And there was John Love who founded the village of Lovington, and who later led a party to join the Mormons at Nauvoo. The Marrowbone settlers include many important names: Crowder, Mitchell, Lansden, Bone, Noble and others. The Marrowbone settlement extended east into the border of Sullivan Township. The creeks are Marrowbone and Willow, and the largest and longest tributary of the river, which is known as West Okaw creek. There were early settlements south of Sullivan made by the Pattersons and Nomacks. The Snyders settled at the head of Jonathan Creek. Settlers came to what is now Lowe and Dora a few years later.

Settlers came thick and fast after the first two or three years, and interesting histories could be written about a number of families: the Smysors, Armantrouts, Munsons, Hendricks, Edwards, Davises, etc. Other men without large families helped to get the settlements going. Daniel Ellington and William Haydon established a store, post-office and school at Whitley's Point, near the John Whitley home. Some of us can remember the long string of log houses built end to end with connecting sheds or covered driveways that made up the town.

Then there was Eben Noyes, who was the largest land owner in the county and who built a town on the prairie on a farm now owned by the Hortenstine Brothers, and to get the travel away from Whitley's Point, marked a road by a plow furrow from Kickapoo east of Charleston through his town of Essex and to the Shelbyville road past the Waggoner

settlement. But the scheme wouldn't work, the timber at Whitley's Point being a better attraction to travelers.

Adam Hostetler and Wright Little came early, and their families were united by the marriage of a son and daughter, whose children and grandchildren still live in the county. Andrew Gammill's family is still represented here, and so is that of Gideon Edwards.

There is a large number of well-known schools in the county, such as Smyser, Whitfield, Baker, and many others whose histories should be written. Also there are the early churches, and the pioneer preachers like Bushrod Henry, Peter Warren, George Dalby, Willis Whitfield, Rezin Martin, John Turner, Levi Fleming, Father McGowan, Col. Morgan, Col. Vaughn, the Kellars, and a score of others in the first fifty or sixty years of our history.

It is said that the first religious meeting in Moultrie County was at the home of one of the Whitleys. Rev. Miles Hart, a Methodist minister, preached the first sermon at the home of Samuel Lindley, whose wife was a Whitley.

The earliest church was the Baptist Church at Lynn Creek. The Waggoners were Baptists; and William Harvey Martin, who then lived on Kickapoo, preached for them as early as 1829, and he organized the first church at Lynn Creek. There were about 20 members, most of whom belonged to the Waggoner families. Their preacher, "Uncle Billy" Martin, moved to a farm near the church, where he officiated as pastor until his death in 1854.

A little later the Smysors and others joined a church of the Disciples, organized by either Tobias Grider or Bushrod W. Henry, or both together, and so the Smysor Church also began about ninety years ago, being the second church in

Whitley township, although there is an older Christian church in Lovington.

The old Lynn Creek church and the first Smysor church were log structures. Newport, Parker and Threlkeld, all famous preachers of that day, visited the Lynn Creek Church. Parker went to Texas, and there is a tradition that he was killed in the Indian wars. Certainly some of his family were captured. A stirring ballad has been written about the captivity of one of his daughters.

The story is interesting. She was married to a Commanche chief, and after she had been rescued by the whites several years later, she said she had been happy with her Indian husband and her children, but she was not permitted to return to them. Her son, a famous chief, waged a relentless war upon the whites to avenge what he thought were the wrongs of his mother, and the refrain of the ballad is "Freedom is sweet on the prairie."

In 1830, several new counties were organized. Coles was made to include the present Douglas and Cumberland counties. My great grandfather, James Scott Martin, who then lived at Kickapoo Point near Charleston, was chosen one of the three county commissioners of Coles. He was still serving as Commissioner when in 1833 he moved to the Whitley and Waggoner settlements.

In the same year, 1830, Macon County was taken out of the north part of Shelby. The new county included what is now Piatt County and a strip nine miles wide off of what is now Moultrie County. The remainder of Shelby County -- including most of what is now Moultrie -- remained as a part of Shelby County.

About 1829 and 1830 several plats were made of town sites in what is now Moultrie County. The first settlement, Whitley's Point, was never platted.

The town of Nelson was the first to be platted, in 1829. The Lincoln family passed through in March 1830 when Lincoln was a month past his 21st birthday. There is a record of his saying that they crossed the river at Nelsonville, which of course was the old town of Nelson.

The record of the plat of the old town of Lovington, like that of the original town of Sullivan, was destroyed in the Court House fire in 1864. The plat itself may have been destroyed in the same fire. Anyway, the old plat was never found and placed of record. So the date of the settlement of Lovington as a town is not known.

The old plat of Marrowbone (now Bethany) suffered the same fate.

Most people acquainted with Moultrie County history know that Nelson, Lovington, and Marrowbone (now Bethany) existed before Sullivan was platted. Fewer people know that there were several old plats made of places that never grew into towns.

For instance, near Lovington, there was East Strington, and a few miles away there was West Strington. These ambitious places were sketched along the public road. The Blackhorse Tavern was between them, and was perhaps older than either. It was there in 1833, but it was at first a country inn along the public road.

Then in Jonathan Creek, east and northeast of Sullivan, two sites were platted -- one called Oiasco, and another place named Julian (usually known as Julia Ann).



Whitley had two towns. There was Shanghai, which I remember as a little town of a half dozen houses and shops; and at Whitley's Point there was a row of log houses -- ten or twelve -- connected together either by partition walls or by a shedded area which served for wagon shelters. There was a post office here, and one building served as a church and school room. There was a store in the room with the post office.

William Hagdon bought the entire town at the time the Whitleys moved away. Mr. Hagdon was the merchant, the postmaster, and the school teacher. Both my parents went to school there. The postoffice of Whitley's Point was moved to the railroad station called Summit, and later both names were changed to Gays.

There was another plat on land in Whitley that never grew into a town. Ebenezer Noyes was the largest land holder there, and he decided to build a city. He located his plat a mile or more south of Whitley's Point. He named his plat Essex after a town of New England, and in order to entice travel away from the Point, he marked with ox plows a new road from Kickapoo Point to Sand Creek to run by his town with markers along the way pointing to the town of Essex. But he never sold any lots and no town was built. After the organization of the county and the choice of the county seat, Mr. Noyes expressed his opinion of the selection. He said it was a shame to spoil a good forty acres of land with such a town as Sullivan. After Mattoon was started in 1855, Noyes moved there and built a hotel, which he named the Essex House. He also laid off an addition and speculated and lost money in lots.

One other old town plat was of Glasgow, located on what is now the Harbaugh or Peadro farm. Some houses

were built there, and it was a contender in the selection of the county seat. When Asa's Point was selected, the houses in the town of Glasgow were moved to Sullivan.

In 1842 began a movement to organize the County of Moultrie from territory of Shelby, Macon and Coles. A Commission of three -- one from each of the most important towns in the territory (Nelson, Marrowbone, and Lovington) -- was chosen to present a petition to the Illinois legislature.

In early 1843, the legislature agreed, and Moultrie County was organized in February 1843. It was created from land which had been parts of Shelby and Macon counties. The north part -- a strip nine miles wide -- was taken from Macon County, and the remainder was taken from Shelby.

The original petition upon which the act was based included a row of townships -- a strip six miles wide -- off of the west side of Coles County. However, people at Charleston objected to the taking of any part of Coles into the new county. Members of the legislative Commission living at Lovington and Marrowbone voted to drop the Coles County strip so that the petition could be presented to the legislature without objection. John A. Freeland, our first County Clerk, who was then acting as clerk for the commissioners, said that if Fleming, the commissioner from Nelson, had held out for the larger territory, the bill would have been passed anyway. Freeland said that the Marrowbone and Lovington members of the Commission wanted to eliminate the Coles territory because retaining it

would place Nelson too near the center of the county and make it more eligible for becoming the county seat.\*

If these four Coles townships had not been eliminated, the new county would have been of fair size, instead of being one of the smallest in the State. Moreover, the City of Mattoon, which was founded ten years later, would be in Moultrie County instead of in Coles. However, it would have been too near the county line to be considered as a county seat. The location of Nelson along the river would have developed into a good town, and even Lovington and Marrowbone (now Bethany) would have fared better in the outcome by being located a little farther from the county seat. Of course Sullivan would not have been born. It was the act of the Lovington and Marrowbone commissioners in out-voting Fleming of Nelson that led to the selection of Asa's Point as the county seat, and it was the voters of these two settlements that insured the selection and building of the town of Sullivan.

Soon after the organization of Moultrie County in February 1843, the first county officers were elected. Nearly all of the first county officials were residents of the Nelson precinct. James Elder, then a merchant at Nelson, was elected County Judge, and he served continuously for 18 years, until December 1861. In the early years, the County Judge had two associates, and besides acting as a court, they

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\*A few years later, after the building of the Illinois Central railroad along the west side of Coles with the towns of Tuscola, Arcola, and Mattoon, the people of Charleston who had objected to any territory being put into Moultrie, or their successors, favored the organization of Douglas County to eliminate support for Mattoon as a contestant for the county seat.

supervised the financial business of the county, much as the Board of Supervisors does now. During the first two years following 1843, Nelson served as the county seat, and court was held most of the time at Nelson. Once it was convened at James Camfield's farm house a few miles southwest of the present site of Sullivan. Judge Elder's two associates were Steven Cannon and Joseph Baker.

John Perryman, Clerk of the Circuit Court, was also a merchant at Nelson. John A. Freeland, County Clerk, was a school teacher; and Walker, the Sheriff, was a farmer who had married into the Waggoner family. David Patterson, Probate Justice, was the only official who did not live in the Nelson precinct.

In 1845, two years after the organization of the new county, the site of the county seat was chosen. There were three candidates -- Nelson, Glasgow (a town which had been platted a few years earlier, one and one-half miles south of Sullivan), and the third place "at or near Asa's Point." For the latter place, a tract of 40 acres was offered free, which the Pattersons and others had bought for the county for \$100.

Asa's Point won a majority of the votes. The Commissioners chose the name of Sullivan in honor of General John Sullivan of Revolutionary War fame. The county had been named in honor of General William Moultrie of South Carolina, who had become famous for his defense of the City of Charleston in the Revolutionary War.\* Mr. Freeland told me that he suggested to the County

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\*The General went by the name of "Mootry" -- the French pronunciation; but the county has been pronounced the way it looks in English.

Commissioners the name for the county seat. He said that as the county had been named for General Moultrie, he suggested the name of a northern man for the county seat; and so he recommended that it be named for a distinguished Revolutionary soldier, Gen. John Sullivan.\* I noticed recently in a school circular of some kind that the City was named for an island off the coast of South Carolina. I hope that error will not be repeated. It does not harm General Sullivan, but it does no credit to us.

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\* General John Sullivan was born in 1740 in New Hampshire. He was a member of the Legislature, and was elected as a delegate to the first Continental Congress. In June 1775 (after the battle of Lexington) he was named as one of the Brigadier Generals of the Continental Army. He was active in the siege of Boston and in the fighting at the battle of Long Island, where he was taken prisoner. After his exchange, he rejoined Washington's army and was made a Major General. He led the attack on the Hessians in the battle of Trenton, and in August following, he commanded in an attack on the British and Tories at Staten Island. He also led his division in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown.

To avenge the Indian atrocities at Wyoming and Cherry Valley, General Sullivan was sent in command of a strong foray against the Iroquois and their Tory allies in the Mohawk Valley; and his victory completely destroyed the power of the League of the Six Nations.

Later Sullivan was Governor of his state. He was one of Washington's appointees to the federal bench. He held this place as Judge of the New Hampshire District until his death in 1795 -- age 55 years. Some man!

The City plat was surveyed on the fifth day of March 1845. It was the day that James Knox Polk was inaugurated President, the fourth being on Sunday that year. There was a public sale of lots. The highest price was paid for the lot on which is now the First National Bank and the National Inn hotel. It has been the site of a hotel during all the century of its history. The price of the lot was \$31. Early owners were James Elder and Joseph Thomason. Joseph Edgar Eden was the owner and manager of the hotel for more than a half century.

The first store building was moved from Glasgow and located on the outside corner southwest of the public square. For many years it has been known as the Shepherd Corner. James Elder moved his store -- not the building -- from Nelson and located at the southeast corner, either at the Progress corner or across the street south.

The north side was occupied by too many saloons. They called them groceries; such places are now taverns. It was called "sod corn" row, and here is where the famous scraps between Jonathan Creek and Labey Bend occurred. Most of the names of these old champions are forgotten. However, Lowery Trailor is remembered as "cock of the walk" wherever he went. I remember once seeing the old man sitting on a horse straight as an Indian, though well past the age of 80 years. Two friends were riding on either side to prevent accident.

The county business was now done at Sullivan though the court house was not finished until the next year, 1846. Most of the officers were also business men. James Elder, the County Judge, and John Perryman, Circuit Clerk, were merchants. John A. Freeland, County Clerk and Recorder, owned a farm just north of the town plat. Joseph Thomason, Sheriff, kept a boarding house and a livery stable.

David Patterson, Probate Judge, was a farmer and lived in the brick house that stood south of town until it had to be torn down because it was too close to state road no. 32. Prior to 1847 each county had a separate probate court. Patterson was elected probate justice in 1843 and served until the probate business was placed under the jurisdiction of the circuit court.

The officers were about evenly divided between Democrats and Whigs, either by agreement or by the voters' preferences. Judge Elder and Uncle John Freeland were Whigs, while Judge Patterson, Perryman, and the Thomasons were Democrats.

Judge James Elder, who was first elected County Judge in 1843, served in that office until December 1861 -- a little more than eighteen years. He had been regularly elected without opposition. He had belonged to the Whig party and was reelected in 1857 after the formation of the Republican party, which he had joined. Party feeling was higher in 1861, and he was not then a candidate for reelection.

Very little has ever been published about Judge Elder. It is well known that through the early years he was regarded as the leading citizen of the county. Like the Waggoners he came from North Carolina. He put in a stock of goods at Nelson, where he was the leading merchant for 15 years. He moved to Sullivan in 1845 and lived on a 600 acre farm, part of which is now in the city. He became the owner of nearly 2000 acres of choice land, and became an investment banker. He owned bank stock in Mattoon and elsewhere, but never established a regular bank of deposit in Sullivan. He was the wealthiest man in the county when he died in 1867.

John A. Freeland was another distinguished citizen among the early settlers of the county. He too came from Carolina. He had crippled feet, and he walked with his crutches much of the way. He was in Tennessee awhile. He was a school teacher in the 1830's, and in 1843 became our first County Clerk, and held the office for ten years, when he was succeeded by Charles A. Roane, who served until 1861. Both Freeland and Roane were Whigs who became Republicans in 1856. Each of them served one term as representative in the legislature some years later -- Freeland being elected in 1872 and Roane in 1882.

Two other great men of that day were Joseph and Arnold Thomason, brothers who came from Kentucky, along with the Kellars, and settled in the Lovington neighborhood.

Joseph Thomason was elected Sheriff about 1845 and served almost continuously for 30 years. He was defeated by a ruse in 1854, and he later gave way to Samuel Earp and several others -- Berry, Kearney, and Carter -- each for a short term of two years. In 1876 he and his friends were caught napping unaware of serious opposition; and in a delegate convention several other names were proposed, and after a few ballots Wash Linder was nominated.

Arnold Thomason was elected Circuit Clerk and Recorder in 1856 and again in 1860. In 1864 Joseph H. Waggoner was elected and served for 16 years. He was a son of Amos Waggoner, another distinguished citizen, and it was his brother John who made a still hunt for the same office twelve years before. Arnold Thomason, however, did not quit. The next year he was elected County Judge and served 12 years, giving way to Judge Jonathan Meeker in 1877 because the legislature had so enlarged the jurisdiction of the County Court that it was thought advisable to elect a good lawyer. (Judge Meeker served nine years, and his



common law terms were as busy and dignified as a circuit court.) But next year, 1878, Judge Thomason was elected representative in the legislature, receiving substantially the entire vote of Lovington and carrying the county by about one thousand majority.

In addition to this list of splendid men elected to fill county offices in the early years of the county -- Elder, Freeland, Roane and the two Thomasons -- there was John Perryman, also a merchant, who served 9 years as Circuit Clerk; David Patterson, who served as probate justice until the adoption of the new constitution, when the office was discontinued in 1848; and Arnold Waggoner, the most prominent of that pioneer family, who was for awhile an associate justice of the County Court. He was the father of John and Joseph H. Waggoner, the Circuit Clerk. Another son was Dr. Edward E. Waggoner, who lived at Shelbyville. One of his daughters married Andrew Scott, who was the contractor in building our first court house. Two sons of the latter (who were also grandsons of Amos Waggoner) were A.E.D. Scott, County Treasurer for 9 years, and Louis K. Scott, eight years County Clerk.

Similar dignity and ability were shown by Henry Moulton Minor, who as a resident of Lovington was elected on the Republican ticket in 1886. Later he was a judge and a state senator in Colorado. Judge Minor served only three years when he resigned and the Governor appointed Charles N. adell, an intelligent businessman who was not exactly suited for a place on the bench, but who perhaps did as well as two or three rather poor lawyers among his successors. His term ended just 60 years ago, in 1890 [which indicates when this portion of the text was written].

Our member of Congress in 1846 was a Democrat, Orland Ficklin, who lived at Charleston. The State Senator

also a Democrat, was Peter Warren, who lived on Sand Creek in Shelby County. The two parties in the county were near equal strength, but beginning with Polk in 1844 the county voted Democrat in every presidential election until 1904, when Roosevelt carried the county against Parker. One time it was very close. Greely in 1872 had only a lead of twenty three votes over Grant. The next election, 1876, Tilden had more than 500 majority. Three Democratic candidates have each carried the county three times -- Cleveland, Bryan, and F.D. Roosevelt. (Dewey had a small lead in 1944.)

Nothing of importance occurred in the political history of the county until 1852. In that year, in the Democrat primary no open opposition appeared against Perryman's re-election as Circuit Clerk, and there was a very light vote. But a still hunt made in the Whitley and Nelson precincts by John Waggoner resulted in his nomination. In the general election, many Democrats who resented such method voted for the Whig candidate, Wilson Lloyd, who was elected. When the new Republican party was organized, Lloyd became a Democrat, but he died in 1856 before the end of his term and was succeeded by Arnold Thomason, who held the office two terms, until 1864, when Joseph H. Waggoner was elected to continue for four terms, or 16 years.

It was about this time, either in 1852 or 1854 (the election returns were all destroyed when the court house was burned in 1864) that there was a close race for Sheriff. It was not determined until the returns from the precinct which is now Lowe township came in, which gave Kearney a small lead over Thomason, the Democrat. Judge W.G. Cochran told me that many years later a man who lived in the north part of Jonathan Creek told him that on the next day after the election, he was in Sullivan and learned of the close vote on Sheriff. He went to see the election judge who had

possession of the returns in the missing precinct. They altered the returns and changed the ballots to give a slight majority to Kearney, whose home was in that precinct. Judge Cochran said he was not sure the story was true. The man might have been trying to pose himself as a sort of hero.

Our first congressman, Ficklin, had been succeeded by James S. Robinson, a famous pioneer lawyer, and in 1852 James C. Allen of Olney was elected. He too was a Democrat. In 1854, Nathaniel Parker, a State Senator living in Coles County, became a candidate against Allen for the Democrat nomination. Parker had many friends in the Nelson and Whitley precincts, partly because he was a brother of Daniel Parker, a famous Baptist minister who had held meetings there. The leaders in Sullivan retaliated for the Waggoner-Perryman still hunt campaign by holding a mass meeting for selecting delegates to the congressional convention without letting Parker's friends know about it. A delegate convention was held later at which Parker delegates were selected. John R. Eden, a young lawyer who had lately located in Sullivan, was one of the Allen delegates, and he and my grandfather, John Martin, representing the Parker men, reached a compromise by which both delegations were admitted to the district convention, each delegate having a half vote. The district convention was held in the old Christian Church in Sullivan, which was quite a large auditorium. Allen was renominated, but the election in November was so close and so uncertain that Congress ordered a second election, at which Allen was chosen.

The first lawyer in Sullivan was Samuel W. Moulton, who later moved to Shelbyville, where he became distinguished as a great lawyer. He served long in the state legislature and won there the name of being the father of the

Illinois Free School system. He served three or more terms in Congress, one as a representative from the state at large.

Another famous man, General Richard Oglesby, was a lawyer here before he volunteered for the Mexican War. He was a general in the Civil War, was a U.S. Senator, and was the only man who has been three times elected Governor of Illinois.

In the year 1855 there was a "cholera" scare in Sullivan and other towns of central Illinois. There were about a half-dozen deaths here attributed to the plague. The leading physician, Dr. William A. Kellar, was stricken and died. He was a minister also and pastor of the Christian Church in Sullivan. He and John R. Eden had an office together. Mr. Eden said that one afternoon he complained of feeling ill and went home. He died the next day.

This year, 1855, was noted for the effort to establish what would now be called prohibition in Illinois. The measure was known as the Maine Liquor Law, and was copied from the law in force in that state. Our legislature had passed the measure with the added provision to submit it to the voters of the state for final passage or rejection. In that way the members of the legislature avoided responsibility and most politicians kept out of discussion. The preachers were not so timid, and most public discussions were led by them. Most Methodists favored the law while the Baptists generally opposed.

Col. John W.R. Morgan, who was then pastor of the Sullivan Methodist Church, favored the adoption of the law. Arrangement was made for a joint discussion between him and Dr. W.A. Kellar, but before the time arrived, Dr. Kellar died, and Rezin C. Martin, the pastor of Lynn Creek Baptist Church, took his place in the debate. The meeting was held

in the big Christian Church, which was filled full of listeners, and many stood outside and listened through the open windows. John R. Eden presided at the meeting, and the arguments were said to have been eloquent and spirited. It was a strange incident that Mr. Martin, who had taken the place of Dr. Kellar, also died a few weeks after the debate.

Col. Morgan met all comers in debate, and discussions were held at Lovington and Marrowbone. I heard Judge Cochran say that he heard the debate at Lovington. The opposition to the law was made by the Christian Church pastor, but he did not remember his name. He was sure that it was not Kellar. In the election, the law was overwhelmingly beaten. The prohibition question was never again submitted to the voters of Illinois until we voted on the question of repeal of National Prohibition in 1933.

For 25 years, until township organization was adopted in 1867, the County Court acted as Commissioners in charge of the financial business of the county. Old citizens used to contend that under Judges Elder, Eden and Thomason and their associate justices, the business was more efficiently conducted than it has been by a board of supervisors.

Two court houses were built under such management. The first was paid for partly by receipts from sale of city lots in Sullivan. This court house burned in December 1864.

The second, in 1865 in the last years of Judge Joseph Edgar Eden's term (with Joseph Baker and Steven Cannon as associates), was paid for by funds derived from sale of swamp and overflowed lands in the county. The federal government had donated all swamps and overflowed lands to the states; and Illinois passed the title to such lands to the counties in which they were situated. Moultrie County had several hundred acres, mostly in Sullivan and Lowe

townships. Hundreds of acres were sold at fair prices. Even the land in Eagle Pond (or swamp) brought \$4.00 per acre. Much of the public land in Lowe township was sold at \$6.00.

The present court house (the third) is the only one that was paid for entirely from taxes. This was done without the issue of bonds, the tax being levied in three annual installments. The first collection was levied before a contract was made, and the last was collected about the time the building was completed. A story is told of Uncle George Ballard of Jonathan Creek, who had opposed the building of a new house. He was in an office in the new court house when someone asked him how he liked the new building. He said, "Oh, it's all right -- fine. I guess we will all say so when we come to pay for it." He owned several hundred acres, and his tax was quite an item. Someone said, "Uncle George, have you paid your taxes for this year." "Yes," he said. "I have the receipt in my pocket." "You have then paid all of your part of the cost," he was told.

During this period, the county also had no County Attorney or County Superintendent of Schools. Prosecutors were selected by a district attorney elected by a district of several countries. School affairs were managed by a Commissioner appointed by the County Court.

Before the Civil War there was little bitterness in party contests. There were many personal friendships that were not embittered by party strife even during and immediately after the war. Judge Elder, the Whig leader and for many years our leading citizen, had friends in all parties and no enemies in either. John R. Eden, the Democratic leader, was active in politics for 40 years without suffering the loss of any personal friendships. Republican voters helped elect him as District Attorney in 1856 and to Congress in 1862. Again, in 1874 when many Democrats had joined the

Farmers Party, making his election doubtful, Republicans like John Powell, John Milligen, Charles A. Roane, and many others were actively for him. Without such Republican support at that time, he might have been defeated.

Bitter taunts were sometimes thrown about; but among friends they passed as jests. I remember an incident -- long after the War -- a meeting between Uncle Joe Thomason and Dr. Nathan Cheever of Lovington. They were very old men at the time. Uncle Joe said, "Nathan, I don't like you. You are a Black Republican." Cheever extended his hand and said, "How are you, you old Rebel."

On September 20, 1858, occurred what was sometimes later referred to as the Lincoln-Douglas "riot" in Sullivan. It was a very small affair; and only the light-minded observer would have called it a riot.

I had many sources of information about this affair. My father was there; he was then 25 years of age, and had a way of keeping his eyes and ears open. He did not engage in the so-called "riot", but he thought he saw and heard it all. My father-in-law, John R. Eden, was Chairman of the Douglas meeting, and made a short speech of introduction. He was also on the reception committee, and was with Douglas from the Senator's arrival at the Eden House until the close of the public meeting. He did not leave the speakers' stand, but could see the affair, and he talked with many who were closer. I talked too with Captain Lee, who was a participant, and who later served as a soldier through the War and became a very partisan Republican. Also, I discussed the events with Henry M. Minor, who was a great admirer of Douglas. He listened to the Senator's speech, and then ran to the Grove to hear Lincoln. He saw much of the disturbance around the crowd at the Douglas meeting, and

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\*I.J. Martin wrote several versions of his recollections of what he had been told about the Lincoln-Douglas speeches in Sullivan. One of these was published in the *Moultre County News*, Centennial Edition, July 5, 1973, p. 12A. These several sets of notes have been edited to form the single account that appears here.



he once told me what he saw and heard. His story tallied well with what my father related of what he saw.

The Lincoln and Douglas meeting at Sullivan was not a real debate. There had been a joint discussion or debate between the two candidates at Charleston on Saturday before the Sullivan gatherings on Monday.\*

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\*Editor's note: The substance of the remarks of Lincoln and Douglas at Sullivan has not been preserved. Perhaps their statements were not too different from their speeches at Charleston two days earlier, on September 18, 1858 -- the fourth of the seven debates during the fall campaign -- which are set forth in *Political Debates Between Hon. Abraham Lincoln and Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, Columbus, 1860. For the newspaper accounts of these speeches, see *Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, III, Lincoln Series, I, edited by Edwin E. Sparks, Springfield, 1908.

Lincoln's remarks in Charleston on the subject of social and political equality of the races show how differently people thought and spoke about such matters a hundred and thirty years ago (Sparks, at 267):

"While I was at the hotel today, an elderly gentleman called upon me to know whether I was really in favor of producing a perfect equality between the negroes and white people. While I had not proposed to myself on this occasion to say much on that subject, yet as the question was asked me, I thought I would occupy perhaps five minutes in saying something in regard to it. I will say, then, that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races; that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor

Some weeks before, when the joint debates were scheduled, the Douglas slate committee arranged meetings for the Senator for the times between the joint meetings. It was then that the Sullivan meeting for Douglas was announced.

Lincoln fixed his own dates and usually arranged them to follow closely after the Douglas dates, sometimes for a night meeting after a Douglas speech in the afternoon. So far as I know, there is now no record of when the Lincoln meeting in Sullivan was first advertised, but it was probably but a short time before the meeting.

John Ginn, a farmer living a few miles east of Sullivan, attended the Charleston meeting, and on Sunday brought Senator Douglas in his carriage from Charleston to his home, where the Senator remained until Monday morning. Judge James Elder met Mr. Lincoln at Mattoon and conveyed him to his farm home, which has since been enlarged and is now one of the good homes on East Jackson Street.

Felix Ashworth, then a boy in his early teens living on the North Okaw in Coles County, related an incident connected with the Lincoln-Douglas visits to Sullivan. Felix belonged to a family which was Democratic before the War.

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to intermarry with white people; and I will say, in addition to this, that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race."

He was riding along the dusty roadway when he was overtaken and passed by John Ginn's carriage. He and his horse were covered by a cloud of dust, and for mischief he decided to retaliate. He passed the carriage and for a while trotted along just ahead of the carriage. His steed was of the heavy footed plow horse variety, and his steps raised plenty of dust. After a while the driver called to him that Senator Douglas was in the carriage, and asked him to follow them. The boy at once complied, for as he said, he "thought Senator Douglas was next in dignity to the Ruler of the Universe."

On Monday morning, Senator Douglas came to the Eden House in Sullivan, and held a reception for his friends and supporters in the forenoon. While he was at the Eden House, Douglas was handed a note written and signed by Mr. Lincoln proposing that he would begin his speech at 3 o'clock in Freeland's Grove if Douglas would so inform his audience at the beginning of his address in the Court House yard at 1 o'clock. In this way, the two meetings would not conflict. Also, Lincoln was a shrewd campaigner, and here as usual he sought the advantage of holding his meeting following that of Douglas. Douglas accepted these terms, and it appears that both Lincoln and Douglas adhered to the agreement.

Douglas was to speak on the east side of the square, a stand having been erected among the trees near the street line, which allowed the crowd to occupy wagons and buggies in the street as well as the seats around the stand. Seats for a thousand or more people were laid under the shade on the north, west, and south sides of the stand. By the time the meeting began, the street was nearly filled with buggies and spring wagons, leaving only a narrow passage on the east side of the street. Hundreds of men stood around the stand and

among the vehicles. It was a very large crowd, numbering perhaps 2,000.

John R. Eden, my father-in-law, was chairman of the meeting and introduced Senator Douglas with a short complimentary speech. Douglas, after making the announcement of the Lincoln meeting for 3 o'clock, began his address about 20 minutes past 1 o'clock. Those were the days of much oratory and long speeches, two hours being required for a great speech. However, Douglas was nearing the end of his speech, and would have finished before 3 o'clock if he had not been disturbed.

The Lincoln supporters had hired a Terre Haute band and brought it over for the Sullivan meeting. About 1:30 p.m., the band began playing on a vacant lot at the intersection of Jackson and Hamilton Streets, near where the Powers School building now stands. The purpose, of course, was to keep the Lincoln partisans away from the Douglas meeting.

About an hour later, a parade was formed on West Harrison Street, and it started to move eastward. When Main Street was reached, instead of turning north to the Grove, a turn to the south was made. Headed by the Terre Haute band and led by a young Marshal, George Lynn [or Lynch?], the procession moved along the west side of the square to Jefferson Street, and then to the east along the south side of the square, the band playing all the while.

Douglas, who was nearing the end of his speech, stopped speaking, remarking that he was used to that sort of courtesy in Northern Illinois but had not expected it here.

The parade, which was not really a very big affair -- perhaps two or three hundred people -- was made up largely

of men from the Marrowbone and Todd's Point settlements. No one from Sullivan was in the procession.

Judge Anthony Thornton was a prominent lawyer of Shelbyville, and he had been invited to address the meeting after Douglas' speech. Thornton and Lincoln had been associated as leaders of the Illinois Whigs. Both of them supported General Scott against Franklin Pierce in 1852, and both regretted the movement to abandon the Whig party and organize the new Republican Party. But when the new party was organized, Lincoln joined it and Thornton became a Democrat. On the day of the Sullivan meeting, the local Republicans were more bitter against Thornton than against Douglas. He had many old Whig friends, and they feared his influence over them. Their strategy was to get as many as possible of the Douglas hearers to leave the meeting and hear Lincoln at the Grove and thus reduce the size of Thornton's audience. John R. Eden later said he doubted if the Republicans intended any discourtesy to Senator Douglas.

The Douglas crowd expected that the parade would move on eastward to Madison Street, where it could turn and march north directly into the Grove where Lincoln's meeting was to be held. But instead, a turn was made north on Washington Street, and the procession started along or through the crowd that was waiting for Douglas to resume his speech. This provoked an angry outcry. A young lawyer, Aley B. Lee, who was then a Democrat, shouted an Old Hickory oath, "By the Eternal, you can't do that," and jumped over the fence, followed by perhaps twenty men.

Douglas urged the Democrats to allow the procession to pass peaceably. Also, Judge Thornton left the speakers' stand and asked Lee and others to allow them to pass. While Thornton was making his plea, a Marrowbone farmer

-- Azel Younger, whom I knew as a fine old gentleman many years after -- seeing Thornton shouted, "What are you doing in that crowd, you \_\_\_ traitor." At that, Thornton started to climb the fence too, but his friends kept him back.

It did not take long for Lee and the others to turn the band wagon at the head of the procession back to Jefferson Street, where the march continued to Madison Street, and then on to the Grove. The Republicans offered no resistance, and there was no riot or any personal encounter. In the excitement, some foolish man or boy threw a brick that hit one of the band boys, who was slightly injured.

At the Grove, a stand had been erected under the elms that are still standing at the entrance of Wyman Park. There Lincoln made a speech said to have been two hours long.

It was later charged that Lincoln was in the procession that disrupted the Douglas meeting, but that was not true, and none of those best informed thought so. Lincoln at that time was trying to compete with Douglas in personal appeal, and he had gone quietly with Judge Elder to the meeting in the Grove. It is clear that Lincoln did not know of the interruption of the Douglas meeting; and, if course, neither he nor any of the leading Republicans had anything to do with it.

A.B. Lee, who led in the move to turn the parade away from the Douglas assembly, was a great admirer of Douglas as long as he lived. He took the advice of Douglas and supported the Union cause, commanding three different companies, one of these being in the famous 41st regiment of Illinois Volunteers. Still later a Republican politician, he never regretted his action. He said no one was to blame except the young parade marshal. He also said that the marshal, George Lynn [Lynch?], admitted that it was a

mistake to try to march north on Washington Street instead of going on to Madison. George Lynn also led a company in the War, and some of us yet remember his erect figure and armless sleeve in the years after the War.

The affair was regretted by all sensible people, and no effort was made to exploit the event to the help or injury of either side.

Efforts have since been made to make this small disturbance at Sullivan match the so-called riot at Charleston a few years later. A St. Louis newspaper published a partisan report from a Douglas supporter, and the Quincy *Whig* had one on the other side even more unfair. The St. Louis reporter had been assigned to the Douglas campaign, and he witnessed the melee, such as it was. The man who made the report to the Quincy *Whig* had been a Moultrie County sheriff. He may have been in town that day, but he was said not to have been near the place. He was sure that the Democrats who turned the procession were "border ruffians", using a phrase applied to Missourians and other southerners who tried to settle in Kansas.

There was no riot and no fight. Neither Captain Lynn, nor Captain Lee and those who supported him, should be slandered as "border ruffians" by newspaper accounts that were biased and partial, or by anonymous "historical letters."

### 3. NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF SULLIVAN\*

The town of Sullivan was platted or surveyed on March 5, 1845, two years after the County of Moultrie was established. The location, then known as Asa's Point, had been selected as the county seat by popular vote a few weeks earlier. The town was named in honor of General John Sullivan, a soldier of the Revolutionary War.

Moultrie County was the owner of the 40-acre tract upon which the town of Sullivan was platted. It was purchased for \$100, and it has been said that the price was donated by the Pattersons and Snyders and others living near Asa's Point. The plat included twenty five blocks, each 200 feet square. The center block was not given a number, and it was reserved for location of the court house. The others were given numbers from 1 to 24, and each was divided into 8 lots of 50 feet street frontage. The unusually small blocks made an awkward arrangement of building sites, and the large number of streets thus created is also a bad feature of the plan.

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\*I.J. Martin's papers contain several writings on the history of Sullivan. For the period prior to Sullivan's incorporation in 1872, we have only sketchy handwritten notes. For the period subsequent to 1872, we have two more extensive pieces, including one published as "A Glimpse of Sullivan's History," *Moultrie County News, Centennial Edition*, July 5, 1973, p. 1, 2A. These several writings have been edited into this single of "Notes."



The Commissioners made another mistake when they put the entire list of 192 lots on sale at auction. There was little demand for building, and many of the lots sold for a trifling consideration. The highest price paid was \$31, for the lot on which the First National Bank is now located. A wiser plan would have been to make a fair appraisal and to sell the lots as they were needed for building sites or other purposes.

The first building in Sullivan was a business room moved from Glasgow and located on the outer corner southwest of the court house square. The two leading stores at Nelson, one of them owned by County Judge James Elder and the other by the Clerk of the Circuit Court, John Perryman, were promptly moved to Sullivan. Judge Elder continued in business for twenty years or more as merchant and private banker, and was generally regarded as Sullivan's leading citizen.

J. Wilson Lloyd, a little later, established a general store. He was also a lawyer. But his promising success was checked by illness, and he was succeeded as a merchant by Orange Clark Martin of a Whitley Creek pioneer family. This store room was on the east side, where the McClure building now stands. The early structures have all disappeared.

The oldest building now facing the court house square is the one at the northeast corner. It was for a long while occupied by the Lewis & Lilly bookstore. Dr. Thomas L. Lewis also had his office in the room with a small stock of medicine and drugs for sale.

There are two other early buildings on the square -- the Corbin building on the south side, erected in 1866 or 1867, and the three Trower rooms on the west side, built at the

same time. The Shepherd building just off the square at the southwest is older, but it has been remodeled and partly rebuilt. The Reithmiller building, off the square at the northeast corner, was built in 1871.

North of the square was the area known as sod-corn row. Most of the quarrels along this row were settled by the disputants themselves in "fair fights." There were at first no licensed saloons. Whisky was sold at the groceries. This changed in 1855 when a state law was passed which forbid the sale without license of liquor in quantities less than one pint.

Whiskey was then a popular remedy for ague, chills and fever, and snake bite, and it was often bought by the gallon jug -- sometimes by the keg or barrel. There was no heavy tax to pay, and it was cheap in large quantities. Even in a pint bottle, it cost much less than by the glass.

When the 1855 law went into effect, it is said that David Reed, a rich landowner, came to Sullivan and put on a great show at one of the groceries. He bought a pint cup full of whiskey, and in front of the store delivered an illustrious lecture. He said that heretofore a man could take a drink and go away, but now he had to drink a pint. He could not give any to his friends, but had to drink it all himself. Finally declining to get drunk (at this time), he threw the remainder in the street. For years people talked of "Dave Reed's temperance speech."

More than one half of the business area around the court house has been swept by fire one or more times.

For a while after Sullivan was platted, it had no distinct political organization. The people depended upon the justice of the peace, constable, sheriff and other county officers

appointed by the County Commissioners to serve in the precinct. Later a town or village organization was established, which served until the village became a city in 1873.

We have no official record of the first sixteen years following 1845 because the records were destroyed in the court house fire in November 1864. It is said the City Clerk was usually also employed as County Clerk, and the records were kept in the county office.

The earliest record begins in the year 1861, and was kept in a little book that in some way escaped the fire. This record shows that in 1861 or before, there had been established a town or village government with a board of trustees and other officers.

The most interesting thing in this old 1861 record relates to the great Civil War, or the War of Secession -- or of the great rebellion, as it was sometimes called. The village clerk was Charles B. Steele, a young lawyer. It is recorded that he resigned and volunteered in the War for the Union. Young Steele was married, and while he was in the service his wife and two young sons made their home with the family of Major Addison W. McPheeters, whose two sons, Rankin and Addison W., also went to the war. Steele served throughout the war and reached the rank of Major. He practiced law in Mattoon after the war, and for a while served in the legislature as a Senator. His son, William A. Steele, will be remembered as the unfortunate president of the defunct Merchants and Farmers State Bank.

Little of interest appears in the record through the 1860's and 1870's. Saloon licenses were issued, and sidewalks and culverts were built. Prominent businessmen,

doctors, lawyers, and county officials served as village trustees and presidents of the council.

Sullivan was chartered as a city in 1872. In that year, Thomas M. Bushfield, County Treasurer, who was the last president of the village Board of Trustees, assumed the duties of Mayor of the new city, and served until the first city election in April 1873.

Victor Thompson was chosen Mayor of Sullivan at the first city election, which was held in April 1873. Mr. Thompson was the leading merchant of Sullivan at the time. He occupied both store rooms in the Titus Opera building. There were men's clothing in one room and dry goods in the other, and there were open passages from one room to the other. There was little to do as Mayor, but Mr. Thompson was a very busy merchant. He served two terms as Mayor.

In 1877, Xavier B. Trower, a banker, was elected the second Mayor of Sullivan. His first term as Mayor was the period of the great Murphy temperance movement. It was a time of great excitement, when temperance societies were organized everywhere in towns, churches, and county schools. Blue ribbons were pinned on nearly every coat, and even women and girls signed the Murphy temperance pledge.

In a year or two the temperance advocates began to adopt the idea that the best way to promote temperance was to prohibit the sale of liquor. This idea was not entirely new. In 1855 a state law had been proposed to prohibit the manufacture and sale of liquor except for "mechanical, medical or sacerdotal purposes." Though it appeared that the proposed exception would provide plenty of room, the people of the state voted against the proposed law.

In every city and village at the election in 1879, the Murphy movement sought to close the saloons. This election furnished Sullivan with its first real city contest. Mayor Trower favored the reissue of saloon licenses, and his name headed the license ticket. The anti-saloon party named a full ticket, with Murray McDonald, a young business man, at the head.

The election of 1879 was marked by the first appearance of J.H. "Jack" Baker in local politics. In the city campaign, he played his earliest political trick. Both conventions were held on the same evening, and Jack had friends in each to propose his name for City Attorney, and he was nominated in both. As Baker was coming down the stairs from the court room where the temperance party held its meeting, he told one of his friends, "My election is certain for I will be nominated at the other caucus." The action offended a majority of each party and resulted in W.M. Stanley, who was then a justice of the peace, being written in on the printed tickets; and Baker was beaten.

The Trower ticket for Mayor and Aldermen was ahead in a close contest. But while his supporters were celebrating the victory with bonfires and other evidences of enthusiasm, Trower and his lawyer were in the bank preparing an assignment for the benefit of his creditors. At 12 o'clock midnight, a special train -- an engine with one coach -- stopped at the main street crossing, south of town, and Trower and his wife went aboard. He carried some hand baggage, which doubtless contained among other valuables enough money for immediate needs.

William Kirkwood was chosen Mayor and served through the term for which Trower had been re-elected. By the end of this term, the temperance movement somewhat subsided, and the license party won the election easily.

Benjamin S. Jennings was elected Mayor in April 1881. He held an old time idea that the less interference or regulation of the liquor business, the better. He was a radical believer in what was then called "personal liberty." Saloon licenses were granted to men who were incapable of conducting an orderly business. One of the two saloons had been a wild and disorderly place, and the administration had been much discredited.

In 1883, the license question was again made the issue. Mayor Jennings was a candidate for re-election on the license ticket; but the anti-saloon party had revived. As a result, one of the most popular businessmen, Demosthenes F. Bristow, was elected Mayor, along with a complete list of aldermen pledged against the granting of saloon licenses. This was the first time in Sullivan that the sale of liquor had been forbidden. But some people managed to procure liquor, and at times the maintenance of order was very difficult. Sullivan had never been without saloons, and the drinkers seized every chance to advance their "personal liberty." Street fights often occurred; and one wild Christmas Eve there was almost a riot. James T. Taylor was City Marshal, and a good one. He and his deputies quelled the Christmas Eve riot so vigorously that some of the bullies -- the Corys and the Carters -- left town. At the end of Bristow's term, an agreement was made to submit the question of license to a popular vote. In the election of 1885, the license forces carried by a substantial majority. Then began a license period of 20 years.

The agreement to submit the license issue to a vote took the liquor question out of the contest for mayor. Bristow declined to run for a second term. The Citizens Party, which had been for granting licenses, now held a primary election for the nomination of candidates. Murray MacDonald, who

had been the no-license candidate against Trower, was one of the candidates, and W.H. Shinn, a lawyer who had just finished a term as States Attorney, was the other. Shinn was nominated and had no opposition in the regular April election.

William Hollins Shinn, elected in 1885, was the sixth Sullivan Mayor. The people had voted in favor of license, but there was a dispute as to the amount of the fee. Three of the aldermen -- Ansbacher, Cummins, and Thuneman -- favored a fee of \$500; but two -- Wiley and Dunlap -- proposed to follow the Mayor's suggestion of \$1000. Lambrecht favored \$750. The temperance people favored the higher license fee in the mistaken belief that a high license would make a better class of saloons. Others feared that a high license fee would put an end to five cent beer. They argued about this for three months, and finally agreed on \$750 for the first year and \$1000 thereafter.

However, Alderman Thuneman held out to the last. He said too high fees led to law violation because, he said, an orderly saloon could not obey the law and be able to pay expenses. "They would have to be criminal to make money." The history of the saloon business afterwards offered some proof that he was right.

The pro-license vote in 1885 began a license period of 20 years. In 1906 saloons were voted out, and the same vote was registered in 1907. Sullivan became anti-saloon territory and remained so until the era of National prohibition. It seems strange that for the first sixty or more years we had only the one time, 1883 to 1885 -- just two years -- without saloons.

Mayor Shinn in 1885 offered the first plan of permanent improvement that had ever been proposed for Sullivan. In

the first forty years of its history, nothing had been done except temporary work on streets and sidewalks. Now a system of street lights was planned, financed by the saloon license fees. A line of street corner gasoline lamps on posts was erected along each street leading from the court house. Each evening a policeman would make the rounds to light the lamps, and in the morning a similar trip was made to extinguish the lights. This improvement was not so permanent after all, for six years later the lamps were replaced by electric lights.

In 1887 Walter Eden, who had recently been elected County Treasurer, was chosen Mayor without opposition. He was but 23 years of age, and was said to be the youngest County Treasurer and the youngest Mayor in the state. He and the Council continued the permanent improvements begun by Mayor Shinn by putting in a system of water-works. A 90-foot well was dug, and a pump provided to be run by a wind engine. A huge wooden tank 60 feet high was put on a tower, and a pipe conducted the water to and around the court house square. It was made to supply fire protection for the business part of town. The system worked well for a while until fine sand began to pile up in the well. This trouble continued for many years, until deeper wells were drilled, and finally after thirty years a new and better plant was established.

Mayor Eden was re-elected in 1889, but not without opposition. George Brosam headed an anti-saloon ticket, but without success.

During Eden's second term, Sullivan got some bad publicity in the publication of a story in a St. Louis paper. The publisher had sent a questionnaire to the chief of police of each city, and the Sullivan chief gave his to his son, a high school boy, who was just a little too smart. The boy



answered all the questions. It was a lurid report, and the paper gave it a prominent place in its sensational article, and Sullivan was branded as the wickedest city in the country. Murder was the most prevalent; crime and drunkenness were increasing, especially among women.

An indignation meeting was held, which attracted a mass attendance. Resolutions were passed endorsing the Mayor and Council, but demanding the resignation of the chief of police. He sent his resignation to the Mayor the next day, and the excitement subsided.

In 1891, Mayor Eden was not a candidate for re-election at the end of his second term, having decided to move to California. The license question was submitted to a vote, and was not an issue between the candidates for mayor.

Nevertheless, the city election in 1891 was a strenuous contest. The Peoples' Party nominated James Wesley Elder for Mayor, and the other ticket -- the Citizens Party -- was headed by Frank M. Harbaugh. This election was long remembered for the sensational buying of votes. One incident was the organization of a gang of tile ditch diggers, 16 in one group, headed and managed by Brewer Russell, who offered their votes for sale to the highest bidder. The Citizens Party had only a small campaign fund, but the Peoples Party supporting Elder had the saloon people to draw upon and so had plenty of money. Two Citizens Party workers, Patterson and Swisher, fell on the plan of bidding for the bunch of votes in order to deplete the Peoples campaign fund. So, without any funds to back them, the Citizens Party workers offered \$10 for each of the sixteen votes. Russell then went to the Peoples party for a bid. Murray McDonald and the City Marshal, Jim Harris, promptly offered \$15. Russell soon came back with a license bid of \$20 and obtained a raise to \$25. McDonald said, "We

are not going to bid any higher. Those fellows haven't any money, and no matter what they promise, they would not pay." Nevertheless, he and one or two helpers who were bidding for the Elder ticket raised the bid to \$30, and warned Russell that the other people were only bluffing and had no money.

Russell went back to the Citizens workers, and when the young men offered \$35, he asked them where they would get so much money. One of the young men, lying, said, "Why the Women's Christian Temperance Union has sent us enough money to win this election." They added, "J.R. McClure has \$500 in his safe, and he can get more if it's needed." (It was said that McClure had the money, but it was his own and was not available for vote buying.) So Russell went back to the Peoples Party representatives and said, "They have the money and offered \$35."

By this time, a shrewd businessman had come to the aid of the Marshal, and he said, "They are lying to you; they have no money. We will give you \$35, but no more. If you want the money, get your men together and go to the city council room and stay there until the polls open in the morning." It was then midnight, Monday night.

The next morning, an hour after the opening of the polls, Jim Harris, the City Marshal, began leading the men two at a time to the polls, "to discharge their duty as citizens." They marched to the ballot box with tickets in their fingers held in full view until they were voted. After voting, he took them back to the council room and a paymaster gave \$35 to each. Most of these men would have voted for Elder anyway -- all but one had been checked by Elder on the Peoples poll book -- but two or three would have voted for Harbaugh, with possibly one or two others. So Swisher and Patterson had accomplished what they started out to do. They had

compelled McDonald and Harris to pay over \$500 for votes that really belonged to their party anyway.

The election was close, Elder being elected by a majority of four. One alderman on the Harbaugh ticket was elected, and one other was beaten by one vote. I had a detailed report of the whole transaction from one of the young men and by the "shrewd businessman" who closed the deal with Russell.

Soon after this, in the Altgeld administration, the secret ballot law was passed, and wholesale vote buying became a thing of the past.

George Brosam had become an alderman in 1891, and was the most active figure in the Elder administration. During Elder's term, a franchise was granted to John H. Baker for an electric light and power service, and a contract for street lights. Alderman Brosam first proposed that the city build and operate the plant. However, William A. Steele, a banker who was then considered a great financier by everyone, took the lead in the opposition to a municipal electric plant. He said it could not be financed.

So in February 1892 a franchise was granted and a contract made with John H. Baker, who, it was said, borrowed the money to build the plant from Murray McDonald with a private agreement that at the end of the first year, the note would be credited with one-half payment, and McDonald was to become the owner of a one-half interest. Instead, Baker raised the money to pay off the note and remained sole owner. This resulted in an abiding coolness between Baker and McDonald.

In 1893, a strong citizens organization was formed, and as a result Alderman George Brosam was nominated for

mayor. J.H. Baker was not consulted by the leaders of the Citizens Party, and he and some others decided to nominate a Democrat party ticket. Ex-Mayor Walter Eden, who had returned from California, was nominated. But Brosam was a Democrat and received enough votes from the party to secure his election.

Mayor Brosam had become an enthusiast for public improvement, and he proposed a plan for street pavement, beginning with the streets around the square. But the council was divided half and half on the proposition. Alderman James Dedman led in the fight for improvement, and Alderman Robert M. Peadro, a persistent fighter, led the opposition. They fought over every step for more than a year until the job was completed, approved and paid for. Mayor Brosam cast the deciding vote on each question. The fight grew so bitter that the divided council disputed about everything. One time, the Mayor and Alderman Dedman were absent, and Alderman Peadro was chosen temporary Mayor. He proceeded to discharge the City Marshal and appoint another who was confirmed, with Peadro voting as Alderman for the confirmation. It was a month or more before Brosam got the matter straightened out by the reappointment of the old Marshal.

Another time, over a mere formality, the opposition bristled up for a fight while Dedman was on a Michigan hunting trip. Brosam went to Michigan and brought the Alderman home, driving in only a few minutes before the time set for the meeting.

The last bricks were laid on the first paving job on Christmas Eve, 1894. Only the four streets around the Court House square with the crossing intersections were included in this paving contract. But bigger plans were made for the next year.

In the 1895 election, the people opposed to Brosam united upon Alpheus Kemper Campbell as a candidate. He was popular, while Brosam's aggressiveness had aroused some opposition. So Campbell was elected at the head of a Peoples ticket.

During the campaign, Mayor Campbell had found it necessary to promise a continuation of the work of street paving which had been inaugurated by Mayor Brosam. So in 1895 a contract was let for the paving of Harrison Street from the public square to the railroad station. This ended the street paving for a few years. Some work was done in the improvement of the water plant. New wells were drilled on the lot where the light and water building is now located, and steam pumps were installed to replace the power of the old windmill, and a steel tank replaced the old wooden one.

The excitement of the Bryan presidential campaign in 1896 was so intense that the Democrats decided to nominate a party ticket for the city election in 1897. J.H. Baker and his friends were in full control of the party organization. In fact, Baker's influence had been dominant in the city since 1895, although Mayor Campbell was a Republican. Campbell did not run for re-election. Baker proposed another candidate, who withdrew before the primary, leaving ex-Mayor Brosam, who had been defeated for re-election in 1895, without opposition. Brosam was thus nominated and elected in 1897, and has the credit of granting the first franchise for a telephone exchange, and also for the establishment of our public library in 1898.

There had been a small circulating library of two or three hundred volumes established by private subscription and donation. These books were given to the new library, and for ten years thereafter the library was run as a free

circulating library. Space was rented in the city book store, and E.E. Barber, the owner, acted as librarian without compensation. This arrangement allowed the library to use nearly all the revenue to buy books. After ten years, better quarters were provided, a librarian elected, and a reading room was opened.

In 1899, the Democrats chose Isaac Hudson as their candidate for Mayor. He had been elected county judge four years earlier on the Republican ticket, but he had supported Bryan on his free silver platform, and was now an active Democrat. Hudson was elected in May, and things began to happen. His term was the most violently factional period in our civic history.

During the administration of Mayor Hudson, 1899-1901, the so-called Baker machine was in full control. There were open charges of corruption, but the Mayor does not appear to have been involved; and the evidence is to the contrary. Louis K. Scott, then County Clerk, was a member of the Council during the first year of Hudson's term. He told some of his friends, confidentially, that four of the six aldermen had formed a plot to vote payment of claims or accounts authorized by themselves without previous authority or action of the Council. When Scott, or the Mayor, or Alderman Swisher, objected to the payment of a claim or asked for an explanation, the other four would sit silent until the question was put to a vote, and they would then all vote for it.

The City Attorney appeared to defend the silent four. He and the Mayor passed some angry words, and even some pugilistic blows in one of their discussions. Two Aldermen stood with the Mayor in opposition to the silent four. They were L.K. Scott, who then held the office of County Clerk, and Charles J. Swisher. This situation was ended at the end

of the first year of the term by the defeat or retirement of three of the silent four. (The facts for this recital were given to me and E.A. Silver, Circuit Clerk, confidentially by Mr. Scott.)

But the most unfortunate action of the Council had the united support of the Mayor and all the Aldermen. Baker had obtained his light franchise in 1891, to run for 20 years, and his contract for street lighting had been signed and sealed in February 1892, to run 10 years. It was expected that the Mayor and Council to be elected in 1901 would renew or modify the street lighting contract.

But Baker had full control of this administration, and he feared the next one might not be so favorable to his plans. The Mayor and Aldermen were "willin," and so a new contract was made, and a new and revised franchise was granted, although the old franchise would not expire for 12 years and the old contract had more than two years to run.

Queer sessions began to be held. When the business of an evening meeting of the Council was finished, a quorum of the Council would remain seated until all visitors had gone away, when the secret business of considering the renewal of the light contract and the passage of another ordinance would be considered. Sometimes a recess was taken to another date, when a closed and secret meeting would be held.

These maneuvers resulted finally in a new ordinance to run 50 years, with all the provisions such as Mr. Baker wanted, and with nothing to protect the public interest.

The new contract was placed on record, but the new franchise could not be found, although the record of its adoption appeared in the proceedings of the Council.

In the old contract, the cost of street lighting was fixed at \$80 per annum for each lamp. There were only 20 lamps provided by the first contract, although a provision was made for adding other lamps at the same cost by action of the Council. The new contract specified 40 lamps at \$90 each, others to be added at the same cost.

The new fifty-year franchise was not yet made public. Baker was said to have the original paper in his possession, and the record could not be found. When the next administration got possession of the records, it was found that the franchise had been recorded on a blank leaf far in advance of the current record of proceedings and had not been indexed.

This new contract was regarded as unfavorable to the public interest; and the new, so-far secret, franchise provided more excitement and indignant criticism than any other public question had ever done. An organization of citizens was formed to contest in court the validity of the new contract and the new franchise. Injunction suits were started in the circuit court, and the cases were later taken to the Supreme Court on appeal. It was two or three years before final decisions were made. The Citizens group won in both causes.

In the meantime, city politics were at the boiling point. Baker's interests were defended by the political party whose organization he controlled. In 1900 an election was held for three aldermen. The Baker party put up a Democrat ticket, and a strong Citizens group put up three independent Democrats in opposition. The Citizens won in all three wards, but in the third their candidate, Jacob Dumond, had a majority of only one over Andy Burwell, the party organization candidate.



To prepare for this election, the Baker partisans had induced several travelling salesmen and gamblers to make Sullivan their headquarters, and spend their weekends here in an effort to qualify as voters. When the polls were opened, a number of these strangers offered to vote. These men claimed that their home was the hotel where they had lived for more than 90 days. The hotel was in the third ward, and these interlopers presumably all voted for Burwell.

The Citizens party won the elections, but Jacob H. Dumond, their candidate in the third ward, had only a majority of one. It was here that the hotel transients had voted. The light crowd had spent too much here to admit defeat. They started an election contest against Dumond before the old Council, which canvassed the election returns. Their defeated candidate, who was a decent fellow, did not appear at the contest and did not seem to take any interest in the litigation that followed.

It would not be easy to cite another case more brazen, bold or reckless than the hearing of the contest before the Council. Two fellows who had been arrested for illegal voting on election day now came before the Council and admitted that they were mistaken about the time they began their residence at the hotel, and said they had not lived there for the full period of 90 days. When asked for whom they had voted, they said they had voted for Dumond. So the Council solemnly declared the votes illegal and deducted two votes from Dumond's tally, at the same time declaring Burwell elected.

The election was contested in court, and Burwell was enjoined from acting as Alderman until a final decision could be had. Mr. Burwell personally took no part in the controversy, and his friends knew that he disapproved of

much that was done in the matter. The case was not determined until near the end of the term, when the decision was in favor of Dumond.

However, by this time the Citizens Party had carried the elections; and by a unanimous vote of the Council, the fraudulent proceedings had been set aside, and Dumond had been declared elected. He was immediately re-elected for another term.

In 1901, the Citizens candidate, John Eden Jennings, was elected Mayor with a substantial majority over John H. Baker, who apparently was unable to induce any strong man to run for him. Mayor Jennings had throughout his term the backing of perhaps the strongest Council that ever served the city. Jacob Dumond, John R. McClure and Walter Chase were the strong men on the finance committee.

And this committee had a job before them. In the last two administrations there had been no public improvements, and even ordinary work on streets and sidewalks had been neglected. In addition to the regular funds from taxes, the City had been collecting \$10,000 per year from saloon licenses. Yet it was found that the City owed \$20,000 in outstanding warrants, most of which was held by the two banks. The mystery was never explained, and none of the old officers of the city would say anything about it. The banks agreed to accept payment in four annual installments of \$5,000 each. These payments were all made as agreed.

During the same period a street light system was installed and paid for. But this was attended by strenuous warfare. Any agreement with Baker was impossible. He acted like a madman. W.A. Steele undertook to effect a compromise. He acted with the advice of Frank M. Harbaugh as attorney. Baker was his own attorney, though

Peadro had represented him in the litigation. But he did not think he needed a lawyer now.

Notwithstanding the decision of the court against both his new contract and his new franchise ordinance, Baker insisted upon the acceptance of both by the new Council. In the attempt at settlement the city was represented by the finance committee, Mayor Jennings and city attorney J.K. Martin [I.J. Martin's brother].

Baker was offered a new contract with the annual fee of \$60 per lamp instead of the \$90 which the city had continued to pay, although the old fee of \$80 had been restored by the decision of the court. Baker refused this offer and refused to make any counter proposition for less than \$90 a lamp.

As the time was approaching for the end of the first contract in February 1902, a proposition was made to Baker that a temporary extension be made by further negotiations or until the city could make other arrangements to light the streets. He told Steele he would agree to something like that if it were put in writing.

Steele arranged for a meeting at the council rooms, and when Baker was informed of the date and place of meeting he said, "You tell those S ... of B ...'s that I will meet them nowhere but in my office." Steele said, "If that is your attitude there is no sense in having a meeting." Harbaugh, too, quit trying; and nothing further was done to bring about an agreement between Baker and the city. Among his friends, he posed as a martyr, but he was defeated only by his own folly.

Baker made no public statement of what he intended doing on the expiration date of his old contract, but early in the evening after its expiration many of his friends appeared

uptown carrying lanterns. In the city election two months later, all the aldermanic candidates of the Citizens Party were elected by big majorities.

Steele, Harbaugh and other conservative citizens who saw the evident trend toward public ownership still hoped for a fair contract with someone. An effort to divert public attention was made by a move to obtain a Carnegie Library building, but the diversion did not work, though a public meeting was held which was attended by no active leader of the Citizen's Party except Mayor Jennings, whose attendance was only formal.

I was editor of the *Progress* and while we had actively supported the Citizens, we had refrained from discussing the controversy over a contract and had said nothing in favor of a publicly owned electric plant.

Steele and Harbaugh assumed that I did not favor such a plan. Harbaugh asked me to write and publish an article showing the objections to such a plan. I told him it was useless to do so unless the city received an offer of a fair contract, but that the *Progress* would publish contributed articles for and against, and suggested that he write his views on the question. He declined to do so, but after a day or two he brought in a letter and said that after consulting with Steele he had changed his mind.

His letter was published with a "reader" signature, and the next week I wrote a reply which was published with a similar signature.

The Baker-Hudson paper published a strong approval of the Harbaugh letter and complimented the *Progress* for its publication. This was printed the same day that the *Progress* published my letter, which the rival paper bitterly denounced,

saying the *Progress* editor was a coward for hiding behind a nom-de-plume. In this denunciation, the editor of the *Progress* was charged with writing both contributions and with making the first one weak that reply might be easy -- this after its fulsome praise of the Harbaugh letter.

Thus began a war of words (which now appears rather ridiculous) between the *Progress* and the Baker-Hudson *Journal*. The *Progress* ignored all personal attacks upon the editor but retaliated upon both Hudson and Baker with occasional half concealed thrusts, and also Whitfield, who had written some editorials and whose name for a while appeared as editor.

A sample of these thrusts may be inserted here. Fifty years ago was near the end of the "full beard" period, which had been started by Lincoln in 1861. Hudson and I both wore the old style of beard. It was not very becoming, but neither of us had much advantage over the other in appearance.

In 1901-2, a woman's name appeared as publisher of the Baker organ which carried at its head "Official Organ." (The *Progress* said it was "Fish-oil".) No editor was named but both Baker and Hudson loafed in the office while Whitfield's Law Office was across the hall. The weekly "Official Organ" went to press on Wednesday afternoon as did the *Progress*. The *Herald*, the other one of the three Democratic weeklies, was a Saturday paper.

One time there was a circus in town whose main attraction was a so-called "Congress of Nations" with exhibits of Indians, Africans, Australians, etc. At noon Wednesday, Alphe Campbell, who learned the trade with the *Progress*, but at the time was a printer on the *Herald*, told me that he had

seen a galley proof of the "Official Organ" and noted an item about me that he thought I might be interested in.

It was said in the report of the circus that "some of the Australians looked like the editor of the *Progress*." Our Progress forms were still open and we had time to insert: "It is hardly necessary to say that no one in the circus exhibit looks like Ike Hudson, but one of the Indian chiefs might be Jack Baker's twin brother. Jack might join the caravan if he could be supplied with an Indian name. We suggest 'Man-Afraid-of-His-Record' unless a better one can be found."

Baker and his crowd had figured that dark streets for three months would make people demand the acceptance of his terms on a light contract, but when the Citizens candidates were all elected in April 1902, the Council promptly began work on a light plant.

The city had a building used for a pumping station. A little extension was made to give room for a long heavy belt connecting a dynamo with a steam engine. Poles and wires were erected, and street lights were well distributed over the city; and the street lamps were lighted a short time before the expiration of Mayor Jennings's term of office. He had declined another term and James E. Dedman in 1903 had been elected Mayor. All the costs of the new plant were settled, and half the old debt had been paid.

The Citizen's Party during these years was an ideal organization of men devoted unselfishly to the public interest. With the Mayors Jennings and Dedman there was a list of sturdy alderman: Jacob Durmond, John R. McClure, Walter Chase, Dr. S.J. Butler, Tobe Wolfe and J.R. Bean. Joel K. Martin was the City Attorney throughout both administrations. David Lindsay was a very efficient Clerk

and James A. Dedman was City Treasurer. The City Marshal was Charles Lansden.

But the list of officers does not show the names of all the active and effective leaders of the party. Capt. Rankin McPheeters was one of the best -- certainly the most outspoken. Frank Hoke was equally active and dependable. Dr. Malone Butler was active and influential, and equally valuable though quiet were J.M. Cummins, Charles Shuman, Mack Birch, Gregg R. Hawkins and a score of others.

Under the Dedman administration the work of street paving was resumed. Two blocks were paved on East Harrison Street and two on North Main, and long pavements were made as extensions of these jobs through Jackson and Worth streets to the city limits.

Dr. Andrew Denton Miller was elected Mayor in 1905, and as usual the entire city ticket was elected. The opposition party, now usually referred to as "The Gang," had been before each election collecting a campaign fund by laying a tribute upon the saloons, and billiard halls, too, under the pretense that the Citizens Party contained all the temperance people while the patrons and supporters of the saloons made up the "Gang" party. Dr. Miller, who was not at that time a prohibitionist, was able to keep the saloons from helping the other side.

Charley Swisher and Aaron Miller, who had been against license in the old fights and who were both members of the Baker party, now sponsored a petition for a local option vote. The real temperance people joined the movement, and the election was carried against the saloons.

The Baker party had two objects in this: punishing the saloons for withholding support, and taking \$10,000 a year

from the city funds. The next year they came back to reverse the local option vote, but the Citizens Party had decided to support temperance, and the vote against the saloons was overwhelming.

Thus the city which had had saloons for a period of 60 years, except the two years of Bristow's administration (1883-85), now in 1906 voted them out and kept them out until 1933.

The Miller administration kept up the work of street paving. Hamilton Street was paved through its whole length. Water Street and West Jackson followed soon, and in the next few years the Market Street pavement was laid, and short connections were made elsewhere until the city was well supplied with good highways. This was all done in a period of about 12 years.

In 1907 Nathan C. Ellis was elected Mayor. Mr. Ellis had been a member of the Citizens Party and one of its strong leaders. There was nothing of great interest in his administration. Road improvement continued and the electric street lighting plant was operated successfully. The streets were well lighted, and the cost of maintenance was about as much as was paid Baker for service not so good. The loss of the license revenue left but little money to be spent on improvements.

In 1909 Homer Shirey was elected Mayor. His administration was troubled by an increase of liquor law violations and gambling. There was never any good remedy found for these evils, and they continued on through the period of national prohibition. But we were never troubled by strong bootlegging gangsters as were many other communities. Our violations were by petty bootleggers, not hardened criminals.



Another trouble that was growing in importance was the deficiency of the water plant. It was about this time that we had the Rork well experience. Our city wells were nearly all of a depth of 90 or 100 feet depth. Deeper wells were no better. Mr. Rork proposed to dig a large well 20 feet in diameter and about 50 feet deep. This vat was to serve as a reservoir, and a number of holes were to be drilled to the water vein at the 90 ft. level. As it ought to have been foreseen, the well was a failure and a waste of about \$3,000.

In 1911, Wm. H. Birch was elected Mayor. Apparently Mr. Birch had up to this time given little thought to city affairs. He appeared to be confused or bewildered by what was going on around him. Aaron Miller and others of the old Baker crowd became conspicuous. Miller seemed to be a sort of dispenser of privileges. There was a rivalry among "houses" that finally led to an explosion. Some two or three gamblers became informers and went voluntarily before the grand jury.

Finally Miller himself went into the grand jury room. He was asked if he knew of any gaming for money, and he said he did not, and that he had not seen any gambling in the last 18 months. As the jury previously had heard several witnesses testify that Miller was running a gaming house and as in fact, the jury had already voted to return a bill against him, they now decided to indict him for perjury. Miller was after tried in the circuit court on the perjury charge, found guilty and sentenced to serve three years in the penitentiary.

Nothing very creditable can be said of the Birch administration. He had been elected on a "people's" ticket. Now the old Citizens Party was reorganized and Finley

Edgar Pifer\* was nominated for Mayor. No candidate was nominated against him but there were contests for alderman in all three of the wards.

The outstanding event of this administration was the acceptance of a bequest by Albert Wyman and the location and improvement of Wyman Park. There were three sites offered: the old fairground at the northwest corner of the city, a tract lying east and south of the cemetery, and a third tract, offered by B.W. Patterson, of timbered land lying further down on both sides of Asa Creek. This was the best tract offered, but its acceptance was opposed because it was thought to be too far out.

The six aldermen were divided equally for the three sites. O.B. Lowe and George Miller were for the site near the cemetery; Charles McClure and Charles Blackwell voted for the lower tract; and George A. Thompson and another alderman were in favor of the old fair ground. After a prolonged contest in which the six members of the council were divided in their support, a compromise was effected by the choice of a new tract offered by Joseph B. Titus, a timber tract lying just south of the last mentioned site.

After weeks of wrangling, the question was submitted to a vote of the people, and the Fair Ground won the election. But that made no change with the aldermen. Someone proposed the Titus tract, and four of the aldermen voted for it.

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\*Editor's note: Finley Pifer was the husband of Hattie Taylor Pifer. They adopted Ruth White, who later married Robert W. Martin, son of I.J. Martin.

Mayor Pifer and one or two of the aldermen spent much time in the improvement of the park. It was a free contribution of service, and they did a good job, but it seemed that all the fault finders in town were around to criticize the work. Many people have regretted that Mr. Pifer did not live long enough to enjoy the general approval of his work.

The Council then followed the lead of Mayor Pifer in the improvement of the park. The arrangement of shade trees and drives and the formation of the lake were his ideas. And there never was a city job more criticized while doing. But after it was finished, the critics became silent, and Mayor Pifer deserves credit next to Albert Wyman for the creation of this fine park.

The Baker light franchise, under which light and power had been furnished to patrons in the city, had expired in 1912, and Mr. Baker had obtained signatures to a petition for a renewal. The old franchise gave the light company the right to make prices for services. As the Mayor and Council insisted on some limitation of the right to fix prices, Baker did not push his application, and he finally sold the light plant to the Central Illinois Public Service Company.

In 1915, the Citizens Party nominated Dr. Stonewall Johnson (who used initial letters A.W. in his signature instead of his first name). Dr. Johnson and one of the Citizen's candidates for alderman, John Eden Martin [son of I.J. Martin], declared for the enlargement of the city light plant to furnish light and power for domestic and commercial use, in addition to street lighting.

The Citizens again elected their entire ticket, and thus began a strenuous fight with the Public Service Company,

which had purchased the Baker electric plant but had no franchise for its operation.

The city gave the company notice to make no further extension of poles and wires in the streets and alleys, and a special ordinance was passed forbidding such trespass in the streets and fixing penalties for violation. When the company, which had headquarters at Mattoon, began sending linemen over at midnight to put up poles and wire, arrests were made and fines imposed. The company took appeals to the Circuit Court and proceeded with further trespasses until it was involved in a long list of penalties.

Their lawyer, from Mattoon, then prepared a petition which asked the State Commission on public utilities to order the CIPS Co. to furnish light service to certain persons who signed the petition. Two of these signers were the cashiers of the two banks, Zachie Whitfield and Irving Shuman. Other signatures were not so important.

The State Commission promptly issued such an order. The CIPS attorneys then armed with this order from the State Commission, went to the Master in Chancery in Sullivan and obtained an injunction forbidding the Mayor, the Chairman of the Committee on Streets and Alleys, and the Chief of Police from interfering with linemen.

This looked like a neat job of legal planning and execution, but when the linemen showed up and began wire extensions, they soon found themselves in jail awaiting the usual ceremony in police court the next morning.

The CIPS was represented by Vauss and Kiger of Mattoon. Mr. Vauss boasted that he would show those boobs in Moultrie County (apparently the city was not worth mentioning) how to respect the courts of the land. He went

to Judge Whitfield in Decatur and obtained a citation of the Sullivan Mayor and Chief of Police for contempt of court in the violation of the injunction of the Master in Chancery. At the hearing before Judge Whitfield in Decatur there was a large attendance of citizens of Sullivan, all in support of the Mayor, who was represented by the city attorney, Rufus Huff and E.J. Miller.

Just before the hearing began, Clarence Darrow, the famous Chicago lawyer, came into the room. Many of the Sullivan people knew he was coming, but Vauss and Kiger were completely surprised.

The two main features of the hearing were proof that the CIPS had no franchise, and proof that the Mayor and Chief of Police had acted only in the enforcement of a city ordinance.

Darrow declared that the State Commission had no authority to issue the order in the first place, and he said to Vauss, "You might as well have petitioned the Gasfitters Union in your town, and if no such union were there you could have written the order yourself and it would have been as valid as the scrap of paper from the State Commission." The decision of the judge was against the citation for contempt and for dissolving the injunction.

In the lobby of the hotel after the trial, Darrow was much amused by the recital of the story of the long fight with the CIPS Co. He said, "I think you are the most patient people I ever heard of. You know the company has no right, without a franchise, to keep poles and wires in your streets. They should remove them instead of trying to put in more."

"It is common sense as well as common law that when anything is wrongfully in a street, anyone may rightfully

remove it. This company seems to have a preference for night work. I wonder how they would like some morning to find poles and wires neatly piled up on the side of the street. There are some places where such work would be done.

"Of course, I would not advise the Mayor or Chief of Police or anyone else to engage in a job like that. It is better to handle the matter as you are doing, but it will be more costly." (It may be mentioned here that after two or three years of litigation, the Company gave up the fight but it had cost the city nearly \$10,000.)

In 1916, the city's plant was so far improved and expanded to begin serving the people with domestic and commercial light and power. For a while, the patrons came from people who had not been using electricity, and little effort was made to get the CIPS patrons.

In the election of April 1917, the so-called Peoples Party nominated Perry J. Harsh for Mayor and a full list of other candidates, including E.D. Elder for City Attorney. Mr. Elder, as Master in Chancery, had issued the injunction against the Mayor and Chief of Police. He had become very zealous in favor of the CIPS Co. Mayor Johnson acting on the advice of F.J. Thompson (who was an undercover agent or attorney for CIPS Co.) would like to have made the campaign on other issues, regarding the light question as settled. But the voters thought differently, especially when the Peoples Party began distributing circulars attacking the municipal light plant. The Citizens Party met the issue vigorously and won a complete victory. Harsh fared a little better, but Elder, the champion of the CIPS, was defeated by a vote of more than two to one.

There has never been an open fight against the Municipal light plant since, and the sly attempts to elect enemies of the system here failed almost invariably.

A free public library had been established in 1898 while George Brosam was Mayor. For ten years it had been conducted as a circulation library, and most of the funds each year were used in the purchase of books. A reading room was opened in 1908, and in 1918 the library was moved into the room now occupied. The room was built by W.A. Steel especially for the library, and after another ten years it was purchased by the city.

In 1919, Dr. Andrew Denton was again chosen Mayor. He had served one term (1905-1907) fourteen years earlier. The city business in this term was only ordinary.

Miller was succeeded in 1921 by William H. Birch, who had served one term ten years earlier (1911-1913). Since that time he appeared to have grown in stature and had won the respect and confidence of many people. His second administration was a decided success. He was not afflicted by any of the hangers-on that plagued his first term. But he had been elected on the Peoples ticket and was renominated by that party for a second term. The Citizens had been the stronger party and had usually been under good leadership.

Mayor Birch had been against a municipal plant when it was first proposed, but he told some of his friends that after becoming Mayor and learning how beneficial it was to the city, he became heartily in favor of the municipal plan. He said he thought any honest man would be convinced as he was.

In 1923, the Citizens nominated Perry Harsh for Mayor. Six years earlier he had run on the Peoples ticket in

opposition to Mayor Johnson and against municipal ownership. He now assured some of the leaders of the Citizens party that he had changed his mind since the municipal plant had proven successful, and that if he were elected the plant would not be sold or delivered to a private company. He did not say so publicly and he appeared to have kept his word, although after his death a few months before the end of his term, strenuous efforts were made to sell the plant to the CIPS Co.

Before the death of Mayor Harsh, one of the aldermen had moved away. He was a young man who was employed as night clerk at the hotel. He was said to favor the sale of the light plant. Only five were left, and they elected Alderman McFerrin as mayor pro tem.

The CIPS Company now began an effort to seize the light plant. The City Attorney was its open champion. Suddenly, there was a sudden shut down on the light service. It was said there had been a breakdown. The manager of the plant got the CIPS to run a high tension wire into the city and supply current for the city plant. (It appears that the CIPS had kept the wire just outside ready for such an emergency.)

Alderman McFerrin, mayor pro tem, discharged the manager and appointed a new one. As the City Attorney now appeared to be acting for the CIPS, Mr. McFerrin employed another lawyer for his advisor. Two of the aldermen favored the sale of the plant, but two others were against a sale. These were Aldermen McFerrin and Newbould. Newbould was informed by the City Attorney that another alderman, Dr. S.J. Lewis, would vote to sell the plant if three others would so, but that he wanted four votes, which would be a majority of the full membership of the Council. There the matter stood to the end. Three men



prevented the sale (or theft) of the plant -- Alderman McFerrin, Newbould and Lewis. Of course, these aldermen had plenty of backing and encouragement outside of the Council.

Roy Patterson was elected Mayor in 1925 and reelected in 1927. A strong council served in both terms of his administration, and John Eden Jennings was appointed City Attorney for both terms. There were two outstanding improvements made in this period. One was an adequate water system with new wells, new water mains and a new tank reservoir. The other improvement was in the electric light and power plant. The old system of steam engines and dynamos with long and heavy drive belts were replaced by a radically new system.

The new equipment was paid for in five annual installments out of the net profits of the light business. The people have never been taxed for any extension, improvement, repairs or new equipment of the plant. Only the original cost of the older plant was purchased with proceeds of a bond issue. Even the new and enlarged building was paid out of the profits.

Besides the streets, public buildings and the park have been lighted free of cost, and power for pumping at the city wells is furnished free. Above all this free service, some profit still remains, most of which has been applied to keep the streets in good condition.

Municipal ownership of both light and water plants has been a great success in Sullivan.

In 1929 Charles F. McFerrin, who as Alderman in the Harsh administration led in the fight to maintain municipal ownership of the light plant, was elected Mayor. For the

past four or five years the Community Club (the forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce) had been selecting candidates for Mayor and other city offices. In 1929 the Club recommended ex-Mayor Birch as a candidate for Mayor. Many citizens urged the choice of Mr. McFerrin, and Birch withdrew in his favor. McFerrin was reelected in 1931 and again in 1933. The people had adopted the Commission form of government, and McFerrin's three terms were the last under the old aldermanic form. His six year period was quiet and void of any sensational event, but there has not been another administration more devoted to the welfare of the city or more successful in accomplishment.

In 1935, Dr. A.D. Miller, for the third time, was chosen Mayor. He was first elected 30 years before in 1905 and again in 1919. He was the first Mayor chosen under the Commission form, and at the close of a four-year term he was re-elected in 1939.

The Board of four Commissioners elected with Dr. Miller were Ray Bupp, Walter Lane, William A. Gardner, and Dr. A.K. Merriman. The Mayor appointed William C. Ingram City Attorney. He was a member of the law firm of Thompson, White and Ingram. It was Mr. Thompson's persistence rather than personal influence that secured this appointment. It seemed to be Mr. Thompson's plan to assume a sort of management of city affairs through the intriguing skill of the City Attorney in guiding of the Council.

Thompson had a plan for a much needed system of sewage disposal. He had started work on the scheme before the city election when he had expected another candidate to be elected Mayor. One of his sons-in-law was at the time an unemployed civil engineer, and Thompson had him make a survey and draw plans and write specifications for a sewer system -- all this done without any official action of the

Council. Nothing had been omitted. One of the land owners had been advised to start a suit against the city for damages on account of cesspool drainage into Asa Creek, which ran though his premises.

It was proposed immediately after the city election to pass an ordinance and order an election for the issue of bonds: \$100,000. There was little left for the Mayor and Council to do as everything had been prepared under the direction of Mr. Thompson.

At first only three commissioners seemed to understand, but after two or three meetings of the council at which Commissioner Lane had been very inquisitive and not a little troublesome, he too was let into such secrets as may have existed. The Mayor was never taken into the confidence of either Thompson or Ingram.

A showdown came at the meeting to open bids for bonds. No bids had been sent to the clerk, but the City Attorney had one which was opened. It offered 91 percent and one of the council expressed surprise that the bid was not lower. The Mayor said he had received a bid which was opened and read. It offered 97 1/2 -- more than \$6,000 over the other bid. A spectator reported that there was an expression of wrath around the table, more in scowls and frowns than in words. Ingram said that the bidder would have to be investigated to learn its reliability. The Mayor replied that as we have the certified check as a guaranty, no investigation was needed -- "All we want is the money for the bonds."

Nevertheless it was determined that the Commissioners go to Chicago and find out something.

At the next meeting of the Council, a Decatur lawyer appeared as attorney for the low bidder. There was a good audience at this meeting, apparently in protest against selling bonds to the lowest bidder. The Council formally voted to reject both bids and re-advertise.

At the last sale neither of the old bidders appeared, and only one new bid was offered. The offer was a little below the best bid at the first sale. I think the offer was 96 percent.

After the first offer of bids was made and while it was thought that the low bid might be accepted, Jack Baker, who had good cause to be suspicious of city deals said, "I'll bet each of those commissioners will get a thousand dollars out of that deal." A friend said, "Jack, do you think Frank will let them have that much?" "Hell no, I never thought of him. I don't suppose they will get more than a hundred."

In the open meeting to consider the acceptance or rejection of bids on the bonds, there had been offered some broad hints of kick backs of commissions. Some people suspected -- a bare suspicion without any proof -- that the low bidder on the bonds had furnished to someone a much higher bid, and that the difference would be divided among insiders.

The Decatur lawyer asked the Mayor, "Has any one ever offered you a bribe?"

"Well," said the Mayor, "I was once offered \$500."

"By anyone on behalf of these bidders?"

"No, it was on another matter and by one of the commissioners."

After everyone had gone away except the Mayor and two or three others, a correspondent for a Decatur paper said:

"Mr. Mayor, I did not get the name of the commissioner who offered you \$500."

"I don't think I said, but if you had been looking closely you would have seen (name of commissioner deleted) go out of here madder than a wet hen." The Mayor explained that it was on a question of operation of gambling devices.

At the next city election there were some changes. Lane, the only Democrat on the Council, had moved away, and a Republican, L.C. Loveless, had been appointed in his place. The only Democrat in a city office was the clerk, and an effort was made to persuade the Mayor to replace him with a Republican. Members of the Republican County Central Committee called on the Mayor and suggested that he make the city government 100 percent Republican.

Finally the county chairman came into his office and the Mayor was the first to speak. He said, "I'm telling you now that I'm not going to appoint Roy Fitzgerald clerk."

Said the chairman, "I came to say the city affairs are not a proper subject for consideration by a county committee and I hope you will appoint any one you please to appoint."

So that was that.

But the Democrats made a mistake of their own. They put in nomination a straight Democratic ticket. Dr. Merriman ran for the office of Mayor in the primary and was third. So of the old Board of Commissioners, only Bupp and Gardner remained; both were nominated and both were

elected. Homer Shirey, a first class man whose name was on the Democratic slate, was elected Commissioner. Harold Lindley was the fourth commissioner elected.

The city business ran smoother in the second Miller administration. There was some criticism of expenses on street work and on taking money from the light earnings for general expenses. But even this practice was defended. The spending of the light funds to improve and enlarge the plant was criticized by those who wanted the money spent in such a way that "home people" would have a chance to get some of it.

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF  
SULLIVAN NEWSPAPERS\*

Only three newspapers have ever become well established in Sullivan. In the order of their age they are *The Progress*, *The News*, and *The Herald*.

The first Sullivan paper, *The Express*, was started in 1857. It was followed, rather than succeeded, as there was an interval between, by *The Enterprise*, which suspended publication some time in the early sixties. It is said that the first plant was used in publishing *The Democrat* and perhaps the early issues of *The Progress*. *The Progress* under its present name is fifty-eight years old, or nearly so, although it and its immediate predecessor, *The Sullivan Democrat* has had a continuous publication since 1865, or for sixty-one years.

For a part of the time there was an opposition paper under various names such as the *Okaw Banner* and the *Sullivan Journal*, which latter paper suspended in 1884. For a number of years in the early days Dr. B.B. Everett and his son published a paper called the *Plaindealer* but it ceased publication some time in the seventies.

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\*These Notes are comprised of an article entitled "Sullivan Progress Came From Sullivan Express," reproduced in the *Moultrie County News*, Centennial Edition, July 5, 1973, p. 4B, and also other articles by I.J. Martin which were published in *The Herald*.

About the time the *Journal* suspended in 1884, C.W. Green and Wade Hollingsworth started the publication of the *Sullivan News*, but they sold out the next year to J.H. Dunscomb, who changed the name to the *Moultrie County News*. He was an aggressive publisher and had built up a good business before he sold the paper to W.G. Covey in 1888. Mr. Covey held the record in Sullivan for the longest continuous service as editor. He was succeeded by S.T. Walker who in turn was succeeded by Mr. Arlo Chapin, the present publisher.

There have been two *Democrats* in the newspaper field. The first *Democrat* mentioned above, back in the 1860's was edited by Joseph H. Waggoner the former circuit clerk and recorder, and his brother, F.M. Waggoner, was foreman and general manager. Phillip Shutt bought the plant in 1869 and changed the name of the paper to the *Progress*. Four years later he sold it to W.H. Smysor and W.J. Mize, who were the two greatest newspaper men -- barring none, present company not excepted -- that Sullivan has ever known. They agreed to pay \$2,000 for the paper in annual installments of \$500, with interest. They put a dollar each in the money drawer and from that time on their cash balance was on the right side.

About the year 1880 they purchased the *Champaign Times* and Mr. Smysor took charge of that paper. Mr. Mize continued in charge of the *Progress* until 1885 when he purchased the *Decatur Review*. He took A.T. and C.B. Stearns, two printers who had learned the trade in the *Progress* with him in the firm of owners of the *Review* under the name of W.J. Mize and Co.

In 1885 I.J. Martin bought a one third interest in the *Progress*, and afterwards W.W. Eden bought the remaining interest of Smysor & Mize, which interest he later sold to



Charles Shuman and A.W. Vaughan. Mr. Vaughan later retired and Martin and Shuman were the publishers until a joint stock company under the name The Progress Printing Company was formed in 1891.

Mr. Martin continued as editor until 1899 when he became manager of an abstract and title company. Mr. Martin resumed the management of the paper in 1901, and in the spring of 1912 sold the paper and plant to Irving Shuman, who was the owner for about five years. During this period O.B. Lowe was for a while editor and publisher, and his energetic and courageous management and the prestige he gave the paper are well remembered. John W. Gaddis was the last manager under the Shuman regime.

In the fall of 1917 J.N. and R.W. Martin purchased the subscription list of the *Progress*. They were at the time owners and publishers of the *Independent*, which had been running a little more than a year. The paper was published by the new owners under the firm name of Martin Bros. until June 1, 1919, when it was transferred by purchase to Ed C. Brandenburger, who came to this city from Belleville where he had been business manager of Fred J. Kern's Belleville Daily and Semi-weekly News-Democrat.

Politically the *Progress* was started as an independent newspaper and has at times been Democratic and then again Independent. It has seen competitors for Democratic leadership in this county, but they had all disappeared and it remains today the only Democratic newspaper in Moultrie County.

The second paper published under the name *Democrat* was edited by Judge Isaac Hudson from 1899 to 1916, barring one or two short interregnums.

*The Herald* was started by W.T. McClure and under his management was a bright newsy paper, but it first became an important influence in community affairs in 1894 when the late John P. Lilly became the editor. While he was the editor, there were at times influences and pressure exerted to obtain support for things he did not approve, and the writer knows how firmly he stood out against every offer of inducement. After his death, Mrs. Lilly as his successor, always kept the paper on the right side of every question. Of course *The Herald* may have been mistaken at times, but in the matter of sincere promotion of public welfare, its record is clean and consistent.

*Editor's note:* Mrs. Lilly sold the *Herald* newspaper and plant to John Eden Martin, the oldest son of I.J. Martin. The precise date of this sale is not known, but it appears to have been in 1919. In the spring of 1920, following the sale by the Martin family of the *Progress* to Ed Brandenburger, Joel Neely Martin, the second son of I.J. Martin, became associated with his older brother in the business of the *Herald*. The Martins, with the help of their father, I.J. Martin, continued to publish the newspaper and operate the print shop until 1927, when the newspaper was sold to the proprietors of the other two Sullivan newspapers -- Arlo Chapin, publisher of *The Moultrie County News*, and Ed Brandenburger, publisher of *The Sullivan Progress*. As was contemplated when the sale was negotiated, the *Herald* then ceased publication, and subscribers received one of the other two Sullivan newspapers for the period of their unexpired subscriptions.

The last issue of the *Herald* contained the following statement:

"It is customary, and we are glad that it is, for newspaper publishers to express their appreciation to their readers and

patrons upon retirement from business through sale or consolidation.

"The publisher of *The Herald* and immediate members of his family have been connected with the newspaper business in Sullivan the greater part of the time for more than forty years. The seven years of publication of *The Herald* have been for the most part a pleasing and fairly profitable experience. During the time, *The Herald* has seen a remarkable growth in patronage from the people of the community and, we believe, increased prestige through its policy of independent thought and expression of views. In city, township and county affairs, the editorial policy of *The Herald* has been entirely independent of every consideration except what it believed to be the best interest of the community it served.

"Furthermore, the merger of the three papers into two establishments is made at the end of the most successful and prosperous year in the history of *The Herald*. The annual business of *The Herald* for the past two or three years has nearly doubled. The total business in the year 1925 was \$5670.43, which was the high mark in its career of thirty years. Yet that total was increased by nearly twenty percent this year. Our total business in 1926 exceeds \$6500, besides the earnings for this week which are yet to be added.

"This is not published for the purpose of boasting, although we confess the figures are gratifying, but we give them to show that *The Herald* is put into the merger only for the purpose of enabling the publishing business to better serve the interests of the community. It is our belief that two papers will be more efficient than three, and if the politicians could surrender their jealous suspicions, it would be better to have only one."

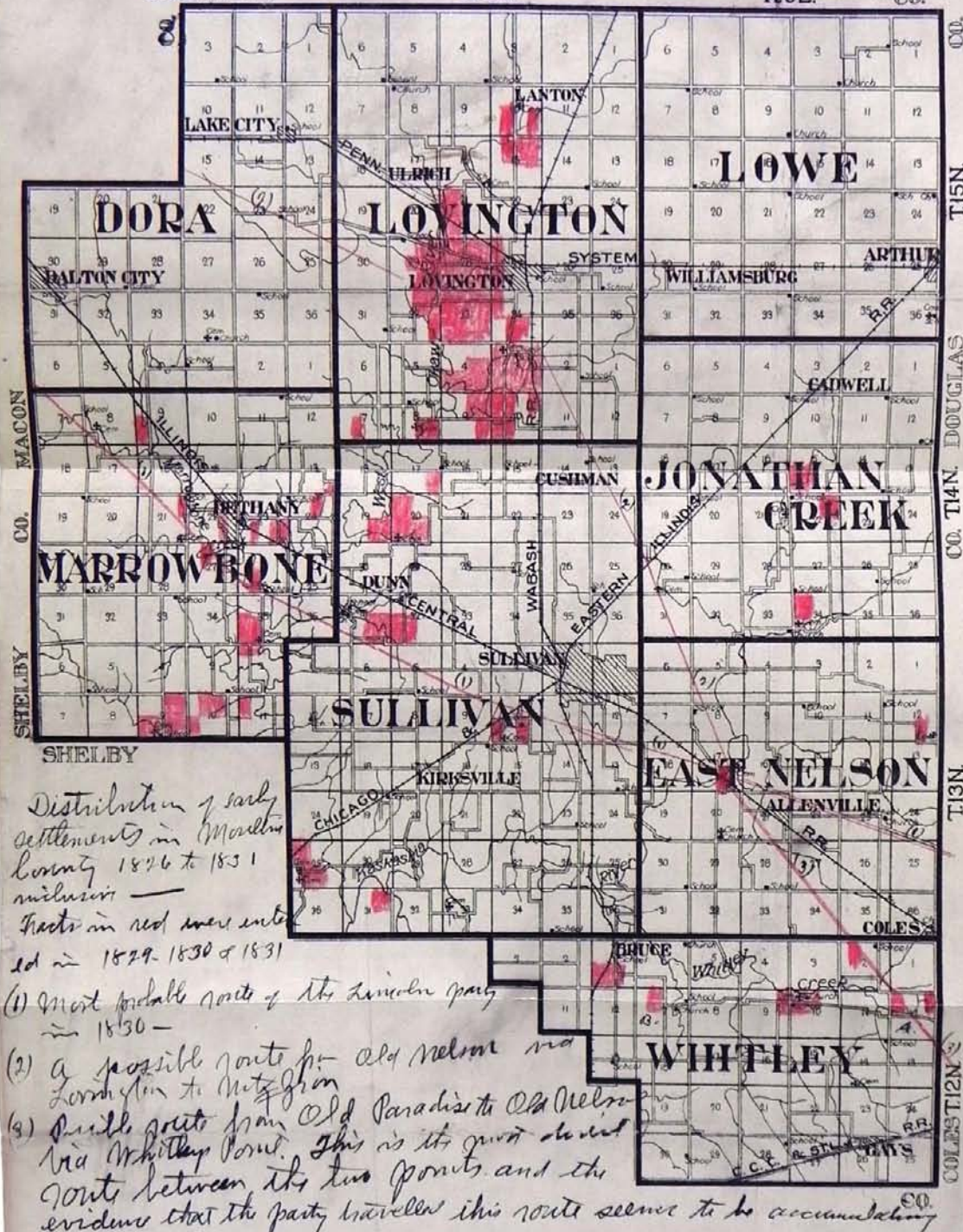
# MOULTRIE COUNTY ILL.

R4E. PIATT

R5E.

R6E.

CO.



Distribution of early  
settlements in Moultrie  
County 1826 to 1831  
miles -  
Tracts in red were settled  
1st in 1829-1830 & 1831

- (1) Most probable route of the Lincoln party  
in 1830 -
- (2) A possible route for Old Nelson via  
Lynnston to Nitz from
- (3) Possible route from Old Paradise to Old Nelson  
via Whitley Point. This is the most direct  
route between the two points and the  
evidence that the party travelled this route seems to be accumulating

A First permanent settlement  
Moultrie County by Dr. Whitley  
- 1826 - set 12-12-6 (1826)

B Second permanent settlement  
in Moultrie County by Dr  
Naggoner - 1826  
7-12-6  
(1826)