THE CASS COUNTY HISTORIAN

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Frontier Education

(To Make a Home in Pioneer Cass County, Illinois by Marjorie C Taylor, 1979)

The need for training the children the frontier families prompted of plans for schools in the 1820s and 1830s. It was true that many of the mothers were like Betsey Pierce, born in New York State in 1803, who came to Virginia in 1836 with her husband, Dr. Thomas Pothicary, whom she had married in 1829. It was said she "was given but limited to literary education but learned to spin wool, flax, weave, and make her own clothing." The story of the school in the Monroe Community was like that of other similar efforts in all parts of the county.

"In 1829 a log house was…erected by united labors of the neighborhood, each contributing logs, labor, or money, according to his means and ere a month had passed the building was completed."

After several years use the building burned. The chimney became defective, being made of sticks and mud, which characteristic of early style chimneys, and caught fire.

The new building put up after this accident was also "built of logs with puncheon floors, slab seats, without back or support, but it had one

advantage over the old building that in that day was considered a great improvement. Instead of greased paper for windows, it was supplied with regular sash and glass window lights." School houses of the 1830s were generally "built of logs and the chinks between the logs rudely stopped with clay. The seats were benches without backs that reached the length or width of the room, and were made of heavy slabs with holes bored in each end for legs, that protruded more or less above the top of the seat. Α wide board like the benches reached the length or the width of the room, was fixed up against the wall at what was considered the right height, and with the proper slant, and here on one of the long benches, managing as best they could to get feet and legs over it and under the slanting board, the pupils sat to write. They wrote with quill pens, and the teacher's patience as well as the metal and condition of his penknife were often greatly tried in keeping these pens in order."

There were no laws making school attendance mandatory, and the older children often remained home to help with the work. Zachariah Hash, who had been born in 1812, went to school for the first time when he was twentyone years of age.

In describing her education an early resident of western Illinois reported going to school for eight weeks in her seventeenth year when she learned to read and write using the New Testament as her reader.

Parents paid tuition or a subscription for each child who attended with a fee of \$2 per a term

of sixty days considered a fair charge. The teachers "boarded around" with the families of their students and often read letters and papers to them which had accumulated since the last visit. The big boys attended school during the "winter term" after the corn had been harvested and often made life miserable for the teacher while the small children were enrolled in the spring and the fall.

A guide book of 1837-1838 noted a school in Virginia "for females" and another for boys, located

a short distance from the town. Thomas Beard and Francis Arenz build the first school house in Beardstown in 1834 and presented it to the town. It was located on Sixth Street near State. The 1840 census reported seven schools with 279 scholars in Cass County at that time.

Hickory Precinct First Subscription School

(History of Cass County, Illinois by William Henry Perrin, 1882)

In the fall of 1834, the first subscription school was organized, and taught by B. F. Nelson in a vacated log cabin on the premises of David Carr, Sen. Early in the autumn, Mr. Nelson made his appearance in the settlement, and solicited the privilege of getting up a school. Mr. Carr gladly gave him the use of the cabin above mentioned, and furthermore, agreed to board him while engaged in the mission of teaching. of was a man prepossessing He appearance, a scholar and a gentleman, but after getting nicely initiated into the work, he was found to be a man decidedly wanting in energy and industry, and at times beastly intemperate, and in no way fitted to stimulate the morals and minds of his pupils. But as no other teacher could be secured, he was tolerated, with a fair attendance of scholars, till sometime in the last of February or

the first of March, when, by gross neglect, he left the fire in such condition when leaving the building that it caught fire and burned up, thus bringing the school very suddenly to a close.

The cabin was located within a few rods of the present residence of Jacob Houke. Some of the scholars that attended this were: John Wells, Harvey, Elizabeth and Nancy Carr, Eliza Ann Turner, Philora Willis, John Hager, Jacob Monroe, David Wagner, Peter Wagner, and the born of Wm. Cole.

Mrs. Eliza Day Dead

(Virginia Republican Gazette-March 23, 1917)

Mrs. Eliza Day, mother of Dr. H.L. Day, a former resident of this city, died Saturday evening at the home of her son in Bluffs, Ill. Mrs. Day will be well remembered by residents of this city, having a few years ago made her home with her son here. She was born in Oneida County, New York, April 14, 1831. Funeral services were held Tuesday from her late home in Bluffs the remains were and taken to Manchester, IA., for burial.

Transferred to Georgia

(Virginia Republican Gazette-March 23, 1917)

Word has been received by Dr. J. A. McGee that his son, Donovan, a Sergeant in the United States army, has been transferred temporarily from Columbus, O., to Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

Did you know that the original name of Virginia was Hallsville?

Graduation for 8th Graders to be held May 8

(Virginia Gazette, 1948, edited)

Exercises for Rural Pupils to be Held at High School

Graduation exercises for the eighth grade graduates of the rural schools of Cass County will be held at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, May 8th, in the auditorium of the Virginia high school. There are 39 rural schools in Cass County with 24 of them having a total of 48 graduates this year. Arenz Mrs. Dorothea Piper, teacher Dorothy Mae Stinson George Joseph Pate Zion Mrs. Ada White, teacher Leon Miller Ruby Lucille Hannel Florence Eloise Hannel Swan Lake Mrs. Lela Ackerman, teacher Jean Genseal Shirley Warden Box Elder Mr. Clyde Shoemaker, teacher Gerald Lee Cox Hagener Mrs. Opal Pate, teacher Roseanne Rupel Harmony Mrs. Eveleen Adams, teacher Joan June Bell Walter Eugene Bell Harlan Richard Adkins Franklin Delano Scholes Wagoner Bridge Norma H. Hierman, teacher Homer C. Copenhaver Marcella Davies Newmansville Mrs. Zeta Daubard, teacher Melvin L. Dambacher Joseph B. Clark Floyd L Taapken Korsmeyer Mrs. Eva Winhold, teacher Wanda June Miller

William Dale Watkins

Dick

Eleaner Blair, teacher Roland Merle Vaughn

Pontiac

Mrs. Doris Leinberger, teacher Milton Wayne Edge West Point Mrs. Ruth K Brasell, teacher Mildred Spicer Springer No. 47 Mrs. Fern Tanner, teacher Peggy Crawford Carolyn Peck Philadelphia Mrs. Helen Plowright, teacher Harold Shortridge

Carolyn Milstead Shirley Yancy

Hall

Mrs. Frances Dodds, teacher Carolyn Jockisch Lewis Howard Webster

Pleasant Hill

Mrs. Janet Case, teacher Anna Ellen Walton

Union 19

Mrs. Marie Turner, teacher Charlotte Janice Maurer

Immanuel Lutheran

Rev. J. Schlichting, teacher Melba Fricke.

Bethlehem

Celia Ann Greenwood, teacher Willia Huddleston Henry N. Carls

Bluff Springs

Roberta Clayton, teacher Dorothy Jean Matthews Viola Virginia Smith Mary E Davidsmeier

Quebec

Mrs. A. H. Christianer, teacher Helen D Stephens Eugene Armstrong Richard S Millner

Victory

Mrs. Beulah Fletcher, teacher Ray Manuel Watkins

Olive Branch

Mrs. Eva Brannan, teacher Ruth Cox

Black Oak

Mrs. Lucille Sansom, teacher Evelyn Hunt Clarence Elliot Wilma McClanahan Delores McClanahan Twila Matthews

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Business Notices Cass County, Illinois

(Illustrated Atlas Map of Cass County, Illinois, carefully compiled from personal examinations and surveys- W. R Brinks & Co. 1874)

Virginia

J. F. CHERRY, Manufacturer and Dealer in Saddles and Harness, Southwest corner Public Square, Virginia, Illinois.

Keeps on hand a large assortment of Saddles, Light and Heavy Harness, Whips, Collars, Curry-Combs, Brushes, Blankets, etc. Will have a splendid assortment of Light Harness on hand, and feels confident of his ability to sell the same at Bottom Prices.

Also a large stock of Bridles and celebrated Spring Bottom Saddles on hand. Carriage Trimming, Trunk Covering, and all kinds of repairing made a specialty. Terms reasonable. Give me a call.

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Believe Accident Frustrated Intended Holdup of Ashland Men on Springfield Hard Road

(Illinoian Star-July 23, 1924)

Ashland-Three prominent local men believe they figured in what was intended to be a holdup on the state road between Springfield and Pleasant Plains one night last week.

The men were James and Lee Kavenaugh and John Henn.

The Kavenaugh car was being driven toward Ashland from Springfield after a shower, when upon topping a hill, the light fell upon a car directly across the hard road. Before the Kavanaugh car could be stopped it collided with the other which completely blocked the pavement. The Ashland car turned over spilling the three men into the ditch at the side of the roadbed.

Whatever may have been the intention of the three men in the first car there was no effort made to molest the three Ashland residents after the crash. One of the party with the car blocking the road had a gun in his hand when the Kavanaugh car approached.

In the collision each car lost a front wheel, making it impossible for either party to leave the scene without abandoning their cars. This resulted in a decision of the Kavanaugh's and Mr. Henn to remain with their car until morning.

After a time the three no less fortunate but rather drunk specimens who were largely responsible for the accident started quarreling among themselves. Two departed leaving the then even more unfortunate owner to get out of the trouble as best as he could.

With the coming of daylight the Kavanaugh brothers and John Henn secured transportation, returned home and sent mechanics back to repair the car.

"Stories have to be told or they die, and when they die, we can't remember who we are or why we're here."

Sue Monk Kidd

Grandma's `Receet' for Washing Clothes

(Name and date of newspaper unknown)

Years ago, a Kentucky grandmother gave a new bride the following 'receet' for washing clothes. It appears below just as it was written and despite the spelling, has a bit of philosophy:

- bilt fire in backyard to heet kettle of rain water.
- set tubs so smoke won't blow in eyes if wind is pert.
- shave one hold cake lie soap in bilin of water
- sort things, make three piles.
 1 pile white, 1 pile cullord, 1 pile work britches and rags.
- stir flour in cold water to smooth then thin down with bilin water.
- rub dirty spots on board, scrub hard, then bile. Rub cullord, don't bile, just rench in starch.
- take white things out of kettle with broomstick handle, then rench, blew and starch.
- 8. spread tee towels on grass.
- 9. hang old rags on fence.
- 10. pore rench water in flour bed.
- 11. scrub porch with hit soapy water.
- 12. turn tubs upside down.
- 13. go put on clean dress, smooth hair with side combs, brew cup of tee, set and rest and rock a spell and count blessins.

Hang this up above your automatic washer and when things look bleak, read it again.



The Legend of Monsoela

(History of Cass County, Illinois by William Henry Perrin, 1882)

Far, far into the long ago, and upon the very place

Where Beardstown stands, there lived and loved and died a noble race. Where pretty lawns and spacious

streets and lofty buildings stand,

Monsoela's Indian village stood upon the hills of sand.

It was an island then, and round the hills on which it stood

The river ripples wandered in a long continuous flood;

While over all the tall oaks waved in foliage bright and green.

And the trees and tents were mirrored on the broad and glassy stream.

Far above the stars were shining, bathed in clouds of silvery light.

And the gentle breeze of summer-day had slumbered into night;

The murmur of the wavelets flowing, and hum of insect wings.

Fell lightly on the sleepers' ears, nor waked their slumberings.

Three weary moons two Indian tribes had been in deadly strife,

And Miamis and Muscoutens had yielded many a life;

Till the allies of the Muscoutens had left them all alone.

And the Miamis besieged them upon their island home.

Slowly, at night, across the waters upon the southern side. The Miamis were paddling up their canoes against the tide;

While in advance of every boat was held a branching bough,

Which from the gaze of watching eyes might shield the advancing prow.

Upon the island, faint and tired, the Muscoutens lay at rest,

All witless of the coming foe as the flowers which they pressed;

They had fought them day by day, their watchfires burning night by night, Until glimmered on their ashen beds the last faint rays of light.

Just as the distant glittering beams that led the morning sun

Sat lightly on the yellow knobs of the bluffs of Sangamon,

A yell as of a thousand fiends fell on the startled ears, and sleepers woke to sleep again pierced by the foreign spears.

Monsoela then, Muscouten's Chief, raised high the battle cry,

And bade his warriors follow him and win the fight or die;

Now on the left, now on the right, his ponderous war club foil,

And many an Indian skull crushed him, and stifled many a yell.

Now backward borne, now pressing on, Muscouten's wavering braves

Proved that the blood that nerved their arms was never meant for slave,

'Till overpowered, and rank by rank fell weltering in their blood.

The brave Monsoela fought alone amidst the crimson flood.

Then the old chief's daughter, White Wing, ran through the rift of spears;

Though gentle as a fawn, that day she showed no childish fears;

Pierced to the heart, into his arms she threw herself, a shield,

He grasped her lifeless form and slowly bore her from the field.

Where the golden grass was waving on the river's western shore,

Monsoela's birchen shallop touched the flowery bank once more;

There oft before the same proud chief had pushed his light canoe,

With warriors in sinewy keels; three hundred brave and true.

Near two hundred years have entered into the dreamy past

Since the chief of the Mascoutens on his village looked

the last -

One longing, lingering look he gave toward his island home,

Then drew his mantle round him and wandered forth alone.

In Memory of Ernest "Ernie" Launer

BIO FROM CASS COUNTY 175^{TH} HISTORY BOOK

LAUNER--Ernest (Ernie) Eugene Launer was born at home on a farm south of Philadelphia, IL on July 13, 1931, to Ralph Richard and Amanda Christine Ring Launer. He resided there until serving in the US Army. Ernest was a 1949 graduate of Virginia High School. He was stationed at Fort Bliss, TX for one year from May 1953 to May 1954. During that time he was married to Shirley Ann Parker of Scott County, IL on Sept 8, 1953 at Fort Bliss, TX. She was born on December 26, 1933.

Ernie's wife, Shirley Ann Parker Launer, graduated from Bluffs High School in 1951 and from Passavant Hospital School of Nursing August 1954. On Oct, 1, 1954, she traveled to England where Ernest was serving with the US Army 60th AAA Battalion. After his discharge on April 14, 1955, they resided on a farm at what was known as Little Indian Station, south of Virginia until April 1978. They moved to a home on South Cass St. in Virginia during the Easter Ice Storm.

Ralph Launer was born April 18, 1901, the son of Richard and Lydia Sophia Krohe Launer, who resided rural Beardstown on the farm where Richard was bon on August 18, 1872. Richard was the son of Theophilus Christian, born Jan. 30, 1838 and Josephine Winhold, born Sept. 12, 1837, Launer. of Theophilus The father was Friederich Gottlieb Launer, a Lutheran Minister, who came to Cass County in about 1840 from Switzerland via New York, where Theophilus was born, with is wife, Lydia Marthe Launer and two sons, Beattus and Charles. Two more sons were born in Cass County, Theodore Frederick and Johann Fred, and a daughter, Maria Catharina.

Lydia Krohe Launer was the daughter of Henry Charles and Marie Christine Menge Krohe. Both were born in Cass County of early immigrants. The parents of Henry Charles were August C and Johanna C Jockisch. The parents of Marie C Menge were John Z and Marie S Meyer Menge.

Amanda Ring Launer was born Nov. 13, 1903, the youngest of 13 living children to Carl Frederick and Anna Marie Loser. She married Ralph Launer on Jan. 11, 1927. Carl and Marie Loser Ring, with eight children, came through Ellis Island to Concord, IL and then moved to Cass County about 1897.

Ralph and Amanda Ring Launer were also parents of Norma (Leland) Sweatman, Jane (Lewis) Webster, and Joanne (Vernon) Anderson, all sisters of Ernest Launer.

Ernest and Shirley are the parents of Marcia Elaine born at Passavant Hospital in Jacksonville on Feb. 11, 1956. Her sister, Jeannine Kay was born at the same hospital on Feb. 4, 1958. They are both graduates of Virginia High School. Marcia attended Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN and graduated in 1978 with a degree in Management, later becoming a CPA. Jeannine attended Southern Illinois University-Carbondale and graduated from the School of Technical Careers as a dental hygienist.

Marcia Launer married David Stratton on April 28, 1984. They reside near Springfield and have two children, Ryan Joseph born Nov. 16, 1985 and Erin Christine, born Aug. 19, 1988. Ryan is a graduate of Lincoln Land Community College. Erin is a student at the University of Illinois, Springfield.

Jeannine Launer married Michael Eugene Cox, June 14, 1980. They reside on the farm where she and her sister were raised. They have two children, Andrew Michael Cox, born May 6, 1983 and Tyler Hamilton Cox, born Oct. 11, 1985. They both graduated from Virginia High School. Andrew "Drew" graduated from Motorcycle Repair School in Phoenix, ΑZ in November 2002. Tyler graduated from Illinois Southern University-Carbondale, May 2008 with a degree in

forestry. Tyler was married to Tiffany Ballough on Oct. 24, 2009. They reside in Harrisburg, MO. Submitted by Ernest E. Launer.

Beardstown Boy in Jail

(Virginia Republican Gazette-March 23, 1917)

Willie Jump, of Beardstown, was brought to this city and lodged in the county jail, Tuesday charged with stealing a watch and pocket knife from Harold Barker, also of Beardstown. He was bound over to the Beardstown city court.

Chautauqua

(A Local History Collection of Arnzville Illinois, Collected and Compiled by Theodore & Hester Ham Lovekamp 1988)

The Chautauquas were annual events and the highlight of the summer in Arenzville. Troupes of high class entertainers in music, dramatics, recitals and lectures arrived yearly. A huge tent was erected in the south side of Zuschka school yard. It is described in one advertisement as being thoroughly waterproof and scientifically designed for acoustics.

The stage was thirty feet wide and all scenery was twelve feet high. The scenery was changed daily. The earliest program we have is dated 1916. All events ran for five days during the summer months. A program with games was held for the children each morning.

The 1922 program featured, "The Shepherd of the Hills," play together with Schubert Ladies Quartet, Cleavers Gypsies, Landis Quartet and Welsh Ladies Glee Singers.

Season tickets, before opening day, were priced at \$2 for adults, \$1 for children 6-12 years old. Single admission prices were 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children. First, third and fifth night prices were 75 cents and 35 cents.

The 1922 program list the following public spirited citizens who made the event possible: C.E. Rice, H. Ed Natemeyer, A.L. Streuter, O.N. Zahn, W. E. Hierman, H. George Wright, H.L. Meyer, Merle Pfolsgrof, H.C. Lovekamp, O.W. Hackman, Henry C Brokhouse, J.A. Weeks, Lorenz Burrus, H.R.Kircher, W. H. Kircher, R. L. Beard, E. R. Hackman, J.C. Springer, P.W. Batis, W. L. Pfeil, M. Hackman, George Musch, F. O. Pfolsgrof, Lydia Engelbach, E. G. Lovekamp, J.C. Pfeil, J.F. Thyen, Eugene L. Peck, Philip Stock, C.A. Schmidt, H.F. Schaefer, Arthur Triebert, W. H. Witte, Sr., H.W. Musch, Arthur Carls, A.E. Crum, Albert Lovekamp, F. G. Kircher, Oscar Niemann, J. M. Swope, John L Naylor, Lewis Willey, H.A. Naylor, B. F. Graham, A. L. Weeks, H. Kuhlman, Harvey McLain, Bert Wood, Theodore Hierman, Mrs. Mary Houston, Adelaide Schnitker and Leo Jones.

The Chautauqua groups originated at Chautauqua Lake, New York, and went on summer circuits. We have one program of 1916 and the last one of 1924. It may not have been held during World War I.

Some Beginnings in Central Cass County, Illinois

(By William Epler, Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, January 1917)

As far as is certainly known, Eli Cox was the first permanent white settler within the present borders of Cass County. He relates that in 1818 he entered a beautiful grove of timber; upon a tree carved his name and the date, thereby giving notice of his squatter claim, as was customary This was during the in Kentucky. first term of President James Monroe, the year Illinois was admitted as a State. In 1820 he returned to the grove and to his claim and began his improvements. He resided at this place until age and loneliness made it necessary for him to seek a home elsewhere, his family having grown to maturity and established homes of their own. The grove in which he had settled took his name, and today is known as Cox's Grove.

It is located in sections 4, 9, 17 and 8, four miles north of the nice little city of Ashland. It can be said of Eli Cox that he was a good citizen, attending strictly to his own affairs, developed a nice farm, became wealthy, was highly respected, dying at an advanced age in his new Ashland home.

Beardstown was first permanently settled in 1820.

Archibald Job settled at what was afterwards known as Sylvan Grove in 1821, sections 7, 17 and 9. He came to Illinois from Maryland, in which state, it is presumed he was born. We have the authority of the late Judge William Thomas of Jacksonville that he represented Greene County in the Illinois Legislature in 1824, but this is not confirmed by a search of the official records. Greene County at that time embraced both Morgan and Cass Counties; however, in 1824 he represented Greene and Morgan Counties in the Legislature, Morgan County having been established in 1823. Again in 1826 he was elected to the Illinois State Senate from the embracing district Morgan, Pike, Adams, Schuyler, Fulton and Peoria Counties. He was a Whig. The Jackson sentiment which now set in closed his political career. His business ability and integrity were recognized later, when he was chosen one of the three Commissioners to superintend the erection the State's of Capitol Building at Springfield, the new State capital city, and tradition says he the active member of the was commission. He died in Cass County in March 1874, at the advanced age of 94 years, and was buried in the John Robinson graveyard near his Sylvan home.

From the Desk

We opened the office on April 5th, and have been gearing up for our summer research projects. As it gets warmer outside, our thoughts have turned to being in the outdoors in the fresh air and maybe doing a little family research or finding out just where that ancestor is buried. Whv not stop by the office, email or call us to see if we can help you find that elusive ancestor or maybe point you in the right direction. We've already started receiving requests for research. Some of the names we have researched so far are Norris, Vieira, Knight, Murray, Anderson, among others. We have also received several donations. As of the typing of this article, we have received pictures from Molly Daniel of the 1943 Arenzville flood, pictures on а flashddive of Providence and Monroe Cemetery tombstones from Bob Daniel, a Buck Genealogy from Carol Orwig, Rexroat Store stationery from Marq Mefford, a Hierman's Store Thermometer and a Washbucket Laundry Cup from Marie Parlier and other items.

Sometimes however, we receive sad news. Since our last newsletter, we have learned of the death of one of our long time members and former CCHGS treasurer, Ernie Launer. Ernie passed away on March 17, 2018. Ernie was a good friend to the society and will be sorely missed. Our condolences to his wife, Shirley and his family.

Thank you to those who have given memorials to the society in Memory of Ernie Launer. We have received a total of \$1,100 so far.

It has been many years since the bylaws and constitution of the society have been updated. We think we've come up with a more updated version that will fit the society's current needs. If you would like a copy of the bylaws and/or constitution, copies are available at the society office.

Our annual meeting will be held on Sunday, June 10, 2018 at 2 p.m at the society office. The topic

will be the "Great War". November marks the 100th Anniversary of an armistice that was signed marking the end of the Great War. Professor Chis McDonald, in this short broad-ranging discussion will examine some of the issues that lie behind the outbreak of the "Great War", trace the development of the conflict focusing on some of the ways that it differed from previous conflicts and presaged many modern wars and look at the contested nature of peace that followed it. Chris McDonald received his PhD from the University of Georgia and has taught Political Science at LLCC for twenty years. Hope to see everyone there!

Membership Dues are due by June 30, 2018. We have attached a membership form for your convenience.

Membership Form

\$20.00	Individual
 \$25.00	Couple
 \$30.00	Family
\$150.00	Lifetime

Name

Street

City

State/Zip

Email Address

Surnames Researching



Pleasant Ridge School District No. 24, 18-8 and 9 (Chandlerville) (Taken from an Illustrated Directory of Cass County Schools by A.E. Hinners, Co. Supt.)

Cass County Historical & Genealogical Society 109 S Front Street Virginia, IL 62691