

**AMARIAH S. THARP.**

Among the earlier settlers of Rensselaer, whose active citizenship won the remembrance of friends and relatives for years after his death, was Amariah S. Tharp, who, although removed from the midst of his friends almost a quarter of a century ago, is still remembered and still loved by many of the present residents of Rensselaer.

Mr. Tharp, a splendid likeness of whom appears with this sketch, was born in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1804. When quite young he removed with his parents to Marion, Ohio, where he was married at the age of twenty-two years to Miss Elizabeth Heins, of that city. To



RESIDENCE OF ALFRED THOMPSON. (SEE SKETCH.)

his wife, "Grandma" Tharp, as she was affectionately called by all, died in July, 1883, beloved by all who knew her for she was kind of heart, self-sacrificing and living as she believed in the love and fear of her Heavenly Father. For two years prior to her death, she told her friends that she was prepared to die and only awaited the Savior's call. Mr. Tharp was born in Betherston, county of Kent, England.

Mr. Tharp was identified with the early upbuilding and improvement of Rensselaer, and he dwells in the memory of many of the present citizens of the city, who would like to see him today as he was many years ago, but who will find pleasure in looking at his picture and perusing the short sketch of his interesting life.

**CATHOLIC CHURCH.**

The early history of St. Augustine's church is wrapped in obscurity and it would require time to ascertain the details of its inception. Yet it is remembered by pioneers that at fixed times priests visited Rensselaer from Michigan City, Lafayette and Reynolds, service being held in the private house of Mr. Baden on Washington street.

About the year 1867 the Rt. Rev. Henry Luers erected an asylum one and one half miles south from the town. The land had been purchased from Mr. S. Spitler. A circular letter addressed to the clergy of the diocese by the Ordinary at this time, shows that the erection of the asylum was accompanied with many difficulties and hardships. Yet in spite of all difficulties the asylum was erected and became a place of refuge for poor children, who found a true home under the paternal care of such priests as Fathers Joseph Stephan, (now Mgr. Stephan,) F. C. Callahan, Henry Rensen and the Rev. August Young, now Rector of SS. Peter and Paul's church, on Washington street.

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toils on this earth to his eternal rewards.

In 1882, the Rt. Rev. Jos Dwenger, successor to Rt. Rev. Henry Luers of Ft. Wayne, urged the Catholics to carry out the design of the deceased bishop and promised to donate the lots, provided work would begin on the church at once. The Rev. M. Zumbuelat once called a meeting of the Catholics, and they unanimously decided in favor of accepting the bishop's offer.

On January the 22, 1882, the congregation elected Messrs. Peter Hordeman, Michael Halloran and Sylvester Healy to compose the board of building society.

Busy hands at once set to work; material was purchased; farmers began to haul, and soon the foundations rose above the earth's surface, under the supervision of the experienced mason, James Maloy.

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RESIDENCE OF J. F. WARREN. (SEE SKETCH.)

Catholic Church." Although the weather was extremely cold, and the roads were blockaded with drifted snow, the church was nevertheless filled to its utmost capacity.

The church is 37 by 80 and is located in the heart of the town on a beautiful elevation. It was erected at a cost of \$5,000 devoid of everything except the most necessary to be used for the celebration of the divine mysteries.

But Providence provided and God evidently blessed the efforts of the good people of Rensselaer.

At that time the indebtedness amounted to \$1,373, undoubtedly a heavy debt to be liquidated by 30 families who had previously almost drained their coffers in erecting the church. This however did not discourage the energetic pastor, the Rev. W. Zumbuelat, but on the contrary, these straits rendered him ingenious in devising ways and means of raising funds to pay part of the standing debt and to defray the current expenses.

brought order out of chaos. He was succeeded in 1892 by the Rev. Stanislaus Neiberg, the present pastor. The congregation numbers about one hundred families, or five hundred members. The various societies are the Altar, Foresters, Aloysian and St. Rose.

The Altar Society is composed of the married ladies of the congregation. Their object is to meet occasionally to exchange ideas and views on the means and ways of making home most attractive and pleasant, and to acquaint one another with methods employed in the rearing and educating of children. Another object in view is the beautifying of the altars and the purchase of necessities for the same, by monthly contributions, hence the name Altar Society.

The Order of Foresters is a mutual aid society, and at the same time has in view the promotion of religion, the diffusion of paternal charity and the betterment of the congregation. The order is in a flourishing condition.

Another excellent society is the St. Rose or Young Ladies Society. This society has for its aim the mutual edification of its members, shunning bad company and amusements, and striving for purity of morals. The St. Aloysian Society is composed of young men, who pledge themselves to lead an honest, sober and pure life, to be practical Catholics and to do all in their power to cause their holy religion to be respected by all.

The Stanislaus Literary Society is composed of young men and young ladies, being members either of the Catholic Order of Foresters or St. Rose society.

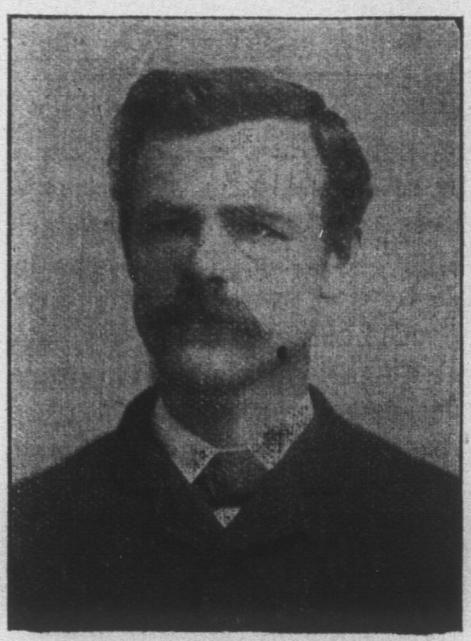
This society has for its aim the elevation of good morals and the diffusion of general knowledge, particularly in the interest of history, Christian etiquette and literature.

Another feature of great interest and most intimately connected with the progress of St. Augustine's church is the choir bearing the same name. Mr. William Meyer, the good old organist who organized the choir, can now look with pride at the success of his efforts. The members have been trained under his direction, with the exception of two members.

Two years ago Mr. Meyer resigned and was succeeded by Prof. Carl Hemmersbach and Prof. Carl Haas, who have successfully presided at the organ since that time. Miss Mary Meyer, the reliable and accomplished musician, never fails to preside at the organ in the absence of the above mentioned professors. The choir is composed of the following members: Soprano, Misses Anna Meyer, Amzie Beck, Maggie Warden and Mrs. Katherine Owens; alto, Misses Mary Meyers, Annie Nagel, Tilly Ramp and Etta Donnelly; bass, Mr. E. P. Honan; tenor, Prof. Carl Haas; violin and cornet accompaniment, Messrs. Jno. and Jerry Healy. The choir furnishes excellent music and well may the congregation be proud of their organists and choir.

**DAVID B. NOWELS.**

David B. Nowels is the youngest son of David and Phebe Nowels, and was born on a farm five miles northwest of Rensselaer, March 5, 1856. He lived here through boyhood, attending the country school in winter and working on the farm in summer. At the age of sixteen his parents sent him to Oorang, Illinois, where he attended school about three years. Upon his return he began teaching, which avocation he has followed ever since. In 1875 he attended the National Normal School at Lebanon, Ohio.



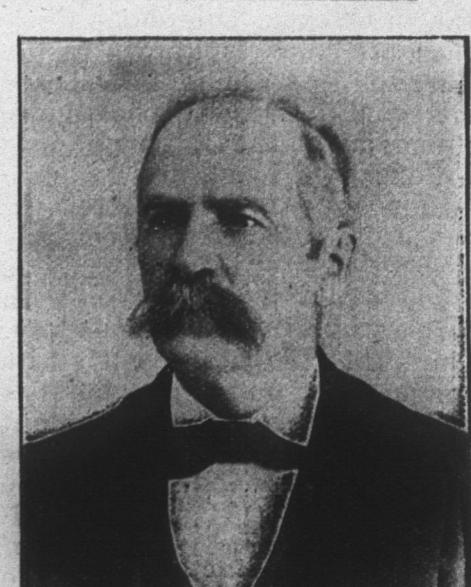
DAVID B. NOWELS.

two terms. After taking a more or less active part in the educational affairs of the county during the years 1876, 1877 and 1878, in June, 1879, he was elected superintendent of schools for Jasper county, succeeding James H. Snoddy. At the time of his appointment to this position Mr. Nowels had the distinction of being the youngest county superintendent in the state. During his incumbency of this office the good work in the public schools, so well begun by his predecessors, was rapidly carried forward.

The first meeting of the County Teachers' Association was held; the first outline of township institute work was compiled and published, thus unifying and organizing this work which before had been unorganized and desultory; the Monthly Reports from teachers to county superintendent were provided for; the first County Manual for the schools of the county was published; the Roll of Honor system was planned and introduced, and, as chairman of the committee appointed by the county superintendents' State Convention to draft and report a plan of graduation from the country schools, he assisted to formulate the plan now in use throughout the state. The first graduates from the common school course of this (Jasper) county received their diplomas during the last year of his administration. He retired from office in June, 1883. His teaching has been confined mostly to the country schools and there are few who understand them more thoroughly than he.

In the campaign of 1894 he was nominated, without solicitation on his part, by both the populist and democratic parties for joint representative for Jasper and Newton counties in the state legislature. Although he ran ahead of his ticket considerably, yet he went down in the landslide that followed, with all the rest, and thus escaped the dubious honors of a legislative career.

He was married Oct. 15, 1879, to Sarah E. Burk, eldest daughter of Geo. W. Burk of this county. They have but one child, a son, aged thirteen years, and have a pleasant home in Rensselaer where they now reside.

JAMES W. DOUTHIT.  
See Sketch.

Tile and brick are made in several places in the county. Two large mills for the making of these much-needed and much used articles are situated near Rensselaer, one in Remington and one in Barkley township.

AMARIAH S. THARP, DECEASED. This union four children were born, viz: Mrs. Mary J. Hopkins, of Rensselaer; Mrs. Sarah Gibson, deceased; Mrs. Hannah Ivers, of Topeka, Kansas and one child who died in youth.

The four children of Mr. and Mrs. Gibson are well known in Rensselaer, Emma and Hattie are trained nurses in Brooklyn, New York; Armenia is the wife of Fred Cole, of Lafayette, and Miss Ida is a missionary, having been sent out by the M. E. church, of Lafayette.

After about thirteen years, Mrs. Tharp died, and Mr. Tharp was then married to Miss Mary S. Hobb, of Marion, Ohio. To this union were born eleven children, viz: Thersa, deceased wife of S. O. Duvall, of Chicago; Mrs. Martha B. Hood, of Fort Wayne; Armenia wife of Caleb Hopkins, both deceased; Oscar R., who resides on a farm near Rensselaer; Henrietta wife of Dr. C. A. Barnes, of Greenfield, Ind.; Elizabeth, wife of J. O. Alter, of Rensselaer; John G., of Remington; Edgar H., of Chicago; Mrs. Leota M. Jones, of Rensselaer, and Lillie W., wife of E. N. Hyland, of Gilman, Ill.

To Mr. and Mrs. Caleb Hopkins, both of whom are dead, were born two children, viz: Lettie R., wife of Charles Pascall, of Indianapolis, and Caleb C. Hopkins of Chicago.

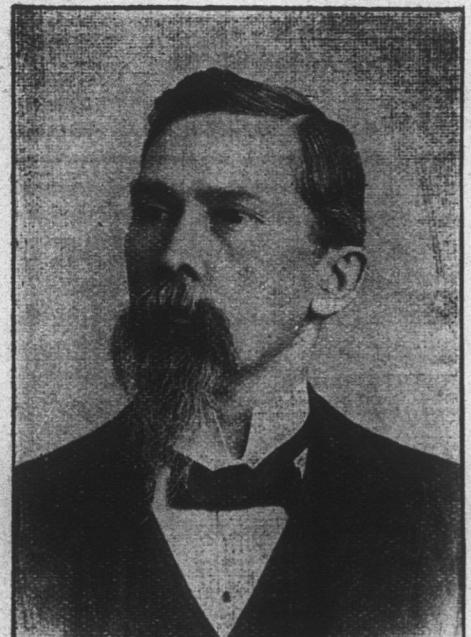
Mr. Tharp removed to Rensselaer in 1845 and engaged in horse buying. The horses were driven across the Cumberland mountains, where he found a ready market for them.

Mr. Tharp bought ground on Washington street and erected the frame building in which Ed. Parcel's barber shop was located for several years, and which was recently torn down and replaced by a new brick building. For some time under the firm name of Tharp Bros., he and his brother William, carried on a general merchandise store in the building.

He was then deeded from the government, the quarter section of land now the Jasper county poor farm, and he erected thereon the small brick building which was recently torn down. In it his oldest daughter was married.

After leaving the farm, Mr. Tharp bought the ground and erected what is known as the Liberal Corner, one of the oldest frame business buildings now standing, and in which he carried on business for some time. At the time of his death, he owned other property in Rensselaer. The house in which several of his children were married and where he and his wife both died was located on the site of J. H. S. Ellis' present residence.

Mr. Tharp was a staunch republican.

IRA W. YEOMAN, REMINGTON.  
See Sketch—Page eight.

and during the war times, when only a few papers reached Rensselaer, being brought here by stage from Monon, (then Bradford,) and when every one desired to learn of the battle results and chances for peace, he was called upon to read to the crowd, and accordingly would mount a temporary stage of boxes, and in his clear and forcible way, read the news to the crowds that would gather to listen.

Mr. Tharp was a member of the M. E. Church, having accepted Christ in his youth, and he lived a practical and exemplary life, always being active in good works. His home was a welcome gathering place for his church brethren and others at all times, and many a poor boy found a good home with him.

Mr. Tharp died in October, 1872, and



RESIDENCE OF JAMES DONNELLY, FARMER, (SEE SKETCH.)



INTERIOR OF AUGUST ROSENBAUM'S SALOON. (SEE SKETCH.)