

Leaves From St. Joseph County's First Book of History

Orange Blossoms and Strains of Mendelssohn Were Lacking
but Romance Thrived in the Early Days, the Record Shows

By C. J. Cooper.

Wafted from a vanished century comes the fragrance of orange blossoms. The musty odor of the aged record book gives way to one of lavender and old lace, and the yellowed pages with their ancient writing melt into visions of the long ago.

There may not have been any orange blossoms there, and there may have been an absence of real lavender and old lace, but you know as you read the words on the yellowed pages that there was that something for which orange blossoms and lavender and old lace are always the symbol.

Even the accumulated dust of years you blow from the worn covers of the book is not unpleasant, for it reminds you that you are about to delve into the romantic past.

The well worn, aged volume County Clerk Wilbur M. Warner hands you contains the record of the first marriage in St. Joseph county wherein the contracting parties were white persons, and as you open its covers and read the record on its first page, you know that even 90 years ago there was romance in St. Joseph county.

You are carried back to the time when Adam Keith courted Hannah Harris, and finally led her to the matrimonial altar in the office of Squire Adam Smith.

NO CHURCH FOR CEREMONY.

Undoubtedly Adam Keith would have liked to have led his bride to an altar in a church, and would have liked to have marched proudly down the aisle to the strains of the Mendelssohn wedding march, but there were no churches in St. Joseph county in 1830, and Adam Keith was forced to lead his bride to the office of a justice of the peace.

It was on the 11th of November, 90 years ago, that Adam procured the marriage license. Hannah's father was willing that his daughter should become a bride, for he was with his prospective son-in-law at the office of County Clerk Lathrop M. Taylor when the license was issued.

How old Hannah was when Adam Keith asked her to link her future with his does not appear, but you know that she must have been very young because County Clerk Taylor before issuing the license to Adam to wed Hannah insisted that Agnes Harris give his consent to the marriage of his daughter.

It was just one week after the license was issued that Adam and Hannah went to the office of Squire Smith. If you had been there you probably would have seen Hannah's father and mother and her sister, Sally, there. And you would probably have shed tears of joy or sorrow, as the case might have been, along with the rest of the company that witnessed the first marriage to be held in the little village of South Bend. And you would have noticed that Sally Harris watched

the ceremony performed by Squire Smith with a great deal of interest, and you might have wondered why. But maybe if you had been there then you might have been in Sally Harris' confidence, and she might have confided to you that within a few weeks she too would be standing before Squire Smith in exactly the same position Hannah Harris was standing on that 11th day of November, 1830.

And you might have been asked by Sally Harris to accompany her and Samuel H. Bell to the office of County Clerk Taylor on the 7th day of December to get their license to wed, and Sally might have invited you to attend the wedding two days later.

SALLY FINDS A MINISTER.

But if Sally Harris had told you that she was to be married by Squire Smith, she would have been mistaken. The wedding took place two days after the license had been issued, but Sally and Samuel found a minister of the gospel at just the right time. Not having been there, you do not know under what circumstances the Rev. David Miller happened to be in South Bend at just the right moment. He may have just arrived on missionary work among the Indians, and Sally and Samuel availed themselves of the opportunity to have the ceremony performed by a minister.

Both Hannah Keith and Sally Bell must have made a happy choice in husbands, or at least they have left no record to the contrary. You may search through all the divorce records of the St. Joseph circuit court and you will not find any record that Hannah and Sally either left their husbands, or were left by them.

And the happiness of the county's first two brides did not depend upon so much as happiness does today. Ninety years ago there was much more to think about than the high cost of living, although if you had been there you might have found out that even in the long ago, persons were not inclined to give away things to eat and wear, and that even then rents were charged to newlards who were not fortunate enough to own their own homes.

NOT EVEN COUNTY SEAT.

South Bend was a very little place 90 years ago, you would have found if you had been there. You would have soon learned that it was not even the county seat, and that a little more than 100 persons formed the entire community. You, along with Hannah and Sally and Adam and Samuel, would have come in daily contact with Indians, you might have traded with the red men as undoubtedly Adam and Samuel did.

And if you had wanted to get married during your stay in South Bend 90 years ago, you would have been compelled to do as Adam and Samuel were forced to do when they wanted to get a marriage license. You would have gone to St. Joseph, which was the

county seat, and asked County Clerk Taylor to give you a license to wed the one of your choice, and if that one was not too young, or you had the consent of those who had in charge the immediate future of the one you desired to make life's journey with, County Clerk Taylor undoubtedly would have been persuaded to give you the necessary license.

Then you would have been compelled to return to South Bend, and if you were not fortunate enough to find a visiting minister of the gospel in the community, you would have been compelled to lead the one of your choice to the altar in the office of Squire Smith.

That is what Adam Keith did, and that is what Alfred Stanton did when he wanted to marry Pheby Fall. Alfred chose the 9th day of December on which to make his visit to the office of County Clerk Taylor at St. Joseph to procure the license. He was accompanied to St. Joseph by Pheby's father, Pheby apparently being too young for County Clerk Taylor to issue a license without first being satisfied that her father was willing.

The license issued to Alfred Stanton was the last to be given out by County Clerk Taylor during 1830. Alfred and Pheby waited until the fifth day of the new year to have the ceremony performed, and you will not find any record anywhere that Alfred and Pheby were not as happy during their married life as were Adam and Hannah and Samuel and Sally.

BOSTON OVEROCKER IN DIFFICULTIES.

Not having been there when Boston Overocker decided to take unto himself a wife, you cannot be quite sure what really actuated him to visit the office of County Clerk Taylor at St. Joseph for a license for himself. If you have looked through the musty record book carefully, you will be aware that Boston Overocker acted as the friend of many young persons desiring to be married. It was his habit to represent the parents of these young persons when the father was unable to be there to give his consent.

And although you were not sure but that seeing so many persons embark on a matrimonial venture caused Boston to take a chance himself, you were not altogether surprised as you turned the yellowed pages of the ancient record book to find that Boston had asked County Clerk Taylor for a marriage license, but you were surprised to learn that although he had testified to the legal age of many others desiring to get married, he was not able to satisfy the county clerk as to his own age, or that of his prospective bride.

Boston wanted to marry Sarah Martindale, and on the 5th day of November, 1831, he made his wants known to the county clerk. Apparently the county clerk was dubious regarding the age of Sarah, and

of perhaps that of Boston himself, for when Robert Martindale, the father of the prospective bride, was called upon to testify to the age of his daughter, he performed the same service for Boston. The couple secured the license, and five days later they were married.

FIRST CHURCH IS BUILT.

It was not until after Adam Keith and Hannah Harris, Samuel Bell and Sally Harris, Alfred Stanton and Pheby Fall, and even Boston Overocker and Sarah Martindale, were married that a church was built in South Bend and a regular minister of the gospel took up his residence in the little village, affording an opportunity to bridal couples to enter the matrimonial state with a parson officiating.

The first church was built in 1835, and Rev. N. B. Griffith, a Methodist minister, was the first to hold religious services in the community. From that time on, those who were married by a justice of the peace did so because they wanted to be, not because of the same reason that compelled Adam Keith and Hannah Harris to select Squire Smith to perform their ceremony.

But even if Hannah and Sally and Pheby and Sarah had to get along without being permitted to start their married life in step with the strains of the Mendelssohn, albeit those same strains have been known to lead some into unhappy and thorn-strewn paths, they were probably just as happy as those who marched down the aisle of Rev. Griffith's church to the accompaniment of the little church organ.

And if you had been there you would probably have seen tears in the eyes of Hannah and Sally and Pheby and Sarah and Adam and Samuel and Alfred and Boston marched away behind County Clerk Taylor to the west bank of the St. Joseph river to protect their homes against the expected invasion of the Blackhawk Indians, and you would have probably cried with them as their young husbands came home again with the news that the Indians had decided not to include the little village in their battle line, although this time you would have cried with them for joy that Adam and Samuel and Alfred and Boston were home again and that all was safe.

WHICH IS WORSE. DO YOU THINK?

And as you look through the musty pages of the aged record book, you are not sure which is worse, fighting Indians or the high cost of living, although it might occur to you that you might stand a better chance against the Indians than you do against the high cost of living, and it might also occur to you that while being scalped is not the most pleasant experience that might befall you, there would be the compensation that the struggle would be ended for you, at least, to say nothing of the pleasure of having been able to put up a fight against the enemy be-

fore he succeeded in hanging a portion of your top hair to his belt.

As you continue to turn the yellowed pages of the musty record book, you find that Squire Adam Smith did not have a monopoly in the marriage business, that his office was not the only Gretna Green in St. Joseph county 90 years ago, and that there were other squires who were favored by the presence of and fees of persons who wanted to be married.

E. R. Tutt, who with County Clerk Taylor, led the men of South Bend to the banks of the St. Joseph river to repel the invading Blackhaws, and who came out of the town's defense as a lieutenant colonel, married many a couple after Rev. Griffith had founded his church. But you will refrain from blaming Lieut. Col. Tutt from becoming a marrying justice when you remember that he lost his position as town clerk, owing to the decision of the inhabitants of the community that a town government was not particularly needed.

PLENTY OF COMPETITION.

Peter Johnson, who was one of the members of the first board of town trustees, and who lost his job at the same time and for the same cause that Lieut. Col. Tutt lost his, also became a justice of the peace, and you have found by reading the record book that he, too, married South Bend couples even after Rev. Griffith entered into competition with the justices of the peace in that particular line of their endeavor.

And although the records convince you that many persons in South Bend 80 and 90 years ago apparently preferred to get their matrimonial start in a justice of the peace office, you also find that Rev. Griffith was not wholly neglected by those who had marriage ceremony favors to distribute.

And with that conviction you close the dusty covers of the yellowed page record book, shutting out the vision of the long ago, and exchanging the fragrance of orange blossoms and lavender and old lace for the odor of something that seems to you a little more modern, and lay the book back upon its shelf, to moulder there and accumulate more dust until some other curious person invades the realms of the past.

You brush the dust of years from your hands and face and clothes, almost wishing that you had been there with the characters in the records that you might have gotten at first hand a perspective of their time. For there is necessarily much that happened in those days that did not get into the records, and you do not feel entirely satisfied, although you have found much to interest you.

And you promise yourself that some day you will again visit the office of County Clerk Warner, and enter the big vault where the atmosphere of the past is brought to you through a portal of the records of the community's early pioneers.

The Origin and Significance of Some South Bend Surnames

By Charles A. Grimes.

A great Englishman once queried: "What's in a name?"

Then, for the edification and enlightenment of his readers he proffered the flowery suggestion that "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." High school orators for the last three centuries have been taking kindly to his hint and they've been telling us that the old bard said considerable. Some folks believe both the bard and the orators.

Some folks—census enumerators and census clerks for instance—have very good reason for their belief. Two months ago 60 enumerators made the rounds in South Bend and learned that aside from the customary Johns, Gwendolyns, Percivals and Esthers which fond mammas pin on their helpless progeny, there are in the city at present approximately 10,000 different surnames. These cognomens are the property of 25 distinct nationalities and lend color to five distinct races. Many of them can't be written with our alphabet limited as it is to 26 letters. Some of them have to be sneezed. Among the 10,000 there are enough O's to last a flustered miss all through her 16th year, and enough skis to afford all of Norway a long winter of sport.

FIRST THING A MAN GETS.

Each of the 10,000 has a purpose. Each is a substitute for an identification tag, or an army serial number.

A name is the first thing a man gets handed him upon his entrance into the world. It sticks with him all through life, sticks along with many others if he happens to grow up a politician and then, to make sure the memory will linger it is carved on the stone over his grave. A name is like prohibition; you can't shake it.

Postmen find names most helpful. Candidates for sheriff, alderman, councilman, mayor and prosecuting attorney likewise find names helpful, particularly and peculiarly helpful as endorsements around primary time. A duck by any other name would be a sheriff just the same, and a Doc Carson could not help but be a Yank mayor. A deKline, regardless of a chieftain's uniform will always mean a downslope.

South Benders who summer at St. Joseph, while away their hours with their names, or with their initials at least. Along the beach the bathing girls scratch their first letters in the sand and the sand doesn't object. Sand-writing though, isn't sanscript. Leaving their prints on the sands of St. Joseph affords a diversion from merely sitting around and getting sun-burned. They intend to sell monogram court plaster at Michigan City next summer. Then, all the

purchaser will have to do to brand herself will be, stick on the monograms, sit out in the sun and, presto! F. O. B. (standing of course for Florence O'Brien) will be imprinted on the fair back.

HOW CARVING BEGAN.

LaSalle and his guides probably started sand and wood engraving in these parts. Two or three centuries back when the discoverer stepped out on the banks of the St. Joseph river he carved a cross on a historic old tree. His Indian guide went him one better and carved his initials. South Bend boys thought so well of the idea that they've been carving their initials and their names ever since, carving them in barns, waiting stations, ball park bleachers and school furniture.

Every spring or fall some Isaac Walton whilst fishing along the river, yanks out a turtle with someone's initials and an 1899 mark on its shell. The turtle is immediately given credit as an old established firm, is carried to town and is exhibited somewhere along Michigan st. until such time as the cooks can make ready the consommé.

Names are lasting, yet forever changing. Over in Spain when a man marries, his wife retains her maiden name. But, Spanish customs have no "customers" over here. In South Bend when a man marries, his wife changes her name, and then—two or three years later—as the divorce courts would indicate, she changes it again. Maybe if the man is still around he attempts another change. South Bend courts are the greatest little cognomen-switchers in the middle west.

DISCARDING GERMAN NAMES.

Marriage and divorce, however, account not for all the changes. When the kaiser decided to rearrange European geography he helped out a number of Hoosier lawyers that knew how surnames could be legally altered. Indiana court records show that since the war many Germans no longer like their "bachs" and their "heimers." Two hundred or more have discarded the old German nomenclature to take upon themselves, not by marriage, but by consent of the court. Anglicized cognomens. Rubenstein in several instances has been changed to Alexander, Vogt has chosen Bromfield, and the Lehmanns have switched to Denis, a name also picked up by members of the Deit family.

The American Hills are growing during the transition. Hill now serves as moniker for those that were once Hellwig, Hildesheimer and Levartsky. Kaye is proving popular and it has come to succeed Kauffman, Kasowsky, Katzer, Kleinheinz, Kosky, Koul-

besch, Krup and Kupfernagel. Pity the poor generations to come that try to trace their genealogy and find that Bryant was once Lauterbach; Graystock formerly Kraemmslach, Curtis a shortening of Hagmaler, Davis an abbreviation of Kamolksi, Denly the English for Liebermann, Desmond a corruption of Frieselmann, Ernes a getaway from Schleuterer and Jiggins nothing more than modernized Sondenheimer.

And so the changes go on. Hundreds are changed yearly but the thousands remain unchanged. Ten thousands in South Bend today are practically the same, as they were six, seven and eight centuries ago when John the blacksmith first became John Smith, and Peter the baker, simply Peter Baker.

WHEN SURNAMES WERE UNKNOWN.

Up until eight centuries ago—so they who know would tell us—surnames were never used. Peter was Peter, John was John and never John Jolinski, never until the 11th or 12th century. Then, it would seem that folks got fastidious, preferred not to run the chance of a mistake in identity and at the instance of the lords, kings and war chiefs adopted surnames. William the Conqueror is credited with having introduced cognomens in England, but the belief has no historical foundation. A century before the Normans invaded England the Irish made it obligatory by statute that all Irishmen bear two identifications, one Christian name and one surname.

Here in America the Indians adopted two names long before Marquette and the missionaries ever saw the Mississippi. The earliest explorers found the red man with two and often more names. Sometimes he'd call himself John Dove, John Turtle, John Bear, or John Moon. Usually, however, his surname was taken from the name of his tribe. We can easily imagine John Pokagon, John Pottawatomie, the nomenclature of red men who once stretched their wigwags here in northern Indiana.

Although introduced eight centuries ago and made compulsory then in Ireland surnames did not come into general use in England until the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It was late in the 17th century before Wales adopted surnames and they were adopted then in Germany, Austria and Russia.

OLD NAMES HAD MEANING.

All of the old names had a meaning. Many of them now found in the census lists of South Bend have been twisted a little but enough of them remains to gather from them their original significance. The original sources from when came those first names, were derived from rank, profession, personal characteristics,

localities, animals, natural objects and patronymics.

The South Benders bearing the names of Black, Brown, Grey, Green, Whyte, White, Little, Long, Short, Broadhead and Lightfoot can trace their names back to personal characteristics of the forebears whose first surnames were either adopted or thrust upon them. Our Kings, Bishops, Princes, Abbots, Priors, Pryors, Stuarts, Smiths, Stewarts, Wrights, Carpenters, Taylors, Bakers, Baxsters, Weavers, Faulkner, Falconer, Fletcher, Glovers, Bowmans, Chapmans or Marchants, Millers, Brewers or Brewsters and Shepherds, all come, if not lineally, at least nominally from ancestors who held those ranks or engaged in those professions.

NAMES FROM NATURE.

Similarly from natural objects, from the landscape and from animals there came Hill, Dale, Wood, Forest, Brookes or Burns, Grove, Shaw, Bird, Lyon, Hogg or Hogue, Crab, Fox, Roebuck, Bull, Stone, Tree, Flint, and Steele. From patronymics or Christian names the following were quite naturally derived: Andrews, Anderson (son of Andrew) Alexander, Sanderson, Sandison, James, Jameson, Jamieson, Jones, Johnson, Jonson, Jackson, Williams, Williamson, Willis, Wilson, Thom, Thomson, Tompson, Roberts, Robertson and Robinson.

In other languages surnames are derived from much the same sources. Two Germans have Schwartz, Weiss and Braun for Black, White and Brown and of the same names the French make Lenoir, Le Blanc and Lebrun.

The Irish prefix Mac and O to names such as come from the aforementioned sources and the French use the Fitz to some extent. The Germans affix shon or son, the Scandinavians add son or sen, the Russians always prefer a vitch and the Poles usually wind up with ski. These prefixes stand for "son of," "place of," "time of" and "father of," and change but little in changing years.

Many of the most common Irish names found in the late South Bend census lists had curious origins and interesting significations. Sullivan was at one time Sillifant and Sullivant, meaning "quick sighted." O'Donnell, McDonnell and all variants of that name came from Donald, Daniel and Doa, which meant "a dark chief."

THE ORIGINAL OF MURPHY.

O'Murphy was the original of Murphy and at one time or another passed through changes. It was spelt Morpheu now and Morpheu again. It meant "superior." Kelly came from O'Kelly, Kiely and Keeley, all meaning "for war." O'Connor comes from Connors, Conerty, Connor and the meaning is "a helper."

Dougherty is derived from O'Doherty, or Daughaday, meaning "a destroyer."

Moloney in its original form was O'Mulowney, Moloney or Mullant, the name meaning "the thoughtful one." McCormick was originally O'Cormac, meaning "son of the crown." Flynn was at first Flann, and it meant "red." Flannegan and Finnegan in the olden days meant "druid." Boyle was Boylan, Bolan, Boland or Boylan, meaning "the benign." O'Brien was Bryant, O'Bryan, Bryan, Brines and Byron, meaning a "singer or author." Brady was Mc Brady or O'Brady, which meant "the captain of the ship." Macaulay was O'Cauley, Mc Gawly, Mc Auly, Mc Auliffe and Cawley, meaning "the echo," or literally the "son of the rock."

The Hebrews and the Arabians were among the last peoples to adopt surnames. The former distinguished two men of the same first name by calling, for example one, Solomon ben David (meaning Solomon, son of David), and the other Abraham ibn Esra (meaning Abraham, son of Esra). Transition from Solomon, son of Abraham, to Solomon Abrahamson was easy. The Isaacsons, Davidsons, Jacobs, Jacobsons of today were descended from the sons of Davids, Jacobs and Isaac of old.

ENGLISH AND FRENCH SOURCES.

Among the more common names on the present census list and in the South Bend directory many can be traced back to English and French beginnings. Almond, Aleman, Elman, Oldman, Helman, Hellman, Holman all came originally from the German al-mund, meaning "strong or powerful protection." Apple, Appleby, Applejohn came originally from a Silesian word meaning "horse." Armfield, Armsby, Ormsby, Armsworth, Armstrong all can be traced to the old Anglo Saxon of "armis" meaning poor. Ashman, Osman, Osmann, Oswald, Asman and the like came originally from the old Anglo-Saxon ash, which one time meant the "staff of a spear made of wood." Augur, Alger, Aucher, Archer and Augers came from an old English word meaning "very strong, helpful in war."

Bacon, Biggins and similar names are said to be corruptions of beacon, meaning "a bright light." Badger, Basher and others come from two words that meant "war spear." Bateman, Bateman and Batman developed no doubt from "boatman." Bake and Bakewell came from an estate called Bakewell in England. Barker was first borne no doubt by a tanner, bark being at one time extensively used in English tanneries. Barrows in old English means "wood or a grove." Barter, Barter, Barton and Barthers came from

(CONTINUED ON PAGE EIGHT)