History
of the
Ada Community

Agnew Welsh
INTRODUCTION

When the documents, letters, and memories of small towns are kept in attics and in the minds of those who lived the experiences the danger is that they may never reach later generations. Small pieces of history are lost and the large puzzle of a community's beginnings is incomplete.

Fortunately for us Agnew Welsh became our historian, collecting and preserving documents, letters, conversations, anecdotes, and observations. Realizing that a community history is of no value unless it is available for future generations, Agnew Welsh in his later years began to write down the information he had collected in his lifetime. Barton Snyder, the son of Welsh's old competitor M. L. Snyder, planned a series of seventeen articles. It grew to twenty-seven articles and was presented in a weekly series form in the 1931 Ada Herald. This material has never been collected in one volume except by those who were wise enough to clip the columns and keep them together. This book is an attempt to do this for everyone.

Agnew Welsh came to Ada in 1875 to study at the Northwestern Ohio Normal school. After two and a half years as a student he returned to his old neighborhood, Bucyrus, to teach for a winter term. But, as he wrote, his years at the Normal school "so enamoured me with the place that I sought to stay." He worked for Frank Elberson as a salesman in his clothing store and then bought "Johnny" Kemerer's book and stationery store. After the fire of 1881 when his building and most of his stock were destroyed, Agnew Welsh bought the Ada Record from E. L. Millar. He was editor until 1914 when he sold the paper to Harry Vestal. The Record existed under several ownerships until 1927 without the dedication of Welsh who said one of his family's jokes was that he would rather miss his own funeral than miss getting the Record in the mail on time. Welsh and his wife moved to Florida in 1917-18 and he worked for the Miami Metropolis (later the Miami Daily News). He gave up active work in 1937 but continued to send his articles "home" to the Ada Herald until 1953. Agnew Welsh died in 1955 at the age of 98.

In his years in the community Welsh, his wife Cora and his children Earl, Rhea, Opal, Margaret, and Dana were active members. He was clerk of the Ada school board for twenty years, served as fire chief and township clerk, helped organize the Tri-County fair, was a 50-year Mason, and was a loyal member of the Ada Church of Christ. His acquaintances included the fraternity of fellow journalists and one of his apprentices at the Record was Wheeler McMillan. As an editor, publisher, and printer he knew the people of the surrounding communities in those early days.

Agnew Welsh's interest in early history went beyond his home in Ada to the marshlands, the county towns, and the state of Ohio. Much of this history would be lost to us were it not for his careful preservation and the ability to write it down in his distinctive style. We publish this book as a tribute to Agnew Welsh and to those people who were a part of the early history of our community.

Elizabeth Park Miller
Ada, Ohio, 1987
History of Ada Community
A Series of Seventeen Articles by Agnew Welsh

FOREWORD

For nearly two-score years I have had much of the matter contained in this series. It was once my purpose to publish it in book form. Changed conditions and expatriation made this impracticable and the unassorted mass was dumped into a box that a few years ago was labeled, "In the event of my decease to be given to Barton F. Snyder," and no one but myself knew the location of that box.

I later realized that, while the material was invaluable, it was a herculean task for any busy editor to take the necessary time to properly assemble the various notes, prepared manuscript and sundry memoranda, hence I have used the present opportunity to put into fairly presentable shape these valuable records.

I fully realize that there are many points not completely covered and others, as important, not even touched upon, but I have not now time nor opportunity to make further research, besides the future historian will have something to achieve and I feel sure he will find a wonderful help in these facts which I have preserved and submit in the belief that it is better to save a part than to lose the whole.

There has been little attempt to bring these stories up to date, due to the fact that they are history—history made by a race of pioneers, nearly all of whom are sleeping that last long sleep, and history does not record up-to-the-minute events—that is the province of the newspaper. My only object in printing these data is to save from oblivion and possible destruction this mass of facts which are not possessed as a whole, if indeed much in part, by any other individual.

With so many dates quoted and references made to the same event by different persons, entire escape from inaccuracies could scarcely be expected, though effort has been made to harmonize all statements where possible to do so without destroying their worth.

To those who have aided in procuring a few later facts I am under deep obligation and to The Ada Herald is due praise for presenting. . . . this life-history of the Ada community.

Agnew Welsh

343 N. E. 26th St.
Miami, Florida
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PROGRESS OF LIBERTY TOWNSHIP

One of Hardin County's Newest
Townships and One of the Best

Its Brave Pioneers Literally
Hewed Their Way to Success

The earliest realty transaction in Liberty township of which trace can be found is the land patent issued on April 20, 1837, to Amariah Thorn. Mrs. James E. Lowry many years ago allowed the writer to publish a certified copy of this deed, issued through the government land office at Bucyrus, the description of the land being "the west half of the northwest quarter of Section Fifteen, Township Three, south of Range Nine," the tract containing 80 acres. All the original transfers were for the fixed government price of $1.25 per acre.

The first settler was John Candler, who came, with his son, James Marshall Candler, then a young man. They were Virginians and after trying several localities in central Ohio, came in 1829 and located near LaFayette and three years later, or in 1832, moved over into the northwest corner of Hardin, in Liberty township, where these rugged pioneers spent the remainder of their days, both being buried in the cemetery bearing their name.

The date of removal to this township of other of the early settlers is as follows: John Shanks, 1832; John Latimer, 1835; Thomas Ryan, 1835; George Hackett, 1835; Tobias Long, 1835; Thomas Shanks, 1836; Richard M. Johnson, 1836; Amariah Thorn, 1836; Henry Krider, 1836; Noah Thorn, 1836; Hugh W. McElroy, 1836; Isem Kindle, 1836; David Sleister, 1836; Eli Pugh, 1837; John and Philip Hoon, 1837; John Wilson, 1837 or '38; Jacob Sapp, 1837 or '38; Nicholas High Sr., 1838; Robert Hyndman, 1838; Daniel Emerson, 1838 or '39; John Shuster, 1839; George Daugherty, 1839 or '40; William Claflan, 1839 or '40; William Ansley, 1840; Elijah Wilson, 1840; Horace Gilbert, 1840; Eli Newman, 1840; John Tressel, 1842; John Mustard, 1844.

Liberty township was formally organized by the election of a corps of officers on October 10, 1837, four years after the first election was held in the county.

At the first election it is asserted that there were eleven votes cast. These electors would probably be Marshall Candler, John Latimer, George Hackett, Tobias Long, Hugh W. McElroy, Amariah Thorn, Noah Thorn, Richard M. Johnson, David Sleister, Jacob Sapp, Isom G. Kindle, and Thomas Ryan.

The election was held at the cabin of Amariah Thorn, which stood on the east side of the township's center road, a half mile north of town. His was the first hewed log house in the township. He died there in 1844 and his wife in 1898. Until her death a small portion of the 160 acres of land Mr. Thorn entered remained in a daughter's hands, the original government deed, signed by President VanBuren, being the only conveyance ever made of this land.

The early records have all been destroyed but the record as handed down by word of mouth is that Hugh W. McElroy was elected justice of the peace and Amariah Thorn, Tobias Long and Hugh McElroy were elected township trustees.

There is no record of other elections until many years later save this
bit of information gleaned from an old docket, long in the hands of the justice's sons and in which is this inscription: "John Latimer's docket. Bought of John Goodin (Kenton). Price $1.50. April 20, 1844." The constable at that time, as shown by the docket entries, was Amariah Thorn. The last case Esquire Latimer docketed bore the date of November 17, 1861, showing Mr. Latimer to have served as justice for seventeen years.

By 1850 the population had increased by the coming of such families as those of John Garlinger (1847), Charles Eckernode (1845), David A. Klingler (1848), John Lynch, John Kuhn, Warwick Shockency, George Rusher (1847), Samuel Wingate.

The pioneers were obliged to carve their farms from the heavy forests that covered the entire area and in which roamed deer, bear, wolves, wild cats and the lesser animals. Henry Pugh related that when his father came to this locality, about 1837, he would shoot deer while standing in his front door. It was some time before he could get lumber for a door for their cabin and closed it by hanging a blanket in the opening. They kept a dog and when the wolves came about at night the dog would take refuge in his fright by running in at the "door."

In the winter of 1837-38 Nathaniel Main killed 51 deer in Orange township, our neighboring township on the north. Mrs. M. Tremain, an adopted daughter of John Lynch, once wrote me that when they came here in 1845 that she frequently saw deer, wild hogs, wild turkeys, wolves and porcupines in the adjacent woods. As late as 1879 the Ada Record of November 13, says: "C.W. Runser killed a deer near the Scioto marsh last week."

Richard M. Johnson located upon a 40-acre tract in the northern part of what is now within the Ada corporation, on the east side of Main Street. He lived to be 89, dying at Van Wert in 1900. His children were Barbara, Marjorie, Austin, Andrew, John, Lydia, Mary and Samuel.

Another of the pioneers was A. C. Baker who came about 1850. Mr. Baker's father walked in August 1837, from Columbus to Bucyrus to make his payment on a piece of land, making it in gold he had brought from Germany from where he emigrated in 1832. His deed was dated August 10, 1837, and was bought "sight unseen" but he walked from Columbus here to inspect his land which yet remains in the family, known as the Baker farm, west of town, on the north side of the railway.

His son (A.C. Baker) once stated to me that the only house his father could find in the locality was that of Jacob Sapp. When he asked Mrs. Sapp how they lived out here in the wilderness she replied, "On corn bread and spice-bush tea." This did not appeal to Mr. Baker and he returned to Columbus. At his death A. C. Baker bought the other heirs' interest and moved here.

Hog creek is the drainage outlet for the vast area of muck land on the east side of Liberty and largely on the west side of Washington township. Drainage operations to bring this rich land under cultivation were begun many years ago but the land was subject to overflow from the "June freshets" until the last effort, begun in 1897, when on June 3 a sale was held to let the contract of cutting through the limestone rock for an average depth of four feet across Liberty
tOWNSHIP.

The low bidders were D.R. McArthur & Co. at $20,600. Patterson Bros. were also interested in the contract but the contract was sublet to W.J. Dull & Co. of Darke county, who completed the work in May, 1900, but at a loss of several thousand dollars. For the work they used a steam shovel after blasting had been done, the machine running on steel tracks. C. Zimmers had charge of the work as foreman.

It is said that Hog creek obtained its name from the following incident. In 1786 there lived at the Indian town in Logan county, Alexander McKee, a Britisher, who was an Indian trader. A party of Kentuckians came up into the Machachee creek region on an Indian killing expedition when McKee sought safety by moving his stores and herds farther north, making a camp on the banks of the stream that meanders through the northern part of what is now Hardin county. When other roving Indians discovered the swine there they exclaimed, "Kosh-ko-sepee," the word "sepee" being the Indian word for stream or river, hence to them it was Hog creek, a name that has stuck. This stream is mentioned in a treaty made with the Shawnee Indians in September, 1817, at the Rapids of the Maumee.

Doubtless the first interment in the township was the body of John Candler, who was the first person to move within the borders of Liberty township, in 1832. He died on September 3, 1835, and was buried on his own farm, the site later developing into the Candler cemetery, which is situated in the northwest corner of the township.

This cemetery came into the township's hands on April 23, 1887, when James Marshall Candler deeded to the township a plat, nine by thirteen rods. Later the trustees bought of Robert Krofft an addition to the ground so that it now contains several acres and is very neatly kept and is beautiful for situation.

A mile or more to the east of the Candler cemetery is the Kindle cemetery, a plat of ground 75 feet square, which also had its beginning as a private burying ground but in 1879 Isem Kindle deeded it to the township to rescue it from its run-down condition. The first interment in this ground, as evidenced by monument date, was that of Ann Kindle, wife of Isem Kindle, who died March 19, 1843, aged 38 years. Mr. Kindle died November 12, 1880, aged 79 years. Only the descendents and near relatives of this pioneer family are buried there.

In the northeast part of the township is the McElroy cemetery, where the oldest date is 1839, being on the monument of Hezekiah McBride, wife of John McBride, the date of her death being August 13, 1839. On July 9, 1892, David McElroy deeded the ground to the township for cemetery purposes.

When the death messenger visited the home of the pioneer he would make the nearest eminence a place of sepulture for his dead. It was this custom, universal in a new country, that gave fixture to the five public burial places in the township. As a rule the first burial spots became public cemeteries but there were exceptions and one of these exists in our own immediate vicinity where, sad to relate, the unmarked graves of several of Liberty township's pioneers have been turned to practical use by unhallowed hands, having been farmed over for years. In 1844, nine years after his arrival here. Amariah Thorn died and was buried on the farm of his brother Noah. This site was
about two hundred feet east of the pike and about the same distance north of the north line of the old Captain Michael Melhorn farm.

Within a week five of Mr. Thorn's children died and were laid beside their father. Two years later Noah Thorn's wife also answered the last summons and was of course interred there. Within the recollection of the writer a rude fence protected these graves but this has long since disappeared and there is now no trace of this burial place.

While William Emery, himself a pioneer here, was yet living in the vicinity, he stated that there were 14 graves in that pioneer burying ground two of his own children being among the number.

An incident once related to me by Henry Pugh shows the hardships and privations of the pioneers of this township. In the summer of 1851 a family named Blake occupied a log cabin east of where Ada is situated, on a farm a year later to become the Landon farm. Mrs. Blake died there and Cornelius Pugh engaged William Shockency, who lived southwest, to make from walnut boards a coffin and when completed these two men carried it through the woods to the house of mourning.

After the body was placed in this rude casket the latter was secured to two poles by tying it fast with long strips of linn bark, then four men bore it on their shoulders through the forest to the high ground just north of what was long known as the Melhorn farm, on the east side of the road running north from Ada.

The principal cemetery is the one south of town which for many years bore the name of the Hoon cemetery, borrowed from one of the pioneers of the vicinity, but in time the Editor of the Record bestowed upon it the more befitting title of Woodlawn. The first interment here was the body of John D., son of Elijah Wilson, who died in 1857; the second one was that of David Routson, Rev. Silas Hagerman officiating on this occasion.

This God's acre became the property of the township by gift, through a warranty deed executed by David Sleichter, a pioneer of the township, on August 1, 1858, the land conveyed being eight rods long by twenty wide. The farm from which this was taken later came into the possession of David Thompson from whom the township bought lands for additions to this cemetery as follows: two and one half acres on June 5, 1872, consideration $125; four acres on May 5, 1883, consideration $500. Thirteen years later they bought of Joseph Myers five acres on the east side of the road for $550, the deed bearing the date of April 25, 1896 and the first ten years there were over a hundred interments in this new addition. To this were added several acres about 1928.

As early as 1888 the Ada Record advocated a public receiving vault for Woodlawn. In 1898 the matter was again taken up and through the efforts of L.O. Ream it was brought to a successful issue. By an extra effort to sell lots Mr. Ream showed how to succeed in the enterprise. At that time they had $367.45 in the cemetery fund and $110.10 was due on lots. They agreed that if lots were sold to the amount of $600 they would contract for the work of erecting the vault. The lots were readily sold and on December 12, 1899, trustees L.L. Dobbins, George Carey and Robert Krofft contracted with a Mansfield, Ohio, firm for a Bedford (Ind.) limestone mausoleum eight by twelve feet inside, for
$1,500. Work on the structure was begun on June 1, 1900, and was completed by November.

In the southwest corner of the township is a small but old cemetery known as the Maysville cemetery where repose the remains of many of the pioneers and the men who fought in the war of 1861-65 to preserve the Union.

Second of a Series of 17 Articles by Agnew Welsh
Original Plat of Town Recorded in
1853; Population 250 in 1861
Names of Business Men in
1876 Revealed by Old Directory

On August 10, 1837, President Martin Van Buren caused to be issued through the Bucyrus land office, a deed to George Rapp for 160 acres, being described in the deed as "the east half of the northeast quarter of Section 21, and the west half of the northwest quarter of Section 22, in Township Three, Range Nine, east."

This became the original plat of Ada and is better known as that part of Ada lying south of what was formerly known as Center street, east by Simon street, south by Montford.

On July 17, 1845, Rapp transferred his holding to James Douglas at a modest profit of $100. Rapp must have been living in Tennessee as his acknowledgment of the deed was made in Montgomery county of that state. On March 16, 1846, Douglas conveyed the tract to John Henry for a consideration of $650. Douglas had also probably moved away as his deed of transfer was acknowledged in Ross county, Ohio. Henry was seemingly also a Ross county man as in the following October he deeded this land to Chauncey Gillett, signing the deed at Chillicothe, Ohio, on October 19, 1846. Gillett signed a deed at Chillicothe conveying the land to Alanson Reed for a consideration of $1,000.

On June 20, 1848, Alanson Reed deeded this land to Thomas Reed, the acknowledgment of signature being executed in Franklin county, Ohio. On July 6, 1850, Thomas Reed conveyed the parcel of land to Rensallear B. Reed, consideration and place of acknowledgment the same as the previous deed. R.B. Reed transferred the land to Hannah, wife of his son and one of the former owners, Alanson Reed, the consideration being "love and affection."

On July 19, 1852, the Reeds transferred the tract, largely valued for its timber, to William Mitchell of Kendallville, Indiana, the consideration being $1,000. Mitchell platted the land into town lots, filing his plat in the county recorder's office on May 20, 1853, where it is recorded on page 106 of Vol. A.

Mr. Mitchell was interested in a company store here but in August, 1855, he acknowledged in Noble county, Ind., a deed for transfer of part of his holdings here.

The original town plat had 75 lots as laid out by Mr. Mitchell and the plat bears the following endorsements:
The State of Ohio
Hardin County
S.S.
Before me, Samuel Smith, a Justice of the Peace, in and for said county, personally came William Mitchell, proprietor of the within town plat, and acknowledged the signing and sealing of said town plat to be his voluntary act and deed for the uses and purposes therein expressed.

Given under my hand officially this 30th day of July, A.D., 1853.

SAMUEL SMITH, J.P.

Received and recorded August 1, 1853.

D. Barron

Recorder of Hardin County

The acknowledgment is witnessed by Mr. Smith and D. Barron. The following certificate from the engineer is attached:

"I hereby certify that the annexed plat is a true copy of the survey of Johnstown, located in the S. W. quarter of the northwest quarter of Sec. 22, Tp. 3 S, range 9 E, first meridian. The streets are 66 feet in width and cross each other at right angles. Those running north and south are laid out parallel to the west line of said Section 22. The alleys are 14 feet wide and are laid out parallel with the street. All lots not marked otherwise on the plat are 60 feet wide and 150 in length. The point from which the measurements are made is the S. W. corner of the N.W. corner of Sec. 22, as established by the surveyor.

HENRY I. RUDISIL

Assistant Engineer, Ohio & Indiana R.R., Johnstown, Hardin County, Ohio, May 20, 1853."

On this plat what is now Main street was called Margaret street in honor of Mrs. Margaret Johnson, wife of the real founder of the village. On petition of the citizens the village council changed the name by an ordinance passed in July 1872.

Since the original plat was made additions to the village have been made and accepted as follows:

- Johnson’s Eastern, December 30, 1864.
- Montgomery’s, January 11, 1866.
- Ream’s, December 19, 1866.
- Heistand’s, March 29, 1866.
- Newland’s, August 25, 1866.
- Gesaman’s, November 8, 1866.
- Stumm’s, July 22, 1867.
- Edwards’, December 10, 1867.
- Ahlefeld & Arbuthnot’s, September 5, 1867.
- Johnson’s Southern, December 30, 1869.
- Ahlefeld’s, February 3, 1871.
- Heistand’s 2nd, March 21, 1872.
- Ream’s 2nd, March 16, 1872.
- Dobbins’ 1st, April 19, 1872.
- Diefenderfer’s, October 28, 1872.
- Ream’s 3rd, January 4, 1875.
- Dobbins, 2nd, May 6, 1876.
- Lehr’s, April 20, 1878.
- Lehr’s 2nd, May 10, 1879.
- Ream & Gilbert’s, November 20, 1879.
- Ahlefeld’s 2nd, August 29, 1881.
Maglott's, January 30, 1882.
S. Rice's, March 14, 1892.

Johnson street was not opened further north than Montford street until July, 1901, when after lengthy condemnatory proceedings by the council it was opened to Center street, passing through the outlots of Henry Young and others, Mr. Young being awarded a verdict for heavy damages by a jury, owing to the high state of cultivation of his lots for greenhouse grounds. The south end of Johnson street was opened by the Ahliefeld addition in 1881.

Davis' "Great Western Business Guide," published in Philadelphia in 1861, listed Ada's business houses as follows:
Attorney-at-law, C.M. Woodward.
Blacksmiths: J.W. Morgan, D. Oyler.
Coopers: A. Blair, W.A. League.
Dry goods, groceries, etc: Samuel Arbuthnot, Gilbert & Reece, Lantz & Hubbard, William A. League, also dealer in staves and hoops.
Furniture: George McElroy.
Groceries: T. Bastable, J. Bricker, Amos Johns.
Hotel: Mansion House, H.M. Gilbert.
Justice: John Epley.
Milliner: Lizzie Rhodes.
Produce, grain and commission: Lantz & Hubbard.
Stock Dealers: S. Arbuthnot, also manufacturer of pearlash; Bricker & Lantz.
Stoves, tinware, saddles and harness: H.M. Gilbert.

The growth of the town must have been quite slow for Jacob Leinard once told me that when he came here in 1857 there were but three houses in what is now the central part of town: one stood on East Buckeye, near the present armory; a log cabin occupied a site on what is now E. Lincoln, and just a few feet west of the new Lutheran church; and the third was on the ground now occupied by what was for years known as the J.B. Murray home, 118 South Main.

What a change the next fifteen years wrought. Monahan's "Hardin County Directory," published at Toledo in 1876, names the concerns then in business here as follows:
Ada Exchange Bank (I. McJunkin, W.L. Reece.)
Ada floucing mills, John B. Carey, corner Johnson and Mill.
Ada Silver Cornet Band, Henry Young, leader.
Anspach & Smith (Samuel Anspach, Jas. H. Smith,) blacksmithing, Buckeye and Montfort.
Anspach, Samuel, Jr., wagonmaker, planing mill, east end of
Buckeye.
Arbuthnot, S. & R., lumber and planing mill, east end of Buckeye.
Arbuthnot, Robert, insurance; also dealer in staves.
Ash, George, brickmaker, N. Main, east side.
Baldwin & Meyer, (J.J. Baldwin, Wm. Meyer,) produce.
Ballard, Capt. J.H., travels for Alcott, Horton & Co., Cleveland.
Baker, Wm. H., plasterer.
Bastable, Bartholomew, street commissioner.
Bastable, J.D., day telegraph operator.
Bauman, E.E. groceries, Main and Buckeye.
Bastable & Vanliew, (Jas. Bastable, John Vanliew,) hardware.
Beals, T.M., saloon, S. Main.
Belknap, D.G., dry goods, n.e. corner Main and Hoosier.
Bodell, J.I., contractor, S. Main.
Brockett, R.B., Commercial hotel, opposite depot.
Butterfoss, C.W., meat market, N. Main.
Burton, W.L., jobber of staves and heading; office, Alleghany.
Charles, A.B. & M.S., grain dealers, opp. depot.
Church, J.N., drayman.
Citizens bank, (C.N. Ahlefeld, Pres., P. Ahlefeld, cashier,) Main
and Buckeye.
Central House, D.C. Harris, Prop., Johnson, near depot.
Cloud, David C., groceries, N. Main.
Collins, J.B., carpenter.
Cunningham, J.T., general store, cor. Main and Buckeye.
Davenport, Ralph, physician, South Main.
Detrick, A. & R. contractors.
Diefenderfer, J.M., saddlery and harness.
Dobbins, A.C., stoves and tinware, South Main.
Dobbins, L.L., meat market, North Main.
Dobbins, John, stock buyer.
Dransfield, Wm., furniture, North Main.
Earnest & Scott (Jacob Earnest, Rosel Scott,) flax and tow, E.
Long.
Elberson, Benj. & Son, groceries and bakery, Main, near R.R.
Elberson, Mrs. S.S., millinery, Buckeye near Main.
Fellows, A.W., photographer, Main near Hoosier.
Fisher, J.S., homeopathic physician.
Friedly, John, mayor.
Gardner, Wm., gunsmith, S. Main.
George, Thos. F., livery, E. Buckeye.
George, M.W., carpenter.
Gilbert, C.W., dealer in stone.
Gilbert, E.W., stoves and tinware, W. Buckeye.
Gilbert, Elmer H., night telegraph operator.
Gilbert, John, groceries, N. Main, near R.R.
Gilbert, M.V., photographer, W. side Main, near R.R.
Gill, John B., St. Cloud hotel, cor. Buckeye and Johnson.
Grafton, W.B., carpenter.
Griner & Houser (Dan Griner, Ed. Houser,) blacksmiths, W.
Buckeye.
Gesaman, Jas. & Wm., carpenters.
Henry, John, tailor.
Holland, B.A., carpenter.
Halladay, Calvin, general store, Main and Buckeye.
Hubble, R. G., drayman.
Huff, A.B., sewing machine agent.
Iten, Frank, restaurant and confectionery, Main, west side.
Irvine, Wm., carpenter.
Judd, S.R., cabinet maker.
Keller, Mrs. M., millinery and dressmaking.
Kemerer, J.H., bookstore, S. Main.
Kisner, Archy, carpenter.
Lantz, Wm., clerk at C. Halladay's store.
Lehr, H.S., principal, N.W.O. Normal School.
League, E. W., staves and heading, railroad between Main and Johnson.
Leinard, Jacob, lumber yard, near depot.
Linderman Bros., (Lem and John, ) painters, etc.
Loudenslager, Geo., bakery and grocery, North Main.
McElroy, Jas. B., carpenter.
McElroy, Thomas D., contractor.
McGinnis, I.C., dentist.
McGregor, Geo. M., boot and shoe maker, North Main.
Mahan, J.N., boots and shoes, North Main.
Mitchell, J.E., cooperage.
Morris, Jonas, barber.
Morris, J.W., physician.
Murray, B.I., fruit tree agent.
Mustard, W.H., carpenter.
Nelson, A.S., meat market.
Noggle, John, saddles and harness, Main near Buckeye.
Nye, Wm., R., saloon.
Nye, A.F., barber.
Olmsted & Wise, sawmill, E. end Buckeye.
Poling, Nathan, groceries, S. Main.
Ream, Abram, contractor, Main and Long.
Reed, Mrs. M., millinery and dressmaking, Main street.
Reece & Black, (W.L. Reece, Sam Black), grain buyers, Main, near railroad.
Ries & Vorhies, (C.F. Ries, W.B. Vorhies), hardware, Ream block.
Rice & Co., general store, South Main.
Richeson Bros., (L.&B.F.), brick and tile makers, East Center.
Rice, J. Frank, painter.
Robinson, Sterling, auctioneer and collector.
Rowley, Prof. C.E. and Hattie, music teachers.
Runkle, C.F., drugs, South Main.
Rusher, Philip, furniture and undertaking, South Main.
Rutter, John, house painter.
Ada Business People, about 1902.

Rutledge, Geo. W., real estate, etc.
Rutledge, Richard, blacksmith, E. Mill.
Rutledge, T.J., groceries, Main and Buckeye.
Ream & Dobbins, (L.O. Ream, L.L. Dobbins), groceries and meat
market, S. Main.
Sale, P.K., merchant.
Souder, John S., carpenter.
Seib., Geo., boot and shoemaker.
Sellers, S. E., meat market, North Main.
Shaw, Albert, tannery and hides, E. Hoosier.
Schindewolf & Elberson, (H. Schindewolf, Frank Elberson),
clothiers and tailors, N. Main.
Shannon, H.S., watchmaker, jeweler and insurance.
Shuster, K.E., justice of peace.
Smick & Young, (J.H. Smick, Eugene M. Young), lawyers.
Sloenberger, C.C., cigar maker.
Stockwell, R.S., house painter.
Stumm, C.E., shoemaker, S. Main.
Stumm, P.W., attorney and justice of the peace.
Stumm, Thomas, hoop factory.
Sturgeon, S.H., physician, West Hoosier.
Thompson, bent L., publisher of Ada Record.
Thomas, Geo. S., drugs, books, wall paper, Main and Buckeye.
Trump, Wm.H., carpenter and contractor.
Umbaugh, J.W., drug store, North Main.
Umbaugh, J.H., livery stable, East Buckeye.
Urich, Wm., constable and deputy marshal.
Urich, Frank, groceries, Hoosier and Simon.
Vickers, Leonard V., carpenter.
Watt & Sharp, (D.A. Watt, John Sharp), watches, jewelry, etc.,
North Main.
Watt J.B., groceries and bakery, South Main.
Walters, Dr. J.W., physician.
Wells, J.H., dentist.
Wells, Lewis H., stock dealer.
Wilson, W.D., wagon maker, West Buckeye.
Young Bros., (C. Wm. and Henry) scroll mills and lumber, E. Mill.

Third of a Series of 17 Articles by Agnew Welsh

Village Was Incorporated in 1861
First Boom Days in Early Seventies
Development Came Rapidly After Opening
of Normal School by Dr. Lehr

The village was incorporated in 1861, the first council meeting being
held on September 5, 1861. The first corps of officers were the
following: Horace J. Gilbert, mayor; W.L. Reece, clerk; Alvin H.
Davis, marshal; Geo. Worrel, deputy marshal; E.L. Sanford, H.P.
Roberts, S.M. Johnson, Dr. J.W. Walters, C.M. Woodard and W.L.
Reece, councilmen.
Ordinance Book A shows the first ordinance was passed on Sep-
Ada Business People, about 1902.
tember 21, 1861, and was for the election of a marshal and treasurer for the village; no others were passed until the following April.

By 1872 Ada began to take on a new view of life. Dr. Lehr had accomplished his long-cherished desire, the founding of a normal school; a newspaper, the Ada Record, was established by Bent L. Thompson, several brick business blocks took the place of the little old one-story frames. At that time two Building & Loan associations were in operation and it was all enough to set awhirling the heads of Adaitees.

In the midst of this period of advancement the matter of an agricultural fair was agitated to the extent that on July 8, 1872, a meeting was called to pave the way for organization. It was held in Ream’s hall, known in later years by the successive titles of Ballard’s opera house, Bastable’s hall and Rothrock’s hall until later acquired by the Masons. Charles W. Butterfoss was elected chairman of the meeting and Hiram S. Shannon as secretary. Dr. E.B. Heistand stated the object of the meeting and after much discussion, as is usual on such momentous occasions, a committee was appointed to select a site for such exhibition, those appointed being William R. Nye, Dr. Heistand, William Urich, B.I. Murray, L. Butler and G.B. McKee.

In a few days this committee reported that it had selected a tract of 26 acres at the west end of Buckeye street and belonging to Dr. Heistand. In July articles of incorporation were issued to the “Ada Union Agricultural Society” but this was the last ever heard of the enterprise and the owner later laid off into an addition to the town the tract which some ridiculed by designating it as “Dr. Heistand’s frog farm.”

In 1872, P.W. Stumm resigned as mayor and on November 10, an election was held to fill the place. I have the poll-book of this election at which the following persons voted, showing they were legal citizens at that time:


McElroy, David Rees, J.S. Oyler,
William Moore, Geo. Laudenslager, Martin V. Gilbert, C. Young,
Frank C. Gastinger, U.W. Hertz, H. Clear, W.H. Davis, Samuel Watt,
Sr., S.M. Drury, J.T. Cunningham, Robert F. Black, J.T. Fitton,
Edmund Vickers, M.L. Armstrong, Madison Stull, Frank Strunk,
Conrad Smallsreed, James Brundage, William Hall, John McAlhaney,
Isaac B. Charles, James Stewart, Wm. Clapper, I.M. Diefenderfer,
Samuel Lamphier, Benjamin Elberson, John H. Mustard, John W.
Manning, Geo. S. Thomas, Milton Nelson, Sr., Daniel Breen, Hugh
Dobbins, C.F. Ries, Albert Shaw, Albert B. Charles, John Johnson,
Daniel Hanley, William Wilson, B.H. Derby, Frank Urich, Samuel
Anspach, B.I. Murray, Charles E. Edwards, Gus Wilson, Bent L.
Thompson, T. Lary, C.E. Wilson, George W. Baum, John Hocorg.

Of the nearly 150 names enumerated above, constituting practically
a city directory of that day, there were less than forty whom I did not
come to know a few years later.

To facilitate the counting of the heavy vote at election time, the
village was divided into three wards in February, 1880, and in July,
1892, the boundaries were slightly changed by detaching a part of
Ward 2 and adding it to Ward 1 to better equalize the voting
population.
The village's first heavy expenditure was the purchase of a Silsby
steam fire engine, about 1873, at a cost of $5,000, a debt the village was
obliged to refund when it came due.
The erection of a city hall or opera house, in 1881, was not a prudent
investment. By an ordinance passed on October 1, 1880, the council
authorized the expenditure of $700 for grounds and $9,000 for a
building. The total expenditure was about $16,000, the remainder
being for seating, scenery, etc.

How did Ada's streets get their names?
Main street was originally called Margaret street in honor of Mrs.
Margaret Johnson, wife of S.M. Johnson, founder of the village and
which for many years bore his name, Johnstown.
Johnson street was named in honor of this worthy old pioneer.
Ream street was so called in deference to Abraham Ream, who laid
off an addition to the village, in the southeast part of town, and Ream
street passes through it.
Simon street derives its name from the Simons family who were
prominent in the early history of the town and influential citizens here.
Edwards street, a short one running through two blocks, was thus
named after Uncle Billy Edwards, for many years an active figure
here and whose son, C.E. Edwards, died here some years ago. The
street runs through an addition made by the elder Edwards in the
northeast part of town.
Liberty street was given its name by Mr. Johnson in his eastern
addition. The people were always patriotic and when the name of the
post office was changed from Johnstown an effort was made to have it
called Sweet Liberty. The township is called Liberty.
Gilbert street takes its name from the Gilbert family that once
formed a large part of the population.
Union street is obviously a patriotic name. This completes the
streets running north and south.

Taking up the cross streets we begin with the commercial center of the town. Buckeye, of course, derives its name from Ohio's nickname—the Buckeye state, and presumably some friend similarly honored Indiana, hence the street running east and west at the M. E. Church was first called Hoosier street.

Next comes Montfort and the late Dr. Walters said it was named in honor of a Mr. Montfort, who was one of the contractors when the railroad was built through here.

Irvine street was once a link between Main and Gilbert. It doubtless owes its name to William Irvine who was an esteemed citizen here for many years.

Next was Center, which derived its name from the fact that it is in the exact center of the township, north and south.

Franklin street runs east of Main only, and in the northern part of town; it was so named by Peter Ahlefeld in honor of the illustrious Benjamin.

South of the railroad the first street was called Mill due to the fact that many years ago a flouring mill, also a scroll mill stood on the corner on the east side of Johnson street and north of the street in question.

Next in order is Ballard street which took its name from "Happy Jack" Ballard who for many years was a conspicuous figure here where he was engaged in the mercantile line and who left here many years ago disappearing from all knowledge so far as ever heard.

Long street got its name from a family by that name that once lived thereon, according to Prof. Lehr.

Next came a double-barreled street, the west end being called Peach avenue and east of Johnson it was known as Williams street, but just why we are unable to state.

The west end got its name from the fact that when the ground back of the college grounds was Uncle John Dobbins' farm that grand old man had a peach orchard that reached from the Terrace to the street and back the length of two lots.

Proceeding south another block brings us to Normal street which name Uncle John Dobbins doubtless gave it when he platted that part of town into lots, out of deference to the school of which he was always a staunch friend.

Next came Dobbins street, a name that has never been disgraced by any member of the families that wore it.

High street took its name from its elevation, being nearly or quite the highest street in town.

Next comes the Lima road which is now called Lima street.

In September, 1909, the council changed the names of Mill and Hoosier streets, to Lincoln and Highland, respectively. Other names have also been changed.

Of the early hotels the late W.L. Reece wrote:

"The first hotel in Ada was run by A.M. Simons and situated, I think, on Buckeye street, on the north side. It was afterwards purchased and remodeled by G.H. Zugswwert. It was more of a boarding house than a lodging house. Mr. Simon's two sons, Gordon and Oscar, were employed on the railroad, Gord as locomotive engineer and Oscar as
division boss. Bill Maxwell kept a boarding house in the old railroad depot. We used to have a dance in his parlor often.”

About 1860 W.L. Reece took into partnership Hollis J. Gilbert in the general store conducted in a little frame that gave way for the Bauman block, now occupied by the Liberty bank. During those days Mr. Reece would travel about buying fur pelts. He heard that a man living on the north edge of Hog creek marsh had for sale a number of mink hides, then bringing high prices; Mr. Reece bought a half dozen at about five dollars each and on closer inspection after he reached the store found that one of them was the skin of a black cat to which had been attached a mink tail.

As late as the 70’s a wooden sidewalk built on piling or “mud-sills,” extended in front of the row of stores on Main street, west side from Buckeye to the railroad. Mason Cunningham tells me that he and D.C. Nelson, now of Marion, made a practice of crawling the length of this highwater walk in search of small coins that might have fallen through.

L.F. Green is authority for the statement that the wife of Johnstown’s first physician, Dr. A.W. Wiley, was the beautiful Ann Goodin of Kenton. The doctor later moved to Kansas. Mr. Green also said, “The fourth governor of Kansas, Nehemiah Green, once waded in the ditches of Johnstown and yelled when the trains went though at twelve miles an hour and watched the water spurt from under the ties.”

35 Served as Mayor of Ada Since 1861

The persons who served as mayor since the village organization was perfected were:
H.J. Gilbert, 1861; H.P. Roberts, 1862; E.L. Sanford, 1862-3; W.L. Reece, 1863-4; S.W. Phillips, 1864-5;
D.S. Judd, 1865-66; W.B. Grafton, 1867-8; Al Card, 1869; C.E. Stumm, 1869-70; P.W. Stumm, 1870-72;
J.H. Smick, 1872-3; H.S. Shannon, 1873; John VanLiew, 1874; B.A. Holland, 1874; Henry Young, 1875-6;
John Friedly, 1876-7; A.B. Charles, 1878-9; Albert Shaw, 1880-81;
John Friedly, 1882-3; A.M. West, 1883-4;
H.E. Neff, 1885-8; William Lantz, 1888-90; C.E. Stumm, 1890-92; B.F. Paul, 1892-94; William Lantz, 1902-04;
C.B. Hickernell, 1904-06; J. Wesley Cook, 1906-8; B.A. Holland, 1908-10; Louis A. Greer, 1910-12; L.W. Campbell, 1912-16;

Correction
A grievous error was made by the Herald last week when the name of Dr. West Montgomery, former local physician, was unintentionally
omitted from the list of Ada mayors.

Dr. Montgomery served the town as mayor from 1916-1918. He is now a practicing physician at Mentor, Ohio.

Those who are preserving the list will wish to insert this correction.

Agnew Welsh Series Brings Replies

January 15, 1931.

Editor Ada Herald:

Today I received a copy of your paper with Agnew Welsh’s historical resume of Ada and surroundings, most interesting to me, having been born there, married there and my children born there.

Through the years I have seen the good town emerge from the pioneer settlement with all its mosquitos, unpaved roads, frogs, stumps and water holes to a fine little city, whose sons have gone into the world with credit for themselves and for Ada.

My father, Nathan Ahlefeld, built the frame building on the center block, northwest corner, at the close of the Civil war. It was the first “sky-scraper” for the then Johnstown. The upper story was the city’s only hall and was used for dances, shows, etc. It still stands a memory to his sturdy German thrift.

Mrs. J.F. Andrews
1025 Topeka Street
Panadena, Calif.

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Neil Ahlefeld, dealer in land securities, Kenton, writes the Herald:

“It has come to my attention that Mr. Agnew Welsh is writing a series of seventeen articles upon the history of the Ada community.”

“Due to the fact that my great grandfather, Rinehart Ahlefeld settled in the Ada community when my grandfather, Nathan Ahlefeld was a very small child, I would naturally be very much interested in Mr. Welsh’s articles.”

Fourth of a Series of 17 Articles by Agnew Welsh

Liquor Fight Started About 1872;
Saloons Voted Out 30 Years Later

The interest with which this series of articles by Agnew Welsh is being received is indicated by the number of letters coming to the Herald office each week. Several readers have informed the editor that they are clipping and pasting each article for future reference.

Comment on this series is welcomed, as the Herald is just as anxious as is Mr. Welsh to keep the record straight and to make it as complete as possible.

This week’s article on the temperance movement in Ada is particularly timely, because of the great current interest in the liquor problem aroused by the report of the Wickersham commission this week.

The temperance sentiment has always been strong here. A lodge of Good Templars, along about 1872, was the first organized effort in this direction. In 1877 the movement started by Francis Murphy in Pittsburgh, swept over the country. Great meetings were held in the old
Ada, Ohio—City Restaurant, North Main street—E.C. Burnett, owner. Courtesy Mary Cotner Motter.

Ada, Ohio, Main street, before turn of the century. Courtesy Joyce Dunn.
M.E. church here night after night and nearly 1,200 names were signed to the pledge to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquor.

Ada has had numerous trials of "wet" and "dry," passing ordinances to prevent the selling of intoxicating liquors at retail as follows:

The first ordinance was passed on June 14, 1886.

On January 23, 1888, a new ordinance was passed prohibiting "ale, beer and porter houses."

Each tide the tide of temperance swept a little higher, and the tidal wave came with the special election held on July 7, 1902, under the Beal law. The vote was as follows:

Ward 1—91 dry, 89 wet; dry majority, 2.
Ward 2—287 dry, 37 wet; dry majority 250.
Ward 3—98 dry, 57 wet; majority, 41.
Total dry, 476; total wet, 183; majority for dry, 293.

About 1896, an effort was made to run a road house just north of the Rinehart school house but after an attempt to dynamite it one night the effort ceased. In 1905 a saloon was opened in a cheap frame building just outside the west corporation line, but an election was soon held by the voters of Liberty township and the saloon was voted out by a strong majority.

After the last ordinance was passed the local branch of the Ohio Anti-saloon League did a great amount of good work in enforcing the laws by causing the arrest of the violators, and gradually those engaged in the traffic quit "boot-legging" and at that time the town was as near absolutely dry as could be expected.

Ada’s example had a good effect on the community. Soon after the last Ada ordinance became effective and proved satisfactory the following neighboring towns voted "dry" in the order named: Dunkirk, Forest, Alger, Patterson, Beaverdam, LaFayette and North Washington (changed March 1, 1907, to Dola).

Ada has been particularly favored in the matter of having distinguished people visit it either on the lecture course or in bringing their claims for political honors before citizens and students. Among the famous lecturers who have appeared in years gone by on the Ada platforms were "Josh Billings," Theodore Tilton, Dr. David Swing, Joseph Cook, Wendell Phillips, John B. Gough, Gen. John B. Gordon, Senator Ben Tillman, Bob Burdette, Sam Jones, Murat Halsted, Henri Watterson, George Alfred Townsend ("Gath"), Judge Albion W. Tourgee, Frank B. Carpenter, George W. Bain, Anna B. Shaw, Hon. William Jennings Bryan, Charles Thwing, Swami Viva Kanenda, John G. Wooley, Belle Boyd, the Confederate spy, Elijah Brown, editor of "The Ram’s Horn."

Great musicians were Remenyi, violinist, and Blind Tom, colored pianist, while Gilmore’s band and that of Sousa played several engagements here.

Of the more famous of the politicians who have used their spell-binding powers here were John Sherman, James A. Garfield, William B. McKinley, Gen. William H. Gibson, Gov. Charles Foster, Senator James B. Foraker, Gov. Nash, Gov. James E. Campbell and Frank B. Hurd.
North Main Street (Business Section), Ada, Ohio

Courtesy Vincent Reichert.

South Main Street at O. N. U., Ada, Ohio.
A large number of men from Ada have filled county and state offices, the first being Samuel Wood, who served as county commissioner from 1855 to 1869. Nathan Ahlefeld was elected county auditor, serving from March, 1871, to November, 1872. In April, 1872, William A. Edwards ("Uncle Billy") was appointed a county commissioner to succeed Thomas Huston, deceased. In 1872 John Shanks was elected to that office.

In November, 1874, G.H. Zugschwert took up the duties of county auditor, serving four years. L. H. Wells was sheriff in 1882-3 and from 1882 to 1888 James E. Lowry served as probate judge. In 1887-88 he was clerk of the Ohio senate. In 1887 Albert B. Charles began his first of two terms as county treasurer.

The auditor's office has often been allotted to Ada men. Following those already named: James Bastable 1896, Justin Brewer 1901, Elmer J. Carey 1908.

The following have filled the office of recorder: Frank P. Carey 1889, Ira N. Kelly (to fill vacancy) 1900, Francis Runser 1901, John Patterson 1907.

As county surveyors several have served from here—N.J. Colwell in 1883, Willis E. Myers in 1894, J.C. Poling in 1907.

As prosecuting attorney four Ada men served in succession: John H. Smick 1880, Charles M. Melhorn 1884, Chester D. Kelly 1890, Charles C. Lemert 1893.

The state's legislative halls have resounded to the voices of several distinguished citizens, M.F. Eggeman being the county's representative from 1888 to 1892; Prof. Charles H. Workman 1892-94, Prof. Frank B. Willis, 1900-1904, J.B. Stambaugh, 1908-10.

James Carman was commissioner from 1906 to 1909.

Ada's first candidate for a state office was Prof. Warren Darst, who was nominated for state school commissioner in June, 1891. The second was Prof. Brig S. Young, for food and dairy commissioner in 1906.

Rev. Aaron S. Watkins, a former minister here, was once the candidate for president on the National Prohibition ticket. More recent men of national note are the late Senator Frank B. Willis and Senator Simeon D. Fess, each of whom spent many years as residents here.

The region round Ada is a tableland and is therefore a watershed, the northern area draining into Lake Erie through Hog creek and the Ottawa and Maumee rivers; to the south the drainage eventually finds its way into the Gulf of Mexico by way of the Scioto, Ohio and Mississippi rivers. By a federal survey made September 15, 1904, the height above sea level was determined to be 964 feet, the official bench-mark being a brass plate seated in the foundation wall of the central church building. From Ada to Lake Erie the decline is 383 feet; The fall from Main street to Grass run is about 20 feet while to Hog creek it is 30 feet. Ada is seven feet higher than Dunkirk and 81 above Lima. The headwaters of Hog creek are 938 feet above sea level and the fall from there to the Allen county line is twelve feet.

The highest surveyed point in Liberty township is on the Rusher pike, a mile west of Main street, where the elevation is 968 feet. The
lowest point is at the northwest corner of the township where it is 915 feet above sea level.

When the first buildings were erected here a rivulet, known as Swag run, meandered from the west side of town diagonally crossing Main at Buckeye, continuing a general northeasterly direction through town. Men and boys would fish this stream with good success at a point near the west side of Main. The first teacher in the schools said the pupils would be obliged to wade ankle deep to get to school.

I have heard Professor Lehr relate that he had to "coon" the fence to get to S.M. Johnson’s home, back of the present college campus. Ada is on nearly a dead-level plateau.

In time the waters coming in from the southwest were diverted northward, along the west side of town, and in 1872 a part of this ditch was "trunked" with oak planks, making a wooden box sewer of it. The specifications said it should be 18 inches high, 24 inches wide in the clear, of two-inch white or burr oak plank, the top to be spiked on crosswise. Swag run was called "fever canal" by inhabitants and this "trunking" process was resorted to through town to obviate the danger which gave rise to this name.

In 1875 a stone sewer was constructed to relieve the western part of town at the time of high waters. This began near Union and Long streets (now Lehr avenue) and ran a little north of east, terminating near Edwards street, from which point it continued to Grass run as an open ditch. It was made by building up, without mortar side walls of flat limestone, so readily obtained here; these walls were covered with broad stones of the same kind, leaving a bottom of natural clay. In the autumn of 1896 the open ditch to the stream was converted into a 24 inch sewer of vitrified pipe, and is officially known as Ada County Sewer No. 2, the work having been done by the county commissioners and the cost taxed to the property owners, and the village for general benefits.

The greater part of the town’s drainage goes into Hog creek, which runs nearly due east and west a mile and a half north of the town. In 1882, a pipe sewer, known as the Main sewer, was constructed by the village, P. & T. Degnan, of Toledo, being the contractors. The route is as follows: two 18 inch lines start at the south side of the railroad about two hundred feet west of Gilbert street; one line continues nearly due north to a point a little north of Center street, then veers to the northeast, and enters Main street at a point near what was known as the John Davenport property; the second line runs northeast to Buckeye where it receives a twelve inch line that starts at a point near Ballard street, running along the east side of Main. The line continues on the east side of the street until it reaches the north part of town, then crosses to the west side of the road to the outlet, which continued to Hog creek as an open ditch, but this outlet in time formed a pool that became offensive in the summer, and after a long period of agitation the county commissioners put in a double line of 20-inch agricultural pipe from this Main street outlet to the receiving stream. This work was done in the summer of 1904 and bears the official name of the Nissley county ditch, taking the name of the principal petitioner, who at that time lived near the original termination of the sewer.

In 1894 Ada County Sewer No. 1 was constructed in the west part of
town to further relieve the pressure pouring in from the southwest country. The sewer is of 20-inch vitrified pipe and has its intake at the point where the Main street sewer begins. It runs almost due north to the run referred to as the outlet of the Main sewer. It was constructed by T.S. Wright, of Defiance, and cost $7,000, the work being done under the direction of the county commissioners, as its name indicates.

In 1896 Ada County Sewer No. 3 was constructed by the same process as above. It begins on South Johnson street, runs north on that street to Normal street then an easterly course until it intersects the continuation of the stone sewer.

The first child born in Ada was a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. S.M. Johnson. She was named Mary and nicknamed "Pud." She married a Mr. Castle.

The heaviest snow fall for many years was the 20 inches that fell from January 19 to 21, 1895.

The first snow falls over a period of years were as follows: 1884, Nov. 25; 1885, Nov. 2; 1886, Oct. 27; 1887, Oct. 21; 1890, Oct. 29; 1891; Nov. 3.

Fifth of a Series of Articles by Agnew Welsh
Pioneers Were Men of Iron will;
Tales of Early Days of Johnstown

Tales of the Long, Hard
Road to Present-Day
Greatness

W. F. Greene, the real Ada's first postmaster, recalled many years ago in a letter to the editor of the old Ada Record, that the men of his recollection who lived here about 1855 were the following: S.M. Johnson, the founder of the village; the storekeepers, Horace Gilbert and J.B. Wilson; Jacob McElroy, Lewis F. Green, who taught the first school in the township in the winter of 1855-56 in what was then called the Neuman district (later the Rinehart) two miles north; the three Stumms—Calvin E., Louis F., and Phillip W., who attended Mr. Green's school; Mr. Simons, who kept a sort of hotel; his two sons Gordon, a railroad engineer, and Oscar, who was an all-around trader; Dr. Albert Wylie, the first physician; Jerry Bricker, William Kidd, John Epley, old Mr. Baum, Sam Maxwell, the two Routson brothers, Jacob High, Alfred York, Hugh McElroy, John Tressel, who lived north of town as did Samuel Bissell. Mr. York lived in a log cabin that stood on about the site of the present Wilson bookstore, opposite the University.

The J.B. Wilson mentioned as a storekeeper moved here from Huntersville and his store was located on Buckeye street, near Johnson and on the south side of the street. Mr. Wilson sold his store to Shepard Green who must have been a man of some parts as one son became postmaster here, and another, Nehemiah, was elected governor of Kansas. He was then living at Woden. The Greens left here in the fall of 1857, selling their store to Nathan Ahlefeld.
Many years ago Mrs. Nathan Ahlefeld, who was Celia Wiley, and the belle of Johnstown when she came here in 1856, wrote for the Record an interesting detail of her pioneer life here. She said her first visit was in 1855, when a party of them came over to attend a Fourth of July ball at the cabin of Mr. Yorke, who lived on the farm later known as the A.C. Baker farm. After enjoying a good supper at William Green’s she said they donned their ball costumes and were carried by a special train (hand-car) to the scene of festivities.

She stated that soon after she came here to live occurred the wedding of Daniel Hoon and Elizabeth Sipes at the hotel kept by William Maxwell. She named as the pioneers of that day the families of S. M. Johnson, Jerry Bricker, J.D. Wilson, the McElroys, Gilberts, Epleys, Pughs, Highs, Stumms, Sterling Robinson, William Kidd, Mr. Bissell, Cassandra Thorn, the Lynches, Simons, Robert Kindle, Wallacks. In the country round-about she recalled the Shanks, Mustard, Anspach, Klingler, Wingate, Charles and Cummins families.

As interesting sidelights she stated that the first store was kept by Emmett Wilson while “Cooskin” Wilson was the butcher but his sales were light due to abundance of wild game. She said in an article that there were then perhaps two general stores and the office of a relative, Dr. A. W. Wiley. Mrs. Ahlefeld says that his sign was a mosquito smoke—a perpetual fire about which the roving cows gathered to obtain respite from the tortures of the winged pests.

W.L. Reece came here from the vicinity of LaFayette in 1858 and two years later began buying grain. He was for many years identified with Ada’s business interests, first as a merchant, a grain dealer, a banker and lastly as manager of the Young hotel. He later moved to Greenville, where he died. In a communication to the Ada Record of February 2, 1910, Mr. Reece related an incident of early history to the effect that while Elijah Wilson was living here, a traveling minister whose name was Tingle, as Mr. Reece recalled it, came through to preach his faith, then called “The New Light,” and arranged to hold Sunday service in the Wilson cabin, in the northern part of town. Some one coming up from the south reported having seen in the snow the tracks where six deer crossed the road at a point near the present Woodlawn cemetery. Mr. Wilson was in a doubly sad predicament; as host he did not like to leave the meeting and he did want a crack at those deer; furthermore, his rifle was hanging on pegs in the room where the minister was to hold service; the need of meat would salve his conscience but he did not want to disturb the meeting by taking down his rifle so he persuaded his son-in-law, George McElroy, to get the gun whereupon Wilson sallied forth and killed five of the deer before night.

Peter Ahlefeld came to the young village in 1864 and was then 24 years of age. He and his brother Nathan opened a general store. In 1866 Nathan sold his interest to E. W. Gilbert and in 1867 Peter sold his interest. In 1867 he and E.E. Williams were partners in a store here.

Sanford M. Johnson has been called the patron saint of Ada. He was enterprising, generous, broad-minded and capable—just the kind of a man the struggling village needed, and it honored him by giving itself his name—Johnstown, which it bore until commercial confusion made it necessary that one or the other of the Johnstowns should change,
Main Street looking North. Ada, Ohio

Courtesy Vincent Reichert.

West Walk, North Main Street. ADA, Ohio.
and this one did it.

Mr. Johnson was born in Genessee county, New York, in 1818. In 1820 his parents moved to Sandusky City, Ohio, where Mr. Johnson learned the millwright's trade. In 1852 his second marriage occurred at Hartford City, Indiana, and he then moved to Fort Wayne, where he became acquainted with William Mitchell of Kendalville, who owned 160 acres of wilderness land in Liberty township, Hardin county, Ohio. He offered Mr. Johnson a half interest in this land if he would go to the same and open up a saw mill.

In 1853 Mr. Johnson came here and built the mill, the site being on the south side of the railroad track, a little east of the present waterworks station; it was a "muley" mill, with an up-and-down saw, and did a large business, first for the new town, then in shipping lumber. A section road was finally opened up on what is now Main street, and from a point on this, near the present M. E. Church, a wagon trail wound through the dense woods to the mill yard.

The mill was later destroyed by fire but the enterprising citizens felt the loss so keenly that they promptly turned out enmasse and soon had up another building. This was the town's first industry. About 1865 Mr. Johnson sold his mill to Solomon Smick, of Canton, Ohio, who was a buyer of lumber for the Aultman works there. He sent his son, John H. Smick, then a young man, to have charge of the business end of the enterprise. It continued in operation until some time in the early 70's, when fire again devastated it.

Mr. Johnson was very public spirited. When the town was laid out he gave the Ohio & Indiana Railway, as the road was then known, the extra strip of ground on its right-of-way, running from Main street to the east side of the stock yards.

Prof. Lehr has often said to the author that it was largely due to Mr. Johnson that the former was employed here as a teacher in the public schools, with the avowed idea of establishing a Normal school.

After living here some years Mr. Johnson bought the land lying west of the college grounds, building thereon a large frame house now known as The Terrace. He planted a double row of pine trees from his house to Main Street. The older citizens remember these as passing through the Normal grounds. This farm later passed into the hands of that grand man, John Dobbins, and was laid out into lots, the college campus, donated by Mr. Dobbins, being taken from his farm.

Mr. Johnson moved to Lima to 1867 and helped to organize the Lima Paper Mill Co., becoming its president and manager of the plant for many years, selling out in 1877. He then spent several years on a farm south of there, moving back to Lima in August, 1882, and died there on October 22, 1882.

Mr. Johnson was to the Presbyterian church what William League was to the Baptist in their early struggles—one of its chief pillars. In physique he was a giant; he was kind to all, a loyal and patriotic citizen, ever ready to help the needy. He was a fine conversationalist. Prof. Lehr told me Mr. Johnson was the most enterprising man he ever met. He was honorable in all of his dealings, a man of exemplary habits and liberal to a fault.

William League was another important personage in the commercial life of early Ada. He was engaged here in merchandizing and
operating a large stave mill where a force of 20 to 25 hands was employed in shaving staves for tight barrels, besides a number of machine tenders and about 15 yard men. The output was about 100 barrels per day, or three carloads a week.

Later the shipping of heading and staves became a part of the business and a third branch was added—the making of spokes and ax handles, in which N. B. Holder was interested with Mr. League. Mr. League operated two shops here, the principal one, two stories high, being located on the north side of the railroad and running from a point a few rods east of Main street to the alley on the east, or opposite the west end of the present passenger station. The other was located south of the railroad, between Main and Gilbert.

Mr. League abandon his shops here about 1873 to engage in similar business at Pittsburgh; he moved there in 1874, Messrs. W. L. Burton and his brother-in-law, O. E. Collins, accompanying him. In 1876 his plant there burned and in 1878 he moved to Chicago where he again engaged in his old business, which he continued to follow until advanced age.

Mr. League was born in Augusta county, Virginia, on June 30, 1828. At the age of twelve he learned the cooper's trade. In 1857 he came to Ohio, settling at Piqua, then going to Tippecanoe from which place he came to Johnstown (Ada).

In 1852 he lived in a house that stood on the northwest corner of Main and Lincoln streets and just north of it stood the store room. With the building of the railroad the tide of commerce drifted that direction and the house was moved to face Johnson street, just south of the railroad grounds; it later was used as a hotel for many years until destroyed by fire, about 1892.

He also built a brick store room on the west side of Main street which was destroyed by the big fire of 1881 which swept a path from the railroad to the alley between the Murray and Kemp blocks; he also put up a two-story frame business room on Main, first lot south of the railroad park, and which years ago was torn down to give way to the east Murray block.

Mr. League was a fine business man, honest in all his dealings, and never had any trouble with his employees. His old foreman, the late Robert J. Hill, a grand man, told the writer that Mr. League was a remarkable man in many respects.

About the year 1898 Mr. League was the People's Party candidate for congress in the 5th congressional district of Chicago, comprising the 11th, 13th, 16th, 17th and 18th wards.

While living here he was one of the founders of the Baptist church. He made hundreds of oil barrels for John D. Rockefeller before that oil magnate had attained fame.

As late as 1875 the present railroad station grounds were covered with piles of staves and heading yet unshipped, but these were soon disposed of and the wide-awake citizens took in hand a plan to convert the remaining debris and sawdust heaps into a beautiful park—but that is another story. The old mill shed was condemned by the fire chief and torn down in the spring of 1888; the old engine was purchased by some saw mill men and moved to the vicinity of New Stark.

Some of the men who were Mr. League’s employees in those early
days were R. J. Hill, Joseph Engle, Thomas Stumm, Oliver Doling, F. C. Gastinger, John W. Manning, Ed Dickens, William Emery, Wesley Bybee, John Cunningham—all familiar names in the village for many years and all are now at rest from their earthly labors.

Sixth of a Series of Articles by Agnew Welsh

Pioneers Faced Many Hardships;
Spirit of Helpfulness Continues
Nights Were Never Too Dark, Roads Never too Muddy to Give Aid

Another family that came to help transform the region from a wilderness to a place of beauty was that of James Landon who came here from Portage county, arriving on May 1, 1852, and taking up their new home in a cabin on 80 acres of land in Section 22, for which he had traded. In their journey they passed through Tiffin, Fostoria and Findlay and the people of these towns urged them not to go "to that wilderness region where 'milk-sickness' or 'trembles' prevailed."

On reaching that part of the wagon trail between the Amariah Thorn place and what later became the Melhorn farm their ox team could not pull the wagon which had bogged axle-deep into the mud. The nearest neighbor, "Dicky" Johnson, who lived a quarter of a mile south, came to the rescue by urging them to unhitch, leave the wagon there until morning and spend the night in his rude home, offering the strangers their one bed.

While the parley was going on Mrs. J., "Aunt Ebecca," got out the old dinner horn, about six feet long, and blew a clarion blast that the few neighbors well knew was the "distress call." The residents at that time, as recalled by the late L.E. Landon, were Samuel Shuster, who lived in a cabin on Hog creek near the bridge; John Tressel, who lived at his water-mill, a half mile down the creek; the widow of Amariah Thorn lived in a little log house that stood near where the half-mile road crosses what is now an extension of Main street to the north; a man named Clark lived on what is now Buckeye street, between the present Main and Johnson; John Lynch lived on what is now South Main, near the present Lima street.

The next morning six of these men went along with the Landons to help them get settled in their cabin, which was located a half-mile east of where is now the Presbyterian church, assisting in cutting through the timber a wagon road for the "new-comers." That spirit of helpfulness, the willingness to "go the second mile," has always characterized the people of this community and has been a great aid in building up a fine citizenship, for "like attracts like."

At the time of which we write a bramble of prickly ash bushes covered the banks of a "slough" that meandered across Buckeye street near the First National Bank corner.

On reaching their cabin, which had been built by a hunter from the Western Reserve, they discovered it had no chimney; neither had the openings between the logs been "chunked and daubed" but these defects were soon remedied and the family spent the winter there. Mr. Landon had two sons, Lucerne E. and Charles D.

L. E. once told me that his father came there with ten cents and the
next spring had the same silver dime, supporting his family in the meantime by wild game and obtaining groceries and other needs by trading hoop poles and similar timber products. The father died about 1885.

Their only neighbor to the south was John Mustard, father of John H., James and Hamilton Mustard; to the east lived Samuel Lamphier. The next year (1853) the John Shanks family came, according to Mr. Landon.

In Woodlawn cemetery, the place of sepulture of so many illustrious dead, repose the remains of James S. DeLisle, of French extraction, as his name indicates. He was born in Perry county, Ohio, in 1815, and passed to his reward in Darke county on March 27, 1872. He was a mighty man in many ways—in physical strength, in pulpit power and grace. In eloquence he was a Sam Jones; in pulpit power, a Lorenzo Dow; in pioneering, a Peter Cartwright. He labored here for a number of years and his fidelity to his work is alluded to in the story of the local Methodist church.

Everybody called him “Uncle Jimmy.” Those were the days when a considerable number of the young men went to church to raise a disturbance rather than hear the sermon but “Uncle Jimmy” was always master of the situation. He might well be called the “fun-loving” preacher for humor crept out in his sermons; he used unique figures of speech. One who knew him well said his voice was like that of a roaring lion and eloquence flowed from his lips “like the mighty torrent of Niagara.” He could play at will upon the emotions of his hearers; one moment he would have them in tears and the next roaring with laughter at some of his quaint remarks. He preached the gospel with both physical and spiritual power.

A friend of the writer witnessed in the summer of 1867, this good man immerse some fifteen or twenty candidates for baptism, using the John Tressel stone pond, north of town, for a baptismry. He requested that he alone be allowed to do the singing, his voice rising with power and pathos as he led each candidate down into the water and as he guided them to the bank he whispered kindly words into their ears.

Generous to a fault, the night was never too dark or muddy for him to go on missions of relief of any sort.

In December, 1838, the late Dr. A. W. Munson, then a young man but longwhile a citizen of Kenton and Andrew Krider, one of the pioneers living northeast of this locality, engaged in a bear hunt along the northern edge of Hog creek. They found the tracks made by several bears that had emerged from the forest skirting the marsh and had taken refuge in the willows bordering the lowland. While thus engaged they met up with Henry Thorn, on a similar mission. They found four black bears and managed to kill one of them.

The doctor also related that the following March Richard Hamilton killed a mother bear and also finding her four cubs took them home and raised them. This occurred on the eastern edge of the Hog creek marsh.

In a letter to the editor of the Ada Record from Mrs. M. Tremain of
Alger, Ohio—Harness and Equipment store in the 1900’s, owned by Lewis Ankerman. Courtesy Joanne Englehardt.

Alger, Ohio—Lewis and Ramon Ankerman in front of their blacksmith shop (closed in 1972) behind the Alger bank. Courtesy Joanne Englehardt.
Blair, Neb., under date of November 11, 1890, the lady stated she was one of the pupils present on the first day of school held in the village. She was reared in the family of John Lynch who moved to Hardin county in 1845 and bought a 40-acre tract of which the south boundary is the Lima road and the east one, Main street. His home was on the hill about where the present Henry Freund home stands. Here he operated a small brick-making plant. He bought the land of Jacob Sapp and Mrs. Tremain states it was then known as the Jacques place. Sapp had a small mill operated by horse-power, for grinding corn, the mainstay of the pioneers.

She named as her neighbors John and Philip Hoon who lived a mile south; Samuel Mathews, who lived an equal distance southwest; Jacob High, who was Mr. Mathews’ neighbor; Eli Pugh, father of Cornelius, Henry and Martin Pugh and who lived two miles south; Richard Johnson, who lived a half mile north of Ada.

She is authority for the statement that S. M. Johnson and John Lynch built the first houses in town. She also mentions Mr. Simons as one of the citizens and states that she had gathered wild blackberries in the center of what is now Ada and that the entire region was covered with a heavy growth of timber and underbush.

HISTORICAL DATA

The last Tri-County Fair was evidently held in 1901 because on March 13, 1902, Henry Young filed in the common pleas court a petition to have dissolved the organization of the Tri-County Fair Co. and upon his suggestion the court appointed Agnew Welsh as Master Commissioner to take testimony and hear the plaintiff in the case. Judge Melhorn made the appointment as suggested, on the 15th, and due notice to that effect was made by publication and on the report of the commissioner the affairs of the concern were closed up.

Central standard time was officially adopted on June 19, 1899.

The old frame grain warehouse that stood on the site of the present Brewer block (Main street, east side, just north of the tracks) was "raised" on September 19, 1857. The late S.H. Bigger, who had wonderful ability as a local historian, furnished this data.

For the holiday trade of 1891 local merchants sold 9,240 pounds of candy, bringing about $1,700.

Cassandra Thorn, one of the persons to live longest in this township, was born in 1812 and died August 2, 1898.

The deaths in Ada for a decade from 1893 numbered 271, of which 20 percent were from tuberculosis. The annual number of all was as follows: 1893, 41; 1894, 26; 1895, 24; 1896, 33; 1897, 33; 1898, 14; 1899, 22; 1900, 20; 1901, 31; 1902, 27.

In its onward sweep from the West to Washington, Randall’s division of “Coxey’s Army of the Commonweal” camped in the
fairground here over Sunday, arriving Saturday, May 26, 1894.

What was probably the first case of manslaughter was the killing of Jacob Stokesberry on August 21, 1891 by J.C. Fruith, a driver of a race track horse during the fair here. The killing took place in front of what was then the Parker saloon and was wholly unprovoked.

On May 25, 1892, there was held an election to determine whether hog pens should continue to be allowed and the people voted to dispense with that highly odorous nuisance.

One of the pioneer physicians of this region was Dr. Robert McGavern, who died at Missouri Valley, Iowa, in 1896. In 1849 he begun the practice of medicine near where the village of Ada now stands, and in 1849 he formed a partnership with Dr. McChesney and in 1850 went to Iowa.

In 1890 the decennial appraisement of Hardin county lands averaged $20.33 per acre; the state average was $21.60.

In the winter of 1872-3 smallpox broke out in the family of Samuel Black, who then lived in the southwest part of the township. Seven of the family had the dreaded disease, Mrs. Black dying with it in January, 1873.

At a banquet given in honor of Co. G., Ohio National Guard, in the Murray hall on November 26, 1904, Capt. Walter Elliott, the head of the body, said the boys should have an armory if he had to build it himself. This Company was mustered into the state’s service on November 10, 1899.

A public well was put down in front of what was then the Bastable (now Rothrock) block in 1886, by popular subscription; this was followed by the one at the corner of Main and Highland by the same process and the third was drilled in front of what is now the Ream store, South Main St.

W. L. Reece retired as manager of the Young Hotel on October 1, 1886.

Early in 1880 meetings were held here on the state local option question and a big rally was held in March.

For the season of 1886-7 Ada consumed 780 gallons of oysters.

Seventh of a Series of Articles by Agnew Welsh
Postoffice Named “Ada” in 1855
by General Thomas Kilby Smith

How the Local Postoffice Grew from Star Route to City Delivery
For several years after the village was laid out the people were obliged to get their mail at Huntersville, a village four and one-half
miles southeast, on the Kenton pike, and which was laid out by Jabez Hunter in 1836. The late S. W. Nixon related that after he came here, in 1852, the people went to Maysville, called Hog Creek postoffice at that time, for their mail. It was about the same distance as Huntersville, only to the southwest. Both these were once flourishing villages but are now but little more than a memory.

For the first few years that mail was received here it was brought from Findlay by “Star Route” post-rider, through Cannonsburg. Richard Johnson was carrier for some time and was succeeded by Joel Baum.

The following has been reported as the list of signers of the original petition asking that a postoffice be established here: John Tressel, Elijah Wilson, S. M. Johnson, Samuel Lamphier, Dr. Ward (Probably Dr. A. W. Wiley), Jacob and Hugh McElroy, Jerry Bricker.

In 1853, a postoffice was established under the name of Johnstown, the same as that of the village, mail being received and dispatched once a week. With the establishment of the regular train schedule, in the fall of 1854, this service was doubtless increased to a daily one.

During the years that the office remained under the name of Johnstown its location was in some village store, indications being that the first merchant to thus handle the mail was J.B. Wilson. He later sold his store to Shepard Green. His son, W. F. Green, wrote from Nashville, Tenn., on April 18, 1894, to the postmaster (then J.M. Bentley) as follows:

“Mr. Wilson was still assisting us in the store, which was general headquarters for the town loafers after supper and one evening a change of names was discussed.”

When this change came about soon afterward W. F. Green was commissioned postmaster and it was his recollection that his bondsman was S.M. Johnson and that the oath of office was taken before Esquire John Tressel, who then conducted a mill on Hog creek, about a half mile west of the present highway leading from Ada northward.

In this same letter Mr. Green stated that he was succeeded as postmaster by Nathanael Ahlefeld, who bought the Green store in the fall of 1857.

For several years there hung in the postoffice, when located in the City building, the first commission under the new name, Ada. This old document was returned by W. F. Green, the man who held the commission. It bore date of July 3, 1855, and stated that Mr. Green had qualified on June 19. This and Mr. Green’s accompanying statement forever sets at rest the date when the name of the office was changed to Ada. In the chapter devoted to the history of the railroad it will be seen that the railroad station’s name was not changed to Ada until October 21, 1867. Both changes were due to the same cause—confusion arising from another Johnstown, in Licking county.

Mr. Green states that when he had the office the quarterly income was about $18.

There is a well-founded tradition which goes to the effect that when the change of name, mentioned by Mr. Green, was under discussion, in 1855, the name decided upon was “Sweet Liberty” but when it was submitted to the Department the officials evidently considered that too long a name or inappropriate. At any rate the name was not
McGuffey, Ohio, Public School. Courtesy Vincent Reichert.

bestowed and the Department selected Ada instead. John H. Mustard, who in his lifetime was a storehouse of local history, stated that the name was given by the Department, but how and why was not revealed for thirty years.

For a number of years the instructor in art in the O.N.U. was Col. Albert Rogall. In the spring of 1885 he had occasion to address a letter to a former military commander, General Thomas Kilby Smith. The reply was dated April 23 and during its course Gen. Smith said:

"It is a little strange that you date your letter from a postoffice that I established and named after a favorite sister thirty years ago when I was connected with the postoffice department and had great power in Ohio." The perfect agreement in dates given in General Smith's letter and the postoffice records makes it clear that to General Thomas Kilby Smith is due the honor of bestowing upon Ada its euphonic and palindromic name.

From Whitelaw Reid's "Ohio in the War" the following is taken: "Thomas Kilby Smith was born in Boston in 1821. When a lad he came with his parents to Cincinnati, was educated at old Woodward, studied law with the great Salmon P. Chase and was admitted to the bar in 1846. In 1853 he was appointed to a responsible position in the Postoffice department at Washington. From 1856 to 1860 he was United States marshal, southern district of Ohio, then was deputy clerk of Hamilton county and in 1861 Governor Dennison commissioned him Lieutenant Colonel of the 54th Ohio regiment, (for service in the Civil war.) Before the close of the year he was made Colonel and served with the Army of the Tennessee, being among the first to receive the reward of promotion, being made a Brigadier General on August 11, 1863."

General Smith went to New York in 1887 to assist in the work of securing funds for the completion of General Grant's tomb, a labor in which he engaged with so much enthusiasm as to overtax his strength, resulting in an illness that terminated fatally on December 14, 1887. The remains were brought to his home near Philadelphia and interred in the parish churchyard of St. Dominick, near that city.

This "favorite sister" Ada, was born in Ohio and married Clinton Rice, a member of the New York bar, who died many years ago. She was the mother of two daughters. The elder, Lillian Dynevor Rice, was editor of The Designer, a well known fashion journal. She was assisted in this work by her sister, Miss Beatrice. The mother was a famous beauty and shone in social circles in Cincinnati and also at Washington during the administration of President Pierce. A son was Walter George Smith, an attorney of Philadelphia, who published in 1897 a book of memoirs and the letters of his distinguished father. On page 192 is reproduced a letter in which reference is made to this sister Ada.

As late as 1865 letters intended for persons here continued to be addressed to "Johnstown," one such, addressed to Ream & Gilbert, having been found among personal effects twenty years later. When the writer came here, in 1875, the postoffice was located in a little frame building that stood on East Buckeye, where the Township house now stands. Later it occupied a building that stood on the site of Foss-Agin-Meyer Legion building. With the completion of the City Hall, in
1881, the office was moved to the east lower room thereof, but later the department desired more commodious and better lighted quarters, and with the completion of the Brewer block in the early 90's, was moved to the south room thereof, the office being entirely re-equipped throughout, using keyless locks and a modern outfit in every respect, making it one of the best appointed offices in the county.

On December 28, 1874, it was constituted a presidential office, changing it from a fourth to a third class office, with a salary of $500 per annum. Later this was increased to $640, then to $710, then it rose to $1,100, from that to $1,400 and in 1886 it was $1,600. Since then increases have been made as follows: in 1893, to $1,800; in 1900 to $2,000. The annual business for an early decade was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>$6,624.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>$6,522.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>$6,971.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>$8,095.48</td>
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<td>1902</td>
<td>$8,696.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>$9,075.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>$9,332.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The minimum requirement of postoffice business to entitle a town to free mail delivery in 1909 was $10,000 per annum. By April of that year Ada's annual receipts had gone above minimum requirement, its claims were duly presented and shortly afterward were granted.

S. W. Phillips was the prime mover in the effort for rural mail delivery and in March, 1899, the service was granted and on May 1 following, delivery was begun with the carriers as follows: John W. Kanode, Route 1; J. Frank Horner, Route 2. In September 1899 Mr. Horner resigned and was succeeded by C. M. Matheny.

Route 3 was installed later and Route 4 soon followed with J.C. Boone as carrier.

As already pointed out the early postmasters, in succession, were J.B. Wilson, W. F. Green and Nathan Ahlefeld. In 1858 or early in 1859 he was succeeded by W. L. Reece; from 1863 to 1864, Edward Peterman; 1864-66, J.O. Phillipi. In the spring of 1866 P.W. Stumm succeeded to the office and in 1867 Nathan Ahlefeld was again appointed with Al. Zugswert, as deputy. About 1868 George C. Tressel succeeded to the office but the next political upheaval threw the plum into the lap of G.H. Zugswert, who held it until the appointment of Samuel Watt on February 26, 1869. He served until President Cleveland appointed S.S. Clayton in June, 1886. In August, 1890, John M. Bentley came in under the Harrison administration. On April 17, 1894, he was succeeded by John W. Morrow and he by Harry Young who died before his term expired and his brother and chief bondsman, B.S. Young, took charge on April 16, 1900, continuing until Walter Elliott was appointed June 5, 1900. He served until the appointment of his successor, S. D. Hazlett, on September 21, 1913, and he by the present incumbent, J.K. Fulks, on November 11, 1921.

**Eighth of a Series of Articles by Agnew Welsh**  
**Presbyterians Formed First Local Religious Organization in 1841**  
Meeting place was Changed from
Roundhead, Ohio—Main street. Courtesy Maxine Young, Lakeview, Ohio.

Blanchard Station, From Ada Herald files.
Huntersville to Ada in 1855

The Presbyterian society is the oldest church organization in this city, having been organized August 21, 1841, under the Sidney Presbytery. The society was formed at Huntersville.

Rev. Thomas B. Clark perfected the organization with the following membership: Isaac Mathews, Nancy Mathews, James M. Nelson, Susanna Nelson and James Hamilton, who were received from the Kenton church, and Thomas Irwin, John McClure, Robert Hyndman and Jackson Mathews by examination.

Isaac Mathews and James M. Nelson were chosen as elders. Rev. Clark, who lived in Logan county, was the pastoral supply of this young congregation for some time. The society continued there about fourteen years and for several years was ministered to by Rev. R. M. Badeau, of Lima.

The services in those years were at stated periods, but perhaps not oftener than once a month, as the minister in charge supplied several other churches, all widely separated owing to the sparsely settled condition of this region.

In 1855 the location of the society was transferred from Huntersville to Johnstown (now Ada) which had sprung up since the completion of the P., Ft. W. & C. railway (the services being held in the school house) though retaining the old name.

At a meeting of the Presbytery held at Mt. Blanchard, Hancock county, on April 11, 1860, the name was changed to the Johnstown church which name it bore until April 22, 1868 when it was again officially changed to the Ada Presbyterian church to conform with the change in name which the village had undergone.

Late in 1860 the building of a church house was talked of and resulted in the appointing of a building committee on January 7, 1861, consisting of James M. Nelson, Robert Hyndman, Thomas Irwin, J.H. Mustard and S.M. Johnson—the man who laid out the town and for whom it was originally named. The contract for erecting the new building was let to John H. Mustard, an honored citizen and a pillar in the church.

The house was erected and enclosed that spring but the War of the Rebellion then in progress retarded the work and the building was not completed until 1864. The dedication did not take place until 1867. Rev. T.P. Johnson, of Lima, preached the dedicatory sermon.

During the erection of the new structure the "mud sills," on which rested the foundation walls of the old church, were exhumed and were in a remarkable state of preservation.

As stated the church was first supplied by Rev. T.B. Clark, who was succeeded by Rev. R.M. Badeau. The latter gentleman continued in charge until after the erection of their church building. He was succeeded by Rev. William M. Reed whose period of labor continued from 1868 until 1870. His two years' service were of great profit to the church. He was succeeded by Rev. John A. Meeks, who moved here from Findlay. All these ministers and those who succeeded them, also preached for the congregation at New Stark which was organized about the same time as was the Huntersville church. About 1889 the Ada congregation began to employ all their pastor's time.

Rev. Meeks was succeeded in 1873 by Rev. John Kelly who served
the church until 1875. The church was supplied for about a year by Rev. T. P. Johnson. In 1877 a call was extended to Rev. C.K. Lehman of Wooster, who accepted and his efficient labors continued until December 1879. Early in 1880 Rev. Z.B. Campbell of Shreve accepted a call from the church and served with what fidelity the long roll of membership and the present house of worship can abundantly testify.

During the interims between the regular pastorates of those named the church was supplied by Revs. John Ustick, James E. Marquis and Robert Edgar, in the order named.

The elders of this church were Isaac Mathews, James M. Nelson, Robert Hyndman, Elihu Mathews, John W. Nelson, John Dobbins, Alexander Sanderson, Alvin S. Nelson, Dr. I.C. McGinnis, David G. Kemp.

After these came J. Ross Lee, C.A. Head, N. Hetrick and William Lantz. The number of elders was increased from three to five. This addition was made at the filling of the vacancy occasioned by the death of John Dobbins, an honored officer and member of the church.

In February, 1888, the society was duly incorporated under the laws of Ohio.

Following the great revival in the church in the winter of 1888-89 there came a demand for a better house of worship. To meet this demand the church elected in 1890 a building committee, consisting of the board of trustees and C. Young, William Lantz, D.G. Kemp, John Souder and F.L. Bauman. The trustees were John H. Mustard, George Epley, John Ash, Robert Gilmore, H.E. Neff, Justin Brewer, O.B. Pendleton and D. C. Nelson. The building committee elected C. Young president, William Lantz, secretary and D. G. Kemp, treasurer.

Plans and specifications were submitted by several architects and those of Charles H. Miller, formerly of this city but then of Lima, were selected. Bids were advertised for and at 12 o'clock, noon, of May 1, 1890, they were opened and the contract of erecting the building was awarded to S.P. Stewart of Bowling Green, Ohio at $9,120.00.

The old building was sold to the man who erected it—J.H. Mustard, and was moved to Gilbert street, near the railroad; a good foundation was put under it and the church continued to use it until they occupied the new one. It was later destroyed by fire.

The erection of a building commensurate with their needs and in keeping with the times required more ground than they possessed and accordingly a purchase was made of Dr. J.T. Croney of the 50 foot frontage adjoining on the south. The residence portion was moved away and ground for the new structure was broken about May 20, 1890. The contract for the foundation was sub-let to E.G. Sousley.

The corner stone was set on Wednesday, July 23, 1890, with impressive ceremonies. The opening prayer was by Rev. Lemuel Herbert, of the M.E. church, who petitioned that no man might be injured in the erection of this building. His prayer was answered. The scriptural reading by Rev. E. A. Lowe, of Ottawa, was followed by an address by Rev. Robert McCaslin, of Sidney. A list of the contents of the box sealed up in the stone was then read, the stone placed in position and a prayer of dedication and thanksgiving was offered by Rev. E. W. Work of Van Wert.

The contract called for completion of the building by November 1,
but from some unavoidable delay the time was extended and the keys to the building were not turned over to a committee until on Friday, February 10, 1891. The building was completed to the entire satisfaction of the committee. The changes made, principally in stone work, involved an extra outlay of $615, so that the total cost of the building itself was $9,735. The dedication took place on May 10, 1891.

In a little circular that came into my hands I find the following as the names of the men who have served as pastor of this church:


Ninth of a Series of Articles by Agnew Welsh
Methodists Organized in 1855; Baptists Eleven Years Later

Wielded Great Influence Here Despite Many Lean Years

The first services held by a Methodist minister in this vicinity were at the home of David Sleister, three miles southwest of Ada, in 1850 and by the Rev. Samuel Hagerman of Huntersville. Soon after the village of Johnstown was laid out, in 1852, a frame school house was erected not far from the center of the township. In this building church services were held irregularly until a congregation was organized in 1855, following a meeting by the Rev. Jacob Fechty. Some of the families thus gathered into an organization were those of Eli Newman, Eli Pugh, Mrs. Simons, John Epley and wife, George McElroy, Joel Baum, the Woods and Turner families, Mr. and Mrs. William Tyler, S.M. Johnson and family, Hammond Gilbert, Jane Lynch and doubtless others whose names can not now be traced.

Services were held in the school house until the completion of the frame structure by the Presbyterians in 1864. The Methodists held their services there until the completion of their own edifice.

At a quarterly conference, held on May 18, 1867, a building committee was appointed to carry out the work of providing a home for this faithful band, this committee consisting of Solomon Smick, Nathan Ahlefeld, Horace Gilbert, Dr. Ralph Davenport, John Davenport, J.O. Philippi, Thomas J. Carson, Samuel Arbuthnot and Samuel Stringfellow.

The site selected was on the southwest corner of Gilbert and Hoosier streets, the latter since named Highland avenue. The building, though unfinished, was dedicated in 1868 by the Rev. Granville Moody, In 1871 it was re-dedicated.

While the new church home was in process of erection the pastor was the Rev. J.M. Delisle who personally hauled to the Smick mill many of the logs for timbers for the structure and during the progress of this work had the misfortune to break a leg but undaunted by this mishap, would be taken to the Tressel quarry, north of town, and lying, face down, would quarry stone for the foundation. The carpenter contract was let to Capt. B. A. Holland.

In February, 1897, it was decided to erect a new and modern structure and when the matter of a site came up there was a con-
sizable division of opinion on the matter, a strong sentiment favoring some location south of the railroad, but in May 1897, the two lots on the corner of Main and Highland were purchased and upon these the present fine structure was erected and two years later a farewell service was held in the old building.

In a talk before the Kiwanis club in 1930, the Rev. William Deal, himself a pioneer and revered preacher of that church, stated that among the early preachers here were David Bulle, Joseph Good, I.A. Smith, Joseph Wykes, S.B. Maltbie, W.J. Peck, and H.J. Bigley. These labored before the early church, known as the Johnstown Mission, was formed he said, its first regular minister being J.M. Delisle, as already stated. Other men who have served as pastors of the Ada church were: Joseph Wykes and J.C. Castor, 1862, Joseph Wykes and Silas Maltby, 1862-63; William J. Peck and Hamilton J. Bigley, 1863-1864; William J. Peck and S.T. Mather, 1864-1865; James S. Delisle, 1866-87; Benjamin R. Rowand, 1867-68; John W. Hill, 1868-72; Isaac N. Smith, 1872-75; Phillip A. Drown, 1875-78; Dwight R. Cook, 1878; William Fitzgerald, 1879; Jesse Carr, 1880; Dwight R. Cook, 1880-82; Gersham Lease, 1882-83; Adam C. Barnes, 1883-85; Gersham Lease, 1885-89; Daniel Carter, 1889-90; Richard Wallace, 1890-95; Peter Biggs, 1895-96; Samuel L. Boyers, 1896-98; John I. Wean, 1898-02; W. McK. Brackney, 1902-04; M.E. Ketcham, 1904-05; Frank W. Stanton, 1905-10; David Bowers, 1910-12; O.L. Curl, 1912-14; Addyman Smith, 1914-16; T.W. Salt, 1916-17; W. N. Shank, 1917-22; W. A. Vorhis, 1922-25; Robert Kennedy, 1925.

Baptist Church History

The Ada Baptist church was organized on October 2, 1866, and re-organized by a council on October 18, 1867. Rev. Chapman of Lima, formed the organization with about 30 members, among whom were the following: John and Mary A. Gilbert, E.L. and Rachel Sanford, D.S. and Cyrena Judd, William League, N.B. Holder, Clara McClanahan, Elizabeth Perry, Ann Glass, David G. Lewis and wife, Christopher Perry and wife, Mr. Enos and wife, William A. Edwards, Grandma League, a Mr. Manning and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas.

This church was planted as a result of a series of meetings held by Rev. E. D. Thomas, who was sent here by the Home Missionary Society. They used the Presbyterian church building pending the erection of their own structure, which was begun in 1867. The building committee was William League, N.B. Holder and William A. Edwards. The site selected was the lot on the northeast corner of Montford and Simon streets, which was then quite a desirable location, being near the center of population. The new house of worship was dedicated on May 10, 1868, by Rev. Chapman. The structure cost about $2,500.

The first board of trustees consisted of D.G. Lewis, N.B. Holder, William League and William A. Edwards, with John Gilbert as deacon. Rev. E.D. Thomas was the first pastor. He resigned in April, 1868, and was followed by Rev. J.D. Albert, who resigned in 1870, and Rev. R.R. Williams was then called. A revival held this year resulted in 23 baptisms. Rev. Williams resigned on January 8, 1871, and in March Rev. Crandall became pastor, preaching for them six months.

Rev. W.H. Gallant was licensed to preach and a number were
dismissed, at their request, to place their membership with the Riley Creek church, in Hancock county.

The year 1872 was one of adversity for the church and a number were excluded. They had no pastor this year, but in 1873, the Rev. D.D. Spencer supplied the charge for part of the year, closing his labors on Feb. 1, 1874, when the Rev. V.D. Willard, who had been licensed to preach, supplied the church on Sunday evenings only. He was succeeded by the Rev. J.D. Allerton, who preached once a month during 1875 as the pastor, until his resignation early in 1877; the pulpit was filled by supplies until July when the Rev. W.M. Leet was called for half-time. He closed his labors the following March when the Rev. Allerton again became pastor, but for half-time. This relation continued for a few months only.

During part of the following year (1879) John M. Beaver supplied the church and in 1880 the church called, for the fourth time, the Rev. Allerton, again for half-time. During 1881 he held a very successful revival, resulting in 88 additions to the church by baptism and 14 by experience. He closed his labors in 1882 and the Rev. M.S. Bowers was called and served until October of that year.

Then followed a period of depression, during which the church was pastorless, divided and discouraged which condition continued for several years. In 1886 the Rev. M.L. Rowland served the church for a short time and was succeeded by the Rev. J.E. Wenman. He remained part of the year and in 1887 the Rev. J.C. Hackworth was called for one-fourth time. The next year a meeting resulted in 22 additions but during the following year dissensions arose and there was considerable contention. Rev. Hackworth resigned and in July (1879) Rev. A.J. Wiant took up the work, preaching one-fourth time, and resigning in a few months. During 1890 the church was pastorless but had preaching occasionally.

In 1891 a meeting was held to organize a second Baptist church which became known as the "Little Vine." The Rev. McCloud was its pastor in 1892-93, the Rev. G.C. Enders succeeding him in 1894. This congregation occupied a small building erected on the southwest corner of Montford and Johnson streets, but in a few years the organization went to pieces.

In August, 1891, Rev. W.B. Hartzog was employed for half-time and the First Baptist church took new courage. He was quite an able man and continued his labors during the following year (1892) during which time a lot was purchased in a more central location, on the north side of Highland avenue, between Main and Johnson.

In August, 1893, the church was pastorless but the building having been moved to the new location and greatly improved, the congregation also gathered force and Rev. B.F. Tilley was called as pastor. He was an energetic young man and during the following year the church doubled its membership.

In March, 1896, the Rev. Tilley closed his labors here and in August, H.B. Hazen, a student of the O.N.U., was engaged as supply, in which capacity he served until the following May. During the remainder of the year the church was pastorless and the outlook was not promising.

On June 1, 1898, the Rev. J. Frank Smith became pastor, serving until the following November. The church was again without a pastor

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until the following September. The year of 1899 opened with gloomy prospects and there was some talk of closing the church. Rev. L.S. Colburn, Association Missionary, held a meeting in January, resulting in twelve additions. Repairs were made on the building and the star of hope again arose. In September, 1899, Rev. G.W. Schmitz, a very energetic young man, became pastor, this relation continuing until November, 1902, when he resigned to become pastor of the Lima church.

In April, 1903, Rev. B.J. George took up the work. He was a man ripe in years and was greatly respected by all. He gave up the work on July 1, 1905, to retire from the ministry and removed to Marion, O. He was succeeded in August of that year by Rev. Max Wertheimer, of Richmond, Ind. He was a very scholarly man, having formerly been a Jewish rabbi.

About the time Rev. George became pastor, the church had built a parsonage, adding it to the rear of the church building.

Tenth of a Series of Articles by Agnew Welsh
How the Ada Church of Christ and Lutheran Church were Organized
Dr. Lehr Among Founders; Lutherans, Dedicated Church in 1878

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CHURCH OF CHRIST

That body of religionists variously known as the Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ and Christians was the result of a movement started by Thomas and Alexander Campbell early last century, their plea being for a restoration of the forms of primitive Christianity, particularly as it applied to the communion service, one faith and one mode of baptism.

At first people began calling them the faith [Some material has been omitted through a printing error in the original. — ed.] repudiated the title and protested so vigorously against its use that it eventually fell into disuse. They were also known in some sections as the “New Lights.”

Out of the teachings of the Campbells and other pioneers of the faith grew two schools: one was the ultra restorationists who do not believe in the use of musical instruments in a church service nor in national missionary work. For many years a body of the latter school has been located a few miles west and known as the Christian church, while the more liberal branch at Ada is known as the Church of Christ. In the city in which I live (Miami, Florida) these names apply to exactly the reverse of the above.

In 1910 the late W.L. Reece wrote in some historical sketches that one of the pioneers of the village was Elijah Wilson and that at his cabin home an appointment was made for a Sunday service by a minister whose name he thought was Tingle and who was known as a “New Light” preacher. This was probably about 1840.

About 1835 James Marshal Candler’s father moved from Allen county to the northwestern corner of Hardin county. J.M. Candler was then a young man; his parents originally came from Virginia, where all had doubtless come under the Campbell teachings for James Marshal Candler became a minister in the Christian faith and planted

Kenton, Ohio—Columbus street looking west 1913. Courtesy Vincent Reichert.
several churches in the region. He continued in the work for a long
period of years.

About 1852 Marshal Carman and his wife, Deborah, came up from
one of the southern Ohio counties and settled just south of the line
between Liberty and Marion townships, a few miles southwest of Ada.
It was largely through their efforts and financial aid that an edifice
was erected not far from the present Carman cemetery. Some of the
neighboring families identified with this work were those of George
Sutton, Evan M. Jackson, George Reese and probably others.

William Guyton, long a resident of that vicinity, recalls the name of
a Mr. Green as that of the man who ministered to the congregation at
one time. Through removals and lack of additions the congregation
later was disbanded and eventually the structure itself was moved to
another point to be used as a farm building.

In 1866 Henry S. Lehr came to Ada, soon after graduating from Mt.
Union college, with the avowed purpose of establishing a normal
school, first paving the way by serving for several years as head of the
public schools, later establishing a "select school" as the beginning of
the institution he founded a few years later.

Once when in a reminiscent mood, Dr. Lehr related to me the story of
the founding of the Church of Christ in Ada, the gist of his
recollection being as follows:

"When I came to Ada there was but one Sunday school in town and it
was held at the Presbyterian church, then just recently completed. I
asked the citizens if there were any of the Christian faith here and a
few heads of families were named, among whom were William Park of
Orange township, George Reese, Evan Jackson, George Sutton and
Marshal Carman, of the vicinity.

"I invited them to come together in the old frame schoolhouse and
on the Lord's day afternoon there were 27 who communed. Elder Dana
Call preached and it was a season of great joy; he made an
appointment for another meeting and I chopped the firewood for it and at
that time about 36 were formed into an organization.

"When the school house was sold we were without a meeting place
but met a few times at the home of Brother Philip Axline, who later
became our pastor; meetings were also held in Ream's hall.

"In the meantime I had organized the Normal school and one day
Brother George Sutton came to me and said we should buy a certain
lot (the one on which the Ada edifice stands) and we purchased it for
$200.

"In the meantime our membership had been strengthened by the
coming here of the George Sousley family, Mrs. Lydia Scott, Mrs.
John P. Cochran, John H. Wilson and others whom I can not now
recall."

The lot to which Dr. Lehr referred was purchased in 1874 and a
contract let to John H. Wilson for a square frame structure; some
years later a vestibule and belfry were added to it. Dr. Lehr said there
were times when the struggle was a difficult one but brighter days
followed and the need came for a larger house of worship.

One spring morning in 1891 the matter of a new building was
discussed by a little group of members and $2,000 immediately
pledged for the work. On June 14 the matter was placed before the
Kenton, Ohio Fire Department. Courtesy Vincent Reichert.

Blocktown German Lutheran Church, 1908. From Ada Herald files.
congregation and the membership voted to undertake the work and elected a building committee, consisting of Prof. J.G. Park, S.B. Wagner and Agnew Welsh.

Messrs. Park and Welsh made, at their own expense, a trip to Rochester, N.Y., to inspect a church that they thought embodied some ideas suited to local use and found such to be the case. An architect from Detroit drew the plans.

In the spring of 1892 the contract was let to C.S. Anspach and on February 26, 1893, the completed structure was dedicated by Elder F.M. Rains of Cincinnati.

On the death of Miss Louisa A. Iden her home was left by will to the church, the proceeds of the sale thereof to be used in the purchase of a pipe organ, provision for such instrument having been made in the church plans.

Through the large Sunday school class conducted for many years by Prof. J.G. Park, this church was enabled to influence hundreds of young men and women, several of whom have attained prominence in the ministry of this and other churches, and in the missionary field. Deaths, removals and the sale of the university to the Methodist church have combined to cause this local church to lose much of the prestige it once held.

A happy thought, conceived by James E. Hawes and being put into execution by Photographer Frederick, is the placing in the church of a large frame in which are grouped photographs of the men who have served this church as pastor. They have been the following:


LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran society was organized at the home of Samuel Anspach, Esq., by Rev. J.L. Smith, missionary president of this synod, on August 23, 1876, with the following membership: Samuel Anspach and wife, John W. Umbaugh and wife, J. H. Umbaugh and wife, S.M. Anspach and wife, Augustus Cronbaugh and wife, Luther M. McCready and Mrs. A. Oberlin.

They bought a lot on the northeast corner of Main and Center streets and began the erection of a brick structure in 1877. It was not complete until the following summer and was dedicated on August 25, 1878. The bell was added in 1880.

The first pastor was Rev. J.G. Neiffer, of Lima, who continued in that capacity until succeeded, in January, 1878, by Rev. Frank P. Cook, then a young man, who came from Mount Pleasant, North Carolina. He was formally installed in August of that year by the venerable Rev. Thomas W. Corbett, of LaFayette, O.
Rev. Cook remained as pastor for seventeen years, resigning in December, 1895, to become the pastor of the church at Jewett, Ohio. In September 1898, Rev. Charles K. Hunton, of Lima, became pastor. Both these ministers increased their usefulness by marrying splendid wives while here.

In 1899 Rev. Hunton resigned to accept a call from Columbus, Ohio, where he labored successfully for several years, giving up that work to accept a call to Salem, Virginia. Rev. Hunton was succeeded by Rev. Jacob Ash, of Rochester, Pennsylvania, who began his labors in January, 1899.

The church has grown gradually, both by confirmations and letters, and has a steady, faithful following. Early in the year 1907 the interior was made more comfortable by new pews and these, together with previous outer improvements have kept this church in the line of progress.


On Nov. 25, 1928, the congregation dedicated a fine new edifice at a new location, corner of Johnson and Lincoln, and two years later the old structure, where they long worshipped, was converted into a gasoline station.

The date of organization of some of the literary clubs of the city were as follows: Current Events, 1893; Twice Ten, 1902; Advance, 1906.

The first farmers' institute held here was in 1883. It was organized and conducted by local farmers without state aid for a number of years.

In June, 1891, a Farmers' Alliance was organized in the vicinity, with John W. Lacey as president.

Eleventh of a series by Agnew Welsh

CATHOLIC CHURCH

The first Catholic services ever held in Ada were about 1858 when Father Sullivan of Tiffin came occasionally for that purpose. Then Father Murphy, also of the diocese of Cleveland, preached at intervals.

This county is attached to the diocese of Cincinnati. In June, 1866, Kenton was given a resident priest, Rev. N.R. Young, and Ada came under his care. The Catholic families and their arrivals in the vicinity were as follows: A.C. Baker, 18—; Michael Flynn and John Morrow, 1856; Daniel Breen, 1858; Thomas and Bartholomew Bastable, 1861; Daniel Hanley, 1863; Bartholomew O'Leary, 1864; Jacob Forbing, 1869.

When Rev. Young took the work, services here were held in the second story of a frame store room that stood on the northwest corner of Buckeye and Johnson, owned by B. Bastable. In 1869 Rev. A.M. Quatman succeeded Rev. Young. He remained a few months and was succeeded by Rev. N.J.V. Fas in June, 1870.

Owing to the increasing work Rev. Fas negotiated for this parish to
be served by the priest at Lima, Rev. A.R. Sidley, who remained in this relation for about three years. Their place of worship here having been destroyed by fire, services were held at the homes of members. With the completion of the I.O.O.F. block, in 1872, the congregation leased room in this building on the second floor and here the faithful worshipped with the most rude equipment.

On June 24, 1874, Rev. A. Siebenfoercer, who remained at Kenton until 1905, took charge of the work here, continuing with but one interruption until giving up the work at Kenton.

From May to December, 1881, Rev. Horatious Bourion had charge of the Hardin county work. Among Rev. Siebenfoercer’s assistants, who occasionally preached here, were Revs. J.M. Quatman, Alfred D. Dexter, Andrew Ebert, W.B. Migel and F.S. Lasance are named by Rev. Siebenfoercer, from whose history of this church, prepared from an old history of the county, we have obtained these facts.

Mr Forbing donated a lot for the church site here. It was located on the southeast corner of Ballard and Johnson streets but was then not deemed a suitable location. What changes time hath wrought. With the donor’s consent the lot was sold in 1874 and two others were purchased, on the northeast corner of Hoosier and Simon, which was then deemed a better location.

Ground for the new structure was broken on September 30, 1874 and in December of that year the structure, 30x50 feet, was ready for use, and was dedicated by Rev. A.M. Quatman. The cost of the lots, building, etc., was $3,227.50, of which about $600 was contributed by non-Catholic citizens of Ada and an equal sum was secured outside the village.

In 1895 Rev. Siebenfoercer was succeeded in this work by Rev. Venneman, of Marysville, who ministered unto this church until succeeded in 1904, by Rev. Siebenfoercer who continued the work until he resigned in 1905, to become the head of St. Mary Seminary, near Cincinnati. He was succeeded by Rev. Augustine Fortman but the Ada work was in charge of his assistant, Rev. J. Ryan. Rev. Venneman passed to his reward on March 6, 1907.

OTHER CHURCHES

A National Holiness Society was organized here on March 15, 1884, with Squire Rice as president and C.E. Rowley as secretary.

In 1889 the Universalists held meetings in Ballard’s hall and in August of that year the Adventists held a meeting in a tent but no active organization resulted from either meeting.

About the mid-seventies the Rev. J.T. Hale organized a religious body here known as the Church of the Strangers, using the Presbyterian house of worship as a meeting place.

The Rev. I.A. Sites organized a Reformed congregation here in November 1884 and was its minister for several years. A new church building was dedicated on May 30, 1888. J.A. Thomas was its pastor from October, 1890 to July 1891. In October, 1891, a call was extended to the Rev. J.A. Ketrow, who was installed the following June and served but a brief time, resigning in October following. The next pastor of which we have record was the Rev. J.W. Yeoisle, who began his labors in 1894. Not long afterward the congregation gave up the work here.
Disciple Church, Ada, Ohio. Courtesy Vincent Reichert.

Main St. train depot and watch tower, Ada, Ohio. Courtesy George Hesser.
At one period in Ada’s history the Wesleyans, a split-off from the Methodists, had a strong organization here and built a brick edifice at the southwest corner of Gilbert and College—the building later being bought and remodeled by the college for a musical conservatory. In 1893 its pastor was Rev. Thomas Scull. The edifice was dedicated as a church in the fall of 1879.

HISTORICAL NOTES

The first improved highways or “pike roads” as they were then called, was the Ada-Kenton road in 1872; the road running past the old Lutheran church in 1894; the Rinehart school, east, in 1892 and west in the following year; the Rusher road in 1909.

The chemical fire engine was purchased in June, 1896. At that time D.A. Watt, local jeweler, was serving as fire chief. He was succeeded by Oscar M. Judd and the line of succession was as follows: Agnew Welsh, John S. Foit, J.F. Perry, J. Guy Deming, the latter in October, 1906.

AGNEW WELSH SERIES BRINGS REPLIES

John Scott, postmaster of Porterville, Calif., who was reared in Ada and served on the Herald staff for many years, writes “Welsh history is full of interest to me.”

Mrs. George Sinclair of Columbus was in Ada visiting relatives that week. She commented on the interest the Welsh articles held for her and brought to the Herald office a copy of the Ada Record, dated December 3, 1884.

This number had been preserved because it contained the obituary of her mother, Mrs. Fannie Dodge Eckenede. It gave the following market quotations:

Butter, 13-15 cents; eggs, 18 cents; potatoes, 25 cents per bu.; apples 40-55 cents; onions, 60-75 cents; sugar, 6-12 cents; coffee, 13-25 cents; corn, per bu., 27-30 cents; wheat 65 cents; chickens, per lb., 6 cents; turkeys, 8 cents.

Twelfth of a Series by Agnew Welsh
First Railroad in Ohio Built Thru Ada in 1854

The real pioneers of a country settled along streams, one of the reasons therefor being a method of communication; another was natural drainage and a third was the use of water for households. When all such adjacent territory was taken up and expansion became necessary a cry for railroads went up and fortunate was the town through which one passed and many other towns sprang up as a result of the coming of the railroads.

The first railroad in Hardin County and in Ohio was the old Mad River road which was granted a charter by an act of the Ohio legislature passed January 5, 1832, the route passing through Kenton and Forest. It has changed names several times and is now known as the Big Four. Its termini were Dayton and Sandusky. In 1837 the state lent financial aid to the extent of $270,000 and on March 16, 1839, the commissioners of Hardin county, by legislative authority, subscribed $30,000 to the prosecution of the work. The road did not reach Kenton
until July 4, 1846; two years later it had reached Urbana and on Jan. 25, 1851, it reached Dayton. Evidently construction work was begun at the northern terminus.

The Ohio and Indiana railway was incorporated on March 20, 1850, and in 1856 the road was leased for 99 years to the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago railway company and on June 7, 1869 that company re-leased to the Pennsylvania railroad which lease was assigned to the Pennsylvania company on April 1, 1871.

Some of the counties through which the road passed issued bonds to aid in construction, but Hardin being too new and too poor, did not enter into such arrangement. The Bucyrus Journal, in February, 1863, contained an advertisement by the county commissioners for bids for the use of $90,000, net proceeds from their bond issue which must have been for about $125,000 as the paper stated the bonds were sold at 69½ cents on the dollar. These latter bonds were one the railroad had given them in exchange for county bonds.

Mrs. M. Tremain of Blair, Nebraska, who proved to be very accurate in her recollections, once wrote that the survey was made through here in 1850 and 1851 and the work of clearing the right-of-way through the forest was begun. The late S. W. Nixon, an old resident and competent authority, said the grading was done in 1852 and in the spring of 1853 the rails were laid and construction trains run, but it was some time before a regular schedule was maintained.

When the railroad engineers surveyed the line across Hog creek marsh they were obliged to employ a gang to cut brush and pile over the proposed right-of-way in order that they might set grade stakes and when construction began the S.M. Johnson sawmill was occupied for a long period on a contract to furnish oak “mudsills” on which to lay the ties. It is related that the locomotive of one of the construction trains jumped the track and buried itself in the ooze and slime of the muck land. It remained there for a long period as there was no way to recover it until a substantial roadbed had been constructed.

The engineering corps then boarded at the Kreidler home, not far from what later became known as the Somerville schoolhouse. When they reached this point they stopped with Uncle Richard Johnson whose cabin stood near what later became known as the Jack McElroy home.

The Wyandot Pioneer, published at Upper Sandusky on November 9, 1854, announced the arrival of the first passenger train there on November 2, 1854. The same publication, in its issue of May 10, 1855, said: “Three passenger trains pass through this place east and west over the Ohio and Indiana railroad. This may pay but to us it looks very much like ‘running it into the ground’ but we hope our apprehensions may be groundless.”

Early in 1854 the railroad tracks had been laid as far west as Forest and that spring the work was completed through here to Lima. That fine citizen, the late Michael Long, gave me this information many years ago.

In a letter to the writer in March, 1909, the late P.W. Stumm stated that the first agent here was A.W. Thompson, acting both as agent and operator of the telegraph line; that the telegraph instrument used was a Morse ribbon machine and that the first sound instrument in use
here was the one used by J.O. Phillipi when he became agent.

The company built for a station the large frame now used for a freight office and depot. As I recall it the present west room was used for the passenger waiting room while a small ticket office opened into it from the east side.

Judge J.E. Lowry, who was one of the early telegraph operators here, said the few duties of the station agent were performed for some time by William Maxwell, the section foreman, who lived in the station. In addition to these two-fold duties he conducted a "hotel" in the building. The late Mrs. Nathan Ahlefeld, of Kenton, said that in 1856 she attended a big wedding in this hotel, at which the contracting parties were a Daniel Hoon and Elizabeth Sipes. She says it was made a general holiday, accompanied by a big dinner; everybody for miles around was invited and came.

Thirteenth of a Series by Agnew Welsh

Coming of the Railroads

The writer does not have the exact dates for all the terms of service of the other men who have served as agents here but the following is approximately correct. A.W. Thompson served from 1858 to 1860; his brother, T.B., followed him and acted for a few months and was succeeded by J.O. Phillipi, who remained until about 1862 when he was relieved by C.R. Higgins, who held the post until the appointment of his successor, James E. Lowry, in 1866, the latter serving three years. In 1869 Mr. Lowry was succeeded by J.F. Richards whose tenancy continued for about a year, being succeeded in 1870 or '71 by John Van Liew who held the post until some time in the 80's when he was succeeded by John Bastable who resigned in 1891 to go with the L.E. & W. railway. The next to follow was W.W. Crooks, who remained until his transfer to Bucyrus (and later to Lima) in 1899 when the duties were taken up by B.A. Welch who remained a number of years to be followed by the late Robert Hunt and he by Mr. Brame.

In the above paragraph it is stated that Mr. Phillipi was "relieved," a gentle way of stating that he was discharged. Many years ago J.W. "Bill" Williamson wrote me from Kansas the story of this incident. He said "Jim" went from his office one night to attend a Methodist revival and was so intent upon getting there that he neglected to "ground" his telegraph instrument. That night a heavy electrical storm came up and a bolt of lightning entered on the wires and burned out the instrument.

Failing to get re-instated Mr. Phillipi went West some years later and finally landed a good situation in the freight department of the C.B. & Q. railway and occasionally came here in later years to provide for his sister, "Becky." Mr. Williamson said he could not understand how men of such limited education could succeed so well.

With the beginning of Mr. VanLiew's administration the offices of agent and operator were divorced. The first special operator under this new regime was James Bastable, who was later in the hardware business for many years until elected auditor of this county. He was appointed operator on October 31, 1871 and acted until he resigned in July, 1875, to engage in business with John VanLiew as a partner. He was succeeded as operator by Douglas Bastable who continued as day operator until his tragic death in 1878. Mr. Bastable's successor was
Richard Plummer who changed to the Nevada office in March, 1879, being succeeded here by J.B. Stroup.

In June, 1880, Phillip W. Ream became day man, and was succeeded in 1887 by Joseph B. Reynolds who was made extra agent at large, being followed as operator here by Amos J. Marty in 1894 and continuing in that capacity until promoted January 1, 1906 to a position in the dispatcher’s office at Fort Wayne and the position here was given to M.C. Voelker.

The fine old pioneer, the late W.L. Reece, once related through the Record two instances of the hard-luck days in the early history of the railroad through here. One day, in the road’s early history, he was coming from LaFayette to Ada, when the fireman ran out of wood—those being the days of wood-burning locomotives; the engineer stopped in front of a shanty close to the track and paid the woman 25 cents for a few arms full of wood with which to keep up steam until they reached Ada.

About that time some one here issued a writ of attachment against one of the road’s limited number of locomotives and it was duly seized and detained here. Shortly afterward a gentleman appeared and told Mr. Reece that he had been commissioned to obtain the locomotive which the company needed badly; he stated that the constable would release it to him for 30 days if Mr. Reece would go security for it, which he did. At the expiration of the time back came the locomotive to Mr. Reece who in turn turned it over to the constable to await settlement of his judgment which came about in due time.

For occasional brief periods in the years gone a night office would be maintained here, but with the adoption of the block system for train dispatching, shortly after the completion of the double track through here, a regular night office was opened and long continued.

As early as 1887 the railway began buying right-of-way through here, and in the summer of 1900 the second track was completed from the west to Main street and put into use and a few months later was open to Peterson’s crossing.

In the summer of 1887 the new passenger station was erected and ready for occupancy by the close of the year. The old depot was then devoted to freight purposes exclusively. During the early part of Mr. Crook’s administration the business of this station had grown to such proportions that the labor was too great for one man and the agent was given a freight clerk. The first regular freight clerk was William W. Meyer, who acted until his death in 1897. Albert P. Kennedy held the position until pensioned in 1929. For many years this office has been provided with an assistant clerk.

On March 1, 1886, the company yielded to the popular demand by the public for protection, in consequence of the large and growing number of trains, and placed O.W. Doling in charge of the Main street crossing as watchman. He served several years and was succeeded by Isaac Altenberger of Upper Sanducky, who performed the duties two years or more and Michael Voelker was then placed in charge.

With the opening of the second track the danger was greatly increased and in response to the urge of the people for further protection the company, late in the fall of 1904, erected at Main street a tower to pneumatically operate protective gates at Main and Johnson street
and they were put in operation in January, 1905, with Mr. Voelker in charge.

Here are a few items that show the amount of business done at this station: in 1886 there were 10,196 pieces of baggage handled here; the company's business here in 1897 was $51,000; in 1900 it was $55,000. For the year ending July 31, 1888, the Western Union Telegraph company's office did a commercial business amounting to $616.42.

On December 1, 1887, the Adams Express company, whose agency had always been handled by the station agent, installed the free collection and delivery of express within the city limits, and in 1903 it began the issuing of money orders at this office. In October, 1905, the local telegraph office was made a money order office.

In 1904 the Western Union reported for taxation 78 miles of wire in Liberty township, valued at $3,556.

In April, 1872, there was much agitation over the prospect of a north and south railroad here—the Delaware and Northwestern was the name selected for the project. Several meetings were held and on July 13 there was put to vote the question of issuing $50,000 township bonds to aid the enterprise and the vote stood 283 for and 38 against. Abram Ream was the chief local promoter. In October a surveying party reached here from the south and a big demonstration welcomed them. J.H. Shinn was the promoter of the road which failed to materialize.

When the Toledo & Ohio Central railway was being surveyed a concerted effort was made to have the line curve westward so as to include Ada but the effort failed.

The Standard Oil Company put in its station here in 1892, buying and tearing down the old Commercial Hotel building for its site.

On Monday, May 21, 1883, a heavy snow fell here and the temperature was so low the sun did not melt it until the following day.

The site for the present township house was purchased early in 1899 and work on the building was begun in May of that year.

The Northwestern Ohio Volunteer Firemen's Association was organized in Ada either in 1873 or '74 and some of its early conventions were held here, one in April, 1881.

By the burning of two barns on North Main street on August 9, 1893, caused by children playing with matches, a child of Mr. and Mrs. David Dewitt was burned to death.

Fourteenth of a Series of Articles by Agnew Welsh
Each Move for Betterment of Schools Had Vote of Approval

Schools and University Have Always Worked Hand in Hand

When the federal government made its surveys of public lands, laying them off into square blocks, or sections of 640 acres each, each
Section 16 of a township was designated as a school section, the proceeds of sale thereof going into the school treasury of that township for aid of public education. Such section in Liberty township was sold about 1856 for ten dollars per acre and on ten annual payments, the purchasers being W. L. Reece, Hamilton McElroy and R. B. Reid.

Mrs. M. Tremain, to whom reference has been made in the list of pioneers, stated that the old frame schoolhouse was erected in 1853. W. F. Green states that the builder was Jacob McElroy. Again referring to Mrs. Tremain's letter, she states that in 1854 the teacher was Phineas Turner and that the old one-room schoolhouse stood on the southwest corner of the streets now known as Main street and Montford avenue.

The following is a copy of the roll kept of the first term of school as taught by Miss Ann Stewart, the term beginning December 19, 1853, and closing March 11, 1854:

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<th>Reading</th>
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(Author's Note: I have had this document in my possession for many years but have had it framed and donated to the school with a request that it hang on the walls near the Gettysburg speech tablet donated by E. W. Gilbert at my suggestion.)

In October, 1911, Mrs. Laura Kidd Stokes, who was one of the pupils in the first school taught here, gave me the list of early teachers as being the following: Anna Stewart (later Huffman) 1852-53; Miss
Ada, Ohio—Parents and visitors at Woodlawn school (Liberty township). Courtesy Elizabeth Myers Evans.
Jeannette Bibby summer term of 1853; Phineas Turner, 1853-54; Rachel Nelson (later Mustard) summer term of 1854; Miss Gilbert, 1854-55; Miss Libbie Cozier (later Mrs. John Haller) summer term of 1855; Jonas Sprague, 1855-56. (Here follows an interim). P.W. Stumm, 1859-60; Calvin E. Stumm, 1860-61; Samuel Friedley, 1863-64. Other teachers she named were a Mrs. Foltz and Jack McCoubrey. Another memorandum says that Mr. McCoubrey taught the winter term of 1865-66. Mrs. Stokes also states that a nephew of Dr. Heistand was one of the early teachers and may have been one of the “interim” ones.

In a letter to me from E. W. Gilbert, received in 1910, that pioneer citizen stated that he cleared the land, splitting the timber into rails on the site of the present north school building for the owner, Horace J. Gilbert. He thought the date was about 1858.

Nearly all the schools of this, Liberty township, were named from the family that lived nearest or contributed the most pupils; to the north was the Rinehart school; to the southeast, the Shanks; the southwest district was known as the Klingler school. For many years there lived on the farm from which the land was taken for Woodlawn school that pioneer citizen, Hoon.

In the winter of 1856-57 this school known as the Hoon school, was taught by a young man from Kenton whose name was Jesse Snodgrass who later became one of the city’s distinguished physicians. The pupils had “run out” the teacher employed for the term and Mr. Snodgrass was engaged to complete the remaining month of the term. In a letter to Miss Maggie High some years ago he related some of his experiences that term, stating that he was then but a youth of 16; that John Runser was the director who engaged him. The names of some of the pupils whose names he recalled were two Baum boys, the three Gesaman children; the largest boy was Will Tyler at whose father’s home the teacher boarded. Mr. Snodgrass said their home was the first house north of the school house, that he paid $1.50 a week for board and that the bill of fare was a rather steady one—corn bread, baked beans and tea, but they were nice people, he said—Connecticut Yankees from the Western Reserve.

The doctor stated that the frame school house stood on the east side of the road at the cross-road while the Hoon home was almost opposite. The Baum home was the first house south, on the east side of the Road. It was his recollection that George Baum was the pupil who made life so unendurable for the former teacher.

Dr. Snodgrass said that Johnstown had then less than a dozen houses and one store. When the teacher went there to get his $26 stipend he saw a young man sitting on a store box occupying his time in whistling, and who directed him to the township treasurer, who lived a half-mile west on the north side of the track. The young clerk in the little “ten by twelve” store and the young teacher later became life-long friends, for the young clerk was Nathan Ahllefeld.

Herefore we have been dealing with the schools as part of the township system, being District No. 5, thereof. Now we enter upon the period of its history as a separate entity—longwhile known as the Ada union school district.

In a book yellow with age and the worse for wear we find this record:

63
Village of Ada, May 31, 1862

At a meeting of the qualified voters of said village which was duly called by three resident householders in said village H.P. Roberts was appointed chairman and C. E. Stumm, secretary, whereupon said voters proceeded to elect, by ballot, three persons to serve as a school board in accordance with the provisions of Sec. 32, the General School Act, passed March 1, 1853. Upon inspection of the several ballots given at said election it was found and publicly declared that C. E. Stumm was duly elected for a term of three years from the 2nd Monday in April, 1862, and W. L. Reece was elected for a term of two years from said date and H. P. Roberts for a term of one year.

Signed C. E. Stumm, Secretary
H. P. Roberts, President

At this time Thomas M. Harbert was clerk of the village and became ex-officio clerk of the new board of education. Its first meeting was held on June 7 at which time they voted a tax of $35 for fuel and repairs and at the second meeting, held on the 9th, reconsidered this action and made a levy of 23/4 mills on the dollar of valuation for school purposes.

On Oct. 4, 1862, Hollis J. Gilbert was sworn in to fill the vacancy occasioned by the absence of H.P. Roberts on military duty. At the fourth meeting held Feb. 19, 1863, Hollis J. Gilbert was unanimously elected clerk of the board.

The next entry appears without date and the clerk certifies that Jeremiah Bricker had given bond “in the sum of a thousand dollars as treasurer of the independent school district” as it was then often called. On April 13, 1863, Samuel R. Judd was elected to fill the vacancy occasioned by the expiration of the terms of Messrs. Roberts and Gilbert, the new board organizing on April 20 at which time C.E. Stumm was elected clerk and the board detached the west half of Sec. 23, the township board concurring in the act. The board settled with H.R. McElroy, treasurer-elect, and made the levy of 23/4 mills, the same as the previous year.

On May 3, 1863, the board engaged S. W. Phillips as teacher of the high school for a term of four months at $1.25 a day. This is the first record we have of the engaging of any teachers. The next record is of the annual election held April 11, 1864, to fill the expired term of W. L. Reece. The ballot resulted as follows: William League, 37 votes; S. W. Phillips, 29; William M. Kidd, 3.

Mr. League was declared elected and qualified forthwith. The record says: “At the same time and place a vote was taken for or against levying a tax of four mills for the purpose of building a school house and upon inspection of the ballot it was ascertained that there were sixty-five votes in favor of said tax and no votes against it. On April 18 the board organized and re-elected C. E. Stumm clerk and increased the levy to eight mills.

The next record is that of the annual meeting on April 9, 1865, at which the following vote was cast for member of the board: S.M. Johnson, 20 votes; N. Ahlefeld, five; W. L. Reece, one.

On the 16th the new board organized. Wm. League was elected clerk and the levy of eight mills was made. On June 10 the board contracted with Hollis J. Gilbert for the purchase of a school house site and paid
him $250 for the same.

On April 9, 1866, was held the fourth annual election for a member and the following vote was cast: A. W. Thompson, 50 votes; D. S. Judd, 31; ————, one.

On the 16th the board elected A. W. Thompson clerk and continued the eight-mill levy.

Here follows a long interval during which we have no record but tradition says that in the spring of 1867 "Lehrism" had become an issue and entered into local politics. By the coming out of Dr. Walters as an independent candidate David Binns, who was a relative of the Gilberts, was elected to succeed S. M. Johnson who had sold out to John Dobbins and moved to Lima. May 29, 1869, H. J. Gilbert and P. Ahlefeld were elected members for three years. W. L. Reece and Ralph Davenport, M.D., for two years and J. H. Williams, M. D., and David Binns for one year. This would indicate an entire reorganization following the interim.

These gentlemen, on June 5, organized by electing J. H. Williams as president, David Binns, clerk, and W. L. Reece, treasurer. A tax of seven mills was levied. On the 14th Rev. W. M. Reed, H. S. Lehr and C. E. Stumm were appointed a board of examiners for one, two and three years respectively.

**Fifteenth of Series by Agnew Welsh**

**The Ada Public Schools**

(Many readers of this series of historical articles by Agnew Welsh will be pleased to know that he will celebrate his seventy-fifth birthday on Saturday, April 11, at his home, 343 N. E. 26th Street, Miami, Fla. Members of the Herald staff join with friends in Ada and throughout the county in wishing him many more years of health and happiness.)

During the interval of which we find no record the brick school building must have been erected as the minutes of July 3, 1869, show that the belfry was ordered finished. On July 13 the board allowed teachers' salaries as follows: Miss Mary Elcock $90; Miss Sadie McManima $60; Miss Jennie Melhorn $60. From this time forward the meetings became more regular and frequent and much routine business was transacted which is of no public interest now.

On October 13, 1869, teachers were assigned departments and wages as follows: H. S. Lehr, high school, $60; Lizzie Anderson, assistant, $25; Miss Aschie Marshall, grammar, $32; Sadie Anderson, intermediate, $25; Sadie McManima, primary, $22.

Two dollars per month for high school and $1.75 for lower grades were fixed as the tuition rate. In November a festival that netted $37.50 was given to buy equipment for the rooms.

On Feb. 22, 1870, J. H. Mustard purchased the old school house which now stands on West Montford avenue. It appears from the minutes that while in charge of the schools Prof. Lehr made his own fires and did the sweeping as he was allowed $2 per month for these services. On May 13, 1870, he was re-employed at $80 per month for the current year and a levy of six mills was made and on the 29th J. H. Williams and M. Nelson were elected members of the board for three years. The
next day the board organized by electing Dr. Williams, president and P. Ahlefeld, clerk, each for two years.

On August 26, 1870, the board engaged teachers as follows: H.S. Lehr, superintendent, $80; R. L. Souder, assistant, $30; Aschie Marshall, $32; Lois Marshall, $28; Sadie McManima, $25.

In the following October P. Ahlefeld resigned and his place was filled by appointing N. B. Holder as member and clerk and Nov. 21, was named as the date for opening a three months' session. On May 29, 1871, Hugh Dobbins, member-elect for one year, and W. L. Reece and Samuel Anspach for three years were qualified and Mr. Dobbins elected clerk. On June 5 W. L. Reece was elected treasurer for three years and on the 17th a levy of four mills was made.

On July 8, 1871, the board employed teachers as follows: H. S. Lehr, superintendent, $25; Aschie Marshall, high school, $38; Miss A. L. Holmes, grammar, $35; Miss Jennie Melhorn, secondary, $32; Sadie McManima, primary, $30.

Prof. Lehr had now organized the Normal school and his agreement with the board was to spend not less than one hour each day in the public school, the remainder of his time being devoted to the Normal. On Nov. 28, 1871, the board passed 27 pupils to the Normal as the "union" school was too crowded. On March 20 following an order was issued for $184 to H. S. Lehr for tuition for pupils sent to the Normal. Miss Mollie Schoonover was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Miss Holmes.

In the spring of 1872 Robert Arbuthnot and Dr. J. W. Walters were elected members of the board, Mr. Arbuthnot becoming clerk, and a levy of seven mills was made. On July 1 of that year the board awarded W. H. Trump a contract for erecting an addition to the building at his bid of $2,401.83. On the 12th the board appointed H. S. Lehr, H. S. Shannon and Dr. J. H. Williams as a board of examiners for three years. On the 16th the board engaged teachers as follows: Robert L. Souder, superintendent, $60; Mary Holmes, grammar, $38; Margery McGinnis, intermediate, $35; Jennie Melhorn, secondary, $32; Maggie Irvine, secondary, $32; Mollie Scott, primary, $25.

On August 12 Dr. Walters and Samuel Anspach were appointed a building committee. On November 9 Miss Holmes again resigned and Mrs. Sadie Arbuthnot was appointed to fill the vacancy. On the 21st the new addition was accepted.

On March 25, 1873, Sadie Arbuthnot resigned as teacher and Miss Minerva Arbuthnot was employed to fill the vacancy. At the ensuing election Dr. Williams was re-elected and J. H. Smick became a member of the board. Dr. Williams was made president, Mr. Arbuthnot was re-elected clerk and a levy of seven mills made for school purposes.

On July 18 the board engaged teachers as follows: J. W. Zeller, superintendent, $60; Aschie Marshall, A grammar, $40; Emma Keller, B grammar, $34; Maggie Irvine, intermediate, $32; Ella Mitchell, secondary, $25; Jennie Scott, primary, $25.

In April, 1874, W. L. Reece and I. B. Charles were elected members. Messrs. Williams, Arbuthnot and Reece being re-elected president, clerk and treasurer, respectively.

On May 9, 1875, the board elected teachers as follows: D. S. Pence, the famous penman without hands, superintendent at $60; K. E.

Dola, Ohio, School with school buses. Courtesy Thomas Tighe.
Shuster, A grammar, $40; Lucy Wilson, B. grammar, $36; Ollie Dobbins, intermediate, $25; Sallie McElroy, secondary, $25; Jennie Scott, primary, $25.

The first regularly employed janitor was Eli Strock, who began in October, 1874, at $16 a month. In January, 1875, the board decided to have but six months school that year. At the April election George W. Rutledge and _____ were elected members of the board and upon organization Dr. Williams was elected president, W. L. Reece, treasurer and J. H. Smick, clerk.

In 1875 the board submitted to the voters a proposition to further increase the size of the school building by an addition to complete the square. Dr. Walters and J. H. Smick were the committee on plans and specifications. The levy this year was fixed at ten mills. On June 10 the board opened bids for the addition and accepted J. L. Souders' bid of $2,791.50.

On July 15 the board engaged the following teachers for the year: K.E. Shuster, superintendent, $60; Eliza Davenport, assistant, $36; Ira Doling, grammar, $40; M. H. Wood, intermediate, $40; Ella Mitchell, third primary, $25; Ida Lehr, second primary, $25; Jennie Scott, primary, $25. In Jan., 1876, Miss Lehr resigned and Miss Mollie Davenport was elected to fill the vacancy and on April 5, Mr. Wood resigned and Luther M. McCreaary was elected to fill the place.

In the spring of 1876 E. W. Gilbert and Robert Arbuthnot were elected members of the board. G. W. Rutledge was elected president, E. W. Gilbert, clerk, and W. L. Reece, treasurer. On May 6 the board elected teachers as follows: H.E. Lacey, superintendent, $60; Mattie Reece, assistant, $35; Alex Comrie, A grammar, $40; Charles M. Melhorn, B. grammar, $40; Ida Lehr, 1st intermediate, $30; Mollie Davenport, 2nd intermediate, $30; Lizzie Mooney, 1st primary, $30; Ella Mitchell, 2nd primary, $30.

On September 30, H. S. Shannon was appointed to fill the vacancy on the board occasioned by the non-attendance of I.B. Charles. Eli Strock was re-engaged as janitor at $17 per month. G. W. Rutledge, Supt. Lacey and E. W. Gilbert were appointed a committee to submit a plan for regrading the school.

In 1877 the enrollment of pupils of youth of school age was 534.

At the 1879 spring election 297 votes were cast for members of the school board, John P. Cochran and C. Young being elected. The board organized by electing G. W. Rutledge, president, J. P. Cochran, clerk and E. W. Gilbert, treasurer. It decided to have eight months school, beginning October 10.

Teachers were elected as follows: H. E. Lacey, superintendent; Charles Melhorn, assistant; Alex Comrie, A grammar; M. F. Eggerman, B grammar; Ida Lehr, A intermediate; Mollie Davenport, B intermediate; Mollie Cochran, A primary; Lizzie Mooney, B primary. The only change in the wages was an increase of $5 per month on the assistant superintendent's salary.

On May 5 the board adopted rules and regulations and a course of study which they ordered printed in pamphlet form. The levy this year was ten mills.

In 1877-78 a project was set on foot looking toward the furnishing of school facilities for advanced pupils. This project in brief, was as follows:
The proprietors of the Northwestern Ohio Normal school were to deed to the board of education the north part of the college campus on which the public school board was to erect a college building and permit the N. W. O.N.S. to have exclusive use of the same in return for which advanced pupils of the public schools were to have free tuition in the higher branches of the Normal after they had passed a required examination in the public school. To this end the Ohio legislature passed on March 1, 1878, an enabling act. On March 11, 1878, a special election was held on the question of levying a special tax for this purpose. There were 352 votes cast of which 327 were for the special tax and only 23 against.

At the April election in 1878 W.L. Reece and J. H. Smick were elected members and upon organization J.P. Cochran was elected president, J.H. Smick, clerk and E. W. Gilbert, treasurer. The board elected the following teachers: W. F. Hufford, superintendent; C. M. Melhorn, assistant; Alex Comrie, A grammar; M. F. Eggerman, B grammar; Jennie Scott, 2nd intermediate; Mollie Davenport, 1st intermediate; Mollie Cochran, 3rd primary; Ollie Cole, 2nd primary; Lizzie Mooney, 1st primary.

The board employed M.H. Rumbaugh of Cincinnati to furnish plans and specifications and superintend the construction of the new building on the normal grounds. On June 10 the board opened bids for the work.

Mr. Hufford served from 1878 to 1884, being succeeded by the following: Alex Comrie, 1884-1889; E.E. White, 1889-1892; W. F. Hufford, 1892-1894; W. B. Carter, 1894-1896; W. Corwin Ewing, 1896-1903; O.O. Vogenitz, 1893-1897; C. H. Freeman, 1907-1909; E. H. Brown, 1909. Later historians may bring the record up to their time.

Alex Comrie relates an incident showing a side-light on the mid-period of the school’s history. About the time he was one of the teachers the high school boys felt the necessity of using chewing tobacco in school; the board approved, providing each user would furnish his own cuspidor. One day one of these “tomato cans” was accidentally kicked over and that put an end to the practice.

In 1890 the brick building on South Johnson street was erected.

The question of erecting the present north building was put to vote on May 7, 1892, the vote being yes, 329; no, 23.

Not until 1895 did the laws of Ohio provide that women might serve as members of a school board. When that privilege was accorded them by an act of the legislature about 50 Ada women met on March 6, 1895, to nominate candidates for the office, those selected being Mrs. Mollie Hickernell and Mrs. E. L. Pendleton, both of whom were elected.

Sixteenth of a Series by Agnew Welsh

Fraternal Orders

The oldest lodge in Ada is the Masonic one. Ada Lodge, 344, Free and Accepted Masons, was instituted on August 24, 1863, with the following charter members: Nathan Ahlefeld, W.L. Reece, Hollis J. Gilbert, Samuel Arbuthnot, Calvin E. Stumm, John C. Stumm, Dr. E.B. Heistand, Balzar Mowan, Dr. J.W. Walters, John Scott and Orin Curtis.

For some years the lodge met in a frame building that stood on Main
street, first building south of the railway grounds. It was torn down in ’02.

When Abram Ream decided to build a brick block, now known as the Rothrock block, the lodge entered into a contract to add the third story as its home. In 1883 the lodge had 70 members and in 1905 the number had increased to 100. In 1889 the lodge spent about $1,600 in room betterments.

Those who have been exalted among their brethren by being chosen master of the local lodge are the following for the periods named:

1863 to 1865 ........................................ Rayen B. Reid
1865 to 1867 ........................................ W.L. Reece
1867 to 1868 ........................................ Rayen B. Reid
1868 to 1870 ........................................ P.W. Stumm
1870 to 1871 ........................................ Rayen B. Reid
1871 to 1875 ........................................ John H. Smick
1875 to 1877 ........................................ Geo. S. Thomas
1877 to 1878 ........................................ John H. Smick
1878 to 1881 ........................................ S.H. Sturgeon
1881 to 1885 ........................................ Alex Carman
1885 to 1887 ........................................ M.F. Eggerman
1887 to 1892 ........................................ Alex Carman
1892 to 1895 ........................................ Warren Darst
1895 to 1897 ........................................ John H. Shanks
1897 to 1899 ........................................ Alex Comrie
1899 to 1901 ........................................ L.F. Anspach
1901 to 1903 ........................................ Byron Tabor

Ada Chapter, No. 138, Royal Arch Masons, was instituted July 13, 1874, with the following as charter members: Christian Young, Peter Ahlefeld, William B. Grafton, P.W. Stumm, C.E. Stumm, J.E. Lowry, Frank C. Gastinger, Ben I. Murray, George H. Zugschwert, John H. Smick, R.R. Reid, George S. Thomas.

Some time later a Council of Royal and Select Masons was organized but lacking in material its charter was soon allowed to lapse.

Ada Chapter, No. 6, Order of the Eastern Star, an auxiliary of the Masonic Order, was instituted April 3, 1890, with the following charter members: Mr. and Mrs. Henry Young, Mr. and Mrs. S.B. Wagner, Mr. and Mrs. J.T. Cunningham, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Griner, Mr. and Mrs. B.S. Young (the first Mrs. Young), Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Cunningham, Mr. and Mrs. William Lantz, Mr. and Mrs. J.F. Rice, Mr. and Mrs. John Sharp, Mr. and Mrs. Agnew Welsh, Mrs. Lovina Young, Mr. and Mrs. Milom Preston, Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Lowry, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Ahlefeld, Mr. and Mrs. James Bastable, Mr. and Mrs. R.J. Hill, Mr. and Mrs. J.C. Riddle, Mr. and Mrs. M.M. Conner, Mrs. J.M. Bentley, Mrs. W.W. Crooks, Mrs. George V. Guyton, Mrs. Dora Bauman, Mrs. (Prof.) Warren Darst, Mrs. Albert Rogall, Mrs. Eliza Grafton, Mrs. Frank Andrews, Mrs. J. Frank Horner, Mrs. Christian Young, Mrs. Julia Johnson, Miss Lou Grafton, James C. Harman and S.S. Clayton.

This representative body of citizens made a strong working organization that flourished like a green bay tree. One of its members, Mrs. Lowry, was head of the state chapter for several years and was ever an active worker in promoting the chapter’s interests. So active was the chapter that it succeeded in having the Grand Chapter meet
here, the date being October 20, 1897.

A glance at the records of the Ada Masonic Lodge, No. 344, shows the following seven living persons as having longest been a member of that body and the number of years they have been members: G.H. Zugschwert, Chicago, 61 years; William Guyton, 54 years; Alex Comrie, 52 years; W.W. Crooks, 48 years; John Sharp, 47 years; Agnew Welsh, 46 years; M.E. Cunningham, 46 years.

Within a year after the close of the Civil War the Grand Army of the Republic was organized, the first post being instituted at Philadelphia. It is a fixed rule to name the posts after a worthy deceased soldier, one who has distinguished himself in the service.

Carman Post, the 101st one organized in the state, was named in honor of Sergeant Samuel Carman, son of Marshal and Deborah Carman, old and respected residents southwest of Ada and who lent three of their sons to the defense of the Union, one being sacrificed on the altar of his country.

Samuel Carman's first enlistment was for three months and on April 20, 1861, with Company F, 20th Ohio. Upon the expiration of this term of service the young soldier veteranized, enlisting with the 33rd Ohio and assigned to Company K. This enlistment was made on October 4, 1861 and for three years. On October 20 he was appointed corporal and on March 21, 1862, he was promoted to sergeant. On October 21st, 1862, he died in the military hospital at Cincinnati.

Both regiments with which he was identified bore an honorable and active part in the great national tragedy. His remains are at rest in the Carman cemetery.

Carman Post was mustered in on July 5, 1883. Captain Barton A. Holland, whose death occurred on June 15, 1907, was the first Commander; Captain J.W. Manning was Senior Vice; W.H. Morrow, Adjutant, and Corporal Samuel Watt, Quartermaster.

Other charter members were Col. N.R. Park, Dr. Ralph Davenport, P.K. Sale, J.M. Bodge, Martin V. Gilbert, Col. Albert Rogall, Leonidas Richeson, James I. Bodell. For some reason the organization was not long sustained.


The officers elected at the re-organization were, as nearly as tradition can fix, the following: Col. N.R. Park, Commander; Capt. J.W. Manning, Senior Vice; P.K. Sale, Adjutant; Samuel Watt, Quartermaster.

Carman Relief Corps, auxiliary to the Post, was chartered on October 25, 1887, the following names being engrossed on the document as charter members: Electa L. Davis, Lizzie Gilbert, Minnie Gar-

In May, 1891, a lodge of the Union Veteran’s Union, a rival of the G.A.R., was organized by the following: Daniel Griner, Henry Morrow, Oscar E. Collins, Dr. J.B. Evans, Alex Harmony, Andrew J. Borden, F.C. Gastinger, John Hyndman, Martin Gonser, George Carey, John V. Dearth, W.D. Wilson and Edmund Vickers.

There was not available material to sustain two similar organizations here and this newer one survived for only a brief period.

Mrs. W.T. Sherman Tent, No. 4, Daughters of Veterans, was set to work on April 8, 1890, with a large charter membership, consisting of the following: Misses Lizzie Davis, Dora Fritz, Laura Young, Anna Souder, Minnie Hubble, Mary Hall, Mattie Cratty, Alta Hubble, Kate Hanley, Tasje Keckler, Allie Wilson, Nellie Preston, Emma Johnson, Ida Dickens, Florence Young, Sadie Hall, Nellie Harmony, Olive Povenmire.

On May 20, 1901, the second annual state convention of this order was held here with five tents represented.

Dispersion and matrimony made such serious inroads in the membership that the organization could not long continue.

Among the Military Orders that had a short life was Abe Lincoln Camp, Sons of Veterans, which was mustered in on September 25, 1886, with the following charter members: William R. Park, A.N. Rice, A.S. Harmony, W.W. Crooks, W.F. Stevens, Claude M. Ballard, Will Poling, Riley Adams, Ben McElroy, H.L. Roberts, W.M. Hunt, Scott B. Ballard.

Seventeenth of a Series by Agnew Welsh

FRATERNAL ORDERS

(continued)

Ada lodge, No. 427, Independent Order of Oddfellows, was instituted July 6, 1869, with these as charter members: David Binns, Joshua Shuster, A.B. Huff, M.A. Wilson, E.E. Williams, W.B.S. Henkle, John Roland, James Gardner, D.P. Selleck.

Meetings were held first in the second story of the C.F. Ries storeroom, corner of Main and Buckeye, until the completion of Bauman block, diagonally opposite, in 1872, when the lodge became owner of its third story, the first meeting therein being on October 21, 1872. With the growth of the lodge more room was needed and arrangements were made to acquire ownership of the third story of a cement-block building erected by R.E. Dunlap, near Main and Highland. It took formal possession of its new home on Jan. 16, 1906, where it has spacious and comfortable quarters.
Ada Encampment, No. 226, step-up of the Oddfellows, was instituted June 26, 1882, with the following as charter members: James N. Church, W. Henry Morrow, Leonidas F. Richeson, Albert Shaw, George C. Tressel, F.H. Moses, J.H. Quint, R.S. Shanks, Dr. Ralph Davenport, Henry Schindewolf, Samuel Watt, J.M. Davis, George F. Marmon, O.F. Clemmer, Daniel J. Hull. So far as I know Mr. Hull is the only one yet living at the time of this publication—1931.

Plymouth Lodge, No. 172, Daughters of Rebekah, an auxiliary of the Oddfellows, was instituted May 22, 1885, the charter containing the following names: J.N. and Eliza Church, Samuel and Tilla Watt, F. H. and Laura Moses, Albert and Louisa Shaw, John and Nancy Friedley, Mr. and Mrs. L. Richeson, Mr. and Mrs. Martin V. Gilbert, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Schindewolf, Mrs. W. L. Burton, Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Matheny, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Hutchinson, Z.O. Elliott, T. E. Elliott, J. C. McDowell, W. T. Gilbert, Robert F. Black, John Oberlin, John H. Mustard, William Lattimer, T. J. Wise, Anna Friedley, George T. Beatty, Edward Wallick.

On January 6, 1880 a Division of the Sons of Temperance was organized, officered as follows: James B. McConnell, presiding officer; Mrs. C. Young, associate; John H. Mustard, treasurer; S. Drury, chaplain; W. F. Hufford. Samuel Black and George D. Sousley, trustees.

This temperance organization was later followed by the broader organization the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. “the White Ribboners,” which had here a large and enthusiastic band of workers.

Many years ago a strong branch of the American Protective Association was organized here; it was Anti-Catholic and ultrapatriotic. Inasmuch as it did not meet with approval by a large body of citizenry of the land, its workings and membership were kept secret and its time and place of meetings were clandestine. It continued to exist for a few years only.


For many years the lodge met in a leased room of the Lovina Young building on North Main st. The membership of this order is usually made up of the younger men, yet it is amazing, as I now copy this list, to note how many have gone to that bourne from which no traveler
returneth. Of the fifty persons named less than one-third are, to the
best of my knowledge, yet living and of these but three are in Ada.

Ada Camp, No. 6902, Modern Woodmen was instituted, August 21,
1899, with charter members as follows: Jacob B. Ream, Dr. West
Montgomery, W. H. Freund, Elmer S. Poling, J. W. Shannon, Roy
Schertz, Dr. S. C. Smith, Bert L. Schertz, Frank N. Stout, B. F.
Spar, W. E. Vertner.

Ada Camp, Independent Order of Foresters, was instituted on June
1, 1897, with 21 charter members among whom were A. J. McElroy,
Ed. F. Hall, H. E. Neff, George August, Samuel Snyder, Earl P. Huff,
Dr. Montgomery, William Goodard, Thomas E. Dearth. The
organization survived less than two years.

Ada Tent, 205, Knights of the Maccabees, also a beneficial order,
was instituted June 2, 1894, the few names available of its charter
members being Will H. Meyer, Dr. O. H. Patrick, W. W. Eifert, Joe B.
This organization has continued its existence for many years.

In 1879 a lodge of the Knights of Honor, one of the life insurance
orders, was instituted here with 38 members. The members soon lost
interest and let it lapse. It was revived in 1893 but continued for only
about a year.

Eighteenth of a Series by Agnew Welsh

Newspaper Graveyard Contains Many Crosses

In the spring of 1872 Bent L. Thompson came from Morrow county to
look the field over with a view to establishing a paper here. The people
guaranteed a bonus of $600, and on April 3, 1872, the first number of the
Ada Record appeared, an 8-column folio, all of its four pages being
printed at home.

Mr. Thompson continued as proprietor until the spring of 1877, when
he sold the paper to James E. Fisher, an experienced newspaper man,
who changed its name to the Ada Commercial, the first issue under the
new name appearing on March 1, 1877.

In October, 1878, E.L. Millar and Bent L. Thompson, who had been
publishing the Literary Casket, bought the good will of the Record and
both papers were combined, Mr. Fisher moving his plant to
Uhrichsville. The new owners of the paper restored its former name,
the first issue of the new series appearing on October 17, 1878.

Messrs. Millar and Thompson continued in partnership until August
17, 1879, when the Record appeared with E.L. Millar as sole
proprietor, which condition continued until August 17, 1881, when Mr.
Millar sold his paper to Agnew Welsh.

On October 13, 1880, Mr. Millar changed the form of the paper from a
quarto (eight pages) to a folio, which form continued the remainder of
its life. The quarto was a ready print of four of the pages, the new form
having larger pages and all home-print.

The second literary venture was the Educational Advance, which
appeared in April, 1873. It was a monthly journal of about sixteen
pages, in the interest of the normal school. It was published from the Record office and survived but a few months.

No further attempts were made toward a college paper until the Literary Casket appeared on December 8, 1877. It was a monthly with pages about twelve by fifteen inches, and was founded by Ellis L. Millar and George W. Rutledge, both of whom had been students here. Mr. Millar, the editor-in-chief, having but recently graduated. The Casket was printed by Bent L. Thompson who had purchased a new job printing outfit. With the consolidation of the Casket and the Ada Commercial in October 1878, Mr. Rutledge disposed of his interest to Mr. Thompson and the latter and Mr. Millar became joint owners of the Record.

In October, 1883, Reverends S. Rice and C.E. Rowley began publishing the Holiness Conservator, a monthly religious publication of four pages, each about eleven by sixteen inches, four columns to the page. The mechanical work was done in the Record office. The last number appeared July, 1887. Both men had been co-laborers along the lines of higher Christian experience and had separated themselves from the M.E. church and organized the Holiness Society. They remained life-long friends after their journalistic venture.

In July, 1886, Rev. John M. Atwater, a very talented and scholarly man, who was then pastor of the Church of Christ here, began publishing a monthly magazine in the interest of the church at large. It was a sixteen page monthly, with cover, and was printed by the Record. This publication was discontinued in July, 1887, when the editor and owner resigned his pastorate here to accept a professorship in Garfield university of Wichita, Kansas.

The next ventures were along the amateur lines but in neither case did “tall oaks from little acorns grow.” These were the Normal Times, a small monthly, established by L.P. Benedict and G.H. Dukes and printed by Mr. Benedict who had a nondescript outfit. It survived but a few issues and died “unwept and unsung.” Its companion-piece was the Monthly Advertiser, for which Claude M. Ballard and Grove H. Williams, late employees of the Record were responsible. One issue satisfied their cravings for journalistic honors and they returned to their old love, the Record.

L.P. Benedict made another effort at establishing a weekly paper, calling it the Ada Newsletter, the first issue appearing September 1, 1889 and the last on January 1, 1890. It was a small four page affair of crude workmanship.

In September, 1889, H.B. Fouke, an elderly gentleman who had conducted papers in several towns in various parts of the state, came to Ada and thought the field ripe for a republican paper and on October 4, 1889, the first number of the Ada Republican appeared. It was a part ready-print quarto at $1.50 per year. The following spring he reduced the price to $1.00 but this did not help make it “fill a long-felt want” and the paper was discontinued with the issue of June 27, 1890.

During this time the democrats did not propose that their interests should suffer in the local field and Ed. B. Harris, who had been raised here and had a smattering of “the art preservative of all arts,” launched the Ada Democrat and it continued a precarious existence until the following February, the last issue being dated February 13, 1890, and the owner moved the plant to LaFayette.
On June 20, 1885, the first issue of the University Herald appeared. It was founded by S.B. Wagner, then in the bookstore business, U.S.G. Cherry and W.W. Poulney, the last two being students here. It was in magazine form, 32 pages and covering two columns to the page. Mr. Poulney, was editor-in-chief. In the second or third year it was changed to the full width line form.

In 1887 Messrs. S.B. and H.P. Wagner bought out the others' interest and for a few months Miss Alberta Smith was the editor. In October, 1887, O.B. Pendleton mounted the editorial tripod. Until this time the magazine had been printed by the Record but in a few months Mr. Pendleton bought an outfit and became publisher as well as editor, and the form was changed to a nine by twelve inch page, ten pages and cover, two wide columns to the page. In June, 1890, it was changed to a semi-monthly.

On April 24, 1891, Ralph Parlette became the editor and in February, 1893, Messrs. Parlette and E.E. McAlpin bought Mr. Pendleton's plant and also became owners of the publication. On March 10 of that year they changed it to a weekly. On February 8, 1895, Mr. McAlpin's connection ceased, he having sold his interest to M.L. Snyder who was connected with the paper until his death. Following Mr. Parlette's eminent success on the lecture platform, Mr. Snyder had entire charge.

On June 9, 1895, the publication appeared in a new form, an eleven by fifteen inch page, four pages, four standard columns to the page. On April 1, 1898, the form was enlarged to seven columns folio with pages seventeen by twenty-two inches.

In January, 1886, the Rev. W.H. Leatherman began publishing the Epworth Messenger from the University Herald press, publication being a small folio that appeared monthly; the subscription price was 25 cents per year. The final issue appeared in February, 1887.

Ada has had two daily papers issued as advertising mediums. During holiday week of 1892 C.E. Ferguson issued from the Record plant a paper he called the "Ada Daily Journal." During fair week of 1896 the same Mr. Ferguson and A.N. Rice issued from the latter's job office a small daily which they called the "Daily Fair News."

In the fall of 1898 A.N. Rice, a life-long employee of the Record as job printer, severed his connection with that paper to engage in the printing business for himself. This not proving sufficiently remunerative to justify, he decided to launch a weekly paper in the local field and on May 28, 1897, the first issue of the Ada Independent appeared. It was a five column quarto, half ready-print, with pages thirteen by twenty-one inches at $1.00 per year. It held on a few months and proved a disastrous venture.

The Record for many years was printed by hand power. It used an old Washington hand press until Millar & Thompson bought it and installed a power press, and even this was propelled by hand power until a few years after it came into Mr. Welsh's hands. He introduced steam as power in January, 1883, and continued its use until June, 1905, when steam was supplanted as a motive power by an electric motor.

The Record was printed for some time in the Reece room, second floor, and Mr. Millar moved it to the second floor of the Ahlfeldt block,
into the room long used as a Grand Army Post room. With the completion of the new Young block it was moved in January, 1880, to the north room, second floor, of this building which gave it better and more commodious quarters. In the spring of 1903 the owner began the erection of a new and permanent home for the Record into which it moved in August, 1903.

The University Herald was located on the second floor of the Murray block, west side of Main, until 1901, when it moved to the east side of Main into the second floor of the Mathews block, which its proprietors subsequently purchased.

After nearly a third of a century of continuous service as editor and owner of the Record, Mr. Welsh, in April, 1914, sold the plant to Harry E. Vestal and later sold the building to the Building & Loan Co. Mr. Vestal continued as owner of the Record for about two years and sold it to some Toledo young men who had neither capital nor newspaper experience and who nearly wrecked the property and sold it to J.A. Alexander, an estimable gentleman with newspaper experience. That it is easier to slide than to climb is particularly true of newspaper prestige, a loss the paper had suffered. Mr. Alexander continued the fight against heavy odds until January, 1928, when he discontinued the paper and the famous old Ada Record became but a precious memory to the people who had been its ardent friends in years gone by.

Most of the men who guided the destinies of the Record are in this year of our Lord, 1931, yet among the living. Even its founder, Bent L. Thompson, is living in the state of Washington. After leaving Kenton E.L. Millar went to Duluth where he bought a trade journal and after remaining there some years returned to Ohio. Since the death of his wife (Minnie Manning) many years ago, he has made his home with his only child, a daughter who lives at Ravenna, Ohio.

[Mr. Millar died at Ravenna on September 22, 1930. Funeral services were conducted at Kenton, Sept. 26.—Ed.]

After selling his paper Mr. Welsh spent nearly two years with the state civil service commission as a special examiner and later in 1917 he went to Miami, Fla., where he has been employed continuously on the same daily paper.

Nineteenth of a Series by Agnew Welsh

Early Struggles of "The Ada Normal"

There could be no considerable reference made to Ada without bringing in the college—the "Normal," as we called it in the old days. Let us turn our thoughts back to the days of 1866—64 years ago—longer than most of those who read this have lived.

Dr. Lehr's first plan was to go to Missouri to carry out his idea of establishing a normal for the masses. Early in 1866 a fellow student at Mt. Union college urged Mr. Lehr to go to Elkhart, Ind., where there was a school vacancy. He did so but could not agree with the officials on terms. He then went to Auburn and Monroeville, both in that state, but his proposition received no encouragement at either place.

On his way home he stoped at Van Wert, Lima and at what is now Ada. Of the board members William League was absent, D.S. Judd could not be interested in the idea but when it was placed before S.M. Johnson he heartily approved of it. Dr. Lehr gave credit to Mr.
Johnson for making the contract for when Mr. League returned he almost allowed himself to be persuaded to vote no because one doubting Thomas said Lehr was too small a man, physically, for the job as those were the days when “running out” a teacher was a favorite pastime among the older boys.

Continuing his journey homeward after his first visit here, Mr. Lehr stopped at Dunkirk and Forest, where they told him they could get good teachers for two dollars per day.

The young man was impressed with the more liberal and broad-minded spirit at Ada (then Johnstown,) returned shortly afterward and entered into an agreement with the board to become head of the schools.

Dr. Lehr was employed at $2.75 per day and began his first term on April 9, 1866, closing the same on June 29. On August 6 he opened the first term of select school with 82 students, followed by a fall term of public school on November 12. The second term of the select school opened in August, 1867, with 38 students.

Among some of the 63 pupils in Dr. Lehr’s “select” school for the opening in May, 1868, were Robert L. Souder and Jennie Melhorn, who later became husband and wife; Rose Smith, Ira Doling, D.C. Smith, Ida Lehr, Mollie Schoonover, Sheldon Shanks, William Guyton, Alex Carman, S.H. Bigger, Lois Marshall, Robert Eastman, John G. Park, John W. Zeller, George F. Henry, George W. Rutledge, Perry Dempster, Eliza and Mary Davenport, the Reams, Leagues, and Gilberts.

In the summer of 1868 a committee from Kenton visited Dr. Lehr to induce him to come there to establish his school but he had his heart set on Ada, where the people were proving true to him.

In the spring of 1869 he received $80 per month and the free use of the school building for his select school.

In June, 1870, a committee came from Findlay and offered Dr. Lehr $1,400 per year to head their schools and carry out his project. Delphos and Bluffton made similar overtures. Dr. Lehr asked for one week in which to deliberate on the Findlay proposition. In the meantime the Ada people began concerted action to avert any change. A public meeting was held and Christian Young, Abram Ream and W.L. Reece were appointed a committee to take such steps as were necessary to avoid the change. By autumn the question had been thoroughly threshed out.

Dr. Lehr proposed that he be given a tract of ground consisting of three and one-half acres and a building to cost not less than $6,500 of which amount he would raise $3,500; all subscriptions under $20 to be donations; over that the sums were to be repaid, beginning five years later and at the rate of ten per cent per annum, these to be known as stockholders who should have a vote in the selection of trustees and site for the institution; subscriptions were to be divided into three annual installments, payments beginning April, 1871. The money was subscribed in five days.

Four sites were considered, using old names of streets: on East Long street, on East Center street, on West Montfort street and a part of the east side of the John Dobbins farm which then fronted on Main street, the family home yet standing on Gilbert and known as “The Terrace.” Dr. Lehr favored the East Long street location, but at the last minute a lot of votes were cast that decided the question in favor
of the Dobbins site. This occurred in September, 1870.

The board of trustees selected consisted of J.H. Mustard, Cornelius Pugh and Leonard B. Vickers. The work for the building was let to a Canton, Ohio, man who flunked on his contract before the building was finished and his sureties had to finish it. I think these gentlemen were William Guyton, Abram Ream and James Bastable.

In the meantime, Dr. Lehr had associated with himself two other gentlemen as partners in the ownership and management of the Normal: these were a recent student of his, John G. Park of Hancock county, and B.F. Niesz who had not long before graduated from Dr. Lehr’s alma mater, Mt. Union college.

The school’s first catalog, issued in 1871, was contained within 16 pages. The Normal opened on Monday, August 14, 1872, with 147 students, many of whom came by wagon, from farms in this and adjacent counties. Dr. Lehr began teaching classes as early as 4:00 a.m. and taught thirteen classes a day; the building not being completed classes were held wherever rooms could be had in halls and churches. Under such strain the little bundle of nerves soon broke down and after I came here in 1875 I helped carry him home from the class room.

According to S.H. Bigger’s diary, the building was dedicated on October 14, 1871, though not wholly completed. Senator Allen G. Thurman was to have been the speaker but due to serious illness of a daughter, he could not be present and the dedicatory address was made by Judge William Lawrence of Bellefontaine, an eminent member of the Ohio bar and ever after a friend of the school.

In 1872 Dr. Lehr sold a sixth interest in the school to George W. Rutledge, of Roundhead township, who had become much interested in the school and later built a large frame structure opposite where the Church of Christ now stands and which was long ago converted into two dwellings. It bore the name of “Poverty Hall,” and was used several years for the purpose erected, a students’ dormitory.

The roof had proven to be defective in the original Normal building and gave so much annoyance that when a committee came here from Auburn, Indiana, to make Dr. Lehr an offer to come there it proved a great temptation but again the citizens came to the rescue and Dr. Lehr said that if the stockholders would release to him the obligations held against the Normal school the latter would rebuild the roof and go on with the school, and this was agreed to.

In 1874 the first class was graduated and that year Mr. Niesz sold his interest in the school to James J. Wood; the ownership at that time was distributed as follows: Dr. Lehr, one-sixth; Prof. J.G. Park, one-third; Mr. Rutledge, one-sixth; Mr. Wood, one-third.

For a consideration of $1,200 Dr. Lehr purchased, in 1875, of J. Fraise Richard a little normal school he had started at Republic and later moved to Fostoria.

In 1877 Mr. Wood sold his interest to Frederick Maglott. In 1880 Mr. Rutledge sold his holding to U.G. Stringfellow, who had been a student here and married Miss Rachel Park, a sister of Prof. Park. Later he sold his interest to Henry E. Neff and he in turn to Prof. Warren Darst.

Courtesy Vincent Reichert.
Twentieth of a Series by Agnew Welsh
How Old ‘Ada Normal’ Became Ohio Northern

(Continued from Last Week)

Some incidents connected with the life of the school were these:
Adelphian Literary society organized September 3, 1880, it being the
third of its kind.

On May 25, 1885, the school was re-incorporated with a change of
name to Ohio Normal University.

Departmental additions were made as follows: Stenographic and
telegraphic, 1882; military, 1882; pharmacy, 1888; law, 1888.

The pharmacy building at the northwest corner of the campus was
erected in 1894.

The first flag-bearer contest between the military companies was
held in 1888.

Founders Day was first observed on July 16, 1897.

In May, 1886, a big row was precipitated by the attempt to institute a
Greek letter fraternity.

At the annual conference held at Sidney that body voted, on Sep-
tember 26, 1898, to buy the O.N.U., the vote being yes, 125; no, 13.

The formal transfer from private to ecclesiastical ownership was
made August 2, 1899; Dr. Lehr continued as active head until his
resignation on July 31, 1902. Dr. Belt succeeded him.

The Dukes building was erected in 1903 and Brown auditorium, now
the library building, in 1904.

On July 28, 1903, the name was again changed, the initials remaining
the same, but their meaning to Ohio Northern University instead of
Normal.

Dr. Belt resigned as president on June 27, 1905, to be succeeded by
Dr. Albert Edwin Smith, who served for 25 years.

The inter-relation between the college and the public schools has
been more than a friendly one over a long period of years—in fact,
almost from the inception of both. It was basic, because Dr. Lehr, who
came here with the primary idea of establishing a Normal school, was
formulating his plans to that end while at the head of the public
school; it was here that he received the encouragement for the
education germ in the mind of the great educator. Then this relation
became a financial one. The State University had begun to take on
Samsonian strength and there were several other strong schools in
Ohio. The old Lebanon Normal had entered upon the period of its
decadence. At Valparaiso, Ind., O.P. Kinsey was vigorously pushing a
flourishing Normal school while in northeastern Indiana, Dr. Lehr’s
former co-worker, Prof. L.M. Sniff, and a former pupil of Dr. Lehr’s,
L.W. Fairfield, were putting a similar institution on its feet at Angola.

In view of these circumstances Dr. Lehr felt that something must be
done to maintain the prestige of his school; that the school could not
mark time in such exigencies but must keep step in the march of
progress. The school needed to expand and could not do so with its then
limited buildings. Dr. Lehr made to the citizenship of Ada a
proposal to the effect that if they would buy from the college of-
officials the north side of the campus grounds, being about one-third of
the same, and erect thereon a college building at a cost of $30,000,
giving the college full control of such building, the college would in

83
turn agree to furnish free tuition in certain named “higher branches” to high school pupils of the public school.

The proposition was thoroughly discussed publicly and when put to a vote of the people it carried, the school district thus bonding itself at a time when it was a great hardship from the fact that there were no great industries nor any wealthy men within its borders upon whom might fall any considerable part of such a burden; it was also a time when its own buildings were becoming inadequate to house its pupils in a proper manner and the board was paying its teachers a miserably low stipend, grade teachers running as low as $25 per month.

In April, 1888 the state legislature passed an act enabling and legalizing such transfer to the O.N.U. and on the 29th of that month the contract was signed.

The people were loyal to the college and for more than a quarter of a century bore this taxation burden, for it must be remembered that the interest paid on the original investment equalled more than the principal, as it requires but sixteen and one-third years for the interest on bonds at six per cent to equal the principal and as I recall it the duration of the issue was twenty years, and payment of principal did not begin for some years.

Soon after the change of ownership of the college, the president, Dr. Belt, found it advisable for the college to regain this part of the campus in order that other college buildings might be erected thereon and he made overtures to the school board to that effect, stipulating that the original clause relating to free tuition should be preserved inviolable. The proposition was given free discussion, there of course being some “cons” as well as pros, but when the question was put to a legal vote it carried.

A search of the records will show that this election for transfer was held on August 24, 1901, and that the vote stood 540 yea and 41 nay.

The consideration to be named in the deed of transfer was to be one dollar and the writer, as clerk of the board, received that dollar, a silver one, from Dr. Belt in the presence of the board of education.

The enrollment of students for the first 27 years of the school’s history was as follows:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1870-71</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>1871-72</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>1872-73</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>1873-74</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>1874-75</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>1875-76</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>1876-77</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>1877-78</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>1878-79</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>1879-80</td>
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<td>1880-81</td>
<td>1402</td>
<td>1881-82</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>1882-83</td>
<td>2070</td>
<td>1883-84</td>
<td>2067</td>
<td>1884-85</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1885-86</td>
<td>2369</td>
<td>1886-87</td>
<td>2434</td>
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</table>
Twenty-First of a Series by Agnew Welsh
Growth of Financial Institutions Traced

Ada’s first financial institution was a Building and Loan company, organized in August, 1870, and known as Ada Building & Loan No. 1. It did a business of $17,800 the first eighteen months of its existence, and in 1872 No. 2 was organized with Professor H.S. Lehr as president.

Building and Loan No. 1 wound up its business affairs in Oct. 1878, No. 2 having gone out of business some time before.

The Home Savings Building and Loan association was chartered Dec. 7, 1883, with Albert B. Charles as secretary and treasurer. He was succeeded by John W. Morrow upon Mr. Charles being elected county treasurer. On May 1, 1894, Mr. Morrow resigned to become postmaster and E. E. McAlpin was elected to the responsible position which he has since held.

There was a race for the opening of the first bank here. The Ada Exchange bank was opened by W. L. Reece and Isreal McJunkin, the latter of Lima, in connection with their grain buying, which was carried on in a large frame building that stood on Main street, east side, north of and adjoining the railroad. On June 1, 1872, William and E. Carey of Kenton and Peter and Nathan Ahlefeld opened the Bank of Ada, with P. Ahlefeld as cashier. The Careys remained with the bank only until 1874 and Nathan Ahlefeld retired in 1877.

In a few years the Exchange bank, of which W. L. Reece was the cashier, put up for its use a brick building on the west side of Main, the building now being used by J.T. Cunningham & Son for their main store. The bank failed on August 14, 1883, the late John W. Umbaugh being the assignee.

Peter Ahlefeld continued in the banking business alone, changing the name of his bank to The Citizens’ bank, until July 17, 1893, when, during the financial stringency of that disastrous year, Mr. Ahlefeld thought it necessary to make an assignment to protect his creditors, though no one lost a penny, even getting interest on their money during the time it was tied up by the assignment. Justin Brewer was made receiver.

With the failure of the Citizens’ bank a new banking company was organized and opened for business on October 3, 1893 at the Ada Savings bank with Justin Brewer as president and James Bastable as cashier. Upon Mr. Bastable being elected auditor of the county the stockholders elected Clyde Sharp to the position.

This bank was converted into a national bank on May 1, 1900, under the name of the First National bank.
On April 1, 1884, E. E. Bauman opened a bank in the old Exchange bank room, but the venture did not prove successful and he voluntarily closed it in July 1885.


The amount of deposits over a series of years were as follows: Oct., 1902, $66,500.54; April, 1903, $106,125.99; Nov., 1904, $112,387.75; March, 1905, $111,148.40; Nov., 1905, $107,470.27; March, 1907, $126,506.40.

The decennial appraisements of realty for two decades were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ada Corporation</td>
<td>$245,080</td>
<td>349,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ada School District</td>
<td>51,520</td>
<td>57,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty Township</td>
<td>414,370</td>
<td>474,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage Debt, Ada</td>
<td>127,000</td>
<td>130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage Debt, Twp.</td>
<td>77,000</td>
<td>55,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There being 20,254 acres of land in the township, outside the corporation of Ada, would give an average mortgage indebtedness, per acre as follows: in 1890, $14.16; in 1900, $20.27.

The chattel valuation, as fixed by the assessors over a period of years were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Valuation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>$330,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>345,280</td>
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<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>326,960</td>
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<td>1885</td>
<td>350,040</td>
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<td>1886</td>
<td>353,760</td>
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<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>375,220</td>
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<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>388,830</td>
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<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>478,020</td>
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<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>420,670</td>
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<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>416,520</td>
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<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>408,440</td>
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Twenty-Second of a Series by Agnew Welsh
Township's Military Record Impressive

The feeling of awe caused by the firing, on that early April day, in 1861, on Fort Sumter of the "shot that was heard 'round the world," P. W. Stumm once described to me in the following language:

"When the news was flashed over the wires that Fort Sumter had been fired upon the people of Johnstown, as in every locality, were
taken by surprise, and the feeling was so intense that there was little done for several days until they realized the situation."

"The first Sunday after Fort Sumter surrendered was more like a holiday in town than a day of rest. Every person who attended church at that time went to the same building; it made no difference what the denomination was. On the day referred to church was suspended and the people congregated along the railroad in the vicinity of the combined passenger and freight depot."

"Democrats, Republicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics, Prohibitionists, Sons of Temperance, of which there was a large lodge in the village at that time, and all others, including work oxen and dogs, assembled at the place mentioned and by unanimous voice concluded that the emergency of the case required us to do something. S. M. Johnson, at that time, proprietor of the saw mill, got two yoke of oxen and a number of men volunteered to go to the woods, with ox teams. They cut and dragged in one good sized ash pole and one hickory pole of the same dimensions."

"While they were absent getting the poles others worked with all energy in digging the holes to receive them. One was erected on the south side of the track and the other on the north side. The poles indicated the unanimity of feeling in regard to the duty of all good citizens."

The poles were erected and a banner stretched from the tops across the railroad track and suitably inscribed to express the loyalty and patriotism of all parties in our community. The banner was one of the best advertisements Ada ever had. Johnstown West was all the talk along the railroad from Pittsburgh to Chicago. Johnstown East was east of Pittsburg.

(Author's note: In those days, it was a custom, during campaigns, for the democrats to erect a tall hickory pole, while the republicans used ash ones.)

In 1861, Governor Todd appointed H. G. Harris, Edward Stillings, Thomas Rough, B. R. Brunson and William Schrader as a military commission of Hardin county and on August 29, 1862, the county auditor reported to this committee that Liberty township had 292 men able for duty; that on July 2 it had 57 men in the field and on August 29 it had 104 men defending the Union.

Meetings were held in the old frame school house being addressed at various times by Captain David Snodgrass, General J. S. Robinson, Rev. J. L. Bull, U. P. minister; Col. A. S. Ramsey, C. H. Gatch, Col. David Thompson, all of Kenton; Rev. Samuel Hagerman of Huntersville and Capt. Daugherty of Williamstown, Hancock county.

Of those stirring days, E. W. Gilbert wrote me as follows:

"My father (Hammond Gilbert) lived across the street from the Union school building and sent six sons and one young man he raised, Pulaski Howe, into service, making seven from one family. These young men served in five different regiments and in as many departments."

"The first recruiting officer to visit Ada was C. H. Gatch, an attorney of Kenton and serving as county clerk. Billy Dixon brought over from Kenton a fifer and three drummers and they marched from the railroad down to the old school house which then stood on the southwest corner of Main and Montford. It was Saturday afternoon,
and the band played, several speeches were made and a call for volunteers was then made. The house was crowded. George Arbuthnot, John Irvine, John Close, Cornelius Dearth, Jehu Garwood, James Huff, O. E. Collins, Pulaski Howe and myself were those enrolled."

"My brother, C. C. Gilbert, hauled us to Kenton in a big lumber wagon. We started from the Irvine house and his sisters locked John Irvine in his room upstairs so he could not go along but he came out on the balcony and said, "Go on, boys, I will be with you." We left him but he got out and rode on horseback to Kenton and joined us there and just two years from that very day he was killed at Chicamauga."

We again quote from Mr. Stumm:

"About this time the 1st and 2nd Minnesota Volunteer Infantry was to pass through Johnstown on the way to Washington, D. C., and the railroad authorities wired ahead from Ft. Wayne for the people of Johnstown to have lots of fresh water along the track to supply the soldiers on the train. The whole town turned out and pressed into service tubs, barrels, buckets, wash boilers and everything that would hold water and had them all filled and distributed along the railroad from east of the old depot to the Main street crossing. The first train stopped and the boys all had their canteens filled and the many good wishes that came from those soldier boys were things that made a person feel that he had performed one of the greatest duties he had ever experienced.

"The different trains transporting those two regiments stopped and the vessels were kept filled with pure well water so that all the men of both those gallant regiments were supplied with all the fresh water they would need until they arrived at Pittsburg.

"George A. Arbuthnot was the first soldier from the township to die from disease or any other cause. He died on February 4, 1862. Simon Hanifan was killed on May 8, 1862, being the first killed in battle."

Of the early enlistments from this township the late P. W. Stumm verified the following list:

W. H. Morrow, Cornelius Unger, April, 1861; assigned to the 4th Ohio.

The following enlisted during August and were assigned to Co. K, 33rd Ohio: John A. Irvine, John Close, John Patterson, George A. Arbuthnot, Edward J. King, Leander J. Calvin, Lorenzo T. Calvin, Cornelius M. Dearth, E. W. Gilbert, James M. Huff, John Hoy, Martin Isham, Andrew Johnson, W. H. Mustard.

The 34th Ohio, D Company, was organized at Camp Lucas in August, 1861, the members from here being: Austin T. Johnson, Samuel Arbuthnot, Jr, Theodore Carnahan, John W. Craig, Jacob Long, John Gilbert, Benjamin R. Newman, Wesley W. Lappin, Philip W. Ream, George C. and Samuel Tressel, Edward and Edmund Vickers, John Wells, James J. Wood, Edward Wallick.

Isaiah Wallick and Shepard Green were assigned to the 49th O.V.I.

Of the early enlistments assigned to the 54th Ohio he named: Noah Dearth, M. V. Gilbert, Robert P. Gilbert, Cornelius Dearth, Robert Kindle, Anderson Larue, William Kirby, Christopher Perry.

The next Ohio regiment to receive local enlistments was the 74th and to it went, during the winter of 1862, P.W. Stumm, Joseph Daugherty, Mark Guyton, George S. Wise.

Of the 99th Ohio Thomas D. McElroy was the only person recalled.


The 135th Ohio Volunteer regiment went into service in May, 1864, with the following men from this locality: Michael Melhorn, captain; Charles W. Gilbert, William L. Reece, Albert Card, Hollis J. Gilbert, Jacob Leinard, William R. Oyler, John H. Mustard, George Clappin, Robert Clappin, Daniel Cross, James M. Davis, Edward Dickens, Isaac Diefenderfer, Calvin R. Gilbert, Joseph Miller, James Mustard, John B. Nixon, Samuel W. Nixon, Jacob Oyler, Jacob Phillipi, Benjamin F. Ream, Ebenezer Wingate, Aaron Yarnall.

The 197th regiment was made up of a number of recruits and quite a number of re-enlistments. It went into service on March 25, 1865 and included the following local men:


Of the 3,077 men in the county Liberty township had 9½ per cent and in August, 1862, it had in the field 10½ per cent of the soldiers enlisted from Hardin county, or one per cent more than its list of available men.

There were a number who enlisted from here in special organizations, one of these being the "Western Sharpshooters" later known as the 66th Illinois. Among these were Col. N. R. Park, J. M. Bodge, George W. McElroy, Silas Agin, Alvin Davis, Charles Candler.

David J. Wood was a member of the 21st Ohio and George Carey of the 180th.

It may not be generally known that in neighboring cemeteries repose the earthly remains of ten soldiers of the War of 1812. These are Sampson Shadley, Patrick Conner and Collis Church, Preston cemetery; Joshua Chenowith, James Thompson, Joshua Ford, Maysville; Isaac Mathews, John Mustard, Sr., Isaac Hitchcock, Huntersville; George Daugherty, Sr.; Carman cemetery.

There are also two soldiers of the Mexican war interred here, these being A. D. Westhoven and Capt. Michael Melhorn.

There were local military organizations in the vicinity nearly a century ago as the following old record in the hands of J. H. Shanks will show. It was issued by his father.

Attention, Company! The Goshen Rifle Rangers are hereby commanded to parade at the house of Samuel Kelly, in Goshen Township, Hardin county, Ohio, on the state road leading from Kenton to Burlington, on Friday, the seventh day of June next, precisely at nine
o'clock on said (day) for the purpose of performing military duty, uniformed, armed and equipped agreeable to law.

By order of the Captain.
May 6, 1844. John Shanks, O.S.

Twenty-third of a Series by Agnew Welsh
First Traction Engine Made by Ada Inventor

It is not generally known that in Ada was invented and operated the first engine ever built that traveled the highway, the forerunner of the modern tractor. It was the invention of Noble M. Davidson, long a resident here both before and after the rise and decline of his pioneer machine of the kind. The enterprise was backed by George W. Rutledge and James E. Lowry and for many years following my purchase of the Ada Record in 1881 there was stored there the blocks for three-colored cuts of the engine drawing a threshing outfit on a highway, the prime purpose of the machine being to replace the old horsepower threshing outfits. Soon others, doubtless the makers of threshing machinery, sold the idea, improved upon it and adapted it to their own use. A few of the steam engines were built and used and the idea was entirely practical for the machine really worked. This was about the mid-seventies.

In the 80's Conner Brothers (William and M.M.) did a big business in making road carts, a two-wheeled vehicle that was popular in new regions before the advent of good roads. Their trade in these was practically all over the Middle States. The plant was on the corner of Johnson and Lincoln.

About this time W. N. Bryan invented an iron wind-engine, or windmill, that offered endurance advantages over the old wood-wheels and a stock company was formed to manufacture them and among whom were Mr. Bryan, George Rothrock, his father, Joseph Rothrock, Henry Young and others, but the concern never was a financial success.

The Ada Fire Alarm Co. was organized to build a magnetic fire alarm system under the P.E. Tarleton patents, Prof. J. G. Park was largely concerned in this and they had a valuable invention that enabled smaller towns, that could not afford the expensive Gamewell system, to protect the town with an efficient alarm. A system was installed here and at Bluffton and possibly one other town. The factory was first located in the building once occupied by the Reformed church, on E. Lincoln, later moving into a brick building on East Buckeye. For some unaccountable reason it never forged ahead.

Another of Ada's industries that flourished for several years was the stave mill, being a plant put in here for converting elm timber into barrel staves. It was owned by the Edwards interests of Leipsic. Its location was on a large tract of ground in the east part of town and south of the railroad. It began operations on October 13, 1900.

In August, 1898, George H. Kephart moved his handle factory here from Spencerville, using ash timber in making hand-tool handles and as a side line cut up vast quantities of basswood to be converted in his plant into flag sticks, rocket sticks and kindred purposes. Following Mr. Kephart's death the plant passed into the hands of the Ada Coal &
Lumber Co., owned by H. R. Butler, Walter Sousley and C. J. Bohannon; at one period L. F. Anspach was also part-owner.

In 1872 Rosel Scott operated a flax mill on the south side of the east end of what was then called Long street, now Lehr Ave.

A once-flourishing industry in Ada was the Ada Canning Co. The location of the plant was on the south side of the tracks near the present plant of the Water Co., the site being staked off on May 15, 1900. Its officials were N. R. Park, president; E. E. McAlpin, secretary; George Rothrock, treasurer; directors—S. W. Nixon, E. M. Turner, N. R. Park, S. F. Richardson, William Moore, J. W. Clum, W. H. Freund.

The plant was running that fall and the output was 125,000 cans of tomatoes but it was not profitable and on March 20, 1901, an assessment of 65 per cent was made on stockholders and it ceased operation with the crop of 1905. The output during the years it ran were as follows: 1901, 26,011 cans; 1902, 84,007 of tomatoes and 18,000 of pumpkins; 1903, 51,864; 1904, 28,000; 1905, 46,732 cans.

The Empire mill, which stood on West Montford street, was built by one of the Reams. In 1872 William A. Edwards either owned all or part of it. William Rinehart later became part owner, selling in October, 1878, to William Smith. Then Hall & Liles became owners and in May, 1894 Justin Brewer bought out George Liles and the firm became Hall and Brewer. Later they bought the old main street grain warehouse and in a few years the firm dissolved, Mr. Brewer taking over the warehouse. Fire later destroyed the Empire Mill.

The first steam grist mill in the township was the one built by the Young Brothers in 1873. It stood on Johnson street, about opposite the new Lutheran church. They soon sold it to John B. Carey. Jacob Forbing, who came here from Fort Wayne, built a scroll mill east of the mill of his brother-in-law, the Youngs. Later Mr. Forbing sold his mill to the Young Bros. and moved to Kenton. The scroll mill burned in 1876. William Young, one of the Young bros. lived directly opposite their mills his son John now occupying the property.

In 1861 William Souder, a brother of the late Dr. Souder, built a tannery on East Montford street, between Main and Johnson. Later he sold the place to A. B. Huff and his brother-in-law, David Binns. They in turn sold it to Lewis Marsh and on January 15, 1871, Mr. Marsh sold it to Albert Shaw who operated it until it was destroyed by fire on January 14, 1885.

Twenty-fourth of a Series by Agnew Welsh

MILITARY HISTORY CONTINUED

Two drafts were made in Ohio, the one on May 23, 1864, not affecting Liberty township: in this 37 men were required of the county. In the draft made the following September, 43 more men were exacted from the county and three or four of these were required to be furnished by Liberty township.

W. L. Reece says that at the call for more troops made in January, 1865, a meeting of the citizens of the township was held in the old school house to take action. A number of citizens formed a combination for mutual protection from the draft, This is the agreement:

"Ada, Hardin Co., O., Feb. 15, 1865. We, the undersigned citizens of
Liberty township, Hardin county, Ohio, in order to protect ourselves against the pending draft, agree to pay the sum opposite our names to the treasurer of this company with the following understanding: That each and every subscriber who shall have paid the amount of his subscription prior to the day of draft of said township and who shall be drafted and accepted shall receive from the fund hereby raised in proportion to the amount of his subscription and that no dividend shall be struck until the quota is filled and that———-is hereby appointed treasurer, provided further that a partial dividend may be struck after the first draft, reserving a sum in proportion to the number of men drafted."

This document bore signatures, together with the amounts pledged as follows:

Wm. League, $100; C. E. Stumm, $100; W. L. Reece, $100; John P. Cochran, $100; Jerry Bricker, $100; W.W. Thompson, $100; John Gerkey, $25.00; Uriah Street, $100; Chris Strahm, $100; N. McAdams, $25; B. F. Guyton, $50; Geo. Reese, $100; Geo. Epley, $100; H. B. Scott, $30; John Shanks, $100; Sam Lantz, $100; Geo. Klingler, $100; Nick McGlumphy, $30; Evan M. Jackson $30; Wm. McGlumphy, $30; Wm. H. Kidd, $60; Samuel Lones, $40; Reube Herring, $50; Jacob Ahlefeld, $100; Josiah Isham, $25; Israel Proches, $20; B.F. Ream, $100; H. J. Gilbert, $100; J. D. Scott, $30; R. B. Reed, $50; Aaron Yarnell, $50; Levi Anspach, $25; Jacob High, $100; S. S. Dickinson, $100; L.F. Stumm, $60; David Kingler, $75; Sol. Anspach, $60; Henry Pugh, $100; Chris Young, $100.

The Park Monument

The first monument erected in the Pennsylvania park was a wooden structure about 15 feet high and sanded to imitate stone. It did not last more than 10 years and in 1892 this was replaced by a more substantial one of brick, stuccoed with cement. This was dedicated on Monday, May 30, 1902, Mayor C. E. Stumm turning over the structure to the Post.

While this monument was more attractive than the wooden one, yet it could not withstand the elements and in a few years became dilapidated.

An act of congress in 1902 gave G.A.R. Posts the privilege of claiming a condemned cannon and a successful effort was made to secure one for Ada, the secretary of war sending a siege gun from Fort Mifflin, below Philadelphia. The department charged $50 for loading the gun on board the cars and this was raised by subscription. The Pennsylvania Railroad transported it here free of freight charge.

The money was sent June 4, 1902, the gun reached here on the 12th and on the 14th was hauled to the northwest corner of the park.

On June 23, Carman Post appointed as a committee on monument the following: Col. N. R. Park, S. W. Nixon, and Jacob Leinard, of its own number, and Wm. Lantz and Agnew Welsh, civilians.

They let a contract to J. B. Weber, of Leipsic, for a Barre granite base, die and gun rest for $575. The stake was set for the location on November 1, the limestone foundation was put in that fall and the stone reached here February 15, 1903 and the erection was completed on February 23. The handsome granite monument to the memory of Ada's soldiers, living and dead, was dedicated on Memorial Day, May
30, 1903, and on behalf of the donors, Mayor L. A. Greer gave it into the hands of Carman Post, 101, Grand Army of the Republic.

The inscriptions are as follows: east side, "In Memory of the Soldiers of 1861-65;" west side, "Lest We Forget," from Rudyard Kipling's poem, "The Recessional."

The expense was borne by about 200 individuals and business firms contributing from one to five dollars each.

In 1861 H. G. Harris, Edward Stillings and William Schrader were appointed by Governor Todd as a military commission for Hardin County. On August 29, 1862, the county auditor furnished this commission the following table of military service:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Twp</th>
<th>No. Liable for Duty</th>
<th>In Service July 1</th>
<th>No. On Aug. 29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blanchard</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buck</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cessna</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dudley</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goshen</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hale</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonald</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundhead</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Creek</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3077</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>1197</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty-fifth of a Series by Agnew Welsh

PUBLIC UTILITIES

The first attempt at public lighting of the streets was made by use of the Sun gasoline vapor lamps installed by a Canton firm. The service begun in January, 1887. There were about 25 lamps located throughout the town, and a man with a horse cart especially arranged for the purpose, went about each day replacing the feedcans with filled ones which he lighted and let burn dry.

Before this contract expired, the council entered into one with a Lima company headed by W. L. Silvey who had patented a dynamo, a considerable of the stock in the local company having been sold to Ada parties, the concern eventually drifting into their hands entirely. Prominent among the local capitalists were Col. N. R. and Prof. J. G. Park.

The Silvey company assumed the old vapor lighting contract, and on January 1, 1889, the streets of Ada were first lighted with electricity,
and as it was then and remained for many years the smallest town around to be thus lighted the village put on airs. The original contract expiring in 1894 it was renewed and the number of lamps increased.

In the early 1890’s the Ada Water, Heat, Light & Power Company was granted a franchise and securing an option on the old company’s plant it begun the erection of a new and up-to-date plant for furnishing water, electricity and hot water heat from a central system, under patents issued to a Mr. Yaryan, of Toledo, who licensed the local company.

The Ada company, which was headed by Brig. S. Young, erected a fine plant, with duplicate engines and pumps for both hot and cold water and dynamos. The original boiler capacity was a battery of three which was increased by another boiler a couple of years later, and in February, 1906, a fifth one was added.

When the new company was granted a renewal of contract it was stipulated that there should be furnished free water for five public fountains. Through the enterprise of the Board of Trade, which contributed $100 of the cost, the council paying about $50, substantial iron drinking fountains for man and beast were erected in public places about town.

In 1905 the village council, with the aid of the Board of Trade and the pledges and support of the Firemen, bought a fire alarm system known as the American Magnetic Fire Alarm, manufactured in Ada, where the bulk of the capital stock was held.

**Telephones**

In 1882 the Bell Telephone company gave Ada its first telephonic connection with the outside world by opening a line from Kenton, where it had a small exchange. In July the poles and wires were delivered here; by August 9th the wires were strung and communication opened on the 11th.

As an inducement to get the line a number of business men and progressive citizens bought $10 coupon books. E. W. Gilbert managed the Ada end of the line, the instrument being installed in his tin store, then located where the Record office building was later erected.

Shortly after the opening of the Young Hotel its manager, the late Hiram S. Shannon, became the Bell agent here. Next it was moved to the Samuel Davis’ furniture store and in the 1880’s it was moved to Kemp’s drug store.

On October 8, 1896, the Ada Telephone Exchange was opened for business with 28 residence and 34 commercial phones. J. E. Hesser and S. F. Wilson were the projectors of this enterprise. In 1897 Prof. J. G. Park became interested in the company, buying a third interest.

The year 1900 was one of considerable activity for the local concern. In April it established long distance connection through an arrangement with the U. S. Telephone Co.; in August it built a line to New Stark and North Washington (now Dola). The first rural phones were installed early that year by the Tabors, Highs, Guytons by using a private line. The Stemple and Huntersville neighborhoods then put in a private line connected with the local exchange; in June a line was built to connect LaFayette.

On April 25, 1900, John E. Hesser, the founder of the exchange sold one-third of the stock to Rev. Z. B. Campbell who resold the same to
Henry A. Clark.

The line to Kenton was not built by this company until 1898.

In March, 1901, the company was merged with one owning plants at Bluffton and Bellefontaine. In March, 1907, the company purchased the local exchanges at Alger and McGuffey and on April 1 inaugurated free toll between all the subscribers of these lines.

When first established the exchange was located in a room on the second floor of Elberson Bldg., City Hall building, and on completion of the township house, October, 1899, the plant was moved therein, the growth of the business demanding increased facilities.

The company bought or located exchanges at Dunkirk, Harrod, LaFayette, Alger, McGuffey and Dola, the latter name having been changed from North Washington on March 1, 1907.

The early directories were printed on cards and doubtless none of these have been preserved. A file of the pamphlet editions shows a large growth of business which is clearly indicated by the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>City Phones</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October, 1896</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 1900</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June, 1901</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March, 1902</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 1903</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 1904</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 1905</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ada has had some good bands in its day and among these was the old Harmonia band which was mustered into state service as the Second Regiment band in May, 1887.

Twenty-sixth of a Series by Agnew Welsh

Rise and Progress of Hardin County

“Civilization comes riding upon a cannon,” is a statement attributed to Napoleon; at least it sounds Napoleonesque. That the statement applies to this region is attested by the fact that the first white man’s foot to press the soil of what is now Hardin county was one of Hull’s officers when Gen. Hull was passing from Urbana to that inglorious surrender to the British at Detroit. From that invasion sprang Fort McArthur, near Kenton; “Mud fort,” probably a slight breast works, a day’s march farther north and then Fort Findlay.

Antedating a few days the declaration of war against Great Britain, on June 18, 1812, General William Hull, in command of the army of the Northwest, was ordered northward with his army of 2,000 men. General Duncan McArthur was detailed to command a regiment that was to be sent ahead as an engineer corps to hew a roadway through the forests. They left Urbana, Ohio, about June 11, 1812, and reached the Scioto river a day or two later.

The point at which the General decided to build the first fortification was about three miles northwest of the present city of Kenton, and on what is now the northwest corner of Buck township. This defense,
Kenton, Ohio—East side Square, Main street. Courtesy Vincent Reichert.

Hardin County Court House, Kenton, Ohio 1855-1913. Courtesy Vincent Reichert.
named Fort McArthur, was erected on level ground on the south side of the Scioto river and here the unmarked graves of sixteen of the men who died there can yet be seen.

The main body of General Hull's army reached this spot on June 19, camping on the north side of the stream. Two day's later Col. Finley's regiment was detached to continue the road-cutting northward to the Blanchard river. About twelve miles north, at a point near where Dunkirk now stands, a blockhouse was erected and named Fort Necessity. Continuing northward the pioneer corps erected on the Blanchard river a stockade similar to Fort McArthur and named it Fort Findlay.

On June 20, Gen. Hull's army moved forward, a company, in command of Captain Dill, being left to garrison Ft. McArthur. Gen. Hull continued his march northward, reaching Maumee on June 30, and surrendering his army to the British at Detroit on August 30 for which act he was court-martialed and sentenced to be shot, President Madison approving the finding, but remitting the sentence in consideration of the condemned officer's previous services.

The old Hull road or "Hull's Trail," was used for several years as the highway between the settlements to the south and those about Detroit.

Howe in his "Historical Collections," who personally gathered the data in 1846, says Ft. McArthur was a light stockade enclosing about half an acre of ground and containing two blockhouses: one on the northwest corner and the other on the southeast angle; that about seventy or eighty feet of the enclosure was made by a row of corn cribs covered with a shed roof sloping to the inside. He says that part of the stockade timbers or pickets were of split timber overlapping at the edges, while others were of poles touching each other. The rows of huts for the soldiers and officers' quarters stood a few feet inside the stockade.

During the summer of 1812 General Tupper marched over the same route with 1,000 men and after an engagement at Maumee Rapids, marched back to Fort McArthur. He must have remained at the fort some time as it is related that in 1813 Blackhoof, a Shawnee chief of local note, visited the fort and while being entertained at night about a campfire by Gen. Tupper and his officers, someone fired a pistol shot at the Indian through a hole in the wall, the ball striking his cheek, glancing and lodging in his neck. It was thought he was killed but he was revived and in due time recovered. So the savages were not guilty of making all the unfair attacks.

This post was one of much danger as the Indians, under Tecumseh, were being incited to many attacks and depredations. Howe quotes Thomas C. Wright as an authority for the following incident: While the fort was in command of General Robert McClelland, a bold and intrepid officer, one of his men went out to peel elm bark and while thus engaged two Indians fired upon him, both shots taking effect in his body. With yells of pain he sped to the fort but fell before reaching it. Believing this to be the forerunner of an attack they were expecting, instead of closing the stockade gates the impetuous general seized his rifle and commanding his men to follow, rushed out the gate toward the enemy, but the two had skulked away.

At a treaty with the Indians, made at the rapids of the Maumee on
September 29, 1817, wherein the United States was represented by Lewis Cass and Duncan McArthur, the lands north of the Greenville treaty boundary, except a few small reservations, and now comprising the northwest group of Ohio counties, were ceded by the Indians.

After the Fort Meigs, or Maumee Rapids, treaty these lands were surveyed and put on the market. There were three classes of such lands: those south of the Scioto river were known as military lands, those north of that stream were Congress lands; there were also a few tracts of canal lands among the latter throughout this region. For the sale of the Congress lands a land office was opened at Bucyrus; the Virginia Military lands were located through an office located at Chillicothe, while the place of disposal of the canal lands was at Ft. Ball, now a part of Tiffin. The Military lands were those set aside by congress to recompense Virginia soldiers of the Revolution for their services. Each of these portions bore a number which is yet carried as a part of the descriptions in making deeds and on the maps of the county.

In 1873 Virginia ceded to the United States all her title to the lands she claimed northwest of the Ohio river. The lands lying between the Miami and the Scioto rivers were set apart to meet the claims of Continental soldiers and some officers and were designated as the Virginia Military Survey. They were not laid out in townships, but claimants were permitted to locate their lands at will. The effect of this method can be noticed in the irregular shape of the townships and other boundaries south of the Scioto.

This county was erected by a legislative act passed on February 12, 1820, Hardin, under this act, being attached to Logan county for judicial purposes. The act creating it a separate and distinct county was passed on January 19, 1833, the act to be come effective March 1, 1833.

The name bestowed upon it was given by Colonel John Johnson, the famous Indian agent and writer of the history of his day; it was chosen as an honor to Colonel John Hardin, a lieutenant in Morgan's Rifle Corps, of the Revolution. Col. Hardin was born in Virginia but after the Revolution settled in Washington county, Ky. In 1792 Gen. George Washington sent him on a mission of peace to the Ottawa and Shawnee Indians, but he was foully murdered by the savages at night while camping on Shawnee soil at a point now in Shelby county.

There is a tradition that a man named Alfred Hale, his wife and two sons and a daughter located at Ft. McArthur in 1817; that his wife died there a few years later and Hale, like the typical hunter and "squatter" moved on — where no one knows. Doubtless Hale township bears his name. However this may be, the first permanent white settlers in the county were Daniel Campbell and Peter McArthur who came from Ross county in 1818, built cabins a few miles east of Roundhead, planted corn and returned to Ross county for their families, but owing to the fear of attacks by the Indians they did not return until 1822. In February, 1822 Samuel Tidd, a native of Pennsylvania, settled north of Roundhead, being the first settler in what is now Roundhead township, Messrs. Campbell and McArthur being in now McDonald township.
Other early settlers in that vicinity were Widow Richey and her two sons, James Hill, Joseph Bowdle and his brother Jesse, Jonathan Carter, William Given, William Ford, Jacob Thompson, Henry Stametz, who gradually dotted that vicinity with their cabins until in 1832 there were a sufficient number to organize a township which yet remained under the protective wing of Logan county.

Wild Pigeons

The wild pigeon days were full of wonder and amusement. Immense droves of them made the marshes their roosting places but the early 70’s saw the last of them and where they went has been an unsolved mystery.

The writer was raised about fifty miles east of Hardin county and well remembers the flashing wings and under parts in the evening sunlight as the great droves swept westward to Hog creek and Scioto marshes where they roosted on the willows along and through the inland lake. At night men would shoot and club them from the branches. The others would take flight with a great whir of wings.

Hunters in Crawford county would trap them when they came in the morning to pick up grains of corn from where my father and other farmers had fed their flocks.

Johnstown in Its Infancy (1855)

This map of the village of Johnstown which later became Ada, the home of Ohio Northern university, was drawn by Agnew Welsh from a sketch made about 1910 by the late W. L. Reece, one of the pioneer merchants of Ada. The dotted lines represent streets — Montford, Highland, Buckeye, Lincoln and Johnson — which were not marked on Mr. Reece’s sketch.

102
Main St., Dunkirk, Ohio.

Dunkirk, Ohio Main street. Courtesy Vincent Reichert.

Dunkirk, Ohio. Courtesy Thomas Tighe.
Twenty-seventh of a Series by Agnew Welsh

HARDIN COUNTY HISTORY CONTINUED

Jonathan Carter settled there in 1829 and in 1832 laid out the village of Roundhead, thus making it the oldest town in the county. Its name was bestowed in honor of the Old Indian chief, Roundhead, who was conspicuous in the war. The old chief’s Indian name was “Stiahta,” meaning, “round head.” Tradition and legend strive to locate Roundhead’s grave on the bank of the Scioto near that village. It is true there were some Indian graves there; of Roundhead’s burial place John T. Wylie, an intelligent man and long a resident of that town, wrote the author some years ago: “A bluff on the bank is pointed out as the place where Roundhead is buried. But this is only conjecture. The bulk of evidence is to the effect that he had gone before the first settlers had arrived and never returned. Doubtless many mistook him for his half-brother, John Battise, who was frequently about here as late as 1834, and was therefore not killed at Fort Meigs as some historians record.”

“At that time there were three cabins in the place — those of Jonathan Carter, Jacob Thompson and Livingston’s “Tavern.” Jonathan Carter’s cabin of hewed logs was situated near the bluff where it is believed from the presence of apple trees that Roundhead’s wigwam was located. Here a thriving Indian village was located as late as 1800.”

The first deed recorded in the county, for the sale of real estate, was executed by Jonathan Carter and wife Nancy, to John Ryan, conveying lot 27 in Roundhead, and is dated July 1, 1832.


Roundhead township, being the only subdivision in the county, embraced a large area. At this first election Daniel Campbell was elected justice of the peace and Mathew Mahan, constable. The result of the vote on the county ticket was as follows:

Commissioners (three): John McArthur, 52 votes; Joseph Bates, 8; John Berry, 1; Charles D. Scott, 48; Cyrus Dilley, 25.
Sheriff: Michael Fickel, 7; Henry D. Tharp, 30; John Hankins, 14; John Ward, 8.
Treasurer: James Hays, 8; Robert McCloud, 19; Jonathan Carter, 19; Jesse Bowdle, 12.
Auditor: Charles W. Stevenson, 43.
Recorder: Stephen Thompson, 22; Daniel Campbell, 38.
Assessor: Isaac Darnell, 10; Peter McArthur, 46.
Surveyor: John Terry, 4; Ethan Terry, 1.
To decide the tie for treasurer, lots were cast and the choice fell upon Mr. Carter.
The general, or state election was held there that fall, October 8, 1833 — by which time the number of electors had increased to 113. An old map and census of this region gives the population of the county in 1830, as 210.

On January 28, 1833, James McCloud and Thomas E. Huston were appointed associate judges and their first court was held on March 8, 1833, at the place designated in the act, at Fort McArthur, in the cabin home of one of their number, Wm. McCloud. They were commissioned for seven years and Alexander Thompson was appointed clerk of the court for a like period.
The court adjourned to May 24 and in all probability at this term of court adopted the report, made by a commission consisting of Ira Page, Abner Snoddy, and E.L. Morgan, which had been appointed to select “a seat of justice for said county of Hardin.” They named Kenton as such seat and the first court held there was on August 8, 1834. The first grand jury convened on September 10, 1833, and returned seven indictments, all for selling intoxicants illegally.
The first election held in the several townships, thus completing their formal organization, was as follows: Roundhead, April 1, 1833; Taylor Creek, May 4, 1833; Blanchard, May 4, 1833; Dudley, October 8, 1833; Goshen, May 24, 1834; Cessna, May 31, 1834; Pleasant, October 14, 1834; Hale, June 25, 1835; Marion, April 4, 1836; Jackson, April 4, 1836; Washington, April 4, 1836; McDonald, June 18, 1836; Liberty, October 10, 1837; Buck, April 7, 1845; Lynn, September 19, 1857.

In 1835 a small store was opened in the village of Roundhead and in 1837 a subscription school was started, taught by Peter McArthur.
Roundhead township had a sort of judicial organization in 1832 as a part of Logan county.

Hardin County comprises 476 square miles of territory and through it passes the water-shed separating the waters of the lake and the gulf, the waters of Hog creek flowing north to Lake Erie while those of the Scioto find their way to the Gulf of Mexico.
It is situated in north latitude 40 degrees and 35 minutes and longitude 83 degrees and 40 minutes west of Greenwich. Its highest elevation is 1371-feet above sea level.
The following census table for seven decades shows the growth of the several subdivisions of Hardin County:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Township</th>
<th>1840</th>
<th>1850</th>
<th>1860</th>
<th>1870</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blanchard</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>2428</td>
<td>2169</td>
<td>2026</td>
</tr>
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In editing this material I have followed carefully the Agnew Welsh material as it appeared in the 1931 Ada Herald. I corrected only typographical errors. In some cases where names were spelled in several different ways (Reese, Reece, Reic, Reis) I tried to keep the spelling consistent only when I was sure the reference was to the same person or family. In many cases Agnew Welsh was using original documents; some must have been faded, folded, and in several instances, almost unreadable. For example, the first Ada school board records were rescued from a trash pile by the custodian, Ernest Routson, and given to Mr. Welsh at the Record office almost seventy-five years ago.

If readers find obvious mistakes in names or dates, they should report them to the Ada Herald in a letter which can be printed so owners of the books can insert the corrections. But, as Agnew Welsh says in his “Foreward,” in spite of some inaccuracies “it is better to save a part than to lose the whole.”

Special thanks are due Paul Logsdon, Director of the ONU Heterick Library, who collated the original material for the Ada Herald. The many people who shared their postcards and pictures for the book added a great deal to its value.

Betty Miller

* All profits from this book (after printing costs) will be turned over to the Ada Public Library board to be used for the preservation of important historical material so that it will be available to anyone interested in the early history of Ada and the community.
Mohler’s Flower Shop, former Kemp home where Ada, Ohio, Post office now stands. Courtesy Ellene Parshall.

Ada, Ohio—Railroad depot on the day of President William Howard Taft’s visit—1910. Courtesy Mary Cotner Motter.
South Main Street, Ada, Ohio.

Courtesy Eilene Parshall.

View Ohio Northern University Buildings, Ada, Ohio.