



March 2013

WARREN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 256 Indianola, IA 50125 Phone-515-961-8085

(Highway 92 West, 1400 West 2nd, turn north into fair grounds)

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WCHS SOUP SUPPER

6:00 pm Tuesday,

March 26



Free will offering

Annual Meeting & Officer Election

Program: Kristi Porter

Warren County Rural School Slide Show

WCHS

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Sat. March 16 at 9:30

Sat. April 20 at 9:30

Sat. May 18 at 9:30

LCF COMMITTEE

Sat. March 16 at 10:00 am

Sat. April 20, at 10:00 am

Sat. May 18, at 10:00 am

Future WCHS Meetings
April 23 Don VanRyswyk *Sayre Family Stories*

May 28 Valerie Diehl
Is it me or Alzheimer's?



THE ROBERTS COURT at the CROSSROADS

Linda Greenhouse, author and 30-year correspondent covering the U.S. Supreme Court for the **New York Times**, will be the 2013 Culver Lecturer at Simpson College Tuesday, March 19th at 7:00 pm at the Kent Center, Hubble Hall. She is currently a Senior Research Scholar in Law, Knight Distinguished Journalist in Residence and Joseph Goldstein Lecturer in Law at Yale Law School.

J-K Intersection Update

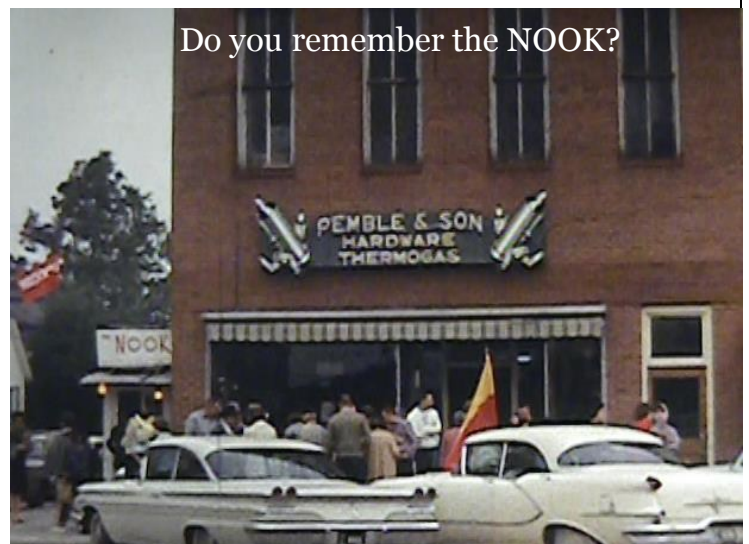
The city of Indianola has purchased the Champlin property and is in the process of scheduling the removal of the house and buildings. However, they have moved the J-K road intersection construction to 2014. So that gives us another year to plan.

Champlin Property next to WCHS



Please bring your photo of any Warren County rural school to the March 26th Soup Supper so that we can make copies for the Log Cabin Festival. Thanks!

Do you remember the NOOK?



RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Book **For the Love of Pete**, an orphan train story recently written by Ethel Barker (Jack Barker's sister-in-law)

48 star U.S. flag and paper memorabilia from Leona Parisho Champlin, donated by Larry Champlin

1940s Bonnets, dresses, shoes, leather vest, and flannel jeans from Judy McClymond

Oak cabinet with VCRs from George Hladky's early Indianola cable station

Liberty Center United Methodist Church, 125th Anniversary, Toni Rath

Two dictionaries from Gary & Barb Marchant

John Kessler's broad axe and handmade wooden vice from Wayne Bartlett

Dictionary stand from Simpson College

1964 DVD of Ridiculous Days and other parades

Westview's Best Kept Secrets (cookbook) and **St. Marys 1948-1960 Finale** (final St. Marys' yearbook)

School books, nursing supplies, and clothing from Earlene Ginter

Presbyterian Women's Missionary magazines from Jim and Joelle Gavin

Carlisle Mill reproduced flour sack from Max Morrison

1873-1916 Palmyra Township Minutes, Justice of Peace Court 1865 H.C. Merrick, 1887 Hartford District School minutes, from John Franklin

Ethelda Beymer Ledlie 4H Scrapbook and miscellaneous 4H items

Miscellaneous Louise Pilmer papers about Hartford and Scotch Ridge and Warren County Fair Premium Lists and Rules from Marieta Grissom

Sesquicentennial booklet for Hartford Presbyterian Church, rural school pictures and probate records from Bill Schooler

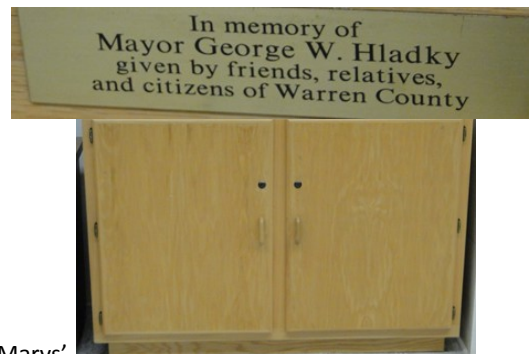
Mary Schimelfenig (pictured here) donated a banquet sized tablecloth and queen sized bedspread crocheted by her grandmother, Marybelle Silus (pronounced Silvus) Allen.

Marybelle Silus was born in Ohio around 1857 and moved to Norwalk with her parents around 1860. She was a devoted Methodist, being converted at 17 (around 1874) when a tent preacher came through Norwalk. She married Alfred Charles Allen and they farmed near Norwalk. They had three children, Edith, Arden, and Esther Allen Onstot (Mary's mother).

Alfred Charles' Allen family landed in Massachusetts before the Civil War. Alfred was one of seven brothers. Some of the brothers fought for the Confederate Army during the Civil War and some fought for the Union. Returning home after the war, their home and their parents were gone so each went their separate ways.

"Grandma Marybelle Allen", says Mary, "taught school at Prole." Mary still has the first chest of drawers her grandmother bought with her first paycheck. Marybelle was very passionate about her faith and had a leadership role in the Norwalk Methodist Church teaching Sunday school and working in other activities. The first Methodist Church service was held in an Onstot home north and east of Norwalk. An Onstot was the first person buried in the Norwalk cemetery.

Esther Allen married Ray Onstot and farmed south of Norwalk for 22 years. Mary was born in 1920 and attended Norwalk schools. Ray died in November of 1963.



Mary Onstot Schimelfenig, 92, at Good Samaritan in Indianola

The postcard that George Fischer received from another soldier thanking him for helping during a Civil War battle.



Bucktails, Civil War Soldier George Fischer



George Fischer was only 15 or 16 years old when he enlisted with The Old Bucktails, a Pennsylvania Riflemen Regiment. He was from Warren, PA, and enlisted to escape his mother's new husband. As a rifleman, Fischer and his comrades were charged with going to the front of the lines and shooting the Confederate Calvary, says George D. Fischer, his grandson who is 86 and lives in rural Norwalk. The unit was known as the Bucktails because they sewed the tail of a buck onto the back of their hats. The Bucktails were shipped from battle to battle in boxcars. Occasionally they were overrun during battle and captured. George Fischer was captured three times and held in the Libby, Salisbury and Andersonville prisons. He was released each time

during prisoner exchanges. George Fischer also was wounded three times during battle. He was hit in the side by a cannonball that had bounced along the ground. Some of his ribs were caved in. That injury is what later led him to migrate to Iowa in 1870 because it was said at the time that the air in Iowa was better and would make it easier for him to breathe.

In a different battle, Fischer was hit by a mini ball in the knee and ankle. He was lined up alongside other wounded at a triage and allegedly told an officer next to him, "Don't let them cut my leg off. I'd rather be dead than not have a leg." Fischer lost consciousness, and medics came by to take him away for surgery to amputate the leg. The officer told the medics that was not what Fischer wanted and even pulled out his handgun to make sure they didn't take the young man away to amputate his leg. The medics left Fischer alone and said he would probably die as a result. Fischer recovered from the wounds but walked with a limp for the remainder of his life.

President Abraham Lincoln had a standing policy that Union soldiers who were wounded were welcome to stop by the White House on their way back to their unit. Fischer says his grandfather and a friend were headed back to their units and decided to stop at the White House. When Lincoln saw Fischer, who was 6'4", the President said he recalled seeing him carrying the flag when the Bucktails had previously marched through Washington D.C. "I remarked to my secretary at the time, I wonder if that young man is as tall as I am," Lincoln said. Fischer says it was decided that a measurement would be taken to see which of the men was taller. Both took off their boots and Fischer stood back to back with the President. Lincoln stood about .25 of an inch taller.



George D. Fischer of Norwalk shows an album filled with photos and other memories from his grandfather George Fischer's Civil War experiences.



**Carol
Mahr**

**WARREN COUNTY RURAL SCHOOLS
LCF 2013 Theme**

Jerry Beatty and Susan Graeser are working on a booklet about our Warren County Rural Schools. We are looking for clear photos of schools, students or teachers. Needed are teacher anecdotes or pupil reminiscences. If you would like to share, contact us by E-mail contact@warrencountyhistory.org or let us copy your items at the museum Thursdays 9-4 or Saturdays 9 to noon.

**LOG CABIN QUILT RAFFLE
RETURNS IN 2013**

Eileen Lenninger has volunteered to help design the 2013 Log Cabin Festival Warren County Rural School's quilt using sophisticated quilt designing software. Carol Mahr, Nancy DeLay, Wanda Bonnes, Rosie Hulen, Linn Smiths and Elaine Lowe from the Warren County Peace Makers will be piecing the quilt blocks. In the center of each block will be an image of a Warren County rural school building or class. Gwen Roen will machine quilt and finish the quilt. This will be a quilt that everyone in Warren County will want to have. Watch for the quilt raffle tickets on sale this summer.



Eileen Lenninger, The Stitching Place



SWITZER SCHOOL 1911-12

Front Row: Loren Lettington, Eldon Cummings, Virgil Laverty, Leo Lettington, Draper Hopper

Second Row: Fanella Hopper, Leona Orrill, Flo Orrill, Hilda Morris, (girl visitor)

Top row: Teacher Helen Sanders Schooler, Cora Sams, Edith Orrill, Helen Morrie, Vera Morris, Blanche Sams, Lydia Orrill

Dr. Wayne Sproul Hull, Carlisle, January 18, 1940, From his son Emmet, Carlisle Citizen

In Carlisle, Dr. Hull had a log cabin on Market Street which was then the center of the village (the street on the hill which extends east and west past the Christian Church. A few years later Hull built what was then a very fine residence, now the Alkire property occupied by the Overton family. It was Gothic style with pointed windows and gables. In this new home in 1872 lived Frank Church, Otho Owen, Lola, Cora, (married William Kail) Emmett and Maude. The water supply was obtained from a well north of the house, which like all others in town was an open one with two buckets suspended by ropes for drawing up the water. One accident occurred when the small daughter of a neighbor fell in a well across the street which was forty feet deep, the child a granddaughter of Biilly Spencer, was saved by her mother who hauled her up in "the old oaken bucket".

The doctor's office building stood on the southeast corner of the lot where there is now a wide lawn. It faced south on Market Street as did the dwelling, and it was later used by Dr. Frank Church Hull (W. S. Hull's son). It is now occupied by Gregg & Goodhue. Other business places in the early 1870s were as follows: Capt. Swallow, groceries and notions; his store stood where Alice Owens' residence is now located. The doctor's office on the corner, the Hull residence, then Wm. Saur's drug store while on the southwest corner of this block Abe Shoemaker and Uncle Charley Foulke sold general merchandise. Across the street was a hardware store and lodge hall.



W.S. Hull and wife in front of house in Carlisle

Believe it or not, the village boasted two hotels and a public well-not a town pump, that came later-all this in the heart of town on Market Street; the hotels were located on the south side, also a harness shop owned by Wm. Reed, uncle of Mrs. John Seid. The chief hostelry was "The Busick Hotel", and was a very good one for pioneer times and stood about where the Conklin property is located. Mr. Busick was a son-in-law of Dr. Baugh.

The pioneer country doctor was considered very efficient in his profession in those days and W.S. belonged to a family which has produced many physicians; his oldest son, the late Dr. F. C. Hull, practiced in Carlisle for 42 years and a grandson Dr. Carl Kail, now resides here. At the time Carlisle was founded another relative Dr. A.Y. Hull (Polk County Senator who engineered the taking of Warren's 4 northern townships by Polk County) practiced here for a time, later moving to Des Moines where he was a successful physician for many years. He was the father of Congressman J.A.T. Hull. Congressman Hull visited in Carlisle and especially enjoyed chatting occasionally in Dr. Frank Hull's office with relatives and friends. The grandfather of U.S. Secretary of State (1933-1944) the Hon. Cordell Hull and the grandfather of Emmett Hull were brothers. Emmett Hull's father, a Virginian, was one of ten children, five boys and five girls, and was the only one of this large family with Northern sympathies during the Civil War. One brother, Dr. Arthur Hull practiced medicine in Missouri.

Dr. W. S. Hull practiced in Carlisle for 35 years, doctoring in town and country, driving miles through mud, rain, snow and cold, when there were no highways and few roads of any kind. Emmett says, "When there were epidemics and there were many which lasted over long periods, such as the ague-often I would not see my father for three days at a time. He would go night and day caring for the sick. He kept two teams and a riding horse, and as a boy I would sometimes go with him and one of us would hold the horses while the other would open and shut the gates. We would have to drive miles out of the way sometimes to reach a house, often following the river bottom. We would drive through woods and across pastures. "Dr. W.S. Hull was independent and loyal and gave his life in service to the community. He always said he would "die with his boots on" and he actively practiced until he was killed in a railroad accident in 1885. " In settling his affairs it was found that he had \$65,000 on the books, a mute testimony of his untiring efforts.

W.S. Hull was married to Jeremiah "Jerry" Church's daughter Margaret. Jerry laid out Dudley by Keokuk Bend on the Des Moines River. In 1851 Dudley was flooded out and rebuilt as Carlisle away from the river.



Dr. W.S. Hull's sign, which was given to the WCHS three years ago, can be seen in the museum Doctor's Office



1918 horse drawn road grader working near Indianola.

COVERED BRIDGES

IN OR NEAR WARREN COUNTY

Owens Covered Bridge is a 94 foot span wood Howe Truss bridge, replacing the original bridge which was destroyed in a flood. It was originally built in 1878, over the old North River channel on a road from Martin's Ferry to Winterset, two miles northeast of Carlisle in Polk County. In 1939, the road and the North River channel were relocated north of the covered bridge site leaving the old bridge without a road and river. It was used for 52 years, then abandoned in 1939. The Polk County Conservation Board purchased it from Gordon and Frederick Owens for \$1. In February 1968 this bridge was moved to Ewing Park at a cost of \$4,500.

OWENS COVERED BRIDGE



WARREN COUNTY SOUTH RIVER COVERED BRIDGE

Do you know where this bridge crossed South River or when it was removed? Did it have a name?

There was a covered bridge at Summerset near Parmelee's 2nd mill over the original Middle River channel. Does anyone have any information about this, such as building date, type of covered bridge and when it ended.

We have heard there was a covered bridge over a creek in Jackson Township, Warren County near Madison County. Warren refused to pay for its repair and Madison paid. Can you validate this story or do you know of any other Warren County covered bridges over our many rivers and creeks. Share your covered bridge information at contact@warrencountyhistory.org