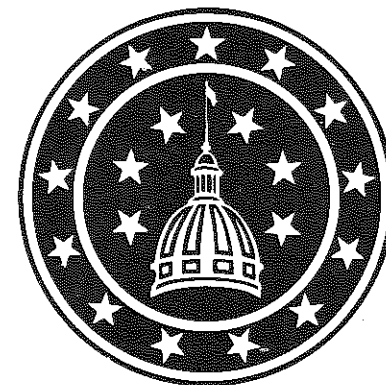


**1816**  
**One Hundred**  
**Indiana**  
**General Assemblies**



**1977-78**



CORYDON CAPITOL, 1813-1825



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## ONE HUNDRED GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

A BUILDING only 40 feet square, two stories tall and costing but \$3,000, was adequate for Indiana's first General Assembly in 1816.

It was the Harrison County Courthouse, a stone structure that was big enough for Indiana's first State Legislature because there were only 10 Senators and 29 Representatives. The first 15 counties elected the 39 legislators on August 5, 1816, five weeks after the first constitutional convention.

Now there are 92 Indiana counties, represented in the Assembly by 100 representatives and 50 senators.

In the tiny first capitol at Corydon, the House met downstairs. The second story accommodated both the Senate and the Indiana Supreme Court.

The first General Assembly convened November 4, 1816, although technically Indiana did not become a state until December 11 that year, when President James Madison approved the congressional resolution creating the 19th State.

### FIRST LEGISLATIVE LEADERS

Isaac Blackford of Knox County was elected first Speaker of the House. As the first Indiana Lieutenant Governor, Christopher Harrison presided over the Senate. Blackford was named to the Indiana Supreme Court in 1817 and served there until 1853; he then served on the U.S. Court of Claims in Washington, D. C., from 1855 until his death in 1859.

The position of Senate President Pro Tem, now occupied by the leader of the majority party in the upper chamber, was not the powerful office it now is until the state adopted a new Constitution in 1851.

Indiana's first Constitution made the General Assembly an extremely powerful body. There were very few restrictions on it. It could meet as often, and for as long, as it wished. Actually, the first session lasted 61 days.



ISAAC BLACKFORD  
FIRST SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE



CHRISTOPHER HARRISON  
FIRST SENATE PRESIDENT

There had been an Indiana territorial legislature whose laws frequently were overruled by the territorial Governor—and his word was final. The 1816 Constitutional Convention created a legislature that could override a Governor's veto, if it wished.

### FIRST CONSTITUTION DESCRIBED

The 1816 Constitution was considered a highly democratic document, for its day. The vote was given to all free, white, adult males. While that seems like a restricted electorate today, it was not, compared with the old Northwest Territory Legislature that had limited the vote to substantial landowners.

By the time Ohio, Michigan and Illinois had been split off from the Northwest Territory, leaving the Indiana Territory, Congress had made the vote available to all free white adult males who had paid any kind of territorial or county tax. A voter did not have to be a taxpayer under the 1816 Constitution.

The Indiana Constitution copied much of the Ohio State Legislature, but it cut the Ohio minimum age requirement of 30 years for all legislators to 25 for State Senators and 21 for Representatives. The first Indiana Assemblies elected the Secretary of State, Treasurer and Auditor. They also elected United States Senators for Indiana and did so until 1913. The state offices became elective under the second Constitution.

## BIPARTISAN COOPERATION

### MEANING OF "FREE AND EQUAL"

The meaning of "free and equal" has changed dramatically during the 100 Indiana General Assemblies. Until 1859, no woman had addressed the Hoosier Legislature. In that year, Dr. Mary F. Thomas, a Richmond physician, appeared with a petition for political rights for women and abolition of all distinctions based on sex.

Women won the vote in 1920 and Julia D. (Mrs. Edward F.) Nelson of Delaware County became the first Indiana State Representative of her sex in the 1921 session. No woman gained the Indiana Senate until Arcada Balz of Indianapolis was elected to the 1943 session. Today, with the 100th General Assembly, there are three women Senators and six women Representatives.

Slavery was barred in Indiana by the first State Constitution, and the 1885 General Assembly passed one of the first sweeping civil rights laws. It said all persons are entitled to equal access to places of public accommodations such as hotels, restaurants and theaters. Truthfully, it was not very effective.

James S. Hinton of Marion County became the first black member of the Indiana House in 1880. Robert L. Brokenburr of Indianapolis was elected the first black Indiana State Senator in 1940. In the 100th General Assembly there are two black Senators and four black Representatives.

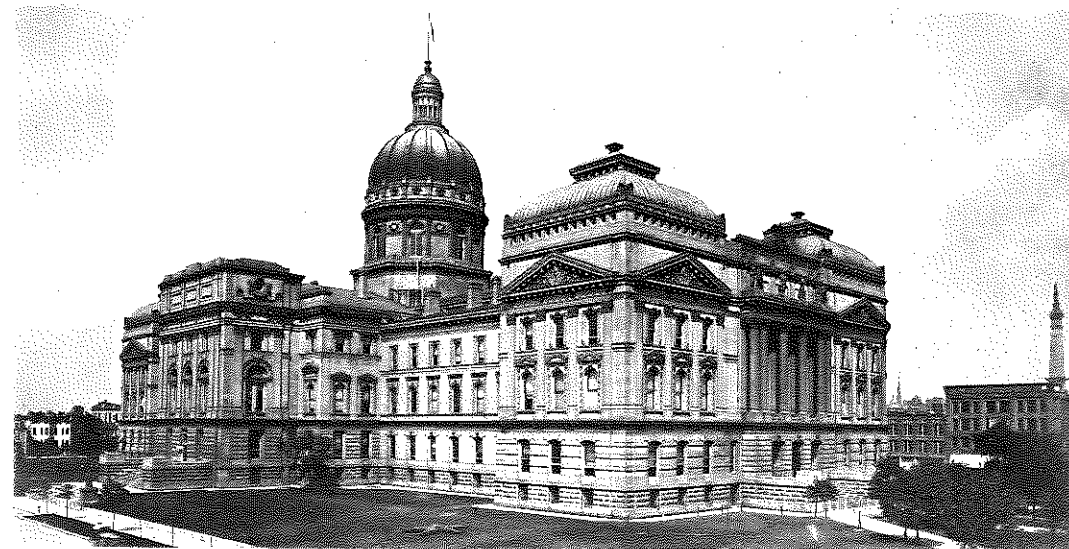
The Civil War period was one of the most turbulent times in the Indiana General Assembly's history. Much of Indiana had been settled by immigrants from Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, and Hoosiers were far from unanimous in their thinking about the conflict. Republican Governor Oliver P. Morton and a Democrat-controlled Legislature disagreed noisily. Morton assumed powers that the Democrats contended were unconstitutional, but they were approved by a Republican Assembly elected in 1864.

More often than not, the political parties have worked together on major legislation. The Indiana General Assembly passed the first comprehensive Pure Food and Drug Act in 1889. The National Pure Food and Drug Act was not passed until seven years later.

In 1889, the Hoosier legislators adopted the secret ballot for public elections with the state supplying the ballots. Before that, the political parties had supplied the ballot at the polls. The new procedure reduced chances for election fraud and most of the other states adopted it.

The Assembly adopted the state flag in 1917; the state song, Paul Dresser's "On the Banks of the Wabash Far Away," in 1913; the state tree, the tulip tree, in 1931, and the state slogan, "Crossroads of America," in 1937.

Indiana has had three state flowers, each voted by the Legislature after fierce debate. First it was the tulip tree blossom, then the zinnia and, since 1957, the peony. Only the tulip tree was native to this state, but zinnias and peonies flourish here despite their foreign origin—as do Hoosiers and their exotic crops and livestock.



CURRENT STATE CAPITOL

TWO KINDS OF LEGISLATORS  
By SAMUEL JUDAH  
State Representative, Knox County

(From The Western Sun & General Advertiser,  
Vincennes, Ind., February 2, 1818)

My knowledge of the individual members of our legislature, and indeed, of deliberative assemblies generally satisfied me that I should have to select one of two courses to pursue during the session. I knew that I might endeavor to make myself appear to the people to be a very considerable business man by introducing resolutions of all sorts upon all subjects; by taking an active part in every discussion; and by having the journals loaded at great public expense, and the newspapers filled with my reports, resolutions and bills.

This might afford the highest apparent evidence of my exertions in the discharge of my duty and of my faithfulness in the service of the people—but it would render me odious and unpopular among the members; it would cause my reports to be laid upon the table, my resolutions to be voted down, and my bills to be postponed or rejected. It would deprive me of the power of doing any good whatever for the state, or for my constituents.

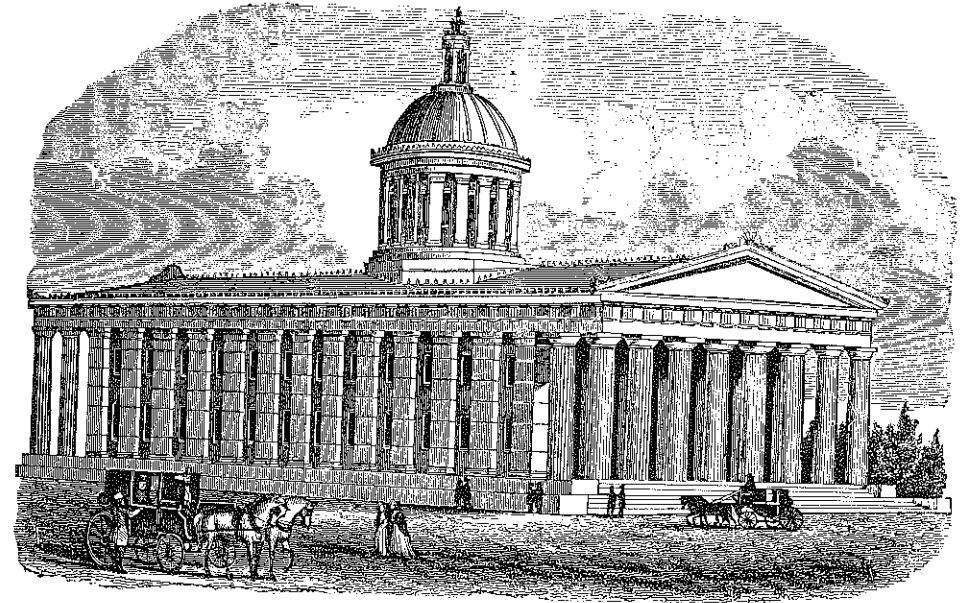
The other course, less flattering to a man's ambition, and less gratifying to a man's vanity, but more agreeable to conscience, and more useful and beneficial to the public, would be quietly to watch the progress of business; not to bring forward any measure, without having conciliated the good feelings of some members at least; to avoid the appearance of any good like the assumption of superiority of ability or knowledge, and to secure the good opinion of the members, ready to be called into action whenever the interests of my constituents required exertion.

## CAPITOL MOVED TO INDIANAPOLIS

The capitol was moved from Corydon to Indianapolis in 1825. The state government moved into a \$60,000 State House in 1835. It was outgrown quickly and the 1877 Assembly voted to build the present State House, completed in 1888. It cost \$2 million and was expected to be adequate for a century or more.

Actually, it has been necessary to build the State Office Building across Senate Avenue, and many state agencies are quartered outside the Capitol complex.

The General Assembly's activities have expanded through the years. Both chambers have been modernized several times. The House was remodeled in 1965, and it established an annex in the ISTA Building, across Capitol Avenue, in 1976. The Senate was remodeled in 1973-74.



FIRST INDIANAPOLIS CAPITOL

The Assembly has reacted vigorously to changing times— not always with 100 per cent success. It passed some of the nation's most stringent laws against alcoholic beverages during Prohibition. It passed a law in 1905 to forbid the sale, manufacture or possession of cigarettes on penalty of fines up to \$500 and jail terms up to six months. This law was amended in 1909 to make it apply only to minors.

Another quaint memory is the 35-mile-per-hour speed limit established by the 1925 Indiana General Assembly. It was raised to 65 in 1953, and to 70 on the interstates in 1963. And then it was cut back to 55 in 1974 because of the gasoline-energy crisis.

### WHY THIS IS 100TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This is only the 100th General Assembly because the body has met only every other year during much of the state's history. The Assembly met annually under the 1816 Constitution but only biennially under the 1851 Constitution until an amendment permitted resumption of annual sessions in 1973.

Indiana adopted its second Constitution because it went bankrupt under the first one. It went deeply in debt, promoting canals just at the dawn of the railroad era. Now the state cannot borrow money but makes some capital improvements such as ports and toll roads by creating commissions with bonding powers.

### SPEAKERS INDIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 1816-1977

(Note: Special sessions are disregarded in the following list, in most instances, if the speaker was the same as in the next previous general session.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1816 - Isaac Blackford,<br>Knox County | Jefferson County                         |
| 1817 - Amos Lane,<br>Dearborn County   | 1819 - Williamson Dunn                   |
| 1818 - Williamson Dunn,                | 1820 - William Graham,<br>Jackson County |
|  | 1821 - Samuel Milroy,                    |

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Washington County                                      | 1846 - Robert N. Carnan,<br>Knox County, Whig   |
| 1822 - General W. Johnston,<br>Knox County             | 1847 - William A. Porter,<br>Harrison County, Whig  |
| 1823 - David H. Maxwell,<br>Monroe County              | 1848 - George W. Carr,<br>Lawrence County, Democrat   |
| 1824 - Stephen C. Stevens,<br>Switzerland County       | 1849 - George W. Carr   |
| 1825 - Robert M. Evans,<br>Gibson County               | 1850 - Ebenezer Dumont,<br>Dearborn County, Democrat  |
| 1826 - Harbin H. Moore,<br>Harrison County             | 1851-52 - John W. Davis, Sullivan County,<br>and William H. English, Dem.   |
| 1827 - Harbin H. Moore                                 | 1853 - Oliver B. Torbet,<br>Dearborn County, Democrat   |
| 1828 - Isaac Howk,<br>Clark County                     | 1855 - David Kilgore,<br>Delaware County, Republican  |
| 1829 - Ross Smiley,<br>Union County                    | 1857 - Ballard Smith<br>Perry County, Democrat  |
| 1830 - Isacc Howk                                      | 1858 - Jonathan W. Gordon,<br>Marion County, Republican   |
| 1831 - Harbin H. Moore                                 | 1859 - Jonathan W. Gordon   |
| 1832 - John W. Davis,<br>Sullivan County, Democrat     | 1861 - Cyron M. Allen,<br>Knox County, Republican   |
| 1833 - Nathan B. Palmer,<br>Jefferson County, Democrat | 1863 - Samuel H. Buskirk,<br>Monroe County, Democrat  |
| 1834 - James Gregory,<br>Warren County                 | 1865 - John U. Pettit,<br>Wabash County, Republican   |
| 1835 - Caleb B. Smith,<br>Fayette County, Whig         | 1867 - David C. Branham,<br>Jefferson County, Republican  |
| 1836 - Caleb B. Smith                                  | 1869 - Ambrose P. Stanton,<br>Marion County, Republican,<br>and (special session) George<br>A. Buskirk, Monroe County, Rep. |
| 1837 - Thomas J. Evans,<br>Fountain County             | 1871 - William Mack,<br>Vigo County, Democrat   |
| 1838 - Thomas J. Evans                                 | 1873 - William K. Edwards   |
| 1839 - James G. Read,<br>Clark County, Democrat        | 1875 - David Turpie,<br>Marion County, Democrat   |
| 1840 - Samuel Judah,<br>Knox County, Democrat          | 1877 - John Overmyer,<br>Jennings County, Republican  |
| 1841 - John W. Davis,<br>Sullivan County, Democrat     | 1879 - Henry S. Cauthorn,<br>Knox County, Democrat  |
| 1842 - Thomas J. Henley,<br>Clark County               | 1881 - William M. Ridpath,<br>Clay County, Republican   |
| 1843 - Andrew L. Robinson,<br>Carroll County, Democrat | 1883 - William D. Bynum,  |
| 1844 - Alexander C. Stevenson,<br>Putnam County, Whig  |   |
| 1845 - John S. Simonson,<br>Clark County, Democrat     |   |

PRESIDENTS PRO TEMPORE  
INDIANA STATE SENATE  
1851-1977

(Note: Only a few presidents pro tempore were named, for brief periods, under the 1816 Constitution.)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1851 - Samuel S. Mickle,<br>Adams County, Democrat  | 1895 - L. P. Newby,<br>Henry County, Republican          |
| 1853 - Andrew Humphreys,<br>Greene County, Democrat   | 1897 - Charles E. Shiveley,<br>Wayne County, Republican  |
| 1855 - Richard D. Slater,<br>Dearborn County, Democrat  | 1899 - L. P. Newby                                       |
| 1857 - Lewis Burke,<br>Wayne County, Republican   | 1901 - Will R. Wood,<br>Tippecanoe County, Republican    |
| 1859 - John R. Cravens,<br>Jefferson County, Democrat<br>(also acting Lieutenant Governor)                                      | 1903 - Frederick E. Matson,<br>Marion County, Republican |
| 1861 - John R. Cravens  | 1905 - Edgar E. Hendee,<br>Madison County, Republican    |
| 1863 - Paris C. Dunning,<br>Monroe County, Democrat<br>(also acting Lieutenant Governor)  | 1907 - Fremont Goodwine,<br>Warren County, Republican    |
| 1867 - Will Cumback,<br>Decatur County, Republican<br>(also acting Lieutenant Governor)   | 1909 - Will R. Wood,<br>Tippecanoe County, Republican    |
| 1869 - None selected  | 1911 - Evan B. Stotsenburg,<br>Floyd County, Democrat    |
| 1871 - John R. Cravens,<br>Jefferson County Democrat (served<br>only January 7-11 until Lt. Gov-<br>ernor Cumback inaugurated.) | 1913 - George W. Curtis,<br>Posey County, Democrat       |
| 1873 - George W. Friedley,<br>Lawrence County, Republican (also<br>acting Lieutenant Governor)                                  | 1915 - Frederick Van Nuys<br>Marion County, Democrat     |
| 1875 - None selected  | 1917 - Arthur R. Robinson,<br>Marion County, Republican  |
| 1877 - None selected;<br>six senators served temporarily.   | 1919 - Harry E. Negley,<br>Marion County, Republican     |
| 1879 - None selected  | 1921 - Oscar Ratts,<br>Orange County, Republican         |
| 1881 - Frederick W. Viehe,<br>Knox County, Democrat   | 1923 - James J. Nejd,<br>Lake County, Republican         |
| 1883 - None selected  | 1925 - James J. Nejd                                     |
| 1885 - Rufus McGee,<br>Cass County, Democrat  | 1927 - James J. Nejd                                     |
| 1887 - Alonzo G. Smith,<br>Jennings County, Democrat  | 1929 - Denver C. Harlan,<br>Wayne County, Republican     |
| 1889 - James F. Cox,<br>Morgan County, Democrat   | 1931 - Lee J. Hartzell,<br>Allen County, Republican      |
| 1891 - Francis M. Griffith,<br>Switzerland County, Democrat   | 1933 - Anderson Ketchum,<br>Decatur County, Democrat     |
| 1893 - Francis M. Griffith  | 1935 - Jacob Weiss,<br>Marion County, Democrat           |
|   | 1937 - Thurman Gottschalk,<br>Adams County, Democrat     |
|   | 1939 - E. Curtis White,                                  |

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|--|
| Marion County, Democrat                                  |
| 1941 - William E. Jenner,<br>Martin County, Republican   |
| 1943 - Thurman A. Biddinger,<br>Grant County, Republican |
| 1945 - John W. Van Ness,<br>Porter County, Republican    |
| 1947 - John W. Van Ness                                  |
| 1949 - John W. Van Ness                                  |
| 1951 - John W. Van Ness                                  |
| 1953 - John W. Van Ness                                  |
| 1955 - John W. Van Ness                                  |
| 1957 - John W. Van Ness                                  |
| 1959 - C. Wendell Martin,<br>Marion County, Republican   |
| 1961 - S. Hugh Dillin,<br>Pike County, Democrat          |

- |  |
|--|
| 1963 - D. Russell Bontrager,<br>Elkhart County, Republican |
| 1965 - Jack H. Mankin,<br>Vigo County, Democrat            |
| 1967 - Jack H. Mankin                                      |
| 1969 - Allen E. Bloom,<br>Allen County, Republican         |
| 1971 - Phillip E. Gutman,<br>Allen County, Republican      |
| 1972 - Phillip E. Gutman                                   |
| 1973 - Phillip E. Gutman                                   |
| 1974 - Phillip E. Gutman                                   |
| 1975 - Phillip E. Gutman                                   |
| 1976 - Phillip E. Gutman                                   |
| 1977 - Robert J. Fair,<br>Gibson County, Democrat          |



CURRENT SENATE CHAMBER