

delphi

Democrat Township: A Political Incubator

By Mark Kay Smith
Carroll County Historical Museum Curator

A very unique area of Carroll County is Democrat Township, which is situated in the southern part of Carroll County flanked by Burlington on the east and Clay township on the west.

It was birthed in 1835 from what had been Burlington Township, and was known for its lively political life, taking the party of the same name as its namesake. There is a preponderance of those with that party persuasion in that area of the County, thus the name.



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The main stream which nourishes that area is also the South and Middle Forks of the Wildcat, a body of water which lends a lot of scenery to the area it wouldn't have otherwise.

There both are and have been some equally as colorful settlements in that township which are singularly unique to that section of the county.

One of those is the now-evaporated village of Lexington, platted in 1836 for Eli Patty, and which was located in the extreme N.E. corner of the N.E. corner of Section eleven. This small village was in its more lively days served by the Burlington to Lafayette State Road, and also the Delphi to New Castle thoroughfare which intersects there. At one time Lexington, or as it is known in local circles—"Lex" boasted of a General store, blacksmith shop, tannery, some carpenter shops, and other industries. At the publication of the Postal and Allied History by Dora Thomas Mayhill the store managed by Elva Tinkle was still in operation.

Another lively little settlement was the now extinct town of Prince William, which eventually gave its name to the road, formerly known as the Delphi to Frankfort Plank Road, to the town. The town was named Prince William for the point of origin of the Ashba family who were credited as the founders in 1837. There was a tannery, blacksmith shop, and shoe maker. Prince William was also the birthplace of Elizabeth Fisher Murphy, subject of "That Old Sweetheart of Mine" by James Whitcomb Riley. Samuel Weaver was a very well-known miller of the Prince William area and well known for being able to hold his own in the political arena. Weaver was born in Butler County, Ohio on November sixth, 1806 and came to Carroll County, Indiana in September of 1835. His father Henry was a soldier of the War of Independence, his cousin was

General Weaver from Iowa, and his son William H. Weaver represented Carroll County for two terms in the Legislature.

Bolivar was another smaller burg which found itself in competition with Cutler when the railroads came to that area for the school.

Adams Mill consisted of Warren Adams, miller, William H. Weaver, stock breeder, J.S. Kelsey, Physician and surgeon, with Farman Wyatt and William Greathouse as stock breeders.

The town of Cutler is a new arrival to the scene, having been platted by John Cook in 1872 along the then-new Vandalia/Pennsylvania Railroad. This resulted in the eventual death of the then-thriving Prince William.

Spiritual needs were met in the Democrat Township area by two Methodist Episcopal Churches, those being Mount Olivet and Ball Hill, Thomas Chapel Christian Church, the Lexington Presbyterian Church and the Cutler Presbyterian Church, which is the only existing body of believers in the area now meeting.

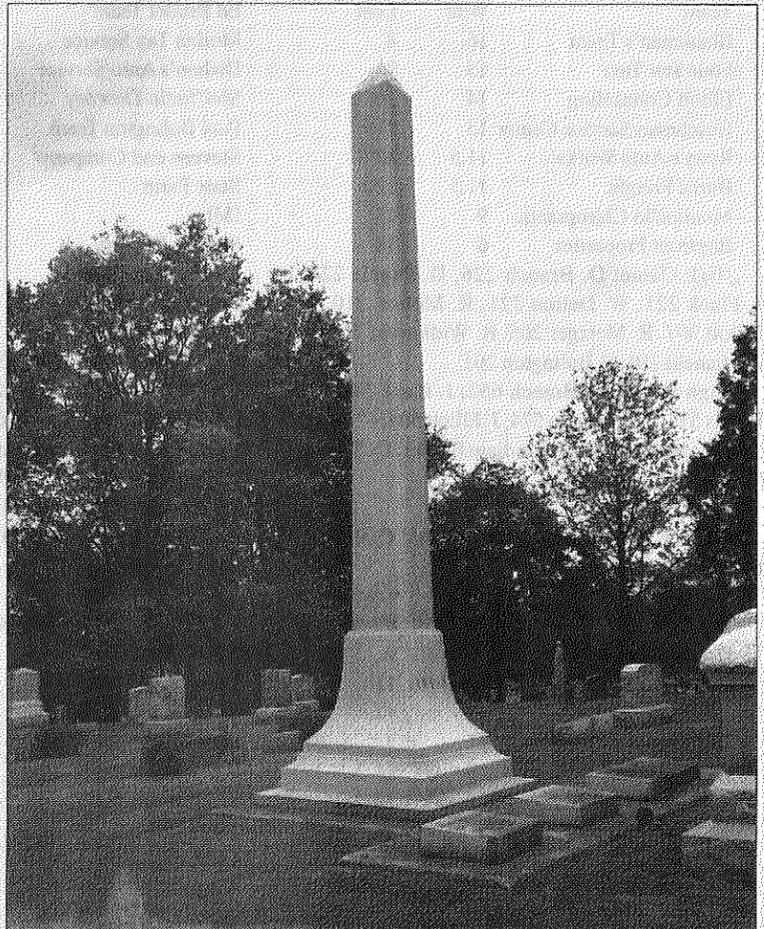
The political incubator to which I referred in the title of the article involved the legacy of Cary D. Landis.

Landis, who was married to Ruth Weaver, was born May tenth, 1873 in Kosciusko County, Indiana to David Landis and Elizabeth Ulrey. He was educated at North Manchester College, Indiana State Normal School, the University of Michigan, and was a member of several fraternities and organizations pertinent to the law.

His service to the academic community included the Superintendent of Schools at Burlington, Indiana, which he left to study the law. He was professor of law at Stetson University in Florida from 1901 to 1905. His law practice was in Deland, Florida. He then served as the attorney for the seventh Judicial District of Florida, 1911-1913. He was appointed Attorney General of the State of Florida. One of his accomplishments was to enforce weight limits on trucks for the purpose of maintaining the surface of the roads in good order.

Landis was never one to forget his "home folks", sending a crate of oranges home to the farmer who operated his acreage.

At his death which was noted in the May 1938 Delphi Journal the body arrived by Pennsylvania Railroad at Logansport and was met by the Leiter ambulance from Flora, also a delegation from the Logansport Kiwanis Club.



Cary D. Landis Obelisk, Ball Hill Cemetery, near Cutler, Indiana.

Mr. Landis was then taken to Ball Hill Cemetery, which is in this writer's estimation a local version of Arlington, with two truckloads of flowers. The body had by the way lain in state in the Florida statehouse prior to shipment to Carroll County.

Accompanying the body was his son, Erskine; the latter's wife and son from Deland, Florida, Assistant attorney General of Florida, and members of the Florida National Guard.

Other notables in the political realm from this township were Allen Lindley, Auditor of State, and the McCarty family with those of their number being Jesse Marcus, who served as school teacher, Federal Land

Bank agent, and principal of the Elementary School at Rockfield, brother Rush, prominent businessman of Flora, and now-retired attorney Dean Overholser.

Clay Township: A Race Car Driver and a Red Bridge

By Mark Kay Smith
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Bordered on the west by Tippecanoe County, the south by Clinton, and the east by Democrat Township is yet another

Presidential township the namesake of which was Henry Clay. Clay Township was formed up in 1831 by taking a certain portion of Deer Creek Township and what later became Madison Township. The predominant

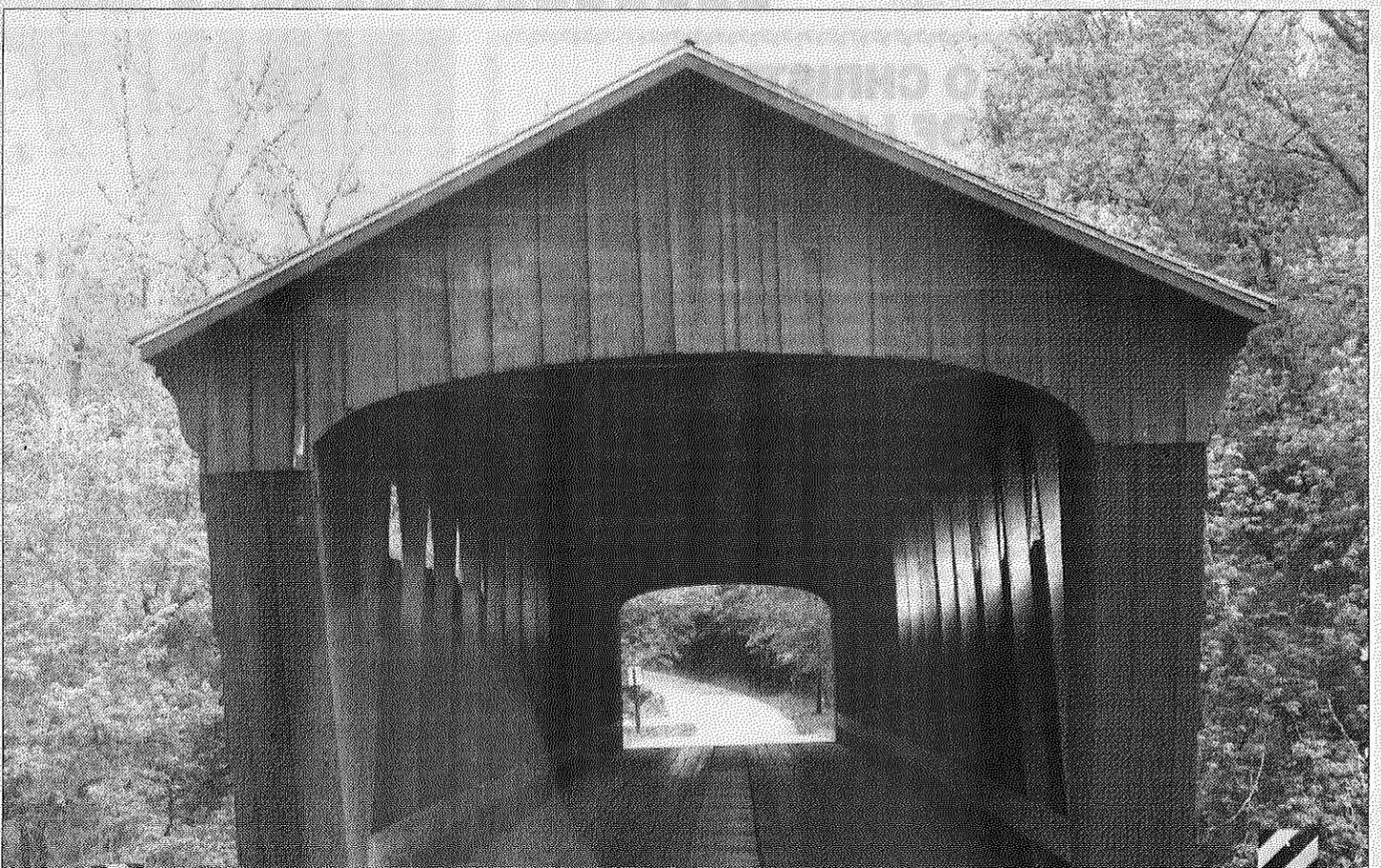
body of water in this governmental body is the North Fork of the Wildcat Creek which gives this area much character as well as many scenic spots.

The two most predominant settlements of this area of Carroll County are Pymont, which claims the German town of Bad Pymont in the district of Hamelin-Pymont in lower Saxony as its namesake. The other larger population hub is that of Owasco, named for an Iroquois word Owasco—of



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Would you believe that there was another smaller burg known as "Egypt"? This settlement is now extinct.

Those in the neighborhood would often speak of going to Egypt--and only the locals would know what they were talking about. In 1872 this was located at the extreme southeast corner of Section eight, and contained a few cabins, a store and blacksmith shop, and the proverbial one-room school house. New Lancaster, the 1872 bridge which I am depicting in the illustration in this article, was another village which was platted by Nicholas Garst in 1833 and which contained a shoe store and grocery, but evaporated soon and is now extinct.

The ethnicity of this area is almost totally Germanic by descent, with surnames such as Wagoner, Studebaker, Hufford, Studebaker, and Cripe dominating the scene.

The mill owned by Mr. Wagoner was a site of many community gatherings and milling until it burned in 1835.

For those whose passion is covered bridges, the covered bridge at Pymont was a feature of the landscape until its collapse in 1951 eliciting a rather folksy plaintive

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New Lancaster Covered Bridge, Constructed by the Wheeler Bridge Company in 1872.

poem bemoaning the loss of an historic structure in the township.

Although there is some controversy in historic circles as to whether the Battle of Spur's Defeat occurred in Tippecanoe County or in Carroll, there was a rather skirmish in this area known as the Battle of Spur's Defeat.

This area may or may not have been used to stage this historical event; however I feel that at least part of this took place in the Pymont area.

Another name for the battle was the Battle of Wildcat Creek, and figured in in the general War of 1812 chronology.

The Battle of Wildcat Creek was the result of a November 1812 punitive expedition against Native American villages during the War of 1812. It has been nicknamed "Spurs Defeat" which was thought to refer to the spurs used by the soldiers to flee the battle scene in quick haste. A Winnebago village was found on Wildcat Creek, and General Samuel Hopkins decided to attack

it. Colonel Miller led 300 men and destroyed the evacuated village. On November twenty-first, a scouting party explored the creek, they were fired upon, and the entire force retreated to rejoin the main army, leaving behind the body of a soldier named Dunn. The next day, on the twenty-second of November, Colonels Miller and Wilcox

Accompanied Captain Beckes and sixty Indiana Rangers to recover Dunn's body. After riding about six miles up Wildcat Creek, they found a dead comrade's head stuck on a pole and a Native standing beside the head taunting them. Thirteen Indiana Rangers were outraged by this and chased the rider, but he managed to stay ahead of them, and led them into a narrow canyon. Here Kickapoo, Winnebago, and Shawnee warriors ambushed the Rangers. Within two minutes, twelve men and several horses were dead and or dying. One man who escaped did so by spurring his horse to action, thus the name of the battle—Spur's Defeat. All this took place in this area

prior to the establishment of county lines so that is the reason I feel that at least part if not all of this battle took place in the area now known as Pymont.

On a totally different note and at the same approximate location was born Melvon Marquette, on September twenty-second of 1884. His father was George Washington Morkert, and his mother Cora Snyder.

Marquette, whose death occurred March fourteenth of 1961, was a graduate of Purdue University and became well-known for his pioneering work in developing synthetic rubber in Liege, Belgium.

He was about ready to leave Germany for Denmark, when he became a prisoner of war. He was also known for working at Findlay, Ohio with the Cooper Tire and Rubber Company prior to his retirement. Marquette was a well-known aviator who worked the Wright brothers, building his own plane in 1910. He was a driver of one of the first 500 mile races.