

## July 29<sup>th</sup> Camden Bicentennial Remarks

Thanks for asking me to be a part of your Bicentennial Occasion. It is indeed a pleasure to serve my ancestral township and that of my wife in this way, especially being invited by one of my distant cousins Ron and his wife Diane.

In delivering remarks on the origin of Indiana, it would be of great assistance if one were to omit the “a” on the end of the name of the state, and to simply notice all the native tribes which populated the state, such as the Wea, Pottawattamie, Miami, Shawnee, Piankashaw, Delaware, and Wyandotte tribes, many of which inhabited this area and who imparted their names to streams such as Deer Creek(Passeonong—place of the fawn) and Wildcat(Pin-ji-wa-mo-tai,)—Belly of the Wildcat.

The area in which we find ourselves this evening was(and still is) a fruitful field for discovery of all genre of native artifacts, many of which were unearthed by Camden native Charles Gish.

The drama of William Wells comes to mind, for example. William was a wee tyke in Kentucky who was first captured by the Miami in Kentucky and renamed Apekonit(Jerusalem artichoke), married a Miami woman and had his first child, was contacted by his brothers, attacked by a Kentucky Militia and his first wife and child, and joined the noted chief Little Turtle. In 1792 forces under St. Clair are attacked and defeated by Little Turtle and William Wells, who in turn married Little Turtle's daughter Wanangepeth( Sweet Breeze). One of their offspring, Mary, was awarded a reserve, the Mary Wells reserve, south of the present-day city of Delphi in the Treaty of St. Mary's on October 6<sup>th</sup> of 1818.

The story of Frances Slocum is another legendary anecdote in the native/settler saga.

Frances was captured in November of 1778 when Delaware raiders attacked her settlement. Her first

marriage to a Delaware brave Tuck Horse was abusive. She was then taken to the Peru area by her Delaware captives, married to Shepoconah(Deaf Man), changed her name to Maconaquah(Little Bear Woman) (sound like a school to you?), and lived among the Miami. Her final resting place is presently in Wabash County.

The failed attempt to unite all natives in the Midwest to counter the encroaching settlers by Tecumseh laid the groundwork for settlers to enter the region.

The disastrous Trail of Death which originated at Rochester involving the Potawottami in 1838 left a dark stain on Indiana history I feel. Fulton County Historian Shirley Willard and I cooperated in marking the trail a few years ago through this county.

The focus now shifts to Vincennes. Vincennes had been a stronghold of French settlement from the earliest days of the region but was relinquished

due to the negative impact of the French-Indian war which occurred in 1754. The effect of the Treaty of Paris was that all the lands east of the Mississippi River were relinquished to British control, including that of Vincennes, which was then ruled by Henry Hamilton, also known as the “Hair Buyer” because he would pay the natives to relieve the settlers of their scalps. The Battle of Fort Sackville put the seasoned General George Rogers Clark against this wily British subject with a minority of troops numbering 170 total who stealthily overtook the fort, traveling in ice-cold water on their journey.

Clark’s failed mission to capture Fort Detroit was compensated for by his victory at Fort Sackville on February twenty-fourth, 1779. This also freed up all the Northwest Territory involving Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Illinois.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 chartered the provided a primitive governmental framework and established a territorial government, which was

seated at the former site of Fort Sackville, which had just recently been wrested from the British.

The first Territorial Governor was William Henry Harrison, whose home, Grouseland, is a site for many visitors yearly. In the same neighborhood as the Harrison home is the Territorial Statehouse as well as the first printing press.

Vincennes served quite well as the Territorial Capitol under Territorial Governor William Henry Harrison but a move to transfer the seat of government to Corydon due to Harrison's pro-slavery sympathies was eventually accomplished and Corydon was confirmed as the new State Capitol due to its central location as well as Jonathan Jennings' anti-slavery sentiment.

The State's "birthday" so to speak was on December eleventh of 1816 although there was a petition of the House of Representatives toward statehood in 1811. The magical number of 63,897 was achieved—and—"Happy Birthday Indiana."

The state's constitution was ratified on June twenty-ninth of 1816, with Jonathan Jennings as the first acting Governor being elected in November of 1816. On December 11<sup>th</sup> of 1816, President James Madison signed the congressional resolution admitting Indiana to the Union as the nineteenth state.

Some of the more notable characteristics of the state's constitution involved a bill of rights guaranteeing freedom of worship, press, and speech, and the right to bear arms and to assemble peacefully. Voting was restricted to white male citizens over the age of twenty-one whose residency was at least one year, and women and African-Americans weren't allowed to vote. (this would be remedied of course later). However—the document specifically stated “There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in this state.”

The states' framework was crafted in the sweltering heat of the summer of 1816 underneath

an elm, later reverently called “The Constitution Elm”, which was trimmed in 1925 due to disease, and the shavings were fabricated into souvenirs; remnants were used in a display case for both of Indiana’s Constitutions at the Indiana Statehouse in Indianapolis. There is presently a shrine containing the remnant of the stump in Corydon.

I would be totally negligent were I to forget to mention the role of Carroll County’s founder, Samuel Milroy in the framing of this document. Milroy served as delegate to the 1816 convention prior to his founding of Carroll County in 1828.

There is another convention delegate laid to rest at the former IOOF cemetery, that being Hiram Allen, who served as delegate from both Carroll and Clinton Counties in 1851.

I conclude my remarks by stating that the State’s history is still marching on for those convened here celebrating its rich history in an area which has contributed greatly to the entire world in

the form of soybeans which were shipped to Detroit for Henry Ford's automobiles, State Senator Franklin G. Armstrong and Representative Walter Sprinkle, and State Senator Claude R. Wickard in neighboring Carrollton Township, as well as the developer of Crest Toothpaste-Dr. Charles Gish, and the final resting place of William Wilson, donor of the town square of Delphi.

Now I shall read you a poem describing Indiana—entitled "Indiana-by Arthur Franklin Mapes.