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# WHITE COUNTY HISTORIAN

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Volume 24, Issue 1

January - June, 2018

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"Preserving and  
Promoting our History"

## 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CORN DAYS  
CORN TASTING &  
MUSEUMS OPEN  
OCTOBER

PIONEER DAYS FOR WHITE  
COUNTY 5TH GRADERS  
WITH THE RETIRED TEACHER'S  
ASSOC.  
MATSEL CABIN  
OCTOBER

FALL DINNER MEETING  
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
NOVEMBER

MUSEUMS OPEN DURING  
WHITE COUNTY CHRISTMAS

## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fellow White County Historians,

The Baptist Children's Home is celebrating 100 years of "faith, sacrifice and vision.

Excerpts below are from "Celebrating a Century of Service to Children and Families" by Randy Olson from The Cooperative Connection, A Monthly Publication of Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative, April, 2018.

"Twenty years prior to the first poles and lines going up in our service area to begin providing electricity to the rural areas of White County and Wayne County, there was a plea put out across the state of Illinois by the Illinois Baptist State Association (IBSA) in 1917 seeking land and resources to establish a children's home to solve the growing crisis of orphans from World War I and the Spanish Flu epidemic that affected Illinois.

If you are not a student of American history, it should be noted that the Spanish flu claimed the lives of over 675,000 people in the U.S. and over 50 million worldwide at that time. Over 500 million people worldwide were diagnosed with Spanish Flu, or roughly 5% of the world population. It was extremely deadly. The survival rate was better among the younger population, leaving many children behind as orphans when their parents succumbed to the disease.

Answering the plea for land and resources from the IBSA was a group of about twenty families from White County. They understood the need and were able to raise \$3,000 and acquire 40 acres of land from Mr. John "Uncle Jack" Holderby. As a result, the vision and plan for the Carmi Baptist Children's Home was born when the non-profit ministry was established in 1918 with the first building completed and dedicated in that year."

David Brown, President

Photos of the Baptist Children's Home are from the Historical Timeline Presentation located at [www.bchfs.com/bchfs-centennial-fund/](http://www.bchfs.com/bchfs-centennial-fund/)



1920 Girls' Band from Orphanage

NEWS FROM THE MARY SMITH FAY GENEALOGY LIBRARY

by: Librarian Diane Waggoner

PO Box 121, 203 North Church St., Carmi, IL  
618-382-8425 email: w.c.h.s-genealogy@hotmail.com  
11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Tuesday - Friday

In our Church Section at the Library, by Richard G. Brown

West Union Cemetery

This is a brief summary of the founding of West Union Cemetery, based on materials found in the West Union Church several years ago, concerning the Old West Union United Presbyterian Church and the adjoining cemetery. The emphasis here is on the land donated by Dr. Marcus Lafayette Brown, Sr., for the original cemetery.

Dr Brown, Sr., for whom Brown's Station(now called Brownsville) was named, moved to White County, Illinois from Memphis, Tenn., in 1850. His father William Brown, was born in Northern Ireland and came to North Carolina where his son Marcus Lafayette Brown was born in 1805. As remembered by old-time settlers in the area, the Parkhursts and Brocketts, Dr. Brown bought a farm from the Brocketts, part of which was approximate to the original church. The doctor had already had quite a large family, some of them grown and married with families of their own. It appears that his daughter, Sarah J. who was married to J.B. Allen, moved to White County at the same time her father did, in 1850.

In 1852, a young Parkhurst girl died. At that time, there were few public cemeteries, with mostly family or private burying grounds. Dr Brown offered to the Parkhurst a deed to land for a cemetery adjoining the church grounds. The next day, the first grave was dug, for Martha J. Parkhurst, dated October 18, 1852. The second gravestone seems to be for Alice Brown, a daughter of Dr. Brown, who died on October 9, 1853.

The gravestone for Dr. Brown and his wife Martha A., a white granite monument, is in the 12th row from the east side of the original cemetery, near a cedar tree. The Martha Parkhurst and Alice Brown stones are in the 11th row.

A quote from the material found in the church states, "The first cemetery was laid out in eighteen rows with a public road on the east side 33 feet wide and a road on the north 12 feet wide. The descendants of Dr. Brown, Sr. have a row on the east side and since the road is vacated have reserved another row that was once in the road and we still have a road 20 feet wide.

Most of the stones in the Brown family section are Browns. Other names are Allen(J.B. and Sarah, noted above), Crozier, Merritt, DeLain, Chilton, Stephens, Seitzinger, Morrill and Winterrose. To the best of my knowledge, all of them are family names connected by marriage.

NEWS FROM THE MARY SMITH FAY GENEALOGY LIBRARY - CONTINUED

The material from the church contain several handwritten pages, and copies of newspaper articles with sometimes confusing information. Eighteen of the pages refer to the Dr Marcus L. Brown, Sr. land donation, with descriptions of monuments. On page 19 are rules and regulations of the cemetery. Page 20 and continuing for several pages more is information called "First Addition." Page 32 ia "Second Addition or Old Park." Included therein is a statement from surveyor N.W. Spencer of Carmi on the cemetery areas as of December 3, 1897.

Information on page 19 indicates that a second area was purchased from Dr. Marcus L. Brown, Jr., and surveyed by Mr. Spencer on September 15, 1897. Page 32 outlines other land acquisitions for the cemetery.

West Union is located in Section 31, Carmi Township. To reach it, turn south from Hwy 14 onto road 600 East, and go approximately 2 1/4 miles. Though no longer in use, the church still is standing.

There are five generations of the Marcus Lafayette Brown family buried in West Union Cemetery, including four Marcus Lafayette Browns starting with the first Dr. Brown, his son Dr. Marcus Brown Jr. and his wife Belinda (Draper). The next generation includes Robert J. and Madeline (Land) Brown, followed by some of their children, including Marcus L. and wife L. May(McFarland) Brown and grandchildren including Dr. Marcus L. Brown, Jr. late of Fairfield. Another Marcus Lafayette Brown, 11 months old as of this writing, son of Maj. Thomas J. Brown and wife Dana, grandchild of the second Dr. Marcus L. Brown, Jr., is living in Anchorage, Alaska.

RESEARCH FEES

If you would like us to do research for you (White County area only), please contact us.

Cost of research is \$15 per hour. Copies are 20 - 25¢ each. Shipping & handling is \$5.

Come and visit us and we will help you do your research at no cost to you, all you pay for is the cost of copies.

## SPRING DINNER MEETING

The Spring Dinner Meeting was held Monday, April 16, at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall of the First Christian Church in Carmi. Our speaker was the very talented Dennis Stroughmatt from Albion. He is part of the Illinois Humanities Road Scholar speakers program. He told an audience of about 90, the story of the French Creoles who founded the Illinois Country over three hundred years ago. Their songs, stories, and language remain largely intact and true to the traditions that have been passed down for generations. Originally from southeastern Illinois, Dennis Stroughmatt was taught to play fiddle by Missouri Creole fiddlers Roy Boyer and Charlie Pashia in the tradition of their fathers. He became an adopted son of the French Midwest Creoles who settled near St Louis, playing at weekly house parties or “bouillons.” As a result of physical journeys that also included French studies in Louisiana and Quebec, Dennis finds himself in a unique position as one who can speak knowledgeably and play in a variety of French styles. Among the songs he played were "La Belle Blondine" about a lovely blond woman who kills her father. He explained many of the songs had a darker side to them. Some of the songs that migrated to America with the early settlers have since been lost in France.

Check out the website for more information:

<https://www.ilhumanities.org/program/road-scholars-speakers-bureau>



David Brown with Reagan and Dennis Stroughmatt.



Reagan joined her father, Dennis Stroughmatt, while entertaining the audience with French folk tunes.

## SECOND GRADE TEA PARTIES

Second Grade Tea Parties at the Robinson-Stewart House were held April 23-26. Approximately 200 White County second grade students and their teachers attended. After the students toured White County's oldest house and learned about some local history, they were seated in the parlor with their hostess. Tea was served to the students by the hostess at each table along with sandwiches, carrot sticks, grapes, and homemade brownies. Sixty-seven volunteers played host/hostess throughout the week and engaged the students in "polite conversation" at each table. Thank you to Stein's Flowers for providing beautiful flowers for each table and to all who helped to make this a fun & successful event.

Librarians Kathleen Rister from the Groff Memorial Library in Grayville, Denise Karns from the Norris City Memorial Public Library, and Stephanie Dennis and Connie Kisner from the Carmi Public Library read "Tea for Ruby" by Sarah Ferguson, The Duchess of York, which tells the story of a young girl who learns about manners before her tea party with the "Queen".

The students were told that Mary Jane Stewart, whose parlor they were sitting in, loved to entertain her friends with tea parties so the Historical Society likes to entertain the children with tea parties. This has become a very popular event for students teachers, and volunteers, and one of the Society's flagship programs to build interest in local history with our county's youth at an early age. ✍



Volunteer Ruth Drury, who is originally from Great Britain, explained the origin of tea parties and the children adored her accent.



Volunteer Judy Cutchin decorated the brownies baked by Sasha Jordan.

SECOND GRADE TEA PARTIES - CONTINUED



SECOND GRADE TEA PARTIES - CONTINUED



SECOND GRADE TEA PARTIES - CONTINUED



## SECOND GRADE TEA PARTIES - CONTINUED



Society Vice President Paula Pierson enjoyed the opportunity to host her granddaughter, Aubrey, for the tea parties.

President Martin Van Buren, in a portrait presented to Senator Robinson in 1841, kept watch over our guests. The Chickering Piano below the portrait was purchased in Philadelphia and the Bill of Lading is framed nearby showing a ship date of 1849.



### MEMBERSHIP DUES

Reminder! Dues notices for 2018 were emailed and/or mailed in April. Thank you for your continued support and quick response.

### ROBINSON STEWART HOUSE PLANT SALE

The Society's annual plant sale had to be canceled for this year.

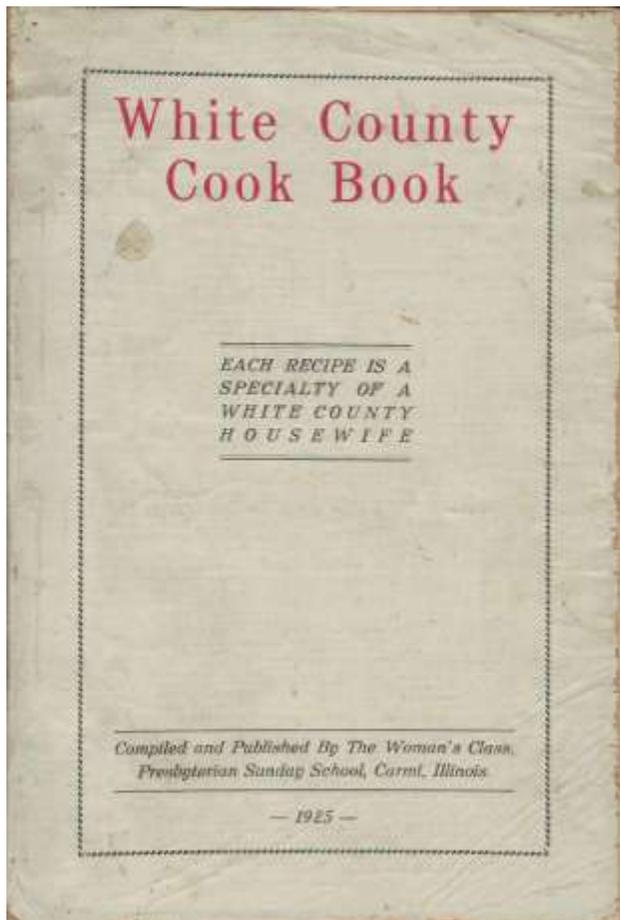
## RECENTLY DONATED

by Kristin Land

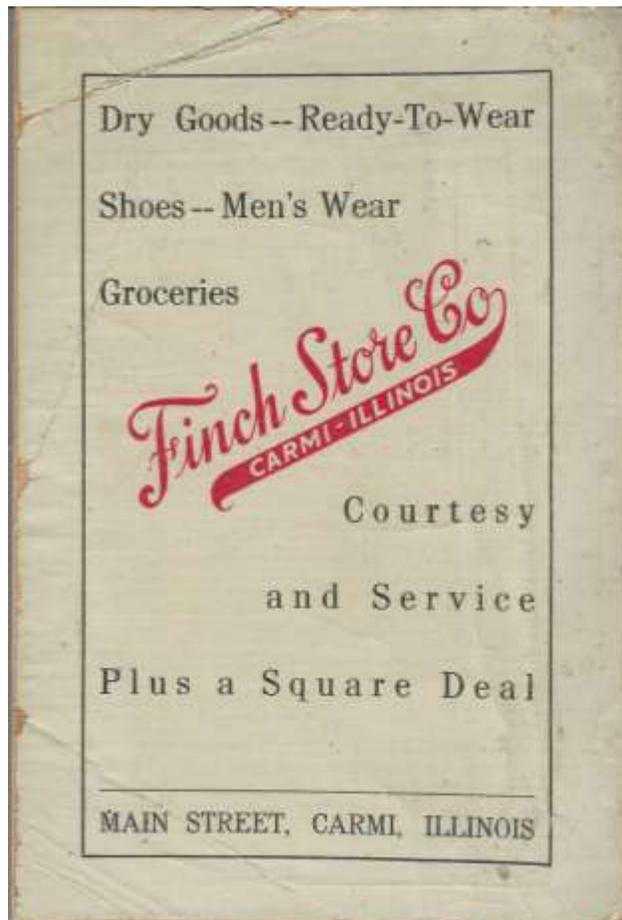
The historical society was recently given a copy of the "White County Cook Book: Each Recipe is a Specialty of a White County Housewife" Compiled and Published by the Woman's Class, Presbyterian Sunday School, Carmi Illinois - 1925 - Tribune-Times Print, Carmi, Ill. The book was sent to Mayor Jeff Pollard by Gordon Paterson of Vermont. He stated his "wife came across the enclosed and we thought it might be of interest to someone in Carmi. Possibly you have a historical society that would appreciate having it. There are a lot of memories for somebody. Bon appetit!" Mayor Pollard passed it on to the historical society and we are very grateful! There are lots of great advertisements and recipes and we are going to be sharing them with you in the next few newsletters.

The first thing I noticed is that the book is covered with oilcloth. Before vinyl was invented and in everyday use, several layers of thick linseed oil was applied to heavy cotton fabrics to make them water resistant and more sturdy. This would be very useful for a cookbook. When I opened the book, I wasn't sure which I found most interesting, the recipes or the advertisements.

The next thing I noticed is that there are no oven temperatures given. Instead I found "bake in a moderate oven" or "bake in a hot oven", or simply "roll thin, cut and bake". Some recipes do give times to bake but not all. Few recipes list over 6 ingredients and some have no ingredients listed at all. You just have to figure it out as you go.



Front Cover



Back Cover

**RECENTLY DONATED - CONTINUED**

For example, Baked Wild Duck on page 38 from Mrs. C. S. Conger:

After the duck is dressed, soak in salt water at least twelve hours. It can soak for several days, changing the water each day, but do not use so much salt. Stuff with a regular head dressing made as for chicken only with two or three times as much onion in it as you would use for chicken. Place three or four strips of bacon over the breast and bake in a moderate oven from one to one and a half hours.

On pages 21 and 89, I found recipes from our own Miss Mary Jane Stewart.

Green Corn Pudding

- |                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 quart sweet milk             | Salt to taste             |
| 1 1/2 pints of finely cut corn | 3 eggs, well-beaten light |
| 1 tablespoon white sugar       | 1/2 cup butter            |
- Bake one hour.

Cookies

- |                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 cup butter     | Scant teaspoon soda |
| 2 1/2 cups sugar | Flavoring           |
| 1 cup sour cream | Flour to roll       |

Yes, that is all there is. No further instructions whatsoever.

Alcie Bayley and Ella B Barnes submitted almost identical recipes. I am not sure if this is a typo for Ms. Bayley's first name since I found no other recipes submitted by her.

Orange Straws

Cut orange peel into strips with scissors. Put into cold water and boil twenty minutes. Change water. Boil twenty minutes more then change water again. Boil twenty minutes more, thus making three twenty minute boilings. To one cup orange add 1 cup sugar and water to cover. Boil until it threads. Roll in granulated sugar and place on platter to dry.

Ms. Barnes used grapefruit peel and instructs to "boil until it hairs". For those of you familiar with candy making, you know that boiling something until it "threads" means cooking until the mixture reaches 230 degrees F (108 degrees C) on a candy thermometer or forms a soft thread when a small amount is dropped in cold water. This definition is for the rest of us.

For the next newsletter, I'll include some of the advertisements for local businesses of the time including, restaurants, groceries, pharmacies, banks, milliners, Ebner Ice Co., Chero-Cola Bottling Co., and L. Haas Store. A time when phone numbers only contained 2 or 3 digits and "closed cars" were the newest luxury!

### **ESTATE GIFTS - SIMPLER THAN YOU THINK**

If you would really like to help the White County Historical Society but are not inclined to do so during your lifetime, you may be pleased to know that there are some simple ways to make a gift to the Society through your estate. Following are a few of the simplest and most popular ways to do so.

1. Simply instruct your attorney to name the White County Historical Society as a beneficiary in your will or trust using the language below.
2. List the White County Historical Society as a beneficiary of an insurance policy, retirement account or tax-deferred annuity. Simply request a “change of beneficiary form” and use the language below to fill it out.
3. Fill out a Transfer of Death (TOD) form where you hold your investments using the language below.
4. Request a Totten Trust form from your bank and list the White County Historical Society as a beneficiary of your account(s), once again using the language below.

“\_\_\_\_\_to the White County Historical Society to be used in the ongoing stewardship of its buildings and grounds, the conservation of its artifacts and the continuation of its educational programs.”

### **GENEALOGY QUERY**

If you have a query, please send it to the Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library and we can add it to the next newsletter.

### **WHAT'S YOUR STORY?**

We know that many of you have stories about a historical event of White County. We would welcome having your story to include in future editions of the White County Historian. Write your story, include your name, and mail it to Mary Smith Fay Genealogical Library at P.O. Box 121, Carmi, IL or email to [rshous@gmail.com](mailto:rshous@gmail.com). Then watch for it in future editions of the newsletter.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

To preserve and promote the historical interest of White County through our stewardship of its artifacts and the historic sites and education programs and exhibits that we provide for its people

### **VISION STATEMENT**

To make the history of White County come alive for the people of White County

**MUSEUMS**



Ratcliff Inn  
218 E. Main Street

The L. Haas Museum  
219 E. Main Street

Robinson-Stewart House  
111- S. Main Cross Street

Matsel Cabin  
East Robinson Street

Our museums, located in Carmi, Illinois, are open on advertised dates or by appointment only:

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

- ✉ Mailing Address: White County Historical Society  
Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library  
PO Box 121  
203 North Church Street  
Carmi, Illinois 62821-0121
- ✉ Email: [rshous@gmail.com](mailto:rshous@gmail.com)
- ✉ To make an appointment to visit our museums, contact the librarian at the Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library: call 618-382-8425 or email [w.c.h.s-genealogy@hotmail.com](mailto:w.c.h.s-genealogy@hotmail.com)
- ✉ If you have an item you are interested in donating to the society contact Gene Jordan, 618-383-5330.
- ✉ Comments, suggestions or contributions for the newsletter can be mailed to the address above or to [rshous@gmail.com](mailto:rshous@gmail.com). Please include "newsletter" in the subject line.

**AFFILIATIONS**

The Society maintains memberships in the following:  
 Southern Illinois Association of Museums (SIAM)  
 Illinois Association of Museums (IAM)  
 American Association of State and Local History (AASLH)  
 Illinois Historic Preservation  
 Carmi Chamber of Commerce

**MEMBERS OF THE 2018 BOARD:**

- |                                |                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| President – David Brown        | Marjorie Brown               |
| Vice President - Paula Pierson | Cindy Birk Conley            |
| Secretary – Ranelle Hubele     | Lecta Hortin                 |
| Treasurer – Jeff Bohleber      | Kristin Land                 |
| Valarie Berekashvili           | Kathleen Rister              |
| Brock Bolerjack                | Past President - Gene Jordan |