

# Iowa County History

*Brought to you by the Iowa County Historical Society*

Volume XXXIII

No. 3

July 2008

## Potpourri

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## Ice Cream Social

# July 17, 2008

All are welcome

**Meal, Music, Pie, Ice Cream  
Demonstrations ... Displays ... Fun  
At the Museum 1301 N. Bequette St.  
Dodgeville, Wisconsin**

## Potpourri

The ICHS plans to have the Floyd School in place and partially restored by the fall of 2008. The Board has decreed that a dedication will transpire with advance notice to the public. We count on you to show up on this yet unknown date and cheer for the progress made, with your support, toward the preservation of this icon of the advances made in American education in the 19th century. In Colonial America and later in the newly independent United States public education was not part of the future. Within a few years it dawned on the citizens that education was essential in order to actively use the newly won right to vote. Slowly, the little one room country schools worked their way across the continent, spurred by the insistence of immigrant parents that their children become competent, qualified, citizens of their new land.

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Floyd School

## From the ICHS Genealogy Collection

by Eileen Arndt

We recently received, **A Short History of the Iowa County Campbell Clan** and companion genealogy report compiled by **George Campbell, Jr.** This "brief" history of the Campbell family is packed with information and photos starting with the earliest ancestors found in Scotland, to those who settled on Prince Edward Island, (PEI) to those who immigrated to America. It includes the Coat of Arms with the motto "Follow Me" and pictures of castles built in Scotland by notable ancestors. "The Campbells of Breadalbane" were associated with the building of Kilchurn Castle and were second only to the House of Argyll as a leading family of Scotland in the 1400s.

The author of **Anne of Green Gables, Lucy Maud Montgomery** was a Campbell cousin. A museum related to the book is located on the Campbell property on **Prince Edward Island**. It is pictured in the newly acquired family history book.

Three Campbell brothers, Alexander, James and Archibald came to America from Prince Edward Island. Only **Archibald** stayed on at **Middlebury** and **Barneveld** in Iowa County. Several other Prince Edward Island families also came to Middlebury including the **McKenzies** and the **Theobalds** who are allied through marriage with the Campbells. Archibald was a teacher at Pokerville and met and married **Johanna Fredericka Helmenstine**. Six of their nine children contributed succeeding generations to this Campbell clan which are outlined in the genealogy report.

### Iowa County Courthouse

**150 years to be celebrated in 2009**

The Iowa County Board of Supervisors has appointed a committee to plan for the 2009 celebration of the 150th anniversary of the dedication of the courthouse cornerstone. **Suggestions from the public are welcome.**

### Dinner Dance Huge Success

About 90 people attended the previously postponed Dinner-Dance Fund Raiser on a bright Sunday in April. Everyone dined and visited, a few danced, a few played cards. It was a pleasant Sunday and a boost for the Floyd School. Now on with the Floyd School restoration.

## Mystery Photos?

Our only clue as to the identity of a person in the typical "mystery photo" is the photographer's logo or trademark. Most old time photographers were "in it for the money" and were not concerned for posterity. To find indexed files was almost as difficult as to determine who "grandpa" was when that is his only designation on the back of a portrait found in a cardboard box in your attic.



Fortunately, some faces and places from our past are so well known as to provide automatic identification. Our example to the left is **Governor James Duane Doty**. Born in 1799 at Salem

New York, raised in Martinsburg, New York, a son of **Chillis Doty**, Sheriff and tavern keeper for the community. In 1823 the ambitious young man was appointed an "Additional" circuit judge in the western part of Michigan Territory, later to become Wisconsin Territory. Doty was a very interesting pioneer politician. **Henry Dodge** and Doty were fervent enemies in the quest for office and prestige. However, Dodge retained the confidence of the voters much longer than Doty.



Another case entirely is this bathing beauty scene captured long ago by the Dodgeville photographer **Letcher**. Supposing that the girls are all gone, and knowing the ICHS does not have a single shred of identification except that the scene was photographed on the banks of an Iowa County pond or river, it is logical to believe that many of them could be identified by a granddaughter among our wide spread membership. *Please call with your clues.*



## A Letter to the Future

*It is an Editor's dream to have a West Coast contributor like Leon "Leonidas" Nelson. An Iowa County native, retired Boy Scout executive and a long time observer of the people and places surrounding him, Leon suffers from an uncontrollable urge to write it all down, as a record for the future. We salute Leon and his many works. Join us as he writes another Letter to the Future, continued from April.*

Mom would iron them in the early morning hours before the children woke up so they could put



Horses walked in a circle for long hours turning a "horsepower" to thresh or to grind grain into flour.

on clean clothes for church on Sunday morning.

It was a blessing when a smithy moved into a rural area to properly shoe horses, sharpen plow shares, repair what metal items needed their skill and to fit iron rims to wagon wheels and other rolling stock. They even made hinges of iron to replace the thick leather straps that were nailed to doors in place of metal hinges. Many times the smithy was paid in "kind", that is with a side of beef, or some chickens for stewing or whatever. Great Grandfather **W.I. Davis** was a blacksmith.

It was a lifestyle that we would find very difficult to adjust to without all of the creature comforts that we have today. Diets were very boring as for some winter, meals were the same for breakfast, din-

ner and supper. There were no things available such as corn flakes or cheerios and no orange juice in that north country. Oranges were so rare in the north that when they became available in the winter they were special treats and were given to children in their Christmas stockings.

Whatever one could store in the "root cellar" for the winter months like turnips, rutabagas, apples, potatoes. Some learned from the German people how to cut up cabbage fine and put it in a crock with a brine solution to make and store "sauerkraut". Carrots kept well in barrels of sand, standing the carrots on end just as they grew. Meat was cut up and stored in layers of tallow or lard rendered off of the hogs butchered in the fall, smoked hams and sides of bacon all prepared at home was available. However, they really lived well and an apple pie made with dried apples was a culinary delight and a real treat. Homemade bread and donuts were common fare in many homes.

For little boys who hated to brush their teeth, there were no tooth brushes or tooth paste in those early days. Most of the health complaints from the youngsters were met with a tablespoon full of castor oil or a mustard pack on the chest!

Dogs and cats on the farms were not really pets, as the dogs were workers bringing in the cattle and horses from the pastures and keeping wild predators away, as well as serving as watch dogs. Cats also had a job keeping the rodent population down as rats and mice could make serious inroads into the grain and corn supply if not held in check, so cats and dogs generally lived in the barn.

Children didn't have many toys and they didn't have much time to use them anyway. Young boys would gather the eggs, feed the chickens, care for and feed the live stock, chop and stack firewood and bring it in every day for the fireplace. When they were proficient with the rifle or shotgun they would go afield to help provide meat for the table. In the fall and winter they would run a trap line for fur bearing animals and

*(Continued on page 4)*

Continued from page 3) *A Letter to the Future*

thereby make a little money. The girls would help their mothers cook, clean, wash and iron clothes, mend, make new clothes, do hand sewing. Each girl would make a "Sampler" to show the world she could do fine stitching and was a good prospect for being a wife. The girls would can and preserve food for the winter, fruit, vegetables and even meat. They made candles and soap as well as performing other household chores. Of course there was no such thing as a washing machine in those early days. The laundry was put in a large kettle and boiled over the fire, using the soap that was made in the fall with lard and ashes from a hardwood fire. The lights that were used at night were tallow candles that were hand dipped at home. Later on they had the luxury of coal oil lamps (kerosene) which made a much brighter light but cost money - a gallon of coal oil cost a nickel. Girls, to perfume their clothes, would take an apple in the fall and completely cover it by pushing cloves into it. They would lay it in the dresser drawer with their clothes much as they do today with sachet. It did make a nice aroma.

Bit by bit families prospered and it was a great day when they could afford a handsome buggy to drive the family to Methodist Church services or to drive it into town for the rare shopping trips. Remember that even a 15 mile trip would take quite a while and the roads were just country lanes with no paving of any kind, so they didn't make very good time. A trip from Wyoming Valley to Dodgeville and back in one day was really a very tough journey up and down hills, and one generally had a load of produce, hides or such



The best way to preserve apples for the winter was as cider, using a hand cranked cider press. Sometimes the cider got out of control and inadvertently became hard cider.

on the wagon, and you never came back empty. More than likely one would stop at the grist mill and have grain and corn ground for feed and get wheat ground for flour. I am sure when someone went into town they would do errands for neighbors also and probably would bring back items for them, too.

Even at the turn of the century when electricity and telephones were available in the cities, many of

the rural farmers weren't able to take advantage of the luxury until well into the 1930's. Electricity made possible not only lighting but power for refrigeration of milk and the family food items as well as power for electric motors to do the work horses or men.

Of course the telephone was the first great communication link with other farmers and it could reach all of the way into town in case of emergencies to call a doctor or whatever would arise. It was also great to hear all of the news in the area as when you heard three longs and a short ring on the phone, that was the signal for you and as you answered the phone you could hear your neighbors lift up the phone to "rubber neck", which mean to listen in to hear what was going on. If the call came from a distance so many people would get on the line that you had to ask them to hang up as the power got so weak you couldn't hear. As you look at the descendancy chart of **Canada Richardson** and his wife **Margaret** you will be constantly amazed at the size of the families, some with ten to fifteen children. Without power equipment a family needed a lot of help to put in the crops and harvest them, and as an older brother or sister was getting old enough to marry and go off on their own there was always a younger one to take the place of the one leaving to help Ma or Pa. Also there were a lot of the children who never made it to adulthood with all of the diseases and accidents that befell our ancestors, and generally there was no medical help available other than the folk medicines that the pioneers knew about using different herbs, etc. When a lady was to have a baby she had it at home with a neighborhood mid-wife in attendance or a near relative who would take over the delivery responsibility. Generally a woman who had eight or ten children lost one or two in childbirth or in early childhood, and it was not uncommon to lose a mother in childbirth also.

Many accidents that happened on the farm resulted in death. Today modern medicines and trauma centers could save many lives. The great Uncle that I was named after, **Eddie Leonidas Richardson** born on July 11 (we share a common birthday) was killed in an accident while raising a building on the farm. He was only 19 years old. He was running the farm with his mother Elizabeth and had been doing it for two years, as his father, Leonidas had died following a fatal heart attack. His younger brother **Jesse** was a great help to him, and Jesse had to take over Eddie's place when he was killed. **Jesse Tasker Richardson** was 16, his brother **Albert** was 14, and **Irving** was 11 years old at that time. Their mother **Elizabeth Coolidge Woodbury Richardson** then managed the farm with her sons and they prospered.



## A TALE OF PIONEER DAYS

by Esau Johnson

*Please be aware that this is a true story about every day life in the mining country beginning in about 1825. Life was no bed of roses for the rugged and combative men trudging the hills, consumed by the desire to strike it rich and more than willing to fight for the pride and privilege of fighting. They talked and they fought, like they worked, without reserve. Esau Johnson was no exception.*

*This article was brought to our attention by Marion Howard of the Lafayette County Historical Society. Marion, Cornish herself, has no doubt about the truth of Esau Johnson's memoirs. They are preserved in detail in the Area Research Center in the Karrmann Library at UW Platteville. Please excuse Esau's grammar; he had little time for the niceties of life.*

*"The Lafayette County Historical Society was given a box of papers from a member in South Milwaukee. Among them are many photocopied pages from a journal written by Esau Johnson, who came to the area as early as 1825. The stories are a fascinating look at life in the days of the lead mining region of Michigan Territory. The following affirms the reputation that Mineral Point was a rough and ready place. The spelling and wording are printed here pretty much as originally written, though I have put in some punctuation for ease of reading." (Marion Howard.)*

In 1835, two of my hands and I were summoned to Court at Mineral Point. One evening when there, some of the Cornish English got two American boys into a house

and went to whipping the boys with a horse whip. The boys hallowed. The American men went to the door and called to them in the house to open the door. The



Esau's Friends

insiders would not let them in all being Cornish English, only the two boys that they were whipping. The men then went to John Hoods woodpile got a log of wood took it on their shoulders went and broke the door in and rushed in. The Cornish English went to put them out. One of my hands a little Yankee Hiram Hobs whipped two of the Cornishmen. When Hobs and the second one were fighting another Cornishman came and struck Hobs. After he had whipped his second man he wanted to whip the one that struck him when he was fighting his second man, but the

Cornishmen had hid him away so that Hobs could not find him. Then Hobs swore he had the English under his thumb that he was King over them. That night the Cornish sent out seven miles to Pedlars Creek and got their big bulley Englishman to come in to whip Hobs. Next morning when we were sitting in Old Abner Nichols sitting room, William Bennet came in with a challenge to Hobs to come out and fight Henry Rablin. They were to fight American fashion to hurt each other so bad as they could. Hobs swore he would go and whip him. The challenge said if Hobs whipped Rablin then they would call him King, but if Rablin whipped Hobs he then should be no more King over the English. I said to Hobs, you stay here, you will certainly get whipped. You are a little scrub and Rablin is a big bulley of an English man and you know that to tie my right hand behind me that I can handle you any way I please, but he swore he could whip any God Damed English man. He went out. Mineral Point was all alive with Cornish, their feathers up with glee like peafowl. They formed a ring, the combatants stood one each side of the ring facing each other. Their seconds stood on the other sides of the ring. William Bennet that brought the chalange to Hobs was Rablins second and Edward Beauchar Hobes second. They held their hats in their hand and was to commence and count one two three. At the word three they were to drop their hats and the combatants started and met. As they met Rablin got all the advantage of Hobs he could have asked for. He nocked both of Hobs hands up struck Hobs him down and jumped on him. Hobs caught one of Rablins fingers in his mouth and rose with it in his mouth. When they got to their feet, Rablin jerked his finger out of Hobs mouth and jerked two of Hobs lower teeth out. Then they clinched, Rablin throwed Hobs when he caught Rablins right thumb on his double teeth and rose with him and then Hobs threw Rablin on his right side still holding Rablins right thumb on his double teeth and drawed his hand up under his left arm, Hobs laying on Rablins left arm then Hobs commenced churning him in his face when Rablin turned his head to keep Hobs from punching him in his face. Old John Bowls said he is not one of the old blue hens chickens. Hobs then commenced punching him in his ribs when he said enough three times in a hurry. Then Daniel M. Parkinson said he has not hallowed it good yet, he then hallowed enough three times in a hurry. When they parted they had to choke Hobs loose from Rablins thumb. The English took (him) into Martin V. Burris Saloon and called him King Hiram Hobs and they called him so as long as he was in the country.



Modern  
Cornish Wrestling



Floyd School

## Floyd School Dedication

### Floyd School Student Reunion

### The Fall of 2008

## MPHS to Host Farm Life Exhibit

The Mineral Point Historical Society is bringing to town a special exhibit, **“Farm Life: A Century of Change for Farm Families and their Neighbors.”** The exhibit was developed by the Chippewa Valley Museum in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The MPHS has developed a companion exhibit to provide local perspective. Members of the Iowa County farming community and the Iowa County Historical Society have supplied stories, photographs and objects highlighting the role farming has played and continues to play in Iowa County. There will be books to look through, farm history forms to complete if desired and a large county map so visitors can highlight their connections to Iowa County farms.

The exhibits will be displayed at 203 High Street, Mineral Point at the corner of High and Chestnut Streets.

From **June 27— October 19, 2008** the exhibit will be open Fridays and Saturdays (12:00 - 5.00) and Sundays (12:00 – 3:00 pm) Admission is \$5.00. Children under 12 are free. A ticket is good for **free returns** all summer, one tour of Orchard Lawn, and discounted admission at Pendarvis and the Mineral Point Railroad Museum.

## Augustus Caesar Dodge

Pictured here as stern, uncomfortable, and probably wishing he was back at “The Grove” selling beef and buying pigs of lead from the miners of Iowa County, Augustus Caesar Dodge was the youngest surviving son of **Governor Henry Dodge**. He became the first U.S. Senator from Iowa and was a diligent senator but was not attuned to the citizens of Iowa, serving only one term.



## German Exchange Students Visit Dodge Cabin

A bright but cool April first brought 22 German exchange students to the Dodge Cabin. It was a pleasant way to open the season and to delve into the regional past.

The students were on a four-week visit to Assumption High School in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin living with the parents of Assumption students. They are students at the Hans-Leinberger Gymnasium in Landshut, Germany. The highly successful program has been in existence for more than twenty years. In alternate years an equal number of Assumption students travel to Landshut, Bavaria to



live with the parents of students at the host school. *Classes are attended but great emphasis is placed on experiencing local culture and history. Each year brings many more applicants than spaces. Perhaps should this be considered as a valuable future program for the schools of Iowa County?* The students were accompanied by four chaperones and traveled to sites of interest in a swath of several hundred miles around Wisconsin Rapids.

The **Tim Hall Family** of San Diego, California enjoyed Wisconsin hospitality at the Dinner-Dance. They are tracing the Franklin Family, early settlers in the Wyoming Valley. They also became the newest members of the ICHS.



## More About the Dinner-Dance

Door prize winners were Grace Rolli, Eudelma Olson, Lonna Arneson, Alice Thompson and Neil Giffey. The "1881" County History was won by Fran Everson.

Designer Amber Westerman of Dodgeville graciously provided a display in the dining room highlighting the **Floyd School** and plans for the restoration.

### Newspaper Microfilm at ICHS

*Please call ahead for an appointment.*

*A reader printer is available.*

Arena Wis. Star, 1874-1876 and 1877-1886, becomes  
Dodgeville Star in 1883-1886, becomes  
Rural Eye, 1887-1887  
The Eye and Star 1893-1895 become  
The New Star, 1895-1896  
Rural Eye of Arena, 1887-1888 and 1888-1889 becomes  
The Eye and Star, 1890-1893  
Index to Wisconsin Miscellaneous Newspapers  
New Star, 1896-1897  
New Star, 1898-1900  
Dodgeville Chronicle, 1862-2007  
Barneveld Banner, some issues missing  
The Hollandale Review, some issues missing

### Acquisitions

**Diane Franklin:** Baton Rouge, LA, Book, Sketches from Memory by Mary Joiner Morris.

**Leon A. Nelson:** Covina, CA, Compact disc, contains 32 photographs of members of the Richardson Family of early Iowa County, WI.

## Wisconsin Historical Society Archival Facilities Scheduled

**Ellsworth Brown**, Director of the Wisconsin Historical Society, has announced that state has funded a \$28,000,000 collections facility to be shared with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Finally some recognition of Wisconsin archival needs.

### Ridgeway C&NW RR Depot

#### A Good Tour

The restored **Ridgeway Depot** at Ridgeway, Wisconsin is open to visitors at selected times. Please call 608-935-3613 for information.

Operated by **Friends of the Military Ridge Trail** it is another "keeper" for Iowa County.

## Membership Application

Iowa County Historical Society

Mail To Marie Sersch

106 E. Pine St. Dodgeville, WI 53533-0044

Individual-annual \$10.00    5 year \$40.00

Couples-annual \$15.00    5 year \$60.00

Historian-annual    \$25.00

Master Historian-annual    \$50.00



Help the ICHS



Help the ICHS

### Membership dues and categories

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Street \_\_\_\_\_ P. O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Period \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

*I am interested in making a tax deductible gift to the  
Iowa County Historical Society. Please contact me at the above address.*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Volume XXXIII No. 3 July 2008**

Iowa County Historical Society  
 1301 N. Bequette St.  
 P. O. Box 44  
 Dodgeville, WI 53533-0044  
 MEMBERSHIPS  
 MAIL TO: MARIE SERSCH  
 106 E. Pine St., Dodgeville, WI 53533

Individual-annual \$10.00      5 year \$40.00  
 Couples-annual \$15.00      5 year \$60.00  
 Historian-annual              \$25.00  
 Master Historian-annual      \$50.00

Membership year is July 1st-June 30th

ICHS SERVICES-GENEALOGY-HISTORIC RESEARCH

The Society has archives for Iowa County: history-cemeteries-obituaries-  
 photographs-newspaper microfilm-artifacts

Curator Dorothy Anderson  
 Museum Phone 608-935-7694  
 Email: ichistory@mhtc.net

**Museum: Open year-round except for holidays.**

**Weekdays 1-4 pm and by appointment at other times**

[Iowacountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://Iowacountyhistoricalsociety.org)

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## Calendar of Events

***Ice Cream Social***  
***July 17, 2008***  
***At The Museum***  
***Demonstrations ... Displays***  
***Meal, Music, Pie, Ice Cream***  
***Serving from 4:30-7:30***

The Floyd School may be sited on the  
 museum grounds by July 17 but the  
 dedication will be held at a later date.

**You will be informed.**

*Support the  
 Floyd School restoration with  
 donations and a legacy gift, thanks.*



**Floyd School**  
 She wasn't expecting company.  
 You may see her on July 17  
 at the Ice Cream Social?