

HISTORY OF DE KALB COUNTY, MISSOURI.

At the time of the admission of Missouri into the Union, in 1821, the territory now composing De Kalb County was included in the county of Ray, which then comprised all that portion of the State lying north of the Missouri river and west of what is now the eastern boundary of the counties of Mercer, Grundy, and Livingston. That portion now comprised within the limits of De Kalb County was unsurveyed, and an unbroken wilderness, except by the old Council Bluffs trail,—a military road extending from Liberty to Council Bluffs, Iowa, and passing along the divide extending south from the present site of Winslow. Along this road the mails for the garrison at Council Bluffs were carried every week by soldiers from that post, who usually made the journey to and from Liberty on foot.

Some time in the winter of 1824 and '5 three soldiers engaged in this service became lost in a terrible snow storm, which entirely obliterated the trail, and took refuge in the timber near the present site of Maysville. They had no means of kindling a fire, and spent the night in a snow-drift. The next morning, two of them were unable to walk, and their companion set out on his journey of fifty miles through the blinding snow to Liberty, where he arrived on the evening of the second day, with hands and feet frozen. A company of pioneers were immediately sent out in search of his two companions, and found them, after their sojourn of four days in a snow-drift, badly frozen, and brought them to Liberty. The stream near which these soldiers found shelter, and which with its branches, waters and timbers the whole central portion of the county, has ever since been known as Lost Creek, and the divide from which they strayed as Lost Divide.

The other streams in the county received their names in an equally practical way. Third Fork was named from its position on the old military road; Castile Creek was named after one of the earliest settlers of the county, Mr. Joseph Castile, who settled on that stream, near where the town of Stewartville was afterwards built; and Grindstone Creek received its name from a grindstone quarry opened in an early day in that stream, and which was probably the earliest manufacturing enterprise in the county.

The first white family that settled within the limits of the county was that of Samuel Vesser, a Canadian Frenchman, who settled on the Northeast corner of the Northwest quarter of the Northeast quarter of Section 14, in Township 57 of Range 32, about two miles northeast of where Stewartville now stands. He was living at that place as early as the year 1824, and cultivated a little field, which is now in the enclosure of John F. Doherty. His farming, like that of many others at that day, was exceedingly primitive in its character, his plow being of wood, and hewed from a white oak fork. During the next twenty years the population increased very slowly, and at the time of the organization of the county it consisted of only a few hundred people, in settlements confined to the timber bordering the streams. The earliest settlers were principally from East Tennessee, where they had been under the necessity of preparing the land for cultivation by clearing it of its timber, and they mistrusted the job which nature had done upon the broad prairies of North Missouri. The value of these lands for agricultural purposes was not appreciated until the prairies of Illinois had been settled and cultivated, and the population had overflowed into the region west of the Mississippi. The territory now included in De Kalb was included in Clay County, which was organized in 1822, and in 1833 was annexed for civil and military purposes to Clinton, which was organized in that year.

De Kalb County was created by an act of the General Assembly approved February 25th, 1845. This act named Henry Brown, of Andrew County, Peter Price, of Daviess County, and Martin M. Nagh, of Clinton County, as commissioners to locate the permanent seat of justice, and appointed the house of Henry Hunter (which was situated about two miles southeast of Maysville, where John Smith, Sr., now lives) as the place of holding their meetings, and also of holding courts, until the County Court should otherwise direct. It also provided for the appointment by the Governor of three persons as justices of the County Court, and a sheriff.

In accordance with the provisions of this act, Elias Parrott, James McMahan and Hervey Ritchie were appointed justices of the County Court, and Charles H. Allen was appointed sheriff. Allen refused to qualify, and Andrew H. Skidmore was afterwards appointed and qualified, and was therefore the first sheriff of the county.

On the first Monday (5th day) of May, the time designated in the act for the organization of the county, the first County Court met at Hunter's house. Allen, the appointee who had refused to qualify as sheriff, was appointed elisor, and John F. Doherty was appointed clerk of the courts. Two of the commissioners, Brown and Price, also met at the same time and place, and Nagh having failed to appear, the court appointed Charles J. Hughes, of Caldwell County, to fill the vacancy; and they agreed on a report locating the county-seat on the Northeast quarter of Section 34 in Township 59 of Range 31—the same land now included within the corporate limits of Maysville. This selection was approved by the court, and on the 18th day of August, in the same year, the land was entered at the Plattsburg land office by Thompson Smith for the use and benefit of the county, and the patent was issued June 1st, 1848.

The court immediately proceeded to have a town laid out on the new site, called it Maysville, and appointed G. W. C. McPherson commissioner to sell and convey the lots.

The first assessor was James McKown, and the first Treasurer Andrew Harner, who was originally from Ohio, and the only Northern man who took any part in the organization of the county. All the other officers, including the commissioner of the seat of justice, were natives of East Tennessee. All the officers were "recommended" by a primary meeting of the people held for that purpose before the appointments were made.

Even the primitive simplicity of those times suggested no means of running a court of record without books or stationery; and as blank books could not be procured at that time in Plattsburg, the nearest town to the new county seat, Mr. Doherty, the clerk, made a journey to Liberty to procure them. He found a merchant's account book, bound in leather, and a paper-covered blank book, which he purchased, and which contain the first court minutes of the county. He also purchased three steel pens. When the clerk presented his bill for these articles, the court was indignant at such needless extravagance as the purchase of the pens, and it was with difficulty that they were persuaded to allow for them. The apology of Mr. Doherty that he had no quills was met by the offer from Judge McMahan to give him some, and, true to his word, when the next term came on, the judge brought in a bundle of quills as big as his arm. This was the steel pen extravagance nipped in the bud, and so careful were they in other respects, that the entire expenditures of the county during the first year amounted to less than three hundred dollars.

One of the first acts of the county court was to divide the county into five municipal townships, of which Camden was situated in the centre, and was bounded on the north by a line running east and west between congressional Townships fifty-nine and sixty, on the east by the line dividing Ranges thirty and thirty-one, and on the south by Section lines passing through the middle of Township fifty-eight, and on the west by Section line passing through the middle of Range thirty-two. The other townships were Polk, situated in the northwest portion of the county; Dallas, in the northeast; Grand River, in the southeast, and Washington, in the southwest; and they were divided from each other by lines running north and south on the section lines, one mile east of the line dividing Ranges thirty-one and thirty-two, and east and west on the section lines one mile north of the south line of Township fifty-nine.

This division continued until 1870, when the County Court added four new municipal townships—Adams, Grant, Colfax, and Sherman—and established the present boundary lines of the whole.

During the summer of 1845 justices of the peace were appointed by the county court for such municipal townships as follows: Camden Township, Zapina Babcock and G. W. C. McPherson; Polk Township, Russell Moore and Newton Cowan; Dallas Township, B. Stout and Andrew Sherard; Grand River Township, John R. Bayse and Charles Morris; and for Washington Township, John W. Kirkpatrick and Robert E. Doherty.

The county was originally assigned to the fifth judicial circuit, of which Austin A. King was judge. The first session of the circuit court was held on the 27th of October, 1845, at the house of John Buckingham, Sr., a log house about a mile and three-quarters southwest of Maysville, on what is now known as the old Barger place. The next spring term was also held at the same place, but in October, 1846, it was removed to a log house belonging to Walter A. Doak, situated on the quarter section east of Maysville. By this time considerable interest had been exhibited in the new county-seat. A great many lots had been sold, and as early as the fall of 1845 John Buckingham, Jr., built the first house within the limits of the town. It stood on the south side of Main street, on the site now occupied by the Maysville Bank. In 1846 Walter Doak built and the county purchased a log court-house situated on the east side of the public square, and the county offices were moved into it in the beginning of the year 1847, and courts were held in it in the spring of that year.

At the general election in August, 1846, the first ever held in the county, Thompson Smith, a Kentuckian, and one of the first settlers in the region included in the county, was elected Representative in the General Assembly. He was again elected in 1848 and served until 1850. At this election James McCorkle, James McMahan and Elias Parrott were elected justices of the county court for the term of four years. Andrew H. Skidmore was elected sheriff for the term of two years, and James Arrington was elected clerk of the courts for the term of six years. At the election of 1848 Skidmore was re-elected sheriff, and Judge King having resigned to become a candidate for Governor, George W. Dunn was elected judge of the fifth judicial district.

During the year 1849 the business of the county had become so extensive that the people began to feel the need of a court-house. In the fall of that year a petition was circulated and presented to the county court, asking that one be built, but no attention was paid to it at that time, further than the appointment of John F. Doherty as agent, to purchase a suitable building for that purpose. In April, 1850, Judge McCorkle resigned, and William Thornton was appointed to fill the vacancy. The court-house matter seems to have received no further attention from this court.

At the general election in 1850 John F. Doherty was elected Representative in the General Assembly and James Y. Johnson, Sheriff. An entire new county court was also elected, consisting of Eli Hewitt, who was at the first meeting chosen president, and John T. Baker and Hugh R. Hodge. The court at its first meeting appointed Isaac N. Shambaugh County Attorney, with a salary of one hundred and forty dollars per year. He was the first person who filled that office in the county. Soon after the new Justices of the County Court qualified and entered upon the duties of their offices, the court-house question began to be re-agitated, and on the 3d of March, 1851, a new petition asking for the building of a brick court-house was presented to the court, and on the 7th of the next month an additional petition for the same purpose was filed. On the same day the court borrowed two thousand dollars from the Internal Improvement Fund of the county and appropriated it for the purpose of building the court-house, and appointed Abram Barger Superintendent of Public Buildings, with directions to submit a plan for the proposed building. On the 5th of May Barger submitted his plans, which included a cupola, but this useless piece of extravagance met with such opposition from a majority of the court that it was stricken off against the protest of Judge Baker. To this stroke of economy we are indebted for the barn-like structure which has ornamented our public square for the last twenty-four years. The estimates showed that even with the sacrifice of the cupola, the building would cost much more than the two thousand dollars already appropriated, and the appropriation was accordingly raised to three thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars, and about the 1st of July the contract for building it was awarded to Geo. W. C. McPherson, for five dollars less than that sum. This was quite a large expenditure in those early days, when it cost but little to run the county government in the somewhat rude and imperfect way in which it was done, and must have looked enormous compared with the total expenditure of the year ending in May, 1850, which only amounted to \$464.60.

The court-house was completed in the fall of 1852, and the officers elected in that year removed their offices to it, and the public papers and records became for the first time reasonably secure.

Arrington having resigned his office of Clerk in the early part of the winter of 1850-51, A. H. Skidmore was elected at a special election held on the first Monday of February, 1851, to fill the vacancy, and served until after the general election in 1852, at which Robert A. Hewitt was elected Clerk, James Y. Johnson was re-elected Sheriff, and Doherty was re-elected to the Legislature.

The building of the court-house was not the only important question which presented itself for the action of the County Court which was elected in 1850. In 1847 the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad was chartered by the Legislature, and the County Courts of the counties along its line were empowered to subscribe to its capital stock. In 1849 an act was passed granting State aid in making a preliminary survey of the line, and in 1850 the County Court of De Kalb County appropriated one hundred dollars toward making a more perfect survey in De Kalb County, and as a result of it the company asked a subscription by the county of \$30,000 to its capital stock, on condition that the road should be run through Maysville. The subscription was made by the County Court on the 8th of September, 1851, and on the first day of December of that year, two bonds, one for \$1000 and one for \$500, were issued in part payment, but the route was found to be impracticable, and the company abandoned it as well as the subscription, and in 1852 located the road on the present line. By this time the overland travel and mail to California had rendered the route from Hannibal to St. Joseph an important one, and a line of stage coaches was soon afterwards placed upon it, running on the State road through Gallatin and Maysville, which was continued until the completion and opening of the railroad in February, 1859.

The first school-house erected in the county was shortly after the organization of the county on Block four, in Maysville, and was of logs. Here the first school was opened by James M. Arrington. Henry Vories, late Judge of the Supreme Court, was at that time a strong temperance man, and actively engaged in the temperance work, and the first temperance lecture delivered in the county was by him in this school-house soon after it was built. He organized a Division of the Sons of Temperance, but the habits and temper of the young community were not congenial to such an institution, and it died in its infancy. It may not be uninteresting to remember that the founder of this pioneer temperance society afterwards attained a celebrity as a manufacturer of native wines from grapes raised by himself in his extensive vineyard near St. Joseph, which was, perhaps, only surpassed by his great reputation as a jurist.

In this old school-house was also organized the first religious society in the county by the Southern Methodists, to which church all the original members of the County Court, as well as a large number of the other early settlers belonged, so that the character of the Methodists as pioneers of religion is fully sustained, by our own local history.

Until 1853, Maysville not only enjoyed the distinction of being the county-seat, but was the only town or trading point in the county, and although it had but few inhabitants, business was good, and the people prosperous.

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The location of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad attracted attention to the Southern portion of the county, and one of its first results was the town of Stewartville, which was laid out by George Tetherow on the South-east quarter of Section 16, in Township 57, of Range 32, and consisted of only six blocks, four of which were north and two south of the railroad, but its growth seems to have been quite rapid, as in the following year another plat was made by Tetherow, extending the town to Block 21, and very soon afterward additions were made by E. T. Howard and Messenger & Clawater, and a third survey made by Mr. Tetherow extended his part of the town to Block 66, its present limit. The first house was built by Wm. McLain, (formerly of Platte County), on Lot 1 of Block 1, and immediately afterwards George Tetherow built a residence on Lot 5 of Block 5, just east of where the Skelton house now stands. The first store was built by Gibson & Vance, and was situated east of the present business limits of the town.

The location of the railroad had given such an impetus to the new town that the business houses of Clawater & Parish, D. M. McDonald, W. P. Hardwick, S. Deatley & Co., and Peyton & McDonald followed in quick succession, and Stewartville became one of the liveliest little towns in North-west Missouri. In 1856 Walters, Marsh & Sweeney built at Stewartville the first saw mill erected in the county, and not long afterward John Hikes started a nursery which has done good work in covering the county with orchards, and is still one of the institutions of the place.

In 1858 D. S. Dickinson & Co. established the Stewartville Telegraph, the first newspaper in the county, but it soon died out for want of patronage. The Stewartville High School was opened in 1859, by Professor J. A. E. Summers, and, to the credit of the citizens, was well sustained, and is now in a flourishing condition, and known as the Stewartville Seminary of Professor W. O. H. Perry. The town was incorporated by an act of the General Assembly in the winter of 1860-61, and since that time its local government has been in continuous operation.

The survey of the railroad has also induced the laying out of two other new towns—Sumnerville on Sec. 13, Township 57, Range 30, surveyed in 1854, and Backlin, in Sec. 13, Township 57, Range 32, in 1855. Neither of these ever had an existence except on paper.

Judge Dunn was re-elected Judge of the 5th Judicial Circuit in 1857, and continued to hold that office for De Kalb County until 1859, at which time the 17th Judicial Circuit was organized, and James W. McFerrer was elected Judge. In speaking of this court it may not be out of place to record that John F. Doherty and Robert E. Doherty were by it admitted to the bar in September, 1847, and were the first resident Attorneys in De Kalb County.

At the election of 1854 I. N. Shambaugh was elected to the Legislature, Simeon Dalton, Sheriff, and Thomas Williams, John Stokes and Thomas Smith, Justices of the County Court. The next four or five years seem to have been, except for steady progress, an uneventful period in the history of our county. In 1856 John Johnson was elected to the Legislature and Simeon Dalton was re-elected Sheriff. It is said that Johnson could neither read nor write, and in that case his capacity for injuring his constituency or the State at large was certainly quite limited. Mr. Dalton during his last term made default in the payment of the revenue, which was the first and only instance of the kind which happened in the county. It is universally conceded that Mr. Dalton was an honorable, conscientious man, and that his failure arose from his disposition to accommodate tax-payers, who did not in the end prove as honorable as himself.

In 1858, Littleton S. Roberts was elected to the General Assembly, and Anderson C. Smith Sheriff. The County Court were Elisha T. Howard, Elias Parrott and Thomas Williams. The offices of Clerk of the County and Circuit Courts having been divided by the Legislature, Jas. T. Doherty was elected to the former, and Robert A. Hewitt to the latter office.

During this year the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad was building through the county, and Henry Baker, who was Division Engineer of the Western Railroad, and William Osborn, managing partner in the firm of John Duff & Co., contractors, together with the railroad, which owned a portion of the land, laid out the town of Osborn, and Mr. Baker moved his office there, which was the first house on the town site. In the fall of that year, William Ferguson and T. B. Harber, built a store, and each of them a dwelling-house in the town, and in the beginning of 1859, a man named McPherson, from Maine, opened the Penobscott House, which was transferred to Andrew Bunton and R. W. Wheeler, during the same year, and was kept by them under the name of the Osborn House. The railroad track was laid to Osborn in June, 1858, and the depot built during the summer of that year.

At the National election of 1860, Mr. Lincoln received seven votes in De Kalb County,—all in Dallas Township. Of the excitement succeeding this election the county had its full share, and after the firing began at Sumter, the people divided themselves almost equally in their adherence to the Federal and Confederate causes. During the summer of 1861, the people, like those in every border locality, amused themselves with many comparatively harmless excesses, which appear strikingly ridiculous when considered in the calm light of peaceful times. During the spring of that year a Union meeting and flag raising was held at Maysville, and the National flag was hoisted in the court-house yard, but after the meeting dispersed the opposite party, who were having a military drill near town, came in and fired on it, and it was finally torn down, trampled on, and pieces of it chewed up and spit out by members of the enthusiastic crowd. No record is left of how it tasted, and any statement with regard to that fact would be a mere surmise of the historian, and entitled to little credence. Two companies of Confederate troops were raised in the county and vicinity, but few of them held out to reach the seat of war in the South. Judge McFerrer, also raised a regiment for the Federal army, and many of the citizens of De Kalb enlisted in his command, as well as others recruited from time to time in the vicinity. Early in the summer of 1861, the Iowa Infantry passed through the county, one company coming to Maysville, and from that time the county was free from anything like Confederate organization. The first actual collision of the war in Northwest Missouri, in which life was lost, occurred at Stewartville during this summer. Col. Tuttle was

passing over the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad with a regiment of volunteers on his way to St. Joseph. When the train transporting them reached Stewartville some of his men observed a Confederate flag floating from a pole in the door-yard of D. M. McDonald, and at once left the cars for the purpose of taking it down. At the gate they were met by Bud McDonald, who asked them what they wanted, and being informed of their errand told them they could not take down the flag without going over his dead body—at the same time exhibiting his revolver in a threatening manner. Some altercation followed, which resulted in his being shot down by the soldiers, and the flag was taken down by them and carried away. His death was regretted by citizens of both parties, as he was universally known in the vicinity, and highly esteemed.

The ordinance of the convention of 1861, which prescribed an oath of loyalty to be taken by all officers in the State, had the effect of materially changing the official situation in this county. Both the offices of Circuit and County Clerk became vacant, and Christopher C. Harvey was appointed to the former, and Ira Brown to the latter position. The office of Sheriff was also vacated, and William Orr was appointed to fill the vacancy. Judge Parrott having devoted himself to military affairs, and Judge Williams having failed to take the oath, the vacancies in the County Court were filled by Lemuel Harvey and Jacob Harper.

In the fall of 1862 a general election was held, at which Joseph E. Branson was elected Sheriff, and Elias Parrott Representative, and John Means Justice of the County Court, to succeed Howard.

In the spring of 1864 C. C. Harvey died, and a special election was held in May to fill the vacant Clerkship of the Circuit Court. Ira Brown resigned the office of Clerk of the County Court to become a candidate in that election, and was elected. Dr. Henry L. Powell was appointed Clerk of the County Court.

At the election in 1864, T. B. Titcomb was elected Justice of the County Court, to succeed Harvey, and William Orr was elected Sheriff, Ira Brown Clerk of the Circuit Court, A. F. Harvey Clerk of the County Court, and Robert Logan Representative. Logan died shortly after the first session of the legislature to which he was elected, and Green B. Atterbury was elected to succeed him.

In the spring of 1865, the Constitutional Convention enacted an ordinance vacating the offices of all Judges and officers of the courts in the State, and providing for re-filling them by appointment from the Governor. Under this ordinance the Clerks of both courts and Sheriff, and T. E. Titcomb were re-appointed, and N. J. Harvey and W. W. Riggs were appointed Justices in place of Harper and Means.

In the spring of 1866, the Legislature established a Probate Court in De Kalb County, and also so changed the organization of the County Court as to make it consist of two Justices, together with the Judge of Probate, who was constituted *ex-officio* President of the County Court. Under this act Lewis H. Weatherby was elected Judge of Probate, and Jehu Ogle and L. M. Harman Justices of the County Court at the election of 1866. W. W. Riggs was at that election elected to the Legislature, and Daniel Ransom Sheriff, Harvey and Brown were re-elected to their respective offices as Clerks of the Courts.

In 1867 Ogle died, and from that time until the general election of 1868 the County Court consisted of only two members, including the Probate Judge; at that election the vacancy was filled by the election of George W. Williams, Daniel Ransom was re-elected Sheriff, and Newton P. Howe was elected to the Legislature. One of the first acts of the new representative was to procure the passage of a bill changing the organization of the County Court, so as to remove the Judge of Probate from his connection with it, and providing for the appointment by the Governor of an additional Justice. Under this provision Asahel Smith—familiarily and universally known as "Yankee" Smith, received the appointment.

While these changes were going on in the government of the county, other events occurred which excited great interest at the time, and which it would hardly be proper to omit from this sketch.

In August, 1865, Joseph E. Branson, the former Sheriff of the county, was shot and killed on the platform in front of the store of Pritchard & Truex, (owned by Eli Hewitt) by a man named Stoffie, a desperate character who had been stopping around Maysville and vicinity for some months. The act was universally conceded to be an unmitigated murder, which could have no other motive than personal dislike, and no grounds for such a feeling were ever known to exist. The murderer seized a horse and escaped. He was afterward badly wounded and captured in Howard County, Kansas, but was released on account of some legal formality and escaped, and has not since been heard from. About a year afterwards, Eli Hewitt, another old and esteemed citizen of the county, and one of the first merchants of Maysville, was standing upon the same spot upon which Branson was killed, when his revolver (with which he had just been shooting rats in the store) was accidentally discharged in his pocket, mortally wounding him, from the effects of which he died in a few days.

At the general election in 1870 Daniel M. Albright and Wm. H. Sifus were elected justices of the County Court in place of Harman and Smith whose terms expired at that time. John Pritchard was elected Clerk of the Circuit Court, A. E. Putnam, Clerk of the County Court; Green B. Atterbury, Sheriff; Orlando G. McDonald, Representative, and J. S. Stevens, Judge of Probate.

E. Holbut was elected assessor, and was the last County officer who served in that capacity although D. B. Todd was elected at the ensuing election but was deposed by the adoption of township organization.

During the summer of 1871 the attention of the people was concentrated upon the proposed construction of the Burlington and Southwestern Railroad through the County. This company had come into possession of the charter of the St. Joseph and Iowa Railroad Company of Missouri, which by its terms authorized the County Courts of counties along its proposed line to subscribe to its capital stock for their respective counties, and application was made to the County Court of De Kalb County for a subscription of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars on condition that the road should pass through the corporate limits of Stewartville and within one thousand yards of the court-house in Maysville.

The subscription was made on the 9th day of October, 1871, and the line having been located through Stewartville and Maysville in the winter of 1871-2 the bonds in payment were engraved and signed, and delivered to O. G. McDonald to be delivered upon completion of the road to Maysville. In March 1872 suit was brought in the De Kalb Circuit Court by Jos. Truex, Wm. G. Farris, Wm. T. Reed, Edward Smith and Ben. M. Hitt, to enjoin the issue of the bonds, and in October of that year the injunction was made perpetual for want of answer. Had the road met no opposition by way of litigation, it would probably have been built, as a very large amount of subscription to its capital stock was made by counties along the line.

In the spring of 1872 the legislature enacted what is known as the Township Organization law, which was adopted by the people of De Kalb at the general election of that year, but some question having arisen as to the validity of the law, the County Court, acting under the advice of Mr. Loring, who was at that time Prosecuting Attorney, took no steps toward organization under its provisions, and in May 1873 entered an order declaring it void. They changed their minds, however, under stress of an opinion of the Supreme Court, and in August of that year divided the County into four judicial districts, as provided by the amendment of 1873 as follows: District No. 1, Grand River and Colfax Townships; No. 2, Adams and Camden; No. 3, Washington and Sherman; and No. 4, Dallas, Grant, and Polk. The court also ordered a special election for County Judges to be held September 9, 1873, at which William H. Sifus, A. T. Downing, John F. Doherty, I. V. Smith and H. C. Burnham were elected.

At the election in 1872, Colonel C. N. Rhoads, had been elected justice of the County Court in place of Williams, E. Holbut, Sheriff, and Joshua Dean, Representative.

Green B. Atterbury was elected the first Collector of the County, that office having been created by the Legislature in the spring of 1872.

In the spring of 1874 I. V. Smith resigned his office of County Judge, and T. G. Smith was appointed to fill the vacancy.

In March 1873 a sad event occurred, without the record of which, even the official history of the County would not be complete, and which at the time produced a great deal of excitement among the people. Mr. Holbut, the sheriff, received a capias from Gentry County for the arrest of William Groomer, who resided with his mother in the northeastern corner of De Kalb County. He sent John L. Thompson, and George Walters, deputies, to make the arrest. The officers proceeded to the house and found the party they were in search of, together with his two brothers David and Christopher Groomer. In the proceedings which ensued Mr. Walters was shot and killed. Mr. Thompson, for some reason, seemed to have but little knowledge of the occurrences which resulted in the killing, but all the statements and circumstances led irresistibly to the conclusion that the perpetrators were David and Christopher Groomer. Both these parties escaped at the time, but Christopher was afterward arrested in Daviess County and is now in jail awaiting trial, and David is still at large. Mr. Walters was a man of irreproachable character, and his death was deeply regretted and excited universal indignation in the County.

In 1874 Pritchard and Stevens were re-elected to their respective positions; John F. Clark was elected Clerk of the County Court; George E. Schultz, Representative; John M. Roberts, Sheriff; and L. L. Daniel, Treasurer and Collector.

In 1875 the Legislature changed the organization of the County Court so as to make it consist of only one judge, and M. Lancaster was appointed by the Governor to that position.

In 1876 Daniels and Roberts were re-elected, and Green B. Atterbury was elected Representative, and W. W. Riggs, Judge of the County Court.

To complete the original plan of this sketch it only remains to mention the changes occurring in the Circuit Court since 1859, to which date it was brought at the election of McFerrer as judge of the 17th Judicial Circuit. Jonas J. Clark succeeded him in 1864, and in 1866 De Kalb County was assigned to the 12th Circuit of which William Herren was judge. Isaac C. Parker succeeded him in 1868, and resigned in 1870 to become a candidate for Congress, and was succeeded by Bennet Pike, who was elected in that year. Judge Pike also resigned to try his fortune in the congressional race of 1872, and Joseph P. Grubb was elected to fill the vacancy which extended to 1874, when Judge Grubb was again elected for the full term of six years.

Within the limits of a sketch like this it has been found impossible to give any thing like a complete history of the County, and the writer has consequently endeavored to fill the space assigned him with such data as will prove most interesting and useful for reference to the people of the County who will constitute the only readers. To this end he has endeavored to answer such questions as are most usually asked concerning the organization of the County, and the citizens who have taken a prominent part in its affairs from the beginning, dwelling with more particularity on those facts which, on account of lapse of time or other circumstances are not readily accessible to the people. With regard to the growth and prosperity of the County it has been shown to some extent what it was in the beginning. Its present condition is patent to us all. Its increase in population has been steady until now it amounts to about twelve thousand, and its three principal towns—Maysville, Stewartville and Osborn, are now among the most thriving of their size in the State. Maysville has a population of nearly eight hundred, Stewartville about nine hundred and Osborn five hundred people. Besides these we have several small post-office towns containing one or more stores, among the most important of which are Union Star, Winslow, Dayton City, and Fairport.

In closing it is pleasant to be able to record that the prospects of our County were never fairer than at present. Emigration, which for a few years succeeding and including 1870, had nearly ceased has again fairly opened, the crops of the last two years have been remarkably good, and real estate is beginning to feel the effects of a more active and prosperous condition of business, and the confidence which it inspires, and every indication seems to point to a healthy prosperity in the immediate future surpassing anything we have enjoyed in the past.