

# HISTORIC COURT HOUSES IN ILLINOIS



HISTORIC COURT HOUSES  
IN  
ILLINOIS



**ILLINOIS STATE CAPITAL**—the sixth in the State's history and the second to be erected after the capital was moved from Vandalia to Springfield. Cornerstone laid in 1868.

HISTORIC COURT HOUSES

IN

ILLINOIS

*By*

LUCY MILLER STURGES

RESEARCH

HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

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THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA  
IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

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## PREFACE

Little did we realize what might emerge from one small "acorn"—a letter, sent to me in November 1961 by Miss Emily Duke of The Virginia Society, suggesting that our Committee prepare historical surveys of the Court Houses in Illinois. In 1962 this research became a National Project of the Historical Activities Committees, of member Societies.

Inspired and encouraged by our National Chairman, Mrs. J. W. E. Moore and Mrs. J. Horton Fall III, President of the Illinois Society, we became captivated by the rich lore of Illinois history through which the thread of the life of Lincoln was so clearly woven. The following October we proudly received high commendation at the Biennial Council in Washington for our compilation of fourteen outstanding Court Houses. And, having opened the door, more and more material came rushing through, sparked by the suggestion of an enthusiastic member that we seek additional data from all 102 counties by sending post card questionnaires.

Meanwhile, a story began to take shape so we turned to a talented author and member of our Society to write the book. Lucy Miller (Mrs. Charles P.) Sturges graciously accepted this assignment, adding material from four more counties.

Our warm thanks and deep appreciation to Mrs. Sturges for writing the story with additional research, and preparing the bibliography; to Paul M. Angle, Director of the Chicago Historical Society for checking the accuracy of the manuscript and for his many helpful suggestions; to Mrs. Warren P. Collins for her outstanding research of "down-state" records; to Helen Graham Lynch of Chicago; Eleanor M. Connor of Peoria; Miss Mildred Warren of Mount Vernon; Clyde C. Walton, Executive Director of the Illinois State Historical Society, and to the members of my Committee without whose loyal support during the past three years, this project could not have been completed:

Mrs. Edwin Brand III—Mrs. Warren P. Collins—Mrs. O. Paul Decker  
Mrs. F. Campbell Derby—Mrs. James M. Hopkins—Mrs. Richard H. Lamberton  
Mrs. Manly S. Mumford—Mrs. Charles C. Shedd—Mrs. Charles P. Sturges  
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Historical Activities Committee 1961-1964

The National Society of the Colonial Dames of  
America in the State of Illinois.

March 1964.

To complete the record the dates of original Court Houses and those of the present day are listed immediately following the story "Historic Court Houses in Illinois."

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Dates of original structures (many of which were destroyed by fire or tornado).

Dates of Court House buildings in use today.

The State of Illinois has 102 Counties, 55,935 square miles of territory with the 1960 census listing a population of 10,457,000.

## INTRODUCTION

### SHIRES, COUNTIES AND COURT HOUSES

Illinois has had its share of historic court houses. Some are still in use after more than a century, others have been promoted to museum or State memorial status, and a few exist only in yellowed records of the past. Their individual histories vary, but each one symbolizes the fierce local pride of the pioneer settler, determined that his community should outstrip its neighboring rivals in power and prestige.

This brief survey, prepared by the Historical Activities Committee of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Illinois, does not pretend to be an authoritative treatise, but rather a glimpse into a phase of Americana that lives on, in one form or another, into the present time.

Except for a few houses in Cahokia, there remains little structural evidence to prove that Illinois was, at one time, a French Colony. The midwestern architect borrowed from many sources, from Haiti and Greece to Victorian England, but each surviving edifice has some purely indigenous characteristics and recalls some segment of American history from its colonial beginnings to the sophisticated civilization of the turn of the century from the nineteenth into the twentieth.

To understand the importance to a pioneer society of the county court house, often the most imposing structure for miles around and representative of the town's respect for law and order, one must realize that the county was a geographic division in the days when each westward outpost was looked upon as a potential metropolis by its adventuresome founding fathers.

The term "county" was borrowed from England, where it was originally called a "shire", signifying a tribal settlement or, as in the case of Kent, an entire kingdom. These "shires" became known as "counties" after the Norman conquest because of their resemblance to the ancient domains belonging to the counts, or noblemen of France.

Chief officers of the shires or counties were the earl, as military commandant; the sheriff in charge of the county court; the coroner to settle matters of life and death; and various justices of the peace. The English county was introduced into the American Colonies and, in most

of the United States, became the main administrative division between the State, municipality, parish and town.

The pioneers, pushing westward from the south or east, huddled in isolated settlements in the wilderness and longed for some legal authority on a less remote and lofty plane than either the Federal or the State government. The size of the counties was determined by custom, not law, and varied considerably in geographic dimensions. There was one criterion—a man had to be able to reach the county seat, by horse and buggy, in one day's journey from any point in the compass of the county's borders. Some counties, large to begin with, were later subdivided into several and the boundary lines changed often in the early days.

Even today, a large percentage of the counties in the United States are rural, although containing or contained in large cities. This often creates a conflict of interest between rural and urban areas in the same county, as in the case of Chicago and its county of Cook.

Outside of New England, where it is of the least importance politically, the county generally administers poor relief among other legalistic duties which are, primarily, concerned with the functions of justice, rather than those of legislation.

In Southern States, the county is the basis of representation, retaining its former importance as a unit of settlement and, at least in the smaller communities, has not lost its local significance. Nor has the "County" forgotten all social overtones. Southerners still tend to refer to friends and relatives as coming from "Fairfield County" or "Warren County", thus conjuring up nostalgic mental images of former plantation days.

Certainly the focal point of many midwestern nineteenth century American towns and villages was the local court house, its cupola rivalling church towers and spires as a landmark visible for many miles. The court house might be Greek, Roman, Renaissance or Victorian (and sometimes a bit of each) in design, with a nationalistic touch or two added to the architectural confusion, but dignity and grandeur predominated. Golden domes and gilded gargoyles illuminated the landscape, and pretentious facades echoed the aspirations of citizens

desirous of “looking up” to the law. Local materials were used in the construction whenever possible.

The surviving examples retain an aura of that hearty period in the 1840s and 1850s when itinerant groups of lawyers traveled in “rigs” from one county seat to another, within a prescribed circuit; met their clients on the court house lawn before cases were tried; and afterwards repaired to the nearest village inn or tavern for a convivial evening. In the days before radio and television, this gave the local populace a chance to hear news from the outside world.

## CHAPTER I

### METAMORA—WHERE LINCOLN PRACTICED LAW

Following the old English custom transplanted to many States, including Kentucky from where many Illinoisans came originally, a judicial circuit system was adopted in Illinois in 1839. The State was divided into circuits, and each such division assigned a judge who traveled from county court to county court for months on end. The old Eighth Circuit, which Abraham Lincoln rode out of Springfield was enormous, but towards the end of his career as a lawyer it became much reduced in size, comprising only five or six counties although still covering several thousand square miles.

Clients were few and far between in the sparsely settled territories, and only by circuit riding could lawyers of Lincoln's time eke out a living. Some, like Lincoln, had had little formal training, while others were well educated. Here was a real matching of legal wits and talents. Lawyers with books in their saddlebags helped to tame a frontier country. It was a rugged life. Sometimes they drove their rigs across the prairies on trails where the mud rose to the wagon wheel hubs, or forded creeks swollen by torrential rains. Sometimes they rode through storms of sleet and snow, mittens frozen upon hands scarcely able to grasp the stiffened reins. On frosty mornings they had to break the ice in hotel room pitchers before they could wash their hands and faces.

The fees were small, the living conditions almost intolerable, yet Lincoln seems to have thrived on it all. His famous story telling sessions, the close friendships and political ties formed by him during those years more than compensated for the weary hours of travel, the poor food and lodgings. He spent about half of each year that he practiced law, except for his term in Congress, in circuit riding.

Metamora court house in Woodford county was once a part of the old Eighth Circuit and it remains substantially the same as it looked when Lincoln came there to argue cases before Judge David Davis. Judge Davis, who later became a Supreme Court Justice, was one of the men responsible for Lincoln's nomination for the Presidency by the 1860 Republican convention in Chicago.



WOODFORD COUNTY COURT HOUSE—(Metamora) Eureka. Built in 1845, now a State Memorial.

The court house was constructed in 1845 in the southern colonial style, complete with cupola of bricks burned in local kilns, and hardwood timbers hewn from the surrounding forests. In 1870 the stairway was moved from the back to the front of the building, and two wings were added some years later, but no other changes have been made in the forty by fifty foot structure.

Lincoln and Judge Davis made the Eighth Circuit famous, as the countryside echoed to the sound of their eloquence. A court session was an important event in the pioneer society—almost as exciting as a country fair. Farmers managed their chores so they could come to town to see the judge arrive, and when his carriage drew up before the court house, men and women rushed forward to greet him. All work ceased while a case was being tried. People sat out under the trees, watching the lawyers and their clients—the accused and the plaintiffs—as they came and went.

One western traveler wrote: “Court week is a general holiday. Not only suitors, jurors and witnesses, but all who can spare the time brush up their coats and brush down their horses to go to court.”

Woodford, like other counties in Illinois, was not immune to change during its early history. Many of the settlers were Mennonites who found the territory to their liking and decided to farm there after making the long journey westward from Pennsylvania. The first county seat was Versailles, a rural community in lower Ohio township, where court sessions were held in a private house.

In 1843 the seat was moved to Hanover and the town’s name changed to Metamora. The court house, built on grounds donated by the local authorities, cost \$4,400 and was paid for within two years. It was abandoned as a court of law when the county seat was again shifted, this time to Eureka, in 1894. The Chicago Historical Society has a model of the Metamora Court House in its Lincoln Diorama.

One notes, time after time, in the early histories of the Illinois counties, how the pressures brought to bear by ambitious city fathers to have a county seat moved from another town to their own, proved the importance of the courts in pioneer society. Often the county seat was awarded to the highest bidder, to whichever place offered a bigger and better court house or improved facilities for rendering justice. Howls of anguish arose from citizens who saw the court snatched from their own door step and established in some rival township.

The Metamora court house, now a notable addition to the Illinois roster of Parks and Memorials, was presented to the State in 1921 and when properly restored, opened as a museum. Today it contains pioneer relics donated by residents of Woodford County as well as por-

traits of Lincoln, Stephen A. Douglas, Robert G. Ingersoll and Adlai Stevenson, Vice President of the United States, and grandfather of the present United States Ambassador to the United Nations and former Governor of Illinois. All these, and many other distinguished jurists tried cases in the second floor courtroom at Metamora.

Documents on file there in the Clerk's Office include a poll book of the 1860 election, maps of the Eighth Circuit, early court orders pertaining to livestock and real estate values, and a docket book listing two cases tried by one A. Lincoln.

## CHAPTER II

### POSTVILLE VERSUS MT. PULASKI

Now an Illinois State Memorial, the reconstructed court house in Postville was once the most imposing structure in all Logan County. Postville was platted in 1835, at a time when Abraham Lincoln was still a young surveyor poring over his law books at night. By 1836 the town had mushroomed, at least on paper, into a "city" comprising 150 blocks. The following year a depression forced its founder-namesake, Russell Post, to sell most of his holdings to other promoters. One of these, Seth M. Tinsley, offered in 1839 to build a court house without cost to the county.

As a result of this magnanimous gesture, Postville won out by one legislative vote over Mt. Pulaski, its chief rival for the honor of becoming the Logan County seat. Tinsley supervised the construction of the court house, which was completed in 1840. It rose two stories from a stone foundation, had oak beams and walnut siding, and cost Tinsley and his partners \$1,176.83. While it was being built, court sessions were held in Deskins tavern. Later the county built a jail of notched logs, twelve feet square and two stories high, the interior boarded with heavy oak planks.

Postville did not retain its courtly eminence for long. In 1847 the booming town of Mt. Pulaski, named for Count Casimir Pulaski of Revolutionary War fame, offered a business block and a new court house as an inducement to lure the county seat away from Postville. The offer was accepted and the records moved to Mt. Pulaski where the citizens raised \$2,700.00 supplemented by a State appropriation of \$300.00 with which to build a court house.

Postville did not give up without a fight, however. The removal of the county seat brought on litigation in which Abraham Lincoln took part. At the time of the location of the county seat in Postville, the proprietors had agreed orally to erect a court house on a block owned by them and deed all to the county, which they did.

The deed was in fee simple without reservations or conditions. On removal of the county seat, the commissioners sold the block and the



**POSTVILLE COURT HOUSE**—Built in 1840—once the most imposing structure in Logan County—now a State Memorial.

building, whereupon the Postville proprietors sued the county for damages. The case was tried before Judge David Davis at Mt. Pulaski in August, 1849.

Abraham Lincoln appeared for the county. His former law partners, Logan and Stuart, represented the Postville proprietors. Lincoln contended that the agreement was against public policy and founded on corruption and that, in deeding the land without reservations, the proprietors took their chances on the county seat being changed some day.

Judge Davis found for the county and, on appeal, the Supreme Court sustained his decision. The opinion has been cited in Illinois and other States, and by the United States Supreme Court, as a leading case in similar litigations.

Unfortunately, the Logan county records burned in 1859 and little is therefore known about other cases handled by Lincoln in Postville, oldest of the courts in the Eighth Circuit.

After losing out as the county seat, the court house was used as a

civic center, a church, and a place for public gatherings. Despite the protests of its leading citizens, the building was sold in 1929 to Henry Ford, who moved it bodily to his Greenfield Village complex of early American structures near Dearborn, Michigan. There it stands today, facing the village green and adjacent to the Thomas Edison laboratories.

At the time of its purchase by Henry Ford, the court house was occupied rent free by a needy family. For two decades the owner, T. T. Beach, had tried in vain to give the building to Logan County, on condition that the Board of Supervisors would maintain it. The county never accepted his generous offer.

In 1953 the State received from the Logan County Historical Society the square block of 1.14 acres upon which the court house had stood until its banishment to Michigan. On this site, used for years as a children's playground, the State erected a replica with exhibits pertaining to early Illinois judicial affairs.

Abraham Lincoln was probably as well acquainted with the Mt. Pulaski court house as with any similar edifice on the Eighth Circuit. This excellent example of Greek Revival architecture stands today as it did in Lincoln's time, and is maintained by the State of Illinois as a memorial to its most illustrious citizen.

Judge David Davis, Stephen A. Douglas, William H. Herndon, Asahel Gridley and Benjamin S. Edwards were but a few of the brilliant barristers whose names are linked with Mt. Pulaski in its heyday. This lasted until 1853, when by legislation, the county seat was removed to Lincoln, a thriving new community named for the Springfield lawyer who was a trusted friend and attorney for the town's founding fathers.

The Mt. Pulaski court house was used as a school until 1878, then it became in turn a city hall and jail, a post office, and headquarters for various city officials. In 1936 it was converted into a State Memorial. During the restoration, the original floor boards were uncovered beneath later ones, and some partitions were removed to give the rooms their former dimensions. Furniture proper for a court house of the period has been acquired, and the court house contains portraits of noted jurists, as well as the gavel used by Judge Davis. The court house saw much of Lincoln who, for nearly a quarter of a century, rode the cir-

cuit first as a partner of John T. Stuart, later as an associate of Stephen T. Logan, and finally as the senior member of the firm of Lincoln and Herndon, a partnership dissolved only by Lincoln's assassination. One of Mt. Pulaski's leading attorneys, Samuel C. Parks, garnered cases for him and worked with him in court trials. The future President had similar associates in other counties of the Eighth Circuit.

By turns moody or ebullient, cracking jokes or brooding alone, Lincoln was one of the most colorful of the itinerant company of legal lights to travel the circuit. He became a familiar figure throughout the entire area. Gaunt, tall, with enormous hands and feet, he cast a prophetically long shadow across the scene, not caring much for his personal appearance, but recognized for his sound knowledge, common sense and endless store of wit. Historians agree that Lincoln's years on the circuit had much to do with his later rise to power and fame. It is noteworthy, too, how often localities claim, with more legend than fact, that "Mr. Lincoln argued many cases here" much in the same vein as the often disproved boast that "Washington slept here" in towns and inns along the Eastern seaboard.

In "Abraham Lincoln, The Prairie Years" Carl Sandburg quotes a contemporary's description of the Springfield lawyer: "He rose from his seat, stretched his long, bony limbs upward as if to get them in working order, and stood like some solitary pine on a lonely summit."

Sandburg noted, on another page: "Sometimes a poetry of fine wisdom in short words came from his tongue as carelessly as rain drops on high corn," using as an example Lincoln's statement that "All rising to power is by a winding stair."

The late Judge Lawrence B. Stringer of Lincoln, Illinois, wrote about several interesting cases in which Lincoln participated in the Mt. Pulaski court rooms. One of them, called the Horological Cradle case involved the trade of an alleged patent on a cradle for a tract of land.

"The patent as described by Mr. Lincoln," wrote Judge Stringer "was a cradle rocked by machinery with weights running on pulleys. The cradle served as a pendulum which being wound up, would rock itself until run down, thus saving time for nurses and mothers."

Lincoln operated the cradle in open court and when Judge Davis

asked how the thing could be stopped when desirable, replied: "It's like some of the glib talkers you and I know, Judge. It won't stop until it runs down."

He won the case only to have the verdict reversed in a higher court. Lincoln took the cradle to his office in Springfield, where he operated it in his leisure time and showed it to all visitors. During the same term of court at Mt. Pulaski, he tried another patent case, this one involving a "cast iron tombstone."

Among the innumerable anecdotes concerning Lincoln's circuit years is the story of the woman he defended in the Metamora Court House. During her trial for the murder of her husband, the defendant walked out of the court house and vanished into thin air, never again to reappear. It seems, the story goes, that she wanted a drink of water and Lincoln told her the water in Kentucky was very good! This court house also contains a table with the under section cut out to accommodate the very long legs of Abraham Lincoln.

### CHAPTER III

## BEARDSTOWN—DEFENSE BY AN ALMANAC

Among the many Lincoln shrines in Illinois, Beardstown ranks high. This was the first Cass county seat, retaining the distinction until deprived of it by Virginia, Illinois in 1872. Beardstown, however, never relinquished the claim of being the most historic site in the area.

The territory was explored by Thomas Beard from Ohio and General Murray McConnell of Jacksonville, who set out together on horseback to penetrate the lush prairies and woodland stretches of the Illinois River country.

Beard was enchanted by the site of the future Beardstown, and concluded that it would be an ideal place upon which to found a settlement. He constructed a log cabin at the foot of what is now state street and began trading with the friendly Indians in the vicinity. The next spring he put up a two story brick building on the present site of the post office. This served for eighty-five years as a store and an inn.

Thomas Beard's letters home to Ohio were filled with such alluring descriptions of his Promised Land that soon his entire family joined him there and within a decade so many settlers had arrived that the city was platted and laid out in September, 1829. It consisted of 23 blocks fronting the river, and three blocks running inland.

Beardstown's most generous gift from its founder and namesake was a plot of land to be used as a market place for farmers coming into the settlement to trade. Thanks to the good judgment and persistence of Beardstown's citizens, no public buildings have ever been erected on this square and it remains a park ornamented by shade trees, walks, and flowers.

Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln, in a fiercely contested Senatorial race in 1858, stumped the State even before the start of their famous seven debates (in which Lincoln was the challenger) and Beardstown was one of the many localities to hear the sound and fury of their impassioned oratory.

Upon one occasion Douglas told a crowd that Lincoln had run a

grocery store where he sold whiskey. Lincoln replied: "But the difference between Judge Douglas and myself is just this: that while I was behind the bar, he was in front of it!"

In the course of the Lincoln-Douglas campaign, in a speech at Clinton, Lincoln made his classic pronouncement: "You can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time."

The practice of shorthand had been recently introduced into the western country, seemingly just in time to record the words of the two political contestants, and as Lincoln began to speak one day, a voice from the crowd called out: "Hold on, Lincoln. You can't speak yet. Hitt ain't here."

"Hitt ain't here?" Lincoln repeated. "Where is he?" The shorthand reporter hadn't arrived, and the debate was held up until another expert in the newfangled hieroglyphics had arrived. Not only Illinois, but the whole nation wanted to hear about every word spoken in those verbal battles between Lincoln and Douglas. Theirs was the first political campaign to be recorded stenographically.

Lincoln lost the senatorial race, but achieved such national prominence because of the debates that two years later he was nominated for the Presidency by the Republican party.

In Beardstown, then the Cass county seat, Lincoln successfully defended Duff Armstrong against a murder charge, in the famous Almanac case, using an almanac to prove that there wasn't sufficient moonlight on the night of the murder for the attack to have taken place in the manner described by a witness for the prosecution.

The old Beardstown court house, now the city hall, was built in 1844. It is a small structure, dwarfed by a huge chimney. In 1872 the court records were moved to Virginia, Illinois, the new county seat, and the court house in Beardstown became a school and later a meeting place for religious groups and civic projects. Today it harbors the offices of the City clerk, the Chief of Police, and the Fire department. The Fire Chief's family occupies an apartment above the jail section. The city council and court affairs are conducted in the second floor room where Lincoln defended Armstrong, in an atmosphere as nearly

like Lincoln's era as possible. Two pictures hang on the wall: one of Lincoln, the other of Thomas Beard.

The building also houses the Rudie A. Black collection of American firearms, an assortment of Indian relics, and a set of dishes that once belonged to Thomas Beard's wife, Nancy. Outwardly the court house has been little changed, although the ancient small-paned windows have been replaced with modern glass, concrete floors laid, and coat after coat of paint added to the walls.

## CHAPTER IV

### FROM OQUAWKA TO MONMOUTH

Towns, like people, sometimes rise to eminence from "log cabin" beginnings. In 1825 Warren County was established, consisting of the territory combining the present counties of Warren and Henderson. The modest home of Alexis Phelps, in the town of Yellowbank (now Oquawka) served as the first seat of government until 1831.

The county seat was then moved to Monmouth, where a log cabin court house was erected for \$62.00. A more pretentious edifice, with a \$10,600 price tag, replaced this a few years later and in 1893 Monmouth built its present court house for \$125,000. There is no record to indicate whether the level of justice rose with each cost increase. But the early histories of the region state that the log cabin was used to shelter residents during the Blackhawk war and that, upon more than one occasion, upwards of 18 people jammed themselves into the tiny building for protection from the Indians.

Cherished amid old documents in Monmouth is a tract drawn up and certified "A. Lincoln." Warren county claims Wyatt Earp and Charles Alexander Reynolds among its distinguished citizens. Reynolds served as an army scout under General Custer in the Battle of Little Big Horn.

Monmouth, fifteen miles west of Galesburg, is located in stock raising country. It has creameries, farm tool manufacturers, and potteries in the vicinity as well as the Presbyterian Monmouth College, founded in 1856. Henderson, once a part of Warren, was established as a separate county in 1841, with Oquawka as its seat. The small court house remains in use today, with two wings added. This was built on land donated by S. S. and Alexis Phelps, the original proprietors of the town, who also gave 200 lots to be sold to finance the construction of the court house, with the provision that should this ever be removed to another town, the property would revert to the Phelps estate. In bidding for contracts, Alexis Phelps, a county commissioner, submitted the low bid of \$1,219.00 to be paid within eight months.



**HENDERSON COUNTY COURT HOUSE—Oquawka—Original building still in use. Built in 1841. Wings added later.**

This resulted in some frenzied financial maneuvers climaxed by the decision not to pay the entire sum immediately, but to give Phelps 8% interest until the total had been paid to him.

Oquawka cannot boast of a Lincoln-Douglas debate, but its citizens heard Douglas speak on October 4, 1858, and listened to Lincoln's rebuttal on October 9th. A docket kept by Stephen A. Douglas and a chancery record of the many cases he passed upon in that court house in the 1841-43 period are guarded there, under lock and key.

In those days, Oquawka was a flourishing river port. Steamers and packets plying their trade up and down the Mississippi tied up at her dock with great regularity. Not far from the town one can see one of the few old wooden covered bridges in Illinois. This bridge, named for a prosperous farmer, Thadeus Eames, is thought to have been erected in 1835.

## CHAPTER V

### TROUBLED TIMES IN HANCOCK COUNTY

The Mormons played a brief but dramatic role in Hancock county history. Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon sect, migrated in 1840 to the settlement of Far West, Missouri. Driven from there, he and his followers crossed the Mississippi to a place called Commerce, Ill., changed its name to Nauvoo, and built up a flourishing community there.

Smith is supposed to have received "a Revelation from God commanding him to build in His name a House which he (Smith) and his family would have a right to use as a permanent residence." Mansion House was completed in 1843, as a private dwelling, then turned into a hotel by the Smiths, who retained a few rooms for their own use. This has been restored and may be seen by tourists.

The Mormon Temple in Nauvoo was completed, furnished, and dedicated despite the Mormon's knowledge that they were soon to be driven away from the town. The day following the dedication, all furnishings were removed from the Temple and it stood empty until destroyed by fire in 1848. Meanwhile, Smith and his followers had become embroiled in politics. Joseph Smith even became a self-promoted candidate for the Presidency of the United States. He and his brother Hyrum were arrested (for the last but by no means the first time) and jailed in Carthage, Illinois, the Hancock county seat.

The court house there never witnessed their trial, however, for before this, both men were murdered by a mob in June, 1844 during the absence of Gov. Thomas Ford who had marched to Nauvoo with several companies of militia in a show of strength. There is evidence, but no proof, of collusion between the mob and those members of the militia left to guard the prisoners in the Carthage county jail.

The times were troubled indeed, and descendants of Carthaginian pioneers remember ancestral tales of huddling behind locked doors while hoofbeats thundered along the levee and gunfire sounded spasmodically. The Mormons were driven from Illinois after Joseph Smith's death. At that time, Gentile residents of Nauvoo must have fled as well,

for a traveler Thomas L. Kane, arrived there in September, 1846 and found it a newly deserted ghost town. Only a few days earlier Illinois militiamen had ejected the last of the Mormon inhabitants. The soldiers, encamped near the Temple, showed him through its spacious but empty rooms.

Led by Brigham Young, who had returned from England after the murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, one large contingent of Mormons found its way to Utah. Young became Governor of the Territory of Utah for two terms.

A house in Nauvoo bears his name, but there are no records to testify that Brigham Young built it. Another Mormon residence still to be seen there was once owned by Wilfred Woodruff, editor of the church newspaper from 1840 to 1845. After the Mormon War in 1846, he left with the "hand cart" brigade of "latter day saints" on their perilous journey westward across the plains, reaching Salt Lake City on July 24, 1847.

Also during the Mormon interlude in Illinois occurred the shooting of Dr. Samuel Marshall, the county clerk, by sheriff Minor Demming, following a quarrel about the proper execution of court orders. Demming died in jail in June, 1845, before he could be tried for the killing.

The old jail in Carthage, scene of so many melodramatic events, is still standing, but the 1839 county court house in Carthage has vanished. In it was held the murder trial of William Fraime, the only man ever executed by hanging in Hancock county. His defense attorney was Abraham Lincoln!

This was one of the first murder cases handled by the Springfield lawyer, then a partner in the firm of Stuart & Lincoln. Horse thieves, murderers, outraged citizens and scandalmongers came to his office to pour out their stories, but Lincoln had quiet times when there was little business because there was little litigation. In his office account book he wrote: "Paid for food . . . 50c. Paid for saw . . . \$2.25." If not occupied practicing law, Lincoln could always keep busy sawing wood.

In 1858, while campaigning for Congress against Stephen A. Douglas, Lincoln addressed a large concourse of people on the court house lawn in Carthage. The Daughters of the American Revolution have placed a boulder there, to mark the spot.

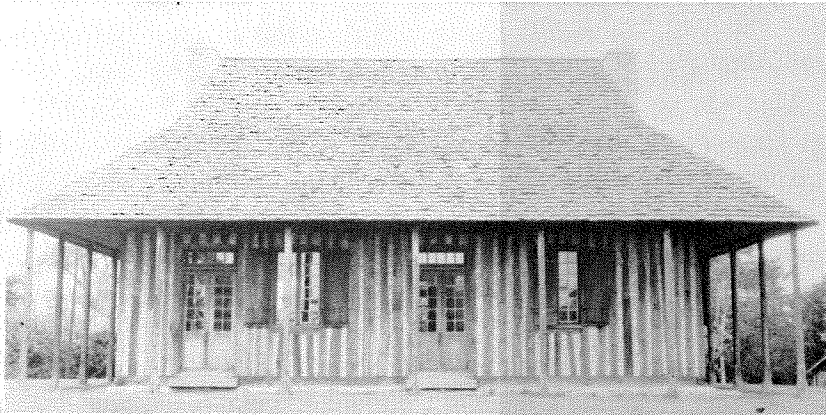
## CHAPTER VI

### FRENCH DRESSING

Only history can testify to the fact that Illinois was, at one time, a French province. No trace of an accent spices the midwestern tongue, nor does any Frankish influence in food, dress or language remain as a monument to those intrepid “voyageurs,” “commandants,” and “habitants” who navigated the rivers, explored the forests and prairies, and made friends or warred with the local tribes of Indians—depending upon trade, treaty or international intrigue.

The era ended so quickly that by 1818 Illinois had cast off first French, then British rule to become part of the United States of America, and this outpost of King Louis XIV’s realm had long abandoned allegiance to the Lilies of France in favor of the Stars and Stripes.

Only the little town of Cahokia stands as a rather wistful ghost of New France with about a dozen buildings remaining as reminders of the French epoch in Illinois. These include the Holy Family Church, the Jarrot mansion, a few houses, and the old court house which led a migratory existence before being returned to Cahokia as an exhibit of the Division of Parks and Memorials of the State of Illinois.



**CAHOKIA COURT HOUSE**—Oldest court house west of the Alleghany Mountains—built about 1737 as the home of Captain Jean Baptiste Saucier (builder of Fort de Chartres). It became a court house in 1793 and was in use until 1814. State Memorial.

The Cahokia court house, south of East St. Louis, is the oldest building in the State, quite possibly the senior citizen of structures in the midwest, and most assuredly the dean of law courts west of the Alleghany mountains. It may also hold a record for the number of times it has been moved, and it has the distinction of having served—for a time—as a saloon! During this stage in its history, the courtroom was used as the tavern, with a bar in the corner where the jury box had stood.

Originally the home of Capt. Jean Baptiste Saucier, builder of Fort de Chartres, this excellent example of a French pioneer log house was constructed shortly after 1737. The walls, with interstices filled with stone and mortar, rest on a foundation of stone nearly two feet thick. The floors are of sassafras puncheons on walnut beams. The cantilevered roof slants steeply down, over the front and side porches. Facing north, the building runs 35 feet north to south and 43 feet, eight inches from east to west. Its grounds cover four city blocks. When it became a court house, one room served as a court, another as the jail, and the remaining two were probably used as government offices.

When it was built, Cahokia was part of the French province of Louisiana. Marquette and LaSalle failed to stop there, but it is the oldest permanent settlement on the shores of the Mississippi, having been founded in March, 1699, by three missionaries from the Seminary of the Foreign Missions in Quebec. These priests built a chapel dedicated to the Holy Family.

Jesuit priests had previously explored the territory and, for a time, continued to work with the Seminarians. Finally the Archbishop of Quebec recognized the latter as the sole local representatives of the Church and they remained in charge for 65 years.

The word "Cahokia" signifies "wild geese" in the Indian dialect and the town was named for a tribe belonging to the Illinois Indian Confederation. With their close associates, the Tamaroas, the Cahokias lived in a wooded strip of land between the Mississippi river and Cahokia Creek. Here they gathered in summer for their councils. In the wintertime they ranged the prairies in great hunts after game. Fur traders followed the missionary—explorers to Cahokia, and permanent settlers were not far behind.

As a result of the Seven Years War, Canada and the Illinois country were ceded to Great Britain. In 1764 St. Louis was founded four miles to the north, across the Mississippi, and many Cahokians moved to the new community, wishing to escape the river floods and to remain on French soil. Soon they learned, to their sorrow, that the St. Louis side of the river had been secretly given to Spain, by France.

Cahokia became a part of the United States on July 5, 1778, after surrendering on the previous day to George Rogers Clark and his "Long Knives." The head of the Cahokia militia, Capt. Francois Trotter, and the men under his command were commissioned American officers by Clark, who managed, through clever diplomacy, to persuade the Indians to remain neutral.

Until St. Clair county was established in 1790, the local citizens practically ruled themselves as a sort of small city-state. The county was part of the Northwest Territory, at the time, and its boundaries reached all the way to Canada. The home of Capt. Saucier, then owned by his son, Francois, was purchased in 1793 for use as a court house. It was the site of the first U. S. election and the first American court session to be held in Illinois. There deeds to land were conveyed; criminals indicted and tried; and administrative orders issued for an area that included Peoria, Prairie du Chien, Chicago and Green Bay.

Because of the constant threat of floods to low-lying Cahokia, the county seat was moved to Belleville in 1814 and the former court house in Cahokia became in turn a saloon, a storehouse, a meeting place or hall, then once again a private residence. It was dismantled and moved in 1904 to the grounds of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, and at the close of the Fair, portions of the original structure were brought to Chicago and set up on an island in the Jackson Park lagoon, where they remained for many years.

Historically minded Illinoisans began agitating to have the Cahokia court house returned to its place of origin. This was done in 1938, under the auspices of the Illinois Department of Public Works, now the Division of Parks and Memorials. During the excavation of the original site, the old stone foundations, fragments of iron work, and many ancient artifacts were uncovered. A detailed study of old draw-

ings of the building preceded the actual reconstruction, in which was used every morsel of original material that could be found.

Those interested in the French period in Illinois need not journey to Cahokia to learn how the 18th century "habitants" lived, for the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Illinois has erected within the Chicago Historical Society a typical French Colonial house with log exterior, its two rooms furnished with authentic antiques of the era. Most of the furniture was acquired, after considerable sleuthing, in out of the way parts of French Canada for, as we have mentioned before, when the French occupancy of Illinois ended, so did its brand of civilization, leaving scarcely a footprint in the sands of history.

Cahokia's story had a happy ending, from the conservationist's point of view, but in Illinois annals are recorded many instances in which court houses and other public buildings were allowed to fall into a state of ruin. This must have been especially true during the 1830s, for civic pride in such structures can be noted in rising crescendo through the period of the mid-19th century in the State.

But in Edmund Flagg's "Far West," a book of travels published in 1838, the author mentions the pleasant little town of Shelbyville on the west bank of the Kaskaskia river. "Its seat of justice," he notes, "was fearfully portended by a ragged, bleak-looking structure called a court house."

"Its shattered windows and flapping doors and weather-stained bricks perched in the center of the village remind one of a cornfield scarecrow performing its duty by looking as hideous as possible. Dame Justice seems to have met with the most shameful treatment all over the West, through her legitimate representative, the Court House."

Flagg also refers to another court house, this one in Jefferson County. "Mt. Vernon has a court house of brick, decent to the eye, but said to be so miserably constructed that it is a perilous feat for his Honour here to poise the scales of justice."

Despite his critical comments about the state of Illinois court houses in that year, 1836-37, Flagg praised the territory as "The New England of the West . . . not a slave state . . . internal improvement is a feature

of its policy and measures for the universal diffusion of intellectual, moral and religious cultures are in active progression . . .”

This pioneer tourist thought very little of the court house in Kaskaskia, which he described as “A huge, ungainly edifice of brick, like Joseph’s coat of many colors and . . . sadly ruinous as regards the items of windows. This circumstance notified me that this was neither more nor less than a western court house . . .”

Flagg had kinder things to say about Springfield, and obviously agreed with men like Lincoln and Douglas who wanted the capitol of the State to be moved there from Vandalia. “A flashing cupola above the trees reminded me I was approaching Springfield,” he related in his “Far West.” “The town was laid out ten or twelve years since but for a long while contained only a few scattered log cabins. All its present wealth and importance dates from six years. Yet such is its location by nature that it can hardly fail of becoming a place of extensive business and crowded population, while its geographic central situation seems to designate it as the capital of the State.

“An elegant State house is now erecting in the public square. A green, pleasant lawn enclosed by a railing contains the court house and market, fine structures of brick. The sides of the square are lined with handsome edifices. Most of the buildings are small, however, and the humble log cabin not infrequently meets the eye . . . among the public buildings are the jail and several houses of worship. Society is said to be excellent, and the place can boast much literary taste.”

## CHAPTER VII

### THE WINNER: SPRINGFIELD

Randolph county is perhaps the richest in Illinois historical lore. Kaskaskia, its county seat until 1847, was settled near the junction of the Kaskaskia and Mississippi rivers by a group of Jesuit missionaries in 1703. French influence remained until the English were granted ownership of the area in 1763, only to be driven out by George Rogers Clark on July 4th, 1776. Kaskaskia became the capital of the Illinois Territory and then of the State. Establishment there of the territorial government in 1809 brought to the little town a number of distinguished residents: Governor Ninian Edwards, Nathaniel Pope, Judge Jesse B. Thomas and Matthew Duncan, who published the first Illinois newspaper in 1809.

A brick court house was erected in Kaskaskia in 1821, a year after the State capital had been removed to Vandalia. In the great flood of 1844, water stood seven feet deep in the court house and raised the question of finding a safer place for the county records. Three years later, the legislature provided for a vote on the question, and the first election showed Chester, Sparta, and Kaskaskia in that order. There were five hundred more votes than in the congressional election in 1846. The second ballot eliminated Kaskaskia, which threw its strength to Sparta, not because it loved Sparta more, but because it hated Chester intensely. Some six hundred illegal votes were cast, each town being more or less guilty, with Chester importing many of its voters from Missouri. Chester won out, perhaps due to a group of citizens who offered to build a court house without cost to the county. This was erected in 1850, and furnished by county funds. Its exterior structure has been but little altered during the years. An addition with iron shutters was built in 1864 to provide more office space and fireproof storage for the valuable records.

After Vandalia became the capital in 1820, Kaskaskia, as if in mourning for its past, dwindled in size and was eventually swept away by erratic changes in the course of the Mississippi. Only a small island community remains to perpetuate, in name only, the original capital of

Illinois, now lost beneath the swirling, rapacious waters of the great river.

Abraham Lincoln saw Vandalia for the first time in 1834, and he was not impressed, although the State capital, with a population of around 900, was then the mecca of politically and socially minded Illinoisans.

Thomas Cox, senator from Union City, discovered the site for Vandalia in 1819, when Kaskaskia, the old capital, had been found subject to floods and badly situated with respect to the Illinois boundaries decreed by Congress. Pioneer Illinoisans had an eye for profit, too, in their quest for a new center of government, since the land selected would thus be greatly increased in value.

The First Illinois Legislature petitioned Congress for land grants in the heavily wooded area overlooking the Kaskaskia river and named it Vandalia, for reasons unknown. Woodsmen were hired to drive back the wilderness, the town was platted, and even before lots were sold at auction, log cabins sprouted in the clearings.

By the time that Sidney Breese, clerk for the Secretary of State, brought the Illinois records in a small wagon from Kaskaskia on December 4, 1820, the legislators were amazed at the "dents" made in the "wilderness." The second General Assembly of Illinois convened in a simple State house whose barren rooms, heated by fireplaces, were reportedly "furnished with smoke as well as heat."

Within a year, the capital was flourishing, with a plentiful supply of stump and log buildings. The surrounding woods echoed to a new sound—instrumental band music provided by members of a colony from Hanover, Germany.

By the time of Lincoln's arrival in Vandalia, a new capitol had been erected. This would later serve as the Fayette county court house. It was "a brick building plain of line and in a condition of extreme disrepair, as plain and primitive as a Quaker meeting house" in which the Governor and other officials sat on hard wooden benches to conduct the affairs of state. They had lodgings little better than the other residents of this frontier community where quarrels were settled in public by fist fights held in a place called the Bull Pen, near the edge of town. These combats usually concluded with a celebration in the local tavern.

That the new capitol was already too small to house the legislators

did not seem to Lincoln a very strong argument for keeping the government in Vandalia. The Tenth General Assembly found plaster not yet dry and “chambers uncomfortable if not unsafe tenements.”

A bank investigation brought Lincoln to the capitol, where he made a strong defense which was printed in the local paper, his first speech to be published. “Our friend carries the true Kentucky rifle, and when he fires he seldom fails of sending the shot home,” commented Simeon Francis, of *The Sangamon Journal*.

In 1834, Lincoln was elected a member of the Illinois legislature on the Whig slate, and served until 1841 as one of the Long Nine—so called because they averaged six feet in height and more than 200 pounds in weight. Their grandiose plans for the State were in proportion to their size. Lincoln led the Long Nine in finding the votes to move the State capital from Vandalia to Springfield, nearer the center of Illinois, and the passage of the bill he introduced was a personal triumph for him. At the ensuing celebration, in Ebenezer Capps’ tavern, the 110 legislators are reported to have consumed 81 bottles of champagne!

The regular session of the Eleventh General Assembly—from December, 1838 to March, 1839, was the last held in the capital carved out of the wilderness two decades earlier. In June, Governor Carlin proclaimed that, as of July 4, Springfield would become the Capital of Illinois. State officials moved north without delay. Wagons loaded with furniture and public papers deluged the narrow roads, and Vandalia was reduced to the status of the Fayette county seat. Lincoln, and other members of the Long Nine, went northwards too.

It must have been a cold spring that year, for one night the soft mud turned hard in an hour and a man, riding to Springfield, froze in his saddle. He had to be carried, saddle and all, into a house to be thawed out.

Abraham Lincoln rode into Springfield in March, 1837, on a borrowed horse, with seven dollars cash in his pockets and more than a thousand dollars in debts. He arranged to take his meals with William J. Butler, who told him not to worry about the board bill, and he hung out a shingle with John T. Stuart as his partner in law.

About this time a contemporary described Lincoln: “he was awk-



**SANGAMON COUNTY COURT HOUSE—Springfield—formerly the State Capital building—now a Lincoln Shrine and Museum. The entire building was raised eleven feet at the turn of the Century, and a lower story added. The above photo shows the building before this was added.**

ward, homely and badly dressed . . . caring less for his appearance than any other respectable lawyer in the State. He wore a rusty old hat, his pantaloons were too short and his vest and coat too loose. His features were rugged, his hair coarse and rebellious.”

Springfield was, in 1837, the big town of Sangamon county, its 1500 inhabitants selling to the county’s 18,000 most of their supplies—grain, pork, beef and produce as well as tools. It had stores, churches, schools, banks, newspapers, government offices, law courts, taverns and saloons. It was a city claiming that it had dispelled the wilderness.

The farm women who came to town wore shoes where they used to go barefoot; the men had changed from mocassins to rawhide boots and shoes. Farmers no longer spent time killing deer, tanning the hide and making leather breeches to tie at the ankles. It was cheaper and easier to raise corn and sell it to buy pantaloons which had come from Massachusetts via the Ohio or Mississippi or the Great Lakes. Stores

advertised “velvets, silks, satin and Marseilles vestings; fine calf boots; seal and morocco pumps for gentlemen;” and for the ladies: “lace veils, Thibet shawls, fine prunella shoes.”

Carriages held men in top boots and ruffled shirts, and women in silks and satins. The people were mostly from Kentucky, coming by horse, wagon and boat across the country not yet cleared of wolves, wildcats and horse thieves. There were in Sangamon county 78 freed negroes; 20 registered indentured servants; and six slaves.

The center of the town was a public square, with the court house, jail, stores, churches and bank lining its borders. The streets and sidewalks were of black Illinois soil, with sticks and stones at the crossings.

The Sangamon county court house was on the lower floor of a two-story building. Upstairs one could find the law office of a new firm—Stuart & Lincoln—in a little room with a few loose boards for bookshelves, an old wood burning stove, a table, chair, bench, buffalo robe, and a small bed. Since his partner was running for Congress, Lincoln handled all the cases, dividing the fees equally with Stuart.

The young lawyer could look out of his office window onto the main street and the square, always busy with a motley throng of passersby—landowners, merchants, squatters, farmers, housewives, washerwomen, the town drunk being dragged towards the jail by the constable. There were French Canadians, Pennsylvania Dutch, Irish, Germans, Kentuckians, Virginians and Yankees to be seen, all going somewhere or coming into town to stay. Below his window creaked farm wagons laden with corn, wheat or potatoes. Drove of hogs wallowed past through the mud. And there were horses of every breed and color, as well as the men who rode or drove them.

In a letter to Levi Davis of Vandalia, Lincoln wrote: “We have generally in this country, Peace, Health and Plenty, and no News.”

The first State capital in Springfield, later used as the Sangamon county court house, was bought back by the State under Governor Kerner’s regime and ultimately will be turned into a Lincoln shrine. It was there that Lincoln made his famous “A House Divided” speech in 1858, a speech so plain that, as Carl Sandburg wrote: “Two farmers fixing a fence on a rainy morning could talk it over in all its

ins and outs . . . its words as fresh, beautiful and terrible as Donati's silver comet with its tail of fire that had been recently flashed across the sky."

According to Sandburg, "When committees met him and escorted him to the hall or court house or grove where the steer was over the fire for a barbecue, Lincoln was easy to pick out as the speaker of the day. At the end of his long body and head was a long stovepipe hat that made him look longer; a lengthy linen duster that made him look lengthier. With a little satchel in one hand, a faded brownish-green umbrella in the other, he looked as though he came from somewhere and was going somewhere."

## CHAPTER VIII

### “WHERE THERE’S A WILL”

According to tradition, Louis Joliet and Pere Marquette were the first white men to explore the Will county region in which the city of Joliet is now located. The two Frenchmen camped on a mound just south of Rockdale in 1673, but it was Saint Cosme', another French explorer journeying through the territory, who gave it the name of Mound Juliet. The settlement was greatly hindered by fierce Indian wars. In his book "Forty Years Ago," George H. Woodruff states that the assassination of Pontiac, the great Ottawa chief, during a meeting for peace negotiations, led to bitter savage reprisals and the ultimate annihilation of the Illinois tribe on Starved Rock.

Later the scene of battle shifted to the vicinity of Aurora, and Mound Juliet was occupied by the Potowatomies, a friendly and peace loving tribe. The first account of a permanent white settlement in the area was recorded by W. R. Rice, who reached Hickory Creek in 1829. At that time, he noted, a Mr. Brown and Col. Sayre were living near what is now Fourth Avenue, while a Mr. Friend occupied an Indian shanty nearby.

Other pioneers moved in, dividing the land into lots, laying out streets and boundaries. By 1834 there were 50 white people in the region, and within three years the number had risen to 600. The village was then known as Juliet, in honor of the daughter of James B. Campbell who owned several acres of land.

W. W. Stevens, in "Past and Present of Will County, Illinois," relates that a fort was erected in 1832 as a means of defense against the Indians. Because of its poor and impractical construction, it was called Fort Nonsense and, in 1835, torn down to make room for private dwellings.

The first settlers subsisted mainly on roast corn, and this remains the number one crop of this farming area. Grain trade and stone quarrying were the major industries of the town which was known as Stone City at one time, with eight quarries in operation. Its first newspaper, the

*Juliet Courier*, made its debut on April 20, 1839, printed on the third floor of the Merchants Row building erected by Martin Demmond in 1835 and still standing.

One of the earliest commercial structures in Juliet was constructed on the northwest corner of Exchange and Bluff streets to house a department store whose proprietor devised a novel method of attracting business. He served Black Strap, a potent alcoholic beverage, to all customers!

Will county, until then a part of Cook, was organized in January, 1836, and the Board of Commissioners authorized the immediate building of a court house on the village square of what had been the original town plat of Juliet. The limehouse structure, with jail cells and storage rooms in the basement, cost \$2,700.00. Will county was already living up to its Motto: "Where There's a Will."

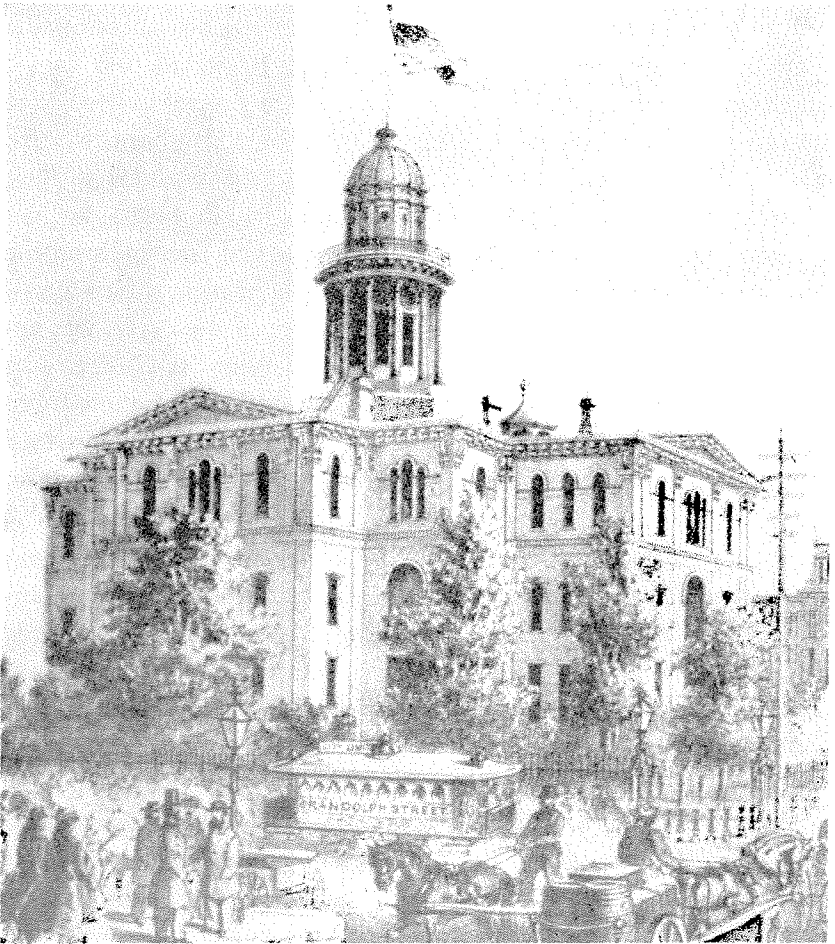
In 1845 the name Juliet was officially changed to Joliet, at the suggestion of President Martin Van Buren. A second court house was erected in 1846, the county having already outgrown the first, and additional space for courtrooms and seating for interested onlookers during trials was provided. This was completed in 1848, crowned with a cupola set with a large clock that proved useful to local citizens, few of whom carried time pieces. The present court house, whose cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1884, also boasts a cupola with a four-faced clock visible from almost any vantage point in Joliet.

Will County likes to talk in "firsts." The Great Sauk Trail cut a first swathe across what had been wilderness. The first concrete road—eight feet wide and a mile long—was laid four miles east of Joliet. Telephone service was first started in 1880, with 60 subscribers, and electricity was first introduced there in 1879. The court house contains a record of claims bought in 1835 by Martin Demmond, a key figure in the growth of the community, from James McKee, who claimed the land in 1820. There, too, one finds portraits of Marquette, Joliet, LaSalle, Dr. Conrad Will (for whom the County was named) and the Pioneer settler, Martin Demmond.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE GARDEN CITY

No trace remains of the 1853 Cook County court house whose cupola dominated the downtown area of Chicago until it was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1871. The present County building,



**CHICAGO COURT HOUSE—Cook County—1865.** The combined court house and city hall, erected in 1853 at a cost of \$110,000 stood at the corner of LaSalle and Randolph Streets. It was a scene of activity until levelled by the Fire of 1871. Lincoln's body lay in state here after his assassination in 1865. Present court house built in 1907.

enveloped in a gray cloud of grime, has none of the stately quality that made its predecessor a landmark for the entire city.

Chicago was known, in the mid-19th century, as the Garden City because of the spacious greenery skirting private residences and public buildings alike, and pictures of the early court house show it set in the midst of lawns and trees, at the corner of LaSalle and Randolph streets, with horsedrawn streetcars, surreys and broughams swirling past in a ceaseless clatter of high stepping hoofs.

Cook county has had four courthouses in all, not counting the "powder room" or magazine at Fort Dearborn, nor pioneer cabins where the affairs of the embryo county were at first conducted. The first white families huddled in the shadow of Fort Dearborn realized, in 1823, that the long arm of civic authority had extended to their cabin doors when officials of Fulton county, within whose confines the unorganized settlement existed, levied a tax of four mills on the dollar on all personal property—exempting only household furniture—as provided by law. Ambert C. Ranson, Justice of the Peace, was appointed Collector for the Fort Dearborn Settlement (as Chicago was called at that time) and he managed to enrich the Fulton County treasury by the vast sum of \$11.42. This, in simple mathematics, assessed the total valuation of personal property in Chicago at that date at \$2,284.

When Peoria County was organized two years later, Chicago—a name by then applied either to the river or to the cluster of cabins along its marshy banks—came within its jurisdiction. Having at long last obtained a coveted land grant, the Illinois and Michigan Canal Commissioners were authorized to lay out towns in certain sections allotted to them, and Chicago was surveyed and a plat published on August 4, 1830, by James Thompson, a canal surveyor. This date marks the real birthday of Chicago and the demise of the Fort Dearborn settlement. In the following year the young "city" received the added distinction of being designated the seat of justice for the newly established County of Cook.

The Act passed by the General Assembly and approved on January 15, 1831, also directed that an election be held on the first Monday in March of that year for the offices of Sheriff, Coroner, and three County

Commissioners. It further provided for a ferry service across the river, "Free to inhabitants of the County."

The first official business transacted by the Commissioners was to issue licenses to two Chicago landlords, Elijah Wentworth and Samuel Miller, for a fee of \$7.00 and \$5.00, respectively. About this time the State granted to the County 24 canal lots, the proceeds from the sale of which were to be spent for the construction of public buildings. Sums accrued from the sale of 16 of these lots were used to defray current expenses, and the remaining eight were set aside as a public square, now the site of the present City and County buildings.

According to the records, the first structure to be erected was known as the "Estray Pen," a place in which to pen stray horses. It was put up at a contract price of \$20. The contractor, Mr. Miller, settled for \$12, admitting, as charged by the Commissioners, that he had not done the work properly according to contract. Contractors and the building business have changed considerably since that time!

By the close of 1832 there were few signs of expansion in Chicago, only about a score of permanent residents having been added to the local population but there was, nevertheless, a feeling of optimism about the town's future because of her geographic position and her natural advantages as a Great Lakes port. Inspired by this sense of Coming Events, many pioneers heading westward through Chicago decided to remain there instead, as settlers.

During the summer of 1832, George W. Dole built what may have been the first commercial structure in Chicago, on the corner of South Water and Dearborn streets, and in the fall Philip F. W. Peck began construction on the second one, at South Water and LaSalle. Twenty-two years later (1854), some 12,000 immigrants arrived by railroad within one week, to say nothing of the "movers" in covered wagons that cluttered up the dusty streets, some heading towards far western "homesteads," others content to put down roots in the midwest farmlands.

That year Cyrus H. McCormick, the farm reaper inventor already established in the river front city, decided that it would become the farm machinery center of the world. He sold 1,558 reapers in 1854, and aimed at 3,000 for 1855. A century later, on August 26, 1954,

Alexander Beaubien, great grandson of the Chicago pioneer Mark Beaubien, came down from Waukegan to make a notable contribution to local history by depositing in the archives of the present court house a unique document believed to be the first transfer of real estate in the annals of Chicago. The deed records the sale in 1800 by Jean Baptiste Point Du Sable to Jean Lalime of a frame house, out buildings, furnishings, livestock and farm implements on the north bank of the Chicago river opposite the future site of Fort Dearborn.

John Kinzie, who later acquired the same property, was a witness to the transaction. DuSable also sold his trading post, and moved to Peoria. The original deed, written in French, was recorded in Detroit, then the seat of a territory which included the tiny settlement at the mouth of the river.

This historic document became the 16th million to be filed in the Cook County records office since the present numbering system was inaugurated in 1874. Mr. Paul M. Angle, Director of the Chicago Historical Society, was present at the ceremony in 1954 and received for his files a photostatic copy of the original bill of sale.

Lalime enlarged DuSable's house and occupied it until 1804 when John Kinzie, fur trader and silversmith, bought the property and moved his family to Chicago from Niles, Michigan, becoming the first American born white settler to establish residence there. There is evidence that he formed a working agreement with the American Fur Company, founded by John Jacob Astor, obtaining from that concern such items as knives, guns, ammunition, blankets, trinkets and whiskey to trade with the Indians for their beaver and other furs.

In 1832 the capture of Blackhawk and his warriors wiped out forever the danger of Indian attack, making the settlement safe at last. Fort Dearborn closed its doors officially on December 29, 1836. Cook County had been born; a city founded; and the great era of fur trading brought to a close.

## CHAPTER X

### THE MILITARY TRACT

The first permanent home of white settlers in the Knox County area was a log cabin constructed by two brothers, Daniel and Alexander Robertson, who came up from Kentucky in 1828. Two years later, there were enough residents to form a county and a petition presented to Judge Richard M. Young of Lewistown, Fulton County was granted on June 10, 1830.

The new county was named for Gen. Henry Knox (1750-1806) in accordance with a custom of giving the names of Revolutionary War heroes to counties within an area called the Military tract. This territory, lying between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers and south of a specified East-West line, was set aside after the war as a soldier's bonus, with veterans receiving land grants within its boundaries.

Judge Young appointed Charles Hanaford, Briggs Pennington and Philip Hash as commissioners to proceed with the election of county officials. The election, for which judges and clerks were allowed 75 cents a day for their services, was held in the log cabin of John B. Gum in Henderson Township on July 3, 1830.

Gum became Treasurer, and his cabin was designated as the first seat of justice in the county. The commissioners platted the village of Henderson, changed its name to Knoxville in 1831, and began construction on a log court house 28 feet long and 21 feet wide at a cost of \$395.43.

When the community outgrew this edifice and built a new one, the old court house was sold to Alvah Wheeler for \$89.50. A third was erected in 1840, serving as the county seat until 1873, when all records were transferred to Galesburg and the Knoxville court house became a meeting place for the city council.

It continues to be used in that capacity, and also as a museum, regarded by many as the most handsome public building in the State because of its classic Greek Revival style. Designed by the Architect John Mandeville when he was only 23 years of age, it stands today as

a symbol of a way of life in America at a time when the White Man's civilization had begun to take form in the midwest.

The decade preceding the erection of the 1840 court house had been an eventful one in Illinois history. The Indian troubles ended with a final war dance by the Potawatomies and the last stand of Blackhawk's warriors. In that era, a plow that would "break the prairie" was hammered out of a saw blade in Grand Detour, and the reaper and threshing machine were devised.

There were but 2,800 miles of railroad tracks in the country; the Morse code had yet to be invented; and steam navigation across the Atlantic had recently become a reality. Whittier, Longfellow, Poe, Hawthorne and Emerson graced the literary world. There was no national debt. In fact, a surplus of \$37 million was divided between the States in 1836! However, a panic the following year put a permanent end to surpluses in the National Treasury.

In 1840 the population of the State was less than half a million—that of the nation stood at 17 million. The Village of Chicago had been incorporated a few years before. On the national scene, William Henry Harrison—the first Territorial Governor when Illinois was part of the Indiana Territory in 1800—was elected President of the United States. He survived only one month in office, to be succeeded by John Tyler.

Of greater interest in the State was the rise of two budding politicians. One, an immigrant from Vermont named Stephen A. Douglas, was 27 years old when the Knoxville court house was built. He had already served as Secretary of State for Illinois and was to become a member of the State Supreme Court the following year.

The second star soon to rise in the political sky was a product of the frontier, one Abraham Lincoln, at 31 twice a member of the State Assembly from New Salem and twice from Springfield; engaged to marry Mary Todd; and beginning to cast an eye on the scene of national politics.

This, in short, was the period in which the court house came into being and played its part in history as the setting for many noted legal battles. Here, in 1841, Stephen A. Douglas held circuit court and, in

1854, debated President Blanchard of Knox college on the question of extending slavery into the new States.

John Mandeville, a young architect, arrived in Knoxville in 1836 to draw up plans for the court house. He rented the log cabin of John Gum for \$8 a month and, judging by entries in his 1836-37 Journal did not consider it much of a bargain.

"It is totally void of any convenience, on the outside, and only one room partly finished within," he wrote. "Yet, if it were worse, we would be compelled to put up with it as it is the only tenement in town which is to let.

"Knoxville is considered the prettiest inland town in the Bounty tract and lies about in the center, being 45 miles from the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. It contains at present, I should say, about 1,000 inhabitants. It has a Methodist Society, Presbyterian Congregation, eleven stores, three physicians, and two lawyers but, these last I am compelled to say, are a disgrace to the profession. The post office is held by John Sanburn, who is also the county clerk."

Mandeville described the journey to Knoxville: "Left the old place where I have been residing ever since I came out to this country and started for Knoxville, which is the county seat of Knox County, Illinois. We, that is my wife and myself, were taken out by my father-in-law. We left home about six o'clock in the morning and went along very smoothly until we had nearly reached Farmington, a small town about 24 miles from Peoria.

"There we were so unfortunate as to get stuck. The wheels went down in mud to within six inches of the hub. We obtained three yoke of oxen from a gentleman who lived near of the name of Wilson and fastened them together with a team of horses to the tongue, but they were unable to start it. After making several attempts at drawing the wagon out forwards, we hitched the cattle to the back of it and drew it out. This detained us about an hour, when we proceeded on our journey. Arrived at Knoxville about seven o'clock."

"One great difficulty about the town is that the ground is too wet to have a cellar deeper than three or four feet, and many places not that, but there is an addition to the town laid off by George Charles which is on much higher ground and commands a much greater prospect of in

a few years being occupied by the majority of dwellings. There you may have a cellar six or seven feet deep and to a person who lives in a country like this, the cellar is the best part of the house.

"It is on this eminence that I am now building me a house. It is sixteen feet front and fourteen feet deep. It is small but I consider it will be as much room as my wife and I will want for some time and then I hope that materials will be lower. The lot on which I am building I received as a present. It is one of the prettiest in town."

One brief entry in Mandeville's Journal reads: "Rained all day so I stayed home and worked on plans for the court house which I am drawing up for those Knoxvilleians." On another page, the architect noted that veal was quite a rarity in those parts but he had managed to get five pounds of it, paying only five cents a pound which he considered very reasonable.

A major problem in the Knoxville area in the 19th century must have been MUD, judging by entries in the Mandeville Journal and by the heroic size of the ancient bootscraper still to be seen outside the portico of the court house.

Restoration of the court house has been carefully carried out, even to the pine mantels painted over many times but now stripped back to the natural beauty of their wood. Heating was by fireplace alone, at first, but stoves were soon added. Most of the woodwork is the original, and there remains a quantity of the early handrolled glass in many windows.

The Greek portico, with its fluted Doric columns, still shares a dignified harmony with the twin iron staircases leading to a second story balcony which was, no doubt, dear to the hearts of the 19th century orators since no highway then passed before the door, as it does today, and the surrounding lawn provided a natural arena for spellbound listeners.

Next door stands the Hall of Records, dating back to 1854 and now used as the Knoxville Public Library. The court house museum contains a rather glum looking portrait of John Gum, its pioneer settler, and likenesses of Gen. Henry Knox (a fine florid figure in his Revolutionary uniform) and his great and good friend, Gen. George Washington.

Henry Knox, for whom the town of Knoxville was named, first appears in history as an ardent Bostonian Whig who designed the early defense of Roxbury, as a civilian, but was installed by General Washington as Chief of Artillery with the rank of colonel after he succeeded in bringing back from Ticonderoga the cannon captured by Ethan Allen. He advanced rapidly in the Continental Army, serving with distinction in many battles. His well worn artillery commanded the field at Yorktown and, after the surrender of Cornwallis, he was promoted to the rank of Major General.

It was Knox who first held out his hand when Washington bade farewell to his troops at Fraunce's tavern in New York City, but Washington—overcome by emotion—threw his arms around his old Artillery Chief. An oil painting commemorates this scene.

President George Washington chose Knox as his Secretary of War after the organization of the federal government.

The cannon he rescued from Fort Ticonderoga was lost through the ice of the Mohawk river west of Waterford, N. Y. It was found in 1853 and taken to Cohoes, N. Y. where it became involved in a dispute between rival political factions and was thrown back into the river by disgruntled participants in the quarrel.

Left there until 1907, the unfortunate cannon was again rescued from a watery grave and given to a museum in Cohoes, N. Y. In a burst of misguided patriotic zeal during World War II, the gun was turned in for scrap. Somehow escaping the melting pot, it was shipped from junk yard to junk yard until finally being acquired by the Fort Ticonderoga museum, in exchange for some guns of World War I vintage. A photograph of this peripatetic artillery piece may be seen in the Knoxville court house museum.

## CHAPTER XI

### LOG CITY SAGA

An historic marker stands on the site of a long vanished Illinois hamlet called Log City, whose brief life span lasted only from 1836 until 1839 but served a purpose in providing temporary housing for a group of adventurous pioneers. The plaque reads:

"Founders of Knox College moved from New York State to the grove near this marker, living temporarily in log cabins while building their homes where Galesburg now stands. In Conger's cabin, just west of here, one of Knox's first teachers, Nehemiah Losey, taught the youth of the settlement."

In the summer of 1836 a band of settlers from Oneida county, N. Y., arrived in Illinois as the advance guard of a larger company intent on founding a college and town on the Midwest prairies. They were led by the Rev. George Washington Gale. Before their arrival funds had been subscribed, explorers sent out to find a suitable site, and 20 sections of government land in Knox county bought for \$1.25 an acre. This was sold to homesteaders for \$5.00 an acre, with the profits set aside to endow the new college.

All efforts were bent to speed the construction of Galesburg, and as fast as the dwellings became available, the settlers moved into them. When Log City had served its purpose, it was sold to Peter Grosscup, owner of a brickyard, for \$1,000. He is said to have paid for his purchase with bricks that went into a Knox College campus building called East Bricks. Old Main, where the issues of slavery were debated between Lincoln and Douglas, is now a National Historic landmark. It was built in 1837 by courageous anti-slavery men, most of whom lived long enough to hear Lincoln proclaim his belief in freedom for all human beings.

Newspapers reported the Lincoln-Douglas debates in full detail, to a waiting nation. On his way from Peoria, Lincoln stopped at Knoxville and was met at the depot by a large delegation that escorted him to Hebard House. Knoxville, ever jealous of Galesburg's growing size

and prestige, was disposed to make the most of her small part in the proceedings.

The next morning all of Knoxville escorted Lincoln to the Galesburg city limits in a mile long parade of carriages, wagon floats and horseback riders.

Lincoln got out of his carriage to shake hands with an old friend from Sangamon County, Isaac Guliher, while the whole procession came to a halt and waited. Meanwhile, one of the Galesburg floats coming to meet the Knoxville contingent and, incidentally, advertise the rival town's business, reached the spot. The float contained a display of the Brown Corn Planter works as well as a steam engine raucously tooting its whistle and manned by the entire working force of the Brown factory.

When Lincoln came away from Guliher's door he found the men lined up, cheering. He took time to shake each one by the hand. According to reports of this gala "progress," Lincoln left his carriage at intervals to visit informally with the people.

Some 20,000 people gathered on the Knox college campus that afternoon, October 7, 1858, to hear the debate between the two rival candidates for the U. S. Senate—a race that was followed with close attention because the political and moral issues at stake were felt deeply by all America.

"There is only one path to peace . . . allowing each State to decide for itself . . ." trumpeted Douglas.

". . . He is blowing out the moral lights around us, when he contends that whoever wants slaves has a right to hold them," cried Lincoln.

On a later occasion, Senator Douglas debated the issue of slavery with the President of Knox College, Jonathan Blanchard, before a large and excited crowd in the Knoxville court house. Clark E. Carr, a Knox student, came with his friends to support their president. He gave an eyewitness account of the affair in his book, "The Illini."

"I shall never forget Senator Douglas' appearance as he emerged through an open window of the building upon the platform," he wrote. "Immaculately dressed in the latest Washington style . . . bold, defiant, confident, he seemed the personification of strength and power.

"Blanchard was a sound scholar, a great preacher, and conspicuous

as an extreme abolitionist. It was a great debate. To us students it appeared that our champion had simply 'mopped up the earth' with his adversary."

Clark Carr's tall, Victorian mansion in Galesburg was the scene, many years later, of the only United States cabinet meeting ever held outside the nation's capital. President McKinley convened an emergency session there during the Spanish-American war crisis, when he was in Galesburg to speak at Knox college and staying with his close friend, Clark Carr, then Minister to Denmark.

Due to its railroad facilities, Galesburg outstripped Knoxville in population by the 1860's and there grew up a popular demand (popular in Galesburg, at any rate) for the removal of the County seat to the more populous city. A long and acrimonious contest ensued, climaxed by the passage of a bill introduced by W. S. Gale of Galesburg, a mem-



**KNOX COUNTY COURT HOUSE—Galesburg—Built in 1840—Original still in use—  
Restored in 1958.**

ber of the legislature, for the transfer. This bill became law, but the issues were not settled until January, 1873, when the Supreme Court of Illinois upheld the contention of Galesburg.

The cornerstone for a court house on the park site near Knox College was laid on June 24, 1885. The building, completed in 1887, is of Berea sandstone in a rather massive, Victorian style of architecture. It contains photographs of all Judges of Knox county from Judge George C. Lanphere (1849) to the present incumbent.

Even before becoming a county seat, Galesburg was busily making history. The town claims many "firsts," including the Ferris wheel (invented by George Gale Ferris, Jr., for the Chicago World's Fair in 1893), and a pioneer power and light company. It was also the home of the first anti-slavery society in the county, and produced the first Republican elected to office (1854).

Galesburg wears still another star in its civic crown—as the birthplace of the venerable poet and Lincoln scholar, Carl Sandburg. Of him Stephen Vincent Benet wrote: "he came to us from the people Lincoln loved because there were so many of them, and through his life, in verse and prose, he has spoken of and for the people. A great American, we have just reason to be proud that he has lived and written in our time."

## CHAPTER XII

### ON THE ROCKS

An Act of the Illinois State Legislature of January 16, 1836, provided for the organization of Winnebago county, including at that time all of Boone and portions of what is now Stephenson. The first elections were held in August of that year. Since neither written nor printed ballots had as yet been introduced into Illinois, voice vote alone was used and a total of 120 votes counted. Simon P. Doty, Thomas B. Talcott and William E. Dunbar were elected commissioners, with Daniel S. Haight chosen to be the sheriff; Daniel H. Whitney, the recorder; Eliphalet Gregory, the coroner; and D. A. Spaulding, the surveyor.

The first session of the commissioners convened in Daniel Haight's home, with the most important official business being the establishment of ferries with toll rates set as follows:

For each carriage, wagon or cart drawn by two horses, oxen, or mules,  $62\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ ; for the same drawn by one horse,  $37\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ ; for each additional horse,  $12\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ ; for man and horse,  $25\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ ; for hogs, sheep and goats, per score,  $50\text{¢}$ ; and for each foot man,  $6\frac{1}{4}\text{¢}$ .

The commissioners also established hotel rates for licensed inns: for victualing, per meal,  $37\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ ; lodging per night,  $12\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ ; oats per bushel, \$1.25; and liquor per glass,  $6\frac{1}{4}\text{¢}$ . It cost a man more to feed his horse than his wife or himself, it seems, in those "good old days."

The first tax levy in Winnebago county for 1837 totaled  $\$562.59\frac{1}{2}$ , of which \$464.00 was collected. From 1838 until 1844, the tax revenue ranged between \$237.00 and \$640.00 per year. Haight's home served as the first circuit court, which met on October 6, 1837. Two years before, every living soul in the county could have been comfortably seated inside a single 12 x 14 cabin. Ten years later, settlements had reached into all corners of the territory and the wild prairie was subdued into farmland.

Bitter rivalry lasted for years between residents of East and West Rockford for the honor of having the county court house on their side of the Rock River. In 1839 the County Commissioners selected the

public square on the east side of the river, and a large quantity of building materials was delivered to the site, but construction was delayed due to lack of funds.

A structure to house the county offices was erected in 1841, and also a twelve foot square log jail. In April, 1843, six men of East Rockford offered to build a court house and jail for \$4,000. West Rockford citizens countered this with a similar proposition, promising to finish the work within the year 1844. This offer was accepted on condition that the buildings would be worth not less than \$6,000 and that the block be deeded to the county.

This closed a controversy of seven years' duration. Jail and court house were completed on schedule, without the outlay of a dollar by the county. The court house was a one-story structure with Doric columns and contained a court room that could accommodate 300 persons. Grand as it seemed, it had to give way before increasing demands of business and prestige. When on February 22, 1873, Freeport dedicated a new court house surpassing "in size and elegance all other buildings west of Detroit and north of St. Louis," the civic pride of Rockford was struck a serious blow.

"Shall Rockford take a back seat to Freeport?" demanded the citizenry in the streets and in local government. It was an era of intense rivalry, and Rockford residents could not bear to have Freeport outshine them. Thus it came about that in February, 1875, a county board committee was named to determine the type of court house suitable for Winnebago. The committee concluded that Rockford should match Freeport, stone by stone, in design, material and workmanship.

"We have unanimously decided that a court house nearly similar to the one in Freeport . . . constructed of like materials both externally and internally, and of the same or nearly the same kind of workmanship would, in our opinion, be such a court house as is required by this county," decreed the committee.

A Chicago architect, Henry L. Gay, assured the board that it could be built for \$104,000. The low bid, however, was \$165,000 submitted by W. D. Richardson of Springfield. Board members dared not think of cheapening their proposed edifice for fear that it would not match Freeport's and the contract was approved on March 8, 1876.

The cornerstone was laid amid great festivities on June 24, 1876. The city was decorated with flags and "every door thrown open to invite guests, and everybody was invited."

On May 11, 1877, while under construction, the court house dome collapsed. As crowds gathered, they found the building in ruins. As it crashed, the dome had crushed most of the interior, killing seven workmen and injuring many others, two of whom died soon after. This disaster still ranks as the greatest in Rockford's history.

Not to be thwarted in their determination to have a court house, the County commissioners immediately authorized the work of rebuilding. Instead of costing \$104,000 as originally hoped, the structure ultimately bore a \$211,000 price tag. For its day, the court house was considered a model of architectural beauty, in a style euphemistically known as "French Venetian with American treatment." The 30 x 30 dome rose 119 feet above the ground. When the building was completed in 1878, it was far too large for the business needs of the county, but by 1916 the space seemed insufficient. An addition was therefore authorized and carried out.

Only one man ever lived in Winnebago county as a slave. He was Lewis Kent, sold to Germanicus Kent in 1829 in Alabama for \$450.00 cash. When Mr. Kent moved north, he brought along the slave who obtained his freedom in 1839 when his owner executed and placed in his hands a deed of manumission. This document, later filed for record in the county court, officially proclaimed Lewis Kent to be a free man. A transcript in the clerk's office remains as the sole evidence that slavery once existed in Rockford. Lewis Kent lived until 1877, working his own land as a gardener.

The Rockford archives also contain the first recorded conveyance of land in Winnebago county, executed on August 25, 1835, in which Catherine Myott, a half-breed Indian woman, conveyed 627 acres of land to Nicholas Boilvin, at one time a government agent for the Winnebago Indians.

A pamphlet printed upon the occasion of Rockford's Centennial celebration in 1944 urged visitors and local citizens:

"In your visit to the court house on this centennial occasion, make it your plan to see every office. Pay your respects to the county

officers and other employees who perform the duties entrusted to them by you. County and township government are the essence of home rule and control. Preserve them; strengthen them!”

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE COSTLIEST COURT HOUSE

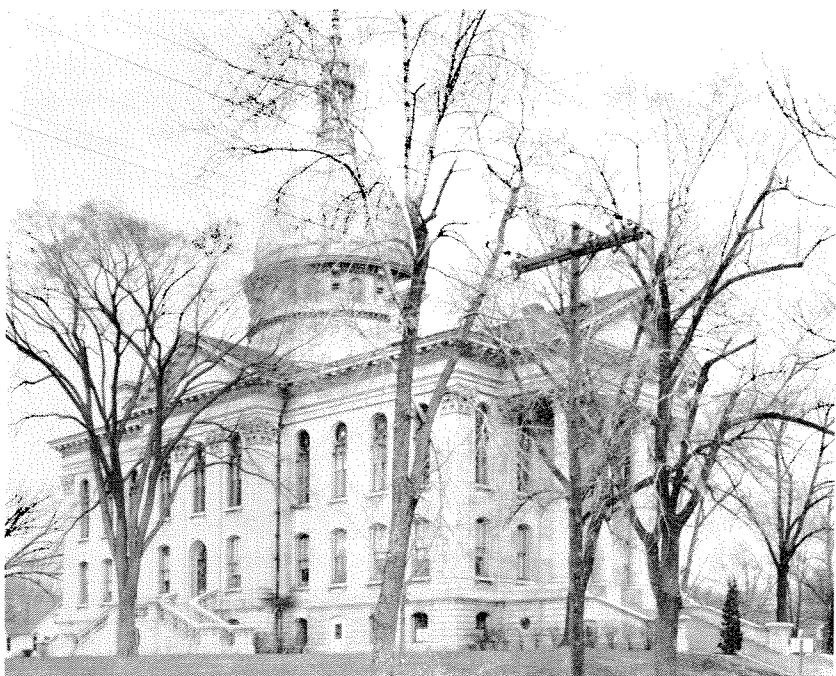
Carlinsville, the seat of justice for Macoupin county, has in all likelihood the most expensive court house in Illinois. It cost the grandiose sum of \$1,380,500.00 and was not fully paid for until 40 years after its completion. When the cornerstone was laid in 1867 for this building, more pretentious than most State capitols, Macoupin county was not even under township organization. The sheriff doubled as tax collector; the Civil War had ended but two years previously; and the country west of the Mississippi remained largely undeveloped.

There is no official record of the reasons for putting up such a regal edifice, practically in the wilderness, but in the early 1860's there was talk of dividing Macoupin county and taking away the seat from Carlinsville. Quite possibly the City fathers concluded that once their costly project was begun, no one could stop the plan or divide up the county.

Macoupin had already had two court houses. The first one, of logs, cost \$128.66 to build in 1830. The second, a brick building with a belfry on top, cost \$15,000, plus an additional \$230.00 for a fence to surround it. Macoupin was still economy minded at the time (1836) as evidenced by an order changing the window sills from stone to walnut at a saving to the county of \$175.00.

Lincoln tried a chancery case there, and the circuit court office has on file a court order in his handwriting. When the brick court house was demolished in 1869, its bell, which had been rung by an officer or citizen whenever a court was called to session as notification that the mill of justice was about to grind, was bought by St. Paul's Episcopal church.

In 1867 the County commissioners decreed that the building of the new court house was to be financed by a tax of 50 cents on each \$100.00 worth of property, with the cost not to exceed \$175,000. The Illinois legislature authorized the county to borrow further sums. Later, bonds were issued. However, the costs continued to rise and the grand



**MACOUPIN COUNTY COURT HOUSE—Carlinville—The costliest court house built in 1867—in appearance ranks with many State Capitals.**

total grew and grew. The residents of Macoupin county began to protest, meetings were held, and letters appeared in the newspapers denouncing the tax. Litigation followed litigation.

Despite this, work continued and the court house was officially completed in 1870. A county jail was built at the same time, across the street, with the ingenious feature of having each stone in its construction hollowed out and stuffed, like an olive, with a cannon ball to prevent any single stone being removed by a prisoner intent on escape. So far as the record show, the cannon ball method was effective.

General John M. Palmer, one-time Senator, later Governor of the State, served as attorney for the county commissioners during the court house building troubles. He took the stand that the court house could not be left unfinished, and therefore the cost must somehow be borne. A native of Kentucky, General Palmer came to Macoupin county in 1839. He was admitted to the bar with Stephen A. Douglas as one of his sponsors. A man of integrity, and of character above reproach, he

became a friend and political co-worker of Lincoln's, equally opposed to slavery. Palmer appeared on the platform when Lincoln spoke in Carlinville on August 31, 1858. He organized the 14th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, rose to the rank of Brigadier General in the Civil War, and later became a great criminal lawyer. His tombstone bears the words: "Lawyer: Soldier: Statesman."

The Carlinville court house storm centered around Judge Thaddeus L. Loomis and County Clerk George H. Holliday. Loomis, known as the "Iron Chancellor," was aggressive, fearless, able, and much vilified although few believed he secured any personal gain from the building of the court house. He constructed the Loomis Hotel in 1869 and lived on until 1910.

George Holliday, a man of culture and superior education, was a connoisseur of books and had one of the finest libraries in the west. At one time he was the owner of a Carlinville newspaper. One night in 1870, Holliday boarded a Chicago & Alton train and was never seen again. Indicted in absentia for his part in the court house scandal, he could never be found and brought to trial. A man thought to be George Holliday was arrested in the 1880's but not identified.

John Moran was another individual connected with Carlinville's financial problems. An Irishman, he came to Macoupin county in 1863 and practiced law there for 50 years. He refused to pay taxes, so his property was offered at delinquent sales quite frequently. Each time, Moran went to court and managed to block the sale.

He was well informed, if eccentric in his views, and could talk on any subject with more force than eloquence. Moran declared there was no such thing as gravity, taking pride in his assertion that he was the first man to "prove" the earth stands still. His special aversions were the court house tax, vested interests, office holders, and politicians. He published a book called "Searching the Record" denouncing the expenditure of funds for the court house and contending its site was illegal since the County commissioners, in selecting it, ignored the 1829 law specifying that the seat of justice should be erected on the public square.

For forty years debt hung over Macoupin county like a financial pall. Taxpayers denounced it, prospective land buyers shuddered, say-

ing: "The debt is a burden detrimental to residents of 'the great State' of Macoupin!"

In 1910, the last mortgage bond was burned by Judge Charles S. Deneen as the climax to a two-day celebration. This Jubilee featured an automobile parade in which prizes were awarded for the best decorated vehicles, and there was much oratory spouted in praise of the court house—"an edifice of magnificent proportions. Note the beautiful symmetry of its Roman Corinthian columns!" Made more beautiful, no doubt, by the lifting of the shroud of debt from Carlinville.

## GRANT'S GALENA

"In April, 1860," to quote from Hamlin Garland's "Life of Grant," "men stood on the levee watching the steamer *Itasca* nose her way up the tortuous current of the Galena river. As she swung up to the wharf, attention was attracted to a passenger on deck wearing a blue cape overcoat. As the boat struck the landing this man rose and gathered a number of chairs together, evidently part of his household furniture.

"Who is that?" asked one man of a friend on the river bank.

"That is Capt. Grant, Jesse Grant's eldest son. He was in the Mexican War—he is moving here from St. Louis" was the reply.

"Capt. Grant took a couple of chairs in each hand and walked ashore with them. His wife, a small, alert woman, followed him with her little flock of children—Frederick, Ulysses, Jesse and Nellie. The carrying of chairs ashore signified that Ulysses Simpson Grant had become a resident of Galena."

There was no way of knowing, then, that Grant would become Galena's most famous citizen and that eventually the whole town would be a memorial to him. The Grants rented an unpretentious, hilltop house on a street appropriately called High, reached by a steep flight of wooden steps. Within a few days, Grant was established in his father's leather store at 120 Main Street, quietly and faithfully performing his duties as a clerk for a salary of \$600.00 a year.

Great changes were brewing, however. Four days after the firing on Fort Sumter launched the Civil War on April 12, 1861, a mass meeting was held in Galena, in the Jo Daviess county court house. Owing to his West Point training and military experience, Grant presided, although there were some who objected to this, saying that he was "only a clerk in a leather store."

One might question the clairvoyance (or lack of it) around Galena at the time, but never the area's patriotism. Jo Daviess county contributed 2,500 men (or nearly one tenth of its population) to the Union cause and produced a grand total of nine generals for the

armed forces. Grant was given command of the 21st Illinois Volunteers a few months after his re-enlistment, and his rise was a rapid one.

Fame came like a blinding light to the once quiet Indian retreat, perched high on bluffs in the northwest corner of Illinois and chiefly noted, until the Civil War, for the lead mines with which the area abounded. The discovery of lead had brought wealth, greed, hatred and prominence. Grant added military and political renown.

The stone buildings, steep streets, and crumbling tombstones stand today as monuments to the past. Galena cherishes its 19th century, General Grant period grandeur. One weekend each autumn, certain of its ponderous old houses, commanding because of their hill crest eminence, are open to the public. Then hundreds of strangers (and some local citizens too) tramp through parlors and bedrooms furnished in dark oak or mahogany as befits their Victorian heritage, with horsehair sofas, antimaccassars, flowers "sous cloche" and gold framed portraits of Grandmother and Grandfather.

Galena can, however, look much further back into history than the General Grant epoch. It is the dowager queen of northern Illinois settlements and its First Presbyterian church (1832) is the oldest church building still in use in the northwest territory.

Indians found lead in the region tucked away in the hills bordering the Mississippi, as did a few French explorers, around 1700, but the first record of any white settlers known to have lived there did not occur until 1820.

Mining privileges on a royalty basis were granted in 1823, with a smelting furnace being erected in that year. Soon American settlers moved in, a trading post was established, and the hamlet became known as Frederick's Point. Within three years the population had increased to 150, a post office was built, and a weekly mail service instituted from Vandalia, the capital of the State.

Already the big river boats were calling there, to take on cargoes of lead in exchange for other products. Pilot's Knob, one of the highest points in Illinois had served as a landmark for river captains ever since that part of the Mississippi was first navigated.

According to early accounts, the best and worst types of people

were drawn to this spot where wealth could be found within easy reach. There was little respect for God—only for the riches from the earth that brought power and created greed. These were held in high esteem. Might was right and the quickest on the draw won every argument, or so it seems from old chronicles of the region.

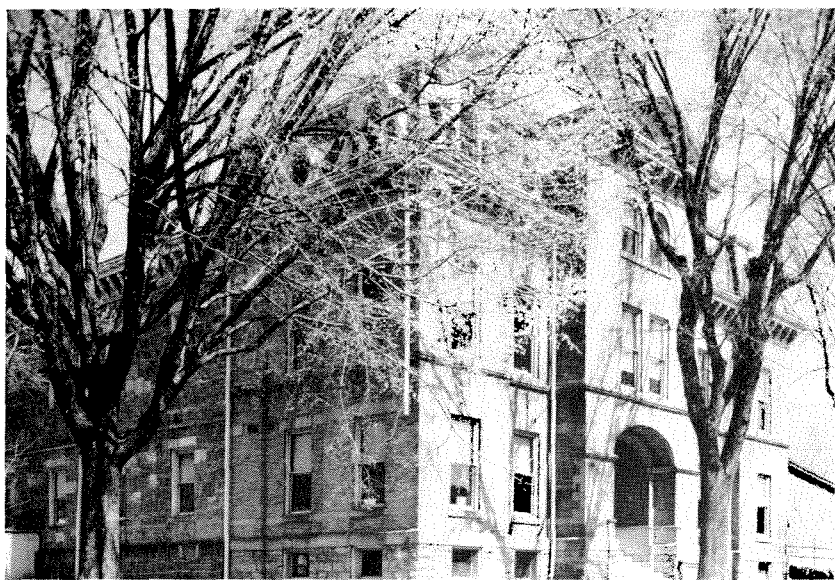
On February 17, 1827, a law was passed by the Illinois State Legislature providing that: "To perpetuate the memory of Colonel Joseph Hamilton Daviess, who fell in the battle of Tippecanoe gallantly charging upon the enemy at the head of his corps, the said county shall be called 'Jo Daviess'."

Frederick's Point was re-christened Galena and named the county seat. When the three duly appointed county officials—Abbott, Swan and Moses—were sworn in on June 5, 1827, they met in a tavern at the corner of Main and Green streets, carrying their legal papers in their hats since they had no office in which to work. The first circuit court convened in a "rough boarded building" where the De Soto Hotel now stands. Presumably all county business was enacted there until March, 1833, when the County Clerk received orders to rent the "large frame structure" belonging to Charles Peck for a term of three years, for use as a court house.

The John Dowling house on Main street was rented in 1837 for \$150.00 and then bought as the first official court house for Joe Daviess County. The building still stands.

About this time, prizes of \$100.00 and \$30.00 respectively were offered for plans for a permanent court house and a jail. Charles H. Rogers won both awards. John H. Slaymaker and Father Charles Samuel Mazzuchelli, a Roman Catholic priest, were chosen as the architects to carry out Rogers' plans in 1839. The Greek Revival structure was heated by stoves and contained fireproof vaults—quite an innovation in their day. Although remodeled from time to time, the court house remains basically the same and its second floor court room, where Grant conducted the patriotic rally at the outbreak of the Civil War, is still in use.

By 1845, Galena was the most important port on the Mississippi, north of St. Louis. As many as eighteen ships often docked at the same time, loading and unloading cargo until the river front resembled



**JO DAVIESS COURT HOUSE—Galena—Original court house still in use. Built in 1839. Present front was built around original court house at later date. Jail is still in court house.**

a busy market place. One writer described the town in that era: "There is mud in the streets knee deep; the log, frame and stone buildings are all huddled together along the waterfront; boats are landing their freight and passengers; everything is lively and noise and good nature abound."

At the close of the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant came home to Galena in the role of a conquering hero. On the railroad journey from Chicago he was given an ovation at every hamlet and whistle stop along the route. Minute guns were fired in salute as the train steamed past, and a crowd of 10,000 persons awaited him at the Galena Station to escort him to the DeSoto Hotel where the Hon. E. B. Washburne delivered an address of welcome.

The town went wild with excitement. Throngs appeared from neighboring states; flags decorated every corner; and in front of the hotel an immense arch spanned the street, bearing the inscription: "Hail to the Chief who in Triumph Advances!"

Another sign, high above Main Street that day, proclaimed: "Gen-

eral, the Sidewalk is Built!" This called attention to a new walk of shiny pine boards ready for the General to use.

During the early part of the war, he had been home on furlough and a friend remarked: "Some day you will be candidate for high civic honors."

Grant replied quietly: "I would like to be Mayor of Galena. Then I might get a sidewalk built from my home to the depot."

The General never became Mayor of Galena, but he got his sidewalk, and much more. Galena's proud citizens honored their fellow townsman with the gift of a home more suited to his new way of life than the one he had left in 1861. This was a fine brick dwelling, on the high-peak of Bouthillier Street, bought from Alexander Jackson who had built it in 1857. The Grants moved in, renewing old friendships during the time that Grant remained a private citizen.

After his two terms as President of the United States, and a trip around the world, General and Mrs. Grant returned once more to Galena and lived there until 1881, when they moved to New York City.

On a celebration of Grant's birthdate, April 27, 1904, his eldest son—General Frederick Dent Grant—with his wife and distinguished visitors, presented the Grant home to the city of Galena, in the name of the heirs to his father's estate. It now belongs to the Illinois State Department of Works and Buildings, and the public may visit the handsome house.

## CHAPTER XV

### GREAT SCOTT! . . . AND COMPANY

A small but historic county, called Scott, was carved out of Morgan county in 1839. Its zigzag boundaries, unchanged in all these years, resulted from the efforts of the General Assembly to retain from the parent county the towns of Lynnville and Bethel, with the rich farm lands surrounding them.

As soon as the county lines were drawn, propositions popped up from various communities desirous of becoming the county seat. Winchester, as the most eligible, succeeded in eliminating North Prairie and Manchester, thanks to a liberal offer from its citizens to provide the site and \$5,000 towards the construction of a court house and jail.

This court house served its purpose until a bond issue carried in the general election of 1884 authorizing the sum of \$40,000 with which to erect a new county building. The old one was sold to Winchester for \$2,650 with the understanding that the structure be demolished and the site used for a public park. The present court house was erected in the fall and winter of 1885, a two story brick edifice of early Romanesque architecture with cut stone trim and an attractive clock tower.

The first railroad constructed in Illinois in 1837 extended from Naples, a port on the Illinois River in Scott county, to Jacksonville in present day Morgan county—a distance of 25 miles. It used strap iron rails spiked on wooden stringers, and mules for locomotive power. Naples at that time was the principal city in the area because its location on the river's edge afforded an excellent landing place for settlers who came, by boat, with their few personal belongings to make their homes in Scott county. Now Scott has a population of around 8,500 and consists mainly of fine farm lands.

One of the most beautiful public buildings in Illinois, in the opinion of architectural connoisseurs, is the Appellate Court in Mt. Vernon, serving 34 downstate counties since 1848. The present structure dates back to 1854, with extensive remodelling done twenty years later when



**MOUNT VERNON APPELLATE COURT HOUSE—Marion County—Built in 1857. This historic ante bellum building was formerly the Supreme Court. Here in 1859 Abraham Lincoln won one of his most important cases. The architecture is Greek Revival with Ionic columns on the East side and wrought iron stairways. The law library contains priceless volumes printed in England in the Seventeenth Century.**

the north and south wings were added. The Greek Revival court house has simple classic lines. Two fluted pillars support the front gable adorned with a medallion depicting the scales of justice. Twin wrought iron stairways on the exterior facade lead to the second floor. It took three weeks to bring this double staircase from St. Louis by ox cart, according to local legend.

Inside, the rooms are high ceilinged with arched doorways and wide-beamed woodwork. Originally the place was heated only by huge fireplaces. On the ground floor are three bedrooms with private baths for the use of the Justices when court is in session in Mount Vernon. The court house also contains a fine library of law books, some of them extremely rare and dating back to the 17th century.

For years the myth has persisted that "Mt. Vernon chose the Supreme Court instead of the State University, and picked the wrong one," but the University of Illinois was not established at Urbana until 1867, and the enabling act for the erection of the first court house for the Southern Division of the Illinois Supreme Court at Mt. Vernon had been passed by the General Assembly as far back as 1848.

During a tornado on February 19, 1888, an emergency hospital was

set up in the Mt. Vernon court house under the supervision of Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross. This court house, the pride and joy of Mt. Vernon, has been selected by the Advisory Committee of the Historic American Buildings Survey as possessing exceptional historic and architectural interest, worthy of the most careful preservation for the benefit of future generations. Toward this end, a record of its present appearance and condition has been made and deposited for permanent reference in the Library of Congress.

Perhaps some day another generation may cite a yet unborn court house in Watseka, Iroquois county, for its beauty and historic significance. For few counties can boast of having left to them in a will the tax free endowment for a new court house! This was the unexpected legacy received by Watseka from Katherine Grace Clifton, the shy and retiring heiress who, several years ago, left one third of her five million dollar estate for the purpose of replacing the ancient edifice now serving the county seat. Mrs. Clifton's fortune was derived largely from the progressive policies of her stepfather, Judge C. W. Raymond who enriched his farmlands by scientific agricultural methods far ahead of his time. Mrs. Raymond and Katherine, her daughter, spent much of their time in Europe and the Orient, while the Judge stayed home and tended to his farms. Consequently, Katherine knew little of home life despite two marriages, never learned to cook, and was satisfied in later life with a modest apartment on the outskirts of Watseka.

Upon the death of Judge Raymond, she took over the management of his lands, piloting her own plane over the extensive holdings to check the crops, drainage problems and other details of operating a vast acreage.

The reason most commonly accepted for the \$1,500,000 court house bequest is that Mrs. Clifton felt an obligation to the people of Watseka and Iroquois county, realizing that her wealth came from the land, and that she wanted to subsidize a project that would be for the public good.

The records of many Illinois counties contain crisp and cryptic explanations about the reasons for tearing down old court houses and building new ones. Sometimes it was a question of space, when a growing community simply had outgrown its legal facilities. Often the

existing structure was in a state of disrepair bordering on collapse and had to be taken down before it fell down.

Mercer reports that its county seat was first located in New Boston, then in Millersburg, then in Keithsburg, but that no court house was erected until the county headquarters were at last settled in Aledo, in 1856. The present seat of justice, built in 1894, replaced the original for reasons of space and convenience. As we have seen, cupidity, ambition, and civic rivalry all played their roles in shifting county records from one town to another, and thus necessitating new buildings to house them.

"Death by natural causes" also played havoc with historic structures during the last century and a quarter. Adams county seems to have had more than its share, for the first court house built in Quincy in 1826 burned down; so did the second one in 1875; and the third, erected in 1877, was wrecked by a tornado in 1945. The present building dates from 1950.



**MOUNT CARROLL COURT HOUSE**—Built in 1858—The Annex built in 1895. Addition connecting original building and Annex built in 1958, 100 years later. Original court house still in use.

The Carroll County court house in Mt. Carroll, was put up in 1858, with a separate addition always referred to as the Annex built in 1895 and still another connecting structure added exactly one hundred years after the original.

It is not difficult to understand why Macomb wanted a new court house in 1869, for the first one built in McDonough county, dated 1841, cost all of \$69.50 and was made of logs. The second, more ornate and of bricks, was built for the price of \$4,832.

A local historian from Paris, Illinois, states wistfully that the Edgar county court house, while described by many as a "Victorian Monstrosity" is, in reality, a handsome structure. It was built in 1891, the third such edifice in the county history since the first frame building was erected there in 1823.

In 1831 the State legislature passed a law fixing Ottawa as the seat of justice for LaSalle county, and the commissioners entered into a contract with William F. Flagg to complete a court house for \$40,000. A tremendous row about the location of the building had first to be settled. This happened in many counties where it was not uncommon for fisticuffs to be employed before a final agreement was reached.

There being no jail in Ottawa at the time, prisoners were confined in Juliet (the early name for Joliet) and William Redick was paid \$60 to convey them there in wagons. During the construction of the court house, Flagg received instructions to excavate down to the solid rock and place a basement jail therein. This changed his architectural plans and added considerably to the expense.

In those days, the entire taxable property in the county was only worth a few thousand dollars, and there was almost no money in circulation. Business was done on the barter plan, with coonskins, deer pelt and "grog" used for legal tender. The price of the latter was regulated by the county commissioners, who licensed "groceries" and "taverns." The county could count on little credit beyond the honesty of its citizens. Nevertheless, bonds were issued to cover the cost of the court house. Flagg sold these bonds as best he could, but soon found himself in all kinds of financial troubles.

The commissioners had agreed to pay a good rate of interest on the bonds, but when these came due it was found necessary to redeem them

with new bonds, and thus the debt grew while the contractor waited for his money. Flagg finished the court house and jail in 1841 and then, weary of waiting for payment, refused to give up possession of the building. The county instituted a law suit to evict him from the premises. Eventually, Flagg was pacified by the payment of still more new bonds. He withdrew from the jail, and the suit was withdrawn from the court.

The court house remained in use for years, to be replaced in 1882 by a larger and sedately handsome building of Joliet stone with sandstone trimmings for the windows and doors.

Citizens of Geneva, Illinois, have always been proud of their town, which retains its "early settlers" look because of the numerous century old residences still lining its tree-shadowed streets near the banks of the Fox river. In 1844 the first court house of Kane county, circa 1837, was replaced by a more ample and substantial building for which the commissioners paid \$800 to Leonard Howard, the builder.

Although there is no official record to confirm it, tradition persists that the very small cost can be attributed to a great deal of stone and handwork donated by Geneva pioneers to enhance the beauty of the county seat.

In 1856, the present court house square was purchased and a fine stone building erected in which much of historical interest took place, especially during the Civil War era. A fire in March, 1890, destroyed the structure beyond repair, although the records were saved because fireproof vaults had been installed. The present court house was dedicated on September 30, 1892.

Disputes about the location of county seats flourished like the tall corn in many sections of Illinois. Washington county was no exception. At one time, the commissioners decreed that justice should be dispensed in a place called Georgetown. This decision was hampered by the fact that the town did not exist, except on paper.

When Georgetown was surveyed and laid out in regular order, a sale was held to dispose of the lots on September 13, 1827. This transaction realized \$168. A year and half later, Judge Smith came to hold court in Georgetown. He found no trace of habitation or civilization save a few wells that had been dug, and a flagpole standing in soli-

tary grandeur. The judge abandoned Georgetown forever, and nothing more was ever heard of it as the county seat.

The Georgetown location never had pleased any considerable number of county inhabitants, and the "county seat question" became a disturbing element between the "east and west" settlements, as the townships of Beaucoup (shades of the French era in Illinois!) and Elkhorn were then known.

The issue entered into political contests, forcing aspirants for office, like the great hunter Davy Crockett, to define their position. There were many citizens who favored the location of the county seat in the town of Nashville, but the settlers in that area were too poor to raise the ready money to purchase the land. David Pulliam, a farmer and stock raiser, was said to be the only man in the district who could raise a hundred dollars in cash whenever he desired to do so.

A deputation was sent to urge him by all means to proceed to Kaskaskia and purchase the land. This angered Pulliam, who pulled off his hat, threw it on the ground, and exclaimed: "I would not give that old hat for all that that town will ever make!"

Robert Middleton and William G. Brown, men of considerable means from St. Clair county, were finally induced to buy the land for the Nashville court house, which was built of wood in 1831, to be replaced within the decade by a larger one. Fire destroyed the second court house in 1883, but its successor, a well built and well preserved structure, remains in use at the present time.

Effingham County Historical records show that the county could boast of four court houses within a period of forty years after its organization in 1833. Two were built in Ewington, the first seat of justice, and two at Effingham, the current seat. Ewington was, in 1835, considered a boom town, but later dwindled in size. The Effingham court house dates from 1871.

## CHAPTER XVI

### A FERRY TALE AND A FINALE

Putnam county, once the largest in the State, fell victim to "border warfare," lost much of its territory, and became the smallest of Illinois counties. Hennepin, however, retained the honor of being the county seat and its court house, built in 1839, can boast that it is the oldest such seat of justice still in use in the State.

On Sunday, September 17, 1939, a ceremony was held to celebrate the dedication of the Hennepin bridge, connecting Putnam with part of its former territory, now called Bureau county, on the other side of the Illinois river. The occasion also marked the centennial of the Putnam county court house.

Before the new bridge was built, the river at Hennepin was crossed by ferryboat. Some historical notes in "Over the River," a souvenir booklet printed for the 1939 Dedication, remind readers that when the ferry was first launched in 1832, the following rates prevailed:

Foot passenger .....	6½¢
Man and horse .....	12½¢
One-horse pleasure carriage .....	50¢
Goods, per 100 lbs. ....	6½¢

It seems that pleasure came high, even in those days! So did the flood waters, apparently, for a further note on the list of ferry rates warned: "When the water is out of its banks, the above rates will be doubled."

Special allowances were paid to ferrymen who, from time to time, had to go far astream to rescue their craft, which had been carried away by storm or ice and were often found many miles away.

The first steamboat to arrive at Hennepin, "The Caroline" came in 1831 and meant much to the commerce and industry of the area. A four hour trip to Peoria by steamboat cost one dollar. Previously, keel or flatboats were used to transport the enormous crops of potatoes grown in Putnam county. The voyage from Hennepin to New Orleans required two months aboard the huge and awkward flatboats that had to be floated downstream, then dismantled and sold after their cargo

was delivered. The smaller keel vessels could be rowed or poled up or down the river. Crews up to twenty men in number were employed on these primitive craft.

According to tradition, the first court house in Hennepin was a blacksmith shop where an anvil served as a bench for the judge, and the jury "room" was the wide prairie!

In 1835, a slave was sold in Putnam county for \$1.50 to an abolitionist who promptly freed him. Hennepin was a center of abolitionism before the Civil War. Two men, Owen Lovejoy and Benjamin Lundy, devoted their lives to freeing slaves. They travelled widely through the middle and eastern states to arouse anti-slavery sentiments. Lundy, a local philanthropist, published an abolitionist newspaper in Hennepin, which was an active "station" on the "underground railroad" transporting slaves from the South into Canada through Putnam and the neighboring Bureau counties.

The actual railroad passed Hennepin by, and perhaps for this reason



**PUTNAM COUNTY COURT HOUSE—Hennepin—built in 1839—The oldest court house still in use in Illinois—in the smallest county.**

the town managed to retain its quiet air of 19th century grace. It has many fine old houses, parks, and tree shaded streets. The old court house is a handsome, classic structure complete with pillars. Hennepin's lack of hustle and bustle can best be illustrated, perhaps, by Paul M. Angle's story of his visit there, some years ago.

He went to the court house to obtain permission from an elderly presiding judge to take a newly discovered treasure trove of ancient newspaper to the Illinois State Historical Society in Springfield. The Hennepin jurist and the present Director of the Chicago Historical Society were deep in a pleasant discussion of historical matters when interrupted by a young state's attorney, who opened the door and rather abruptly demanded the judge's advice about some plaintiff's case.

Said his honor: "Young man, if anyone else comes around here to-day pantin' for justice, tell him to come back tomorrow, please!"

Jacksonville, Illinois may not have an old court house to point out to visitors, but it has had a long and interesting civic life. Morgan county originally included the present counties of Cass and Scott, with the county seat at a place called Olmstead's Mound. The court was removed to Jacksonville, where a frame court house was erected in 1826. On July 4, 1861, Colonel Ulysses S. Grant marched his raw regiment, the 21st Illinois Infantry, into the Fair Grounds at Jacksonville, and the legend persists that the Colonel worked hard to prevent bootleggers from selling whiskey to his recruits!

Jacksonville is the site of Illinois College, chartered in 1829. Beecher Hall, on the campus, was named for the first president—Edward Beecher—brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher. William Jennings Bryan graduated from the college, and practiced law in Jacksonville at one time. The town was also noted as one of the "stations" on the "Underground railroad" and as the home of the "Ladies Society for the Promotion of Education of Females," now known as the Ladies Educational Society, founded in 1833 and said to have been the first club for women in the United States.

One could continue, almost indefinitely, a recital of the court houses both ancient and modern that have been erected at one time or another in the 102 counties of Illinois. Space prohibits such an undertak-

ing. Thus, with a glimpse into the past and a hint of things to come in the near future, we conclude this brief and fragmentary survey of the county court houses in this State. Those described are but a few of the proud reminders of a pioneer civilization that, for the most part, looked up to the law and cherished the buildings that housed and symbolized the high authority vested in man.

On the following pages may be found a complete list of the 102 county court houses in Illinois, with dates of original structures and those of the present day. This chronology has been compiled by Mrs. Thomas R. Gowenlock and members of her Historical Activities Committee for the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Illinois.

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# APPENDED LIST OF THE 102 COURT HOUSES IN ILLINOIS

County	Seat	Original	Present
ADAMS .....	Quincy	1826	1950
ALEXANDER .....	Cairo	1818	1865
BOND .....	Greenville	1821	1824
BOONE .....	Belvidere	1854	1854
Still stands. Addition under construction.			
BROWN .....	Mt. Sterling	1859	1942
BUREAU .....	Princeton	1868	1936
CALHOUN .....	Hardin	1837	1848
CARROLL .....	Mount Carroll	1858	1858
Annex built in 1895, additions in 1942 and 1958. Exactly 100 years between original building and the latest addition.			
CASS .....	Virginia	1844	1872
Original Court House was in Beardstown and built in 1844—now the City Hall—"Historic Court Houses".			
CHAMPAIGN .....	Urbana	1836	1957
CHRISTIAN .....	Taylorville	1856	1902
CLARK .....	Marshall	1903	1903
County seat was moved from Darwin to Marshall in 1903. Fire practically destroyed original at Marshall but no dates given for Darwin original or Marshall original.			
CLAY .....	Louisville	1818	1912
Original Court House built in Clay City in 1818. Later moved to Louisville. Shawnee Vandalia road crossed old Natchez Trace. Included in its corporate limits Maysville as first county seat.			
CLINTON .....	Carlyle	1883	1883
Addition built in 1959 for more space.			
COLES .....	Charleston	1831	1898
Original was a log structure near town branch, replaced by brick building in 1835. Twice enlarged in 1858-1860 and 1864-1866. Present day building of limestone erected 1898-1899 with renovations and repairs in 1951-1952.			
COOK .....	Chicago	1835	1911
<i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
CRAWFORD .....	Robinson	1818	1897
Has had 6 Court Houses, 1818, 1832, 1833, 1843, 1849, 1897.			
CUMBERLAND .....	Toledo	1854	1887
DeKALB .....	Sycamore	1838	1904
First too small, second built in 1850-51. First court held in Coltonville west of Sycamore. Town now gone. All 3 Court Houses mentioned were in Sycamore.			

# APPENDED LIST OF THE 102 COURT HOUSES IN ILLINOIS (*Continued*)

County	Seat	Original	Present
DeWITT .....	Clinton	1839	1894
No information on two earlier structures.			
DOUGLAS .....	Tuscola	1861	1913
Original 2-story frame. Second built in 1866, never satisfactory—replaced by classic stone 3-story.			
DuPAGE .....	Wheaton	1896	1896
Land grant by Warren Wheaton Additions in 1953 and 1961.			
EDGAR .....	Paris	1823	1891
First of frame, second brick and present building referred to as "The Victorian Monstrosity" but really a handsome structure.			
EDWARDS .....	Albion	1853	1853
Addition East Side in 1941.			
EFFINGHAM .....	Effingham	1835	1871
<i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
FAYETTE .....	Vandalia	1820-1824	1932
The first state capitol was erected in Vandalia and was for a time the terminus of The National Road, which followed the wilderness Trace that Daniel Boone and his followers blazed across the Alleghanies. There is a graceful building in the city, now a historical museum, where the budding statesman, Abraham Lincoln, once vaulted out of a window to vitiate a quorum call. Chicago Tribune March 18th, 1964. <i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
FORD .....	Paxton	1841	1876
FULTON .....	Lewistown	1823	1898
Second frame built 1830, third brick 1839, present erected by township citizens through private donations.			
GALLATIN .....	Shawneetown	1826	1939
Town moved three miles west after Ohio River flood of 1937. Original Court House was in Equality—built in 1826.			
GREENE .....	Carrollton	1824	1892
GRUNDY .....	Morris	1841	1912
HAMILTON .....	McLeansboro	1821	1937
First log court house burned after which brick building was used—suffered stigma because of no real court house for many years.			
HANCOCK .....	Carthage	1823	1839
<i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
HARDIN .....	Elizabethtown	1858	1923
First Court House built before the Civil War burned in 1884. A new one was built and burned in 1920.			
HENDERSON .....	Oquawka	1841	1841
<i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			

# APPENDED LIST OF THE 102 COURT HOUSES IN ILLINOIS (*Continued*)

County	Seat	Original	Present
HENRY .....	Cambridge	1838	1878
First court house built at Richmond in 1838 burned down. Next one built at Morristown and moved to Cambridge in 1840, where two others were built as the need for space increased.			
IROQUOIS .....	Watseka	1845	1867
New court house under construction since 1963.			
JACKSON .....	Murphysboro	1816	1926
First court house built at Brownsville in 1816 and burned in 1843 and county seat was moved to Murphysboro.			
JASPER .....	Newton	1835	1878
An addition in 1963.			
JEFFERSON .....	Mt. Vernon		
<i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
JERSEY .....	Jerseyville	1840	1893
JO DAVIESS .....	Galena	1839	1839
<i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
JOHNSON .....	Vienna	1865	1865
KANE .....	Geneva	1838	1892
KANKAKEE .....	Kankakee	1855	1912
KENDALL .....	Yorkville	1864	1887
Addition in 1958.			
KNOX .....	Galesburg	1840	1840
Original still standing but restored in 1958. <i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
LAKE .....	Waukegan	1844	1844
Original still stands but addition in 1922.			
LaSALLE .....	Ottawa	1834	1881
Remodeling took place from 1952-1962.			
LAWRENCE .....	Lawrenceville	1889	1889
LEE .....	Dixon	1840	1901
LIVINGSTON .....	Pontiac	1839	1875
LOGAN .....	Lincoln	1839	1839
A state memorial. <i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
McDONOUGH .....	Macomb	1831	1872
McHENRY .....	Woodstock	1839	1857
McLEAN .....	Bloomington	1831	1902
MACON .....	Decatur	1829	1939
MACOUPIN .....	Carlinville	1830	1870
<i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			

# APPENDED LIST OF THE 102 COURT HOUSES IN ILLINOIS (*Continued*)

County	Seat	Original	Present
MADISON .....	Edwardsville	1818	1915
Home of Thomas Kirkpatrick used from 1812-1817. Had no formal court house.			
MARION .....	Salem	1911	1911
MARSHALL .....	Lacon	1840	1854
Additions put on in 1884 and 1958.			
MASON .....	Havana	1851	1882
MASSAC .....	Metropolis	1860	1942
MENARD .....	Petersburg	1844	1896
MERCER .....	Aledo	1856	1894
County seat was first in New Boston, then Millersburg, then Keithsburg but no court house was erected in these cities.			
MONROE .....	Waterloo	1832	1853
Addition in 1906.			
MONTGOMERY .....	Hillsboro	1823	1835
Court house remodeled in 1875.			
MORGAN .....	Jacksonville	1826	1868
<i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
MOULTRIE .....	Sullivan	1845	1904
OGLE .....	Oregon	1841	1891
PEORIA .....	Peoria	1825	1878
New court house now under construction.			
PERRY .....	Pinkneyville	1829	1939
PIATT .....	Monticello	1843	1903
Land donated by William Hart Piatt, son of James A. Piatt, for whom the county was named.			
PIKE .....	Pittsfield	1821	1894
Original court house was built in 1821 at Coles, moved to Atlas in 1823 until 1826 when it burned. An uncompleted building was used until county seat was established in Pittsfield.			
POPE .....	Golconda	1816	1873
PULASKI .....	Mound City	1912	1912
PUTNAM .....	Hennepin	1839	1839
Putnam county is the smallest county and has the oldest court house still in use. Chief Shaboney was one of the first settlers and his picture hangs with a group of Lincoln. There is a daguerrotype of every county judge in walnut frames.			
<i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
RANDOLPH .....	Chester	1850	1850
Included in <i>"Historic Court Houses"</i>			
RICHLAND .....	Olney	1841	1915

# APPENDED LIST OF THE 102 COURT HOUSES IN ILLINOIS (*Continued*)

County	Seat	Original	Present
ROCK ISLAND .....	Rock Island	1838	1896
Court house remodeled in 1960.			
ST. CLAIR .....	Belleville	1790	1814
This county is included in " <i>Historic Court Houses</i> "			
SALINE .....	Harrisburg	1853	1905
Original court house was in Raleigh and moved to Harrisburg in 1905 with an addition in 1938.			
SANGAMON .....	Springfield	1837	1837
" <i>Historic Court Houses</i> "			
SCHUYLER .....	Rushville	1826	1881
SCOTT .....	Winchester	1839	1885
" <i>Historic Court Houses</i> "			
SHELBY .....	Shelbyville	1828	1879
STARK .....	Toulon	1848	1856
STEPHENSON .....	Freeport	1840	1870
TAZEWELL .....	Pekin	1916	1916
UNION .....	Jonesboro	1818	1857
Reconstructed by W.P.A. in 1937.			
VERMILION .....	Danville	1832	1913
WABASH .....	Mt. Carmel	1829	1960
WARREN .....	Monmouth	1831	1873
" <i>Historic Court Houses</i> "			
WASHINGTON .....	Nashville	1884	1884
WAYNE .....	Fairfield	1819	1891
WHITE .....	Carmi	1883	1883
There is a drive on at present for a new court house much needed for safety of records.			
WHITESIDE .....	Morrison	1866	1866
WILL .....	Joliet	1837	1884
" <i>Historic Court Houses</i> "			
WILLIAMSON .....	Marion	1841	1888
WINNEBAGO .....	Rockford	1844	1878
" <i>Historic Court Houses</i> "			
WOODFORD .....	Eureka	1845	1894
" <i>Historic Court Houses</i> " County Seat originally in Hanover (now Metamora). Moved to Eureka in 1894. Metamora Court House now a State Memorial.			