

## Montgomery County Facts

Five Civil War Generals came from Montgomery County.

Home of Lew Wallace, author of *Ben Hur*.

Sugar Creek is a unique Crinoid fossil area.

The first Indiana Basketball game was played at the YMCA between Crawfordsville and Lafayette, which Crawfordsville won.

Home of Senator Henry S. Lane.

The Old Jail Museum is the only working rotary cell jail in U.S.

The annual Strawberry Festival takes place every summer.

Crawfordsville is home to Wabash College.

James Marshall left Crawfordsville in 1845 for California and was first to discover gold at Sutter's Mill, which started the Gold Rush in 1849.

Crawfordsville High School won Indiana's first State Basketball Championship in 1911, defeating Lebanon 24-17.

Famous former residents of Crawfordsville include:

- Joe Allen, astronaut on the Space Shuttle
- Dick Van Dyke, actor
- Ezra Pound, poet

22 October 2010

# Montgomery County Writers



### Crawfordsville District Public Library

205 South Washington St.

Crawfordsville, IN 47933

765-362-2242

Fax: 765-362-7986

[www.cdpl.lib.in.us](http://www.cdpl.lib.in.us)

### Carnegie Museum of Montgomery County

[www.cdpl.lib.in.us/carnegie/](http://www.cdpl.lib.in.us/carnegie/)

## Bibliography

### Richard Elwell Banta

Richard Elwell Banta was born in Martinsville, Indiana, on February 16, 1904. His family lived in Los Angeles for two years, then moved to Crawfordsville in 1909, where he attended public schools, then Wabash College. In college, he wrote articles and produced illustrations for the *Chicago Daily News*, *College Humor*, *Weird Tales* and other periodicals. With DeWitte O'Keiffe, Banta founded the college humor magazine, *The Caveman*, in 1924. He was publicity director for Wabash, and edited *The Wabash Bulletin* in the 1930s. In 1932, he published *Wabash College, the First Hundred Years*, by Osborne and Gronert. Banta's efforts as a publisher were as interesting as his published writings. One such work was *Henry Hamilton and the Battle of Vincennes*, the English general's diary of his army's journey from Fort Detroit and their subsequent defeat at the hand of George Rogers Clark and his band of ragtag soldiers and local Indians, in the Revolutionary War. Gronert described Banta as an untrained historian, but his history, *The Rivers of America: the Ohio*, published by Rhinehart in 1949, and many other well-researched regional and Ohio Valley histories effectively refute that label. He was a talented editor his whole life, and his *Indiana Authors and their Books*, *Hoosier Caravan*, and other works attest to his editorial and writing skill. He served in various capacities at Wabash College, in admissions, as assistant to the president, and with publications. Banta died in 1977, survived by his wife, Caroline French Banta, and his daughter, Kathleen Scott.

### William Norwood Brigrance

William Norwood Brigrance was born November 17, 1896, in Olive Branch, Mississippi. His father raised cotton on the family plantation and sent his children, one boy and three girls, to the country school. William—or Norwood, as he preferred—lived there until he was 12 years old. He enlisted in the army in 1917 for training as an officer. After seeing combat in France with the 33<sup>rd</sup> Division, Brigrance earned a master's degree in history at the University of Nebraska and later taught speech class and coached debate at a Chicago high school. His successes as an energetic and enthusiastic teacher caught the eye of Wabash College President George MacIntosh, who was looking for an instructor to teach rhetoric and public speaking and to coach students in intercollegiate debate and oratory. In 1922, Brigrance accepted an offer to teach at Wabash with the idea of staying for two years at Wabash and moving on. He stayed for 37 years, until his death in 1960.

With Brigrance as teacher-coach to some of the ablest students at the college, Wabash gained the reputation as a "powerhouse" in oratory and debate. This success brought national recognition to these young men, their school, and to Brigrance himself. Needing a Ph.D. in Speech, Brigrance took a leave from Wabash in 1930 and earned the degree in just one year.

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with Prof. George Pierce Baker.

In 1922 she was living in Chicago. In 1923 she was an assistant manager for outdoor advertising for Standard Oil of Indiana, and in 1924 became a reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*, covering the crime scene from the courts to the county jail. She interviewed Loeb and Leopold, talked her way into the funeral of the victim, Bobby Franks, and then covered the trials of two murderesses, Belva Gaertner and Beulah Annan. Watkins' stories were vivid enough to make the front page, and in six months' time, she apparently had enough material for a play. She went to Yale School of Drama, where Prof. Davis was then teaching, and wrote *Chicago* as a class project. It hit Broadway in 1926, where it ran for 172 performances, drawing both rave reviews and denunciations for being 'vile, immoral and blasphemous.' *Chicago* also went to Chicago, but the citizens apparently thought it gave an unflattering picture of the city and its people. The play was made into a silent film in 1927, and a movie starring Ginger Rogers in 1942, called *Roxie Hart*. Watkins wrote other plays, none as successful as *Chicago*, and was a busy screenwriter in Hollywood until 1940. After her father died she moved to Florida to be near her mother. She did not allow any further performances of *Chicago*, and it was not until after her death in 1969, that it was released, with permission of relatives, to be made into the hit musical and movie that we have enjoyed in recent years. Watkins never married, and her estate, at the time of her death, was valued at 2.3 million dollars, and was given to Indiana colleges to fund scholarships and institutional expenses for the study of Greek and Latin, her major interest in later life.

Brigance established himself as a prolific and elegant writer; his records cite over a thousand titles of articles in scholarly journals and popular magazines, public lectures, and books. Admired by his peers, he was selected to edit the Speech Association of America's two-volume *History and Criticism of American Public Address*, a collection of essays on American orators. He also published his dissertation, a study of Jeremiah Sullivan Black, a strong defender of the Constitution. These works were templates for rhetorical studies for decades to follow. In all, Brigance wrote fourteen books, the last being *Speech: Its Techniques and Disciplines in a Free Society*, where he argued his philosophy that speech and democracy are essential ingredients of a free society, a reciprocal relationship echoing the Greek ideal of democracy going back to Isocrates. With these successes, in 1946 Brigance was elected president of the Speech Association of America. In 2007 William Norwood Brigance was recognized as a National Communication Association Distinguished Scholar.

### **Rose A. Cline**

Rose A. Cline, or "Pat" as she was affectionately known, was born in Ohio, and before coming to Crawfordsville was an editor for the *Tipton Tribune*, and before that, was a nurse. She came to the *Journal Review* in 1971 as a civic affairs editor. In 1972 she was the *Journal's* first correspondent to the Viet Nam war zone, also making stops in seven countries. In 1976 she co-founded *Montgomery Magazine*, a monthly publication dedicated to local history. In 1981, she sold the magazine to the *Journal Review* and continued as editor. In 1988, she compiled and edited *Montgomery County Legend and Lore*, published by the Montgomery County Historical Society. In 1990, she wrote and compiled *One Hundred Years of Public Power: Crawfordsville Electric Light and Power*. Her book, *Pictorial History of Crawfordsville*, was published in 1991 in cooperation with the Elston Bank. She contributed to several other books, including *Montgomery County Remembers* and *The Strong-Willed Child*, by James Dobson. She published *Montgomery County Almanacs* in 1978-79, and *Agriculture: the Heart of Montgomery County*, in 1978. Pat Cline died in Crawfordsville on July 24, 1996. She had three sons, two surviving, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

### **James Buchanan Elmore**

James Buchanan Elmore was born in 1857 on a nine hundred acre farm near Alamo, and was dubbed "the Bard of Alamo" by the *Journal Review* when he died in 1942, in the house where was born. He graduated from the Alamo Academy, taught school for twenty years, and spent his summers farming. He married Mary Ann Murray in 1880. Elmore wrote a poem, "*My Mary of Missouri*," to her. They had three children.

Elmore wrote poems which were published in Indianapolis and Crawfordsville newspapers, and published a collection, *Love Among the Mistletoe*, in 1899. His poems had rustic themes, titled “*Sugar Making*,” “*When the Paw Paws are Ripe*,” “*The Good Old Sheep Sorrel Pie*,” and “*When Katie Gathers Greens*.” Elmore produced other small volumes of stories and poetry: *A Lover in Cuba, and Poems; Supplement to A Lover in Cuba, and Poems; Twenty-Five Years in Jackville, a Romance in the Days of “The Golden Circle”*; *Selected Poems, 1904*; and *Autumn Roses*, 1907.

James Elmore did many readings of his poems through the years, and was fondly remembered reciting “*the Monon Wreck*,” and “*Sassafras, Oh Sassafras*” from the courthouse steps. When Thaddeus Seymour was president of Wabash College he declared an “Elmore Day” each year on an especially pleasant day each fall, when students had a day off from classes, and Thad would read dramatically from Elmore’s poems while standing on the chapel steps.

### **Theodore Gronert**

Theodore Gronert, (or Ted, as he was usually called) was a well-known and well-loved Wabash professor. He was born in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, on July 27, 1887. He received three degrees from the University of Wisconsin, the last, a PhD., in 1919. He became head of the department of social sciences at Texas State College for Women, and taught at the University of Arkansas for two years. While in the South he wrote two works on women’s citizenship and women’s club work. In 1924 he came to Wabash College and was made head of the department of history. His history of Wabash, written with another admired professor, James Insley Osborne, was *Wabash College; the First Hundred Years, 1832-1932*. His last book, a Montgomery County all-time best-seller, was *Sugar Creek Saga*, published by Wabash College in 1958. It is a comprehensive and well-documented history, and is a necessary starting point for any study of Crawfordsville or Montgomery County history.

Dr. Gronert was appointed professor emeritus in 1957. He died in Crawfordsville in 1966. He was preceded in death by his wife Hazel, and was survived by a brother.

### **Will Hays, Jr**

Will Hays, Jr. was born in Indianapolis in 1915, the son of Will H. Hays and Helen Thomas Hays. His father was a prominent Sullivan, Indiana lawyer, a Wabash graduate who became very prominent in Indiana and national Republican politics, held offices in local, state and national party organizations, and was Republican National Committee chairman 1918-21. He was U.S. Postmaster General 1921-22, and was president of the Motion

when Billy the Kid was being hunted and tried. In 1881 he was sent to Constantinople as ambassador to Turkey. In 1880, *Ben Hur* was published, and it is said that he wrote the first half in New Mexico and finished his novel at his study in Crawfordsville. He also found time to play the violin and do some painting, drawing and a bit of sculpture. Throughout his life he wrote, producing a long listing of plays, novels, articles and fiction on many subjects, and a voluminous correspondence available in various collections. Lew Wallace died in Crawfordsville on February 15, 1905. His *Lew Wallace: an Autobiography*, published posthumously in 1906, was considered less formal, easier reading than his usual style.

### **Susan Elston Wallace**

Susan Elston Wallace, Lew Wallace’s wife, was born in Crawfordsville on December 25, 1830, the daughter of Isaac Elston, founder of the bank, major landowner in Crawfordsville and railroad pioneer. Elston gave all of his children land surrounding his home on East Pike Street, in the Elston Grove. Susan’s sister, Joanna Elston Lane, lived close in what is now the Henry S. Lane Historical Home.

Susan Wallace was also a gifted writer, confining herself to poems, travelogues and works for young people. *The Storied Sea, The Land of the Pueblos, and Along the Bosphorus, and Other Sketches*, are among her published works. She and Mary Hannah Krout, a favorite protégé, completed and edited General Wallace’s autobiography, after his death in 1905. Susan gives Mary Hannah all credit for the success of the project, and others give both of them credit for its more readable, conversational style. It is known that Susan had been a valued reader and editor of his works throughout his writing life, and there were those who thought he might have benefited from even more of her assistance. She was content to remain in his shadow, though, and was a devoted admirer. She died in Crawfordsville on October 1, 1907.

### **Maurine Watkins**

Maurine Watkins, who wrote *Chicago*, may be the most mysterious of our local authors. She was born in Louisville, Kentucky in either 1896, 1898 or 1901, (most probably 1896) to the Rev. George Watkins and his wife, Georgia, a schoolteacher. The family moved to Crawfordsville, where Rev. Watkins was pastor of the First Christian Church. At age eleven, Maurine wrote a play, “*Hearts of Gold*,” which was performed for the Ladies Aid Society at First Christian. She wrote other stories and plays during her school years, graduating from Crawfordsville High School in 1914. She went to several colleges during the next four years, with sometimes overlapping enrollments: Hamilton, Transylvania, the College of the Bible, and, perhaps, the College of Missions, studying Hindi, finally receiving an A.B. from Butler in 1919. She taught briefly at Wingate H.S., conducting classes in English and classics. She attended Radcliffe, studying playwriting

office before or since, and many changes took place during that time. Gifts and endowments were made which allowed important building projects and an expanded faculty and curriculum. Wabash began to produce more pre-medical and pre-law graduates, and fewer ministerial candidates. The sciences, language, literature and the classics were emphasized. A new gymnasium was built, and a boiler house and system replaced the Franklin stoves in every room. Yandes Library was built, and the book collection rose from 2000 to 75,000 volumes. The college museum collection of artifacts and fossils grew to over 26,000 specimens, “one of the most complete in the country.”

From 1863 to 1866, Dr. Tuttle was also pastor of Center Presbyterian Church, and was actively involved in that institution’s affairs and welfare. Always writing articles, lectures and sermons, he developed a long list of published works on a variety of theological, historical and ethical subjects. He continued to be very active until his death in 1901.

## Lew Wallace

Lew Wallace was born in 1827 in Brookville, Indiana, the son of a lawyer, David Wallace. The family moved frequently, but settled in Indianapolis where David became active in Whig politics and was eventually elected governor of Indiana. Lew had a sketchy education, spending ‘a scant two months’ at Wabash College’s preparatory department, but his main source of training was his father’s library. He read law in his father’s office, but failed his first exam, it is suggested, because of his haste to get into the Mexican War. The military was a very important second career most of his life.

Lew Wallace was undoubtedly the most famous of Crawfordsville’s many interesting authors. His novel, *Ben Hur, a Tale of the Christ*, was immediately successful when it was published in 1880. It became a best-seller, (not a usual term at that time) and was only surpassed by the *Holy Bible* for many, many years, perhaps until the advent of *Gone With the Wind*. *Ben Hur* was made into a stage play, a Klaw and Erlanger production which included chariots and horses clattering across the stage. A huge success in New York, it was also a road production which performed at the Strand Theater in Crawfordsville complete with chariot race and horses. *Ben Hur* was an all-time best silent movie in the late twenties, and a film in 1959 starring Charlton Heston, which won eleven Oscars.

Lew Wallace had a law office in Covington, Indiana, and then in Crawfordsville, prompted by his marriage to Susan Elston. He was a Civil War general, with a colorful and controversial record which is still a subject of argument and analysis. He was a member of the military commission that conducted the trial of John Wilkes Booth and the conspirators in the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, and his contributions are a part of the 1865 report of that trial. He was a territorial governor of New Mexico,

Picture Producers and Distributors from 1922-45, and as advisor, 1945-50. He established the famous Hays Office, rating movie content for obscenity and sexuality. He wrote several technical works on aspects of film production, and after his retirement, *Memoirs*, 1955. He died in 1954.

Hays Jr. graduated from Wabash College, also became a lawyer, graduating from Yale University Law School in 1940. He married Virginia Robinson in 1942, served in the U.S. Army 1942-45, and practiced law in Sullivan, at Hays and Hays law firm. In the 50s, the family lived in Hollywood, California, where he wrote movie scripts, and was a writer for the popular television show, “*This is Your Life*,” with Ralph Edwards. In 1954, he wrote an historical novel, *Dragon Watch*. After his retirement he wrote another novel, *Loose on the Wind*, and later, an autobiography, *Come Home With Me Now*, about Will and his father. Hays was a popular mayor of Crawfordsville from 1964-72, and was also active in Republican local, state and national organizations. Will Hays Jr. was a long-time trustee of Wabash College. He died in Crawfordsville on August 12, 2000, survived by his wife and three children.

## Mary Hannah Krout

Mary Hannah Krout was the oldest daughter of Robert and Caroline Brown Krout, born in 1851 in the home of her maternal grandparents. She was educated in Crawfordsville, first in subscription schools, then in Crawfordsville public schools. She was an enthusiastic student, and at age fifteen wrote “*Little Brown Hands*,” a poem which was published in a juvenile magazine, and was widely read throughout the country. The poem was included in schoolbooks and recited by schoolchildren for years to come.

Mary Hannah Krout taught at Bunker Hill School, and then in Crawfordsville, for eleven years. She was also writing for area newspapers, and in 1979 got a job on the *Crawfordsville Journal* and contributed to Indianapolis and Cincinnati papers. On *The Journal*, besides reporting, she wrote a gossip column under the pseudonym “Heinrich Karl,” a lively, perhaps libelous account of Crawfordsville people and their activities, which was also sold to other papers. In 1881 she became associate editor, and in 1882 was hired as editor by the *Terre Haute Express*. Long hours eventually forced a partial retirement during which she kept writing, but was unable to work at a job. Susan Elston Wallace, as she did at other times in Krout’s life, sent money during her recuperation.

In 1888 she went to Chicago, “willing to do anything in the line of newspaper work only to gain a foothold,” and got a job on the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*. That paper sent her to Hawaii to cover the installation of the new provincial government. This led to her first book, *Hawaii and a Revolution*, in 1898, and later, two biographies of prominent Hawaiian

women. In 1900 *Alice's Visit to the Hawaiian Islands*, was published (Eclectic School Readings). Krout covered many places and important events of the day, calling on "the Boxers in China, alone except for a single missionary;" Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee; and wherever her employer sent her. In 1898 the paper was sold to *The Chicago Tribune*, and she continued with them, never exhibiting the appearance of the daring woman traveler she was, wearing "alpaca jackets with braid, boned collars on her shirt-waists and plenty of petticoats."

At the same time, she lectured whenever possible on women's suffrage, in America, in England, in New Zealand, China and Hawaii. She never married, but had no lack of suitors. In 1906, after a trip to Australia, she retired and spent the rest of her life in Crawfordsville until her death in 1927, living in the family home with three unmarried sisters and a bachelor brother. She was actively writing until her final illness, and worked with her friend Susan Wallace on the completion of *The Memoirs of General Lew Wallace*. She and Susan are given credit for making that the most readable of Lew Wallace's works.

### **Caroline Virginia Krout**

Caroline Virginia Krout was born in 1852 in Crawfordsville, the second daughter of Robert and Caroline Brown Krout. Their first daughter, born just eleven months earlier, was Mary Hannah, who will be discussed later. The Krouts had nine children in all, of whom six lived, and of the six, all remarkable, the first two were especially so. Robert Krout was called a "Hoosier Bronson Alcott" in *Indiana Authors and Their Books*, having "a profound effect" on his brilliant daughters, and, later in the piece, "the tyrannical male who first convinced his eldest daughter that a campaign for equal rights for women was a project well in order..."

Caroline Krout was educated at a Crawfordsville subscription school, and then a public school. At age sixteen, her mother died, and, as Mary Hannah was teaching at Bunker Hill School, took over the running of the house and the care of her four siblings. Three years later, her sister Jane took over these chores, an occupation she kept for nearly seventy years, and Caroline began to teach at local schools at age nineteen. Five years later she quit, having become a "nervous invalid." During the five years she was ailing, she began to write stories and articles in *Inter-Ocean*, *Interior*, *Chicago Daily News*, *Chicago* and other papers. Recovering somewhat, she became a court reporter in Crawfordsville. Through Mary Hannah, she found a job at Chicago's Newbery Library, but poor health soon forced her return to Crawfordsville.

With the encouragement of Susan Wallace, Caroline began to write stories and articles for periodicals such as *St. Nicholas* and *Cosmopolitan*. In 1900 she published, *Knights in Fustian*, under the pen-name, Caroline Brown.

were highly regarded and have been reprinted many times. He wrote many other novels, articles, stories and poems, which were published in periodicals, journals, and as volumes. He wrote about many locales, and having grown up in Georgia, customarily spent winters there and the rest of the year in Indiana throughout his life. Maurice Thompson died in Crawfordsville on February 15, 1901, survived by his wife and three daughters.

Some of his other titles include *The Boys' Book of Sports*; *Sylvan Secrets*, *In Bird Songs and Books*; *Stories of the Cherokee Hills*; *The Ocala Boy: a Story of Florida*; and *My Winter Garden*.

### **Will Thompson**

Will Thompson, brother of Maurice, was born in 1846 in Calhoun, Georgia (sometimes recorded as 1848, in Missouri), where his Baptist father had a ministry. He grew up in Calhoun, Georgia, and shared a similar upbringing and education with his brother, including the military academy and the Confederate army service in the Civil War. Will also worked as a civil engineer, building railroads in Indiana. He studied law, and for some years was a partner with Maurice in their Crawfordsville law practice. He became Western Attorney for the Great Northern Railway, and moved his family to Seattle, Washington in 1889, where he lived until his death in 1918.

He collaborated with Maurice on *The Witchery of Archery*, actually contributing a chapter in later editions, and revised the last edition after his brother's death. He and Maurice wrote *How to Train in Archery* together, and the two of them are given credit for the emergence of archery as a popular sport throughout the country. Will contributed to *Century Magazine*, and his most famous poem in that periodical was "*High Tide at Gettysburg*."

### **Joseph Farrand Tuttle**

Joseph Farrand Tuttle, 1818-1901, was president of Wabash College from 1861 to 1891. He was born in New Jersey, the son of a prominent minister, the Rev. Jacob Tuttle. He moved to Ohio, and was educated at Marietta College, then Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, where he studied under Lyman Beecher. He became a Presbyterian minister in 1844, and in 1845 was pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Delaware, Ohio. He married Susan Caroline King, of Rockaway, N.J., and in 1847 was called to be asst. pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Rockaway, where his father-in-law, Dr. Barnabas King, was pastor.

He served at Rockaway, "speaking and writing for the religious and secular press," until he became president of Wabash College in 1861. He served thirty years in that office, until 1891, and lived on in Crawfordsville until his death in 1901. His presidency was the longest that anyone had held the

the Wabash College campus that existed primarily – so we thought – for the children who lived nearby.’ She picked violets there in May, gathered buckeyes in the fall, and remembered visiting Lew Wallace’s study when he was a very old man, and allowed children to explore.

She attended the University of Illinois, and received a PhD. from the University of Chicago in 1935. After graduate work at the U. of Chicago, she received an M.Ed from Winnetka Graduate Teachers College in 1941. She spent several years in social work, then worked for a textbook publisher in Chicago. During World War II, she worked with the U.N. Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in Egypt, saying ‘among many other duties...I found myself teaching young Yugoslavs (in a Sinai refugee camp) some rather theatrical versions of American folk dances.’ In Egypt she met Francis de Regniers, and they were married in 1946. In 1961 she became editor of Scholastic Books’ Lucky Book Club, a position she held for twenty years, until her retirement, when she began to write plays.

Although de Regniers had been writing since she was a teenager, her first published book was *The Giant Story*, illustrated by Maurice Sendak, with Harper, in 1953. She published over forty books for her children under her own name, and ten more under the pseudonym, Tamara Kitt. She won many awards, notably the *New York Times*’ best illustrated children’s book award for *A Little House of Your Own*, which she wrote and illustrated. *Was It a Good Trade?* and *Cats, Cats, Cats, Cats, Cats* were also popular award winners. Her book, *May I Bring a Friend?*, illustrated by Beni Montresor, was a Caldecott winner for illustration in 1965. Beatrice de Regniers died in Washington, D.C., on March 1, 2000.

## Maurice Thompson

Maurice Thompson was born in Fairfield, Indiana, the son of a Baptist minister who moved his family frequently. He was educated first by his well-read mother, and then in a military academy in Georgia. He served in the Confederate army. He married Alice Lee, daughter of Col. John Lee, a southern railway builder and contractor, and became a civil engineer, long enough to find that he didn’t like that occupation. He studied law, and opened an office in Crawfordsville. After a time, he began work on the staff of the *New York Independent*, later serving as literary editor until the end of his life. He and his brother Will were partners in the Crawfordsville law practice, which was a career best suited to Maurice’s writing and many other interests.

Among Thompson’s most famous works was *Alice of Old Vincennes*, a best-seller of its day. This was published in 1900, not long before his death, and was a long awaited confirmation of his belief in his appeal to readers. He actually had many successes. *The Witchery of Archery*, which later was revised by Will, and *How to Train in Archery*, which he co-wrote with Will,

This novel, although it received some critical carping, was a popular success. The then-governor of New York, Theodore Roosevelt, wrote to her, saying, “you have given me far and away the best and most vivid idea I ever had of the Indiana Copper-heads and also an exceptionally good picture in the western farming communities.”

Her next book, *On the Wea Trail*, used the same time period and locale as *Alice of Old Vincennes*, Maurice Thompson’s hugely popular novel, upsetting her greatly. Neither had any idea of the work-in-progress of the other, and Caroline was crushed, vowing to abandon her writing career. Thompson, when he heard of this, “exerted all of his native kindness to put her at ease.” She wrote two more novels, *Bold Robin and his Forest Rangers*, in 1905, and *Dionis of the White Veil* in 1911, then did retire from writing and lived as a “happy, home-loving recluse” until her death in 1931.

## Janet Snyder Lambert

Janet Snyder Lambert was born in Crawfordsville on December 17, 1894, the daughter of F.L. Snyder, a prominent member of David W. Gerard’s Supreme Tribe of Ben Hur and accompanying insurance plan, known then as the Live Stock Insurance Company of Crawfordsville, changing to the Ben Hur Life Assn. Janet graduated from Crawfordsville High School in 1912, and attended Ferry Hall in Lake Forest, Illinois. Before her marriage to Kent Craig Lambert in 1918, she had small parts in some stage plays. She and her husband, brother of famed football player and coach, Piggy Lambert, and even more famous fashion arbiter, Eleanor Lambert, had one daughter, Jeanne Anne.

Janet Lambert began her writing by collecting and recording bedtime stories she told to her daughter. She had a long writing career, with well over fifty published works, mostly light romance novels. Some of her titles are: *Star-Spangled Summer*, 1941; *Candy Kane*, 1943; *Friday’s Child*, 1947; *Cinda*, 1954; *Fly Away, Cinda*, 1956; *Wedding Bells*, 1961; *A Bright Tomorrow*, 1965; *The Odd Ones*, 1969, to give a small sampling of her extraordinarily popular works. Lambert died at Long Beach Island, N.J., on March 16, 1973.

## Caleb Mills

Caleb Mills was born in Dunbarton, New Hampshire, in 1806, one of eight children born to a wealthy farmer. He was graduated from Dartmouth College in 1828, attended Andover Theological Seminary for a year, then became an agent for the Sunday School Union, visiting Indiana and other parts of the middle west. He returned to Andover and received a degree in 1833. He answered an ad in *The Home Missionary Journal*, for “a qualified young man who could preach on Sundays in Crawfordsville, Indiana, and could teach in the new college and teachers training school being organized there.” He taught in the preparatory school (was the entire faculty for the

first year) and then served as professor of languages in the newly-formed Wabash college, finally teaching Greek only, until 1876.

Mills' major claim to fame as a writer centered in his passion for public education in Indiana. In 1846, he began writing a series of anonymous pamphlets, one each year, entitled, "*Read, Circulate and Discuss, an Address to the Legislature of Indiana at the Commencement of its Session, by One of the People.*" Mills wrote six of these, with slightly varying titles, and the legislature was slowly galvanized to action, until the first Superintendent of Public Instruction was appointed in 1852. Mills himself was the second to hold that office, and helped establish the system he had designed and promoted.

Caleb Mills is widely acknowledged to be the father of public education in Indiana. He died in Crawfordsville in 1879.

### **Frank Moody Mills**

Frank Moody Mills was born in Ladoga, Indiana in 1831. He was educated locally, attending Wabash's preparatory program, and entered the college in 1843. He left Wabash College in 1845 and, having begun training in the printing trade at age fourteen, became a newspaper, law book and periodical publisher in Springfield, Illinois, and Des Moines, Iowa. He was at various times a farmer, merchandiser, and a promoter as operator of traction and bus lines. He was acting president of the Sioux Falls traction system in his mid-nineties, and was one of the founders of the Northwest Associated Press, now a part of the Associated Press of Iowa.

His memoir, *Early Days in a College Town and Wabash College in Early Days and Now with Autobiographical Reminiscences* was published in 1924, and has been extensively quoted by Ted Gronert and other local historians, providing information not found anywhere else about Isaac Elston, Ambrose Whitlock, Henry Ristine and other pioneers. Mills wrote other works, one being *The Notings of a Nonagenarian: a Study in Longevity*, published in Boston in 1926. He died in Sioux City, Iowa, on October 21, 1929, at age 98. "He was proud of the distinction of being the oldest living alumnus of Wabash College, and considered *Early Days In a College Town* his best."

### **Meredith Nicholson**

Meredith Nicholson was born in Crawfordsville in 1866. His father was a 'substantial' farmer and a member of Lew Wallace's Zouaves, or Montgomery Guard. Edward Willis Nicholson became Captain of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Indiana Battery, served in the Civil War with Sherman, and fired the first gun at Shiloh. His mother, Emily Meredith, was a nurse in the South during the War. This was the background to Nicholson's intense interest in the Civil War, as a writer and reporter.

He grew up in Indianapolis, and was educated in Indianapolis public schools. He left school at age 15, embarking on a series of odd jobs, always getting close to the field of writing. He worked for a law office, then at age 19 began to study law with the firm of Dye and Fishback. He finished his studies with William Wallace, brother of Gen. Lew Wallace, an outstanding Indianapolis attorney. At the same time, he was writing for Indianapolis newspapers, the Sentinel and the News. He put in a stint with a stock brokerage, then served as auditor and treasurer of a coal-mining company in Denver, Colorado. Back in Indianapolis at the turn of the century, he worked exclusively at writing, publishing *The Hoosiers*, historical essays, plus many poems and newspaper pieces. He published *The Main Chance*, *Zelda Dameron*, and, in 1906, *The House of a Thousand Candles*, one of his best-known efforts. Nicholson wrote many other works, including *Honor Bright*, a play with Kenyon Nicholson, and *Tell Me Your Troubles*, a play by Kenyon Nicholson based on a short story by Meredith Nicholson. His last work, *Old Familiar Faces*, was written in 1929. He had a life-long interest in politics and in 1913 was asked by Woodrow Wilson to serve as minister to Portugal, which he refused. In 1933-34, he was envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary from the U.S. to Paraguay, 1935-38 to Venezuela and in 1938-41 to Nicaragua. Nicholson died in Indianapolis in 1947. He was married to Eugene Kounty, who died in 1931. They had four children: Eugene, Charles, Meredith, and Elizabeth.

### **Kenyon Nicholson**

Kenyon Nicholson was born in Crawfordsville in 1894, and graduated from Wabash in 1917. After service in Europe during World War I, he became a theater press agent in Indianapolis. He taught dramatic composition at Columbia University Extension in 1921, and was married to Lucile Nikolas in 1924. By the middle 1920's he was actively writing and producing plays in New York City, and had many successes. His novel, *The Barker*, was made into a play, *The Barker*; both written in 1927. In 1941, Nicholson wrote another play about carnival life, *The Flying Gerardos*.

His first play, *Honor Bright*, was written with Meredith Nicholson, and in 1928, his play *Tell Me Your Troubles* was based on a short story by Meredith. Apparently they were not related, but when Meredith died, Kenyon was among the illustrious honorary pallbearers. Kenyon Nicholson died in New Jersey on December 19, 1986, survived by a niece and nephew.

### **Beatrice Schenk de Regniers**

Beatrice Schenk de Regniers was born in Lafayette, Indiana, in 1914, one of three children of Harry and Sophie Freedman. She grew up in Crawfordsville, where her parents owned a men's clothing store, and lived in a cul-de-sac called Mills Place, later renamed Freedman Place, after her very public-minded parents. She recalled Crawfordsville as 'a lovely town with