

SIXTH REUNION—

(Continued from preceding page)

wall; the door was of clapboards and had wooden hinges and a wooden lock, with a buckskin latch-string hanging out. Logs had been left out on each side for windows. These openings were dressed smooth with the ax, and perpendicular pieces of wood set in at intervals of 10 or 12 inches for sash. On these was pasted paper which was greased to make it more transparent. The desks were of hewed puncheons slanting on pins driven in the wall under the windows; the seats were made of puncheons or slabs hewed out with the ax, with wooden pins for legs. We sat with our backs to the teacher, so as to face the light and the desks. The floor was on puncheons; the chimney was made of sticks and mud, the jambs reaching about half-way to the dirt hearth inside; the hearth was large enough to hold a quarter of a cord of wood. In cold weather a large fire was kept up, built against a huge back-log, to put which in place required the united strength of the master and several of the larger boys. Mr. Hackney, father of Jacob Hackney, was our first teacher. I recollect as schoolmates the Downing, Patterson, Parks, Morrow, Fletcher, Allen, Jackson, Harry and Laughery boys and girls.

THRESHING DAY WAS THE BIG DAY ON FARM IN "GOOD OLD DAYS"**MARY AND JOHN BUCKLES TELL OF PIONEER HARDSHIPS HERE****Letters of These Pioneers Read At Eighth Reunion**

The eighth annual reunion of the Old Settlers was held on Thursday, Aug. 12, 1880, at Mount Pulaski.

Mrs. Mary Buckles' letter as follows, was read at this meeting:

"I will give you a little sketch of the old settlers' times when I came here. When I first started out to find a home I rode about 800 miles on horseback and carried a child. We moved out here in 1822, and lived that winter by the mouth of the lake. The house we lived in was made of logs split and notched at the end and laid together. The way we got our bread in those days, we had to beat the corn into meal and then make our bread and boil our hominy.

"We came to Illinois in October, and I never saw the face of a white woman till in March, except my stepmother. We moved in the spring upon the lake, where Jerry Buckles lives now. We lived in the Frontier House until my husband died. I have seen as many as 100 Indians camped together down where William Buckles lives. The Indians used to stop at our house when they were out hunting and want something to eat. Sometimes my husband would be away from home, and just me and the little children there. It would make my very heart ache, but I always gave them something to eat to get shut of them.

"When we came through Springfield there was but one store, and that was Major Ile's. We got our first grindings at Buffalo Hart and Elkhart. It was ground by a horse-mill. My husband volunteered and went to the war to fight the Indians in 1826, and I was left alone with five little children — not a man on the place. I was thus left from one week to five lots of times. Elizabeth Ann Copeland was the first child I had born in this county. She was born May 3, 1824. I had an aunt who died in March, 1824. The way they made her coffin, they cut a walnut tree down on the place where we lived, and dug it out and buried her in it. She was interred at William Buckles' graveyard. We raised a large family of children, and for 14 years never had a doctor in the house. I had 15 children and raised 14 of them until they were grown and married. There are 12 now living, and I have 73 grandchildren and 67

great-grandchildren living. In those days we clothed our children by spinning and weaving. We wore coverlets, blankets, jeans, flannel, and everything that we wore. Instead of pianos, organs and sewing machines, we had looms and spinning wheels. We did all our own clothing. Children had no chance to get an education in those days, as we only had three months of school in the year. We had no preaching for a long time after we came here, and the first preaching I ever heard was at old Grandfather Turley's; then the next we opened the doors of our meeting. We were not particular what denomination preached. We opened our doors for all. Bob Foster was the first who held a three day meeting at our house; then A. J. Kane, of Springfield, had a three day meeting out under the shade trees. Folks were not as particular then as they are now, for they would come from Buffalo and Sangamon and from all around. We couldn't set as fine tables then as people do now, but always had plenty to eat. I have had from 18 to 20 persons to stay all night with us, when they came up to a meeting. Now, if I were young again and had a family to raise, and knew there was such a country as this, I would be willing to go through it all again. Although I had a very hard time, I never regret it on account of my children. Before I took this last spell of sickness I was able to walk from a half a mile to a mile. When I pass away from this world of trouble, I hope I will be in a world of rest. These are a few items of the way we lived, and had to do in the early days.

I was born in Georgia in 1803, and am now going on 78.

MR. BUCKLES' LETTER

From John Buckles' letter we extract the following:

"Where you now see nice houses, abundant fields of corn and other grain, green pastures where various kinds of domestic animals are quietly grazing, was once a trackless prairie. Standing at this point you might have seen the smoke curling from the mud chimneys of two or three little log cabins scattered along the margin of the lake timber. I was reared in one of these cabins, which was constructed without a nail or a board, and the chinks between the logs were the only windows. Of the present luxuries we had none. I never saw a cookstove until I was nearly grown. The cooking was done at the fireplace, which was

about half the width of the cabin, and which took huge logs for fuel that we were obliged to roll in at the door. Our cooking utensils were mainly the pot and the gridiron, and the kettle oven in which to bake bread. We had no machinery of any kind except the loom and spinning wheel. With these we manufactured the cloth from which our clothes were made. Work was performed by main strength, and with bare hands, thus our bread was truly earned by the sweat of our brow. It was a rare thing to see a man with a pair of boots, and boys didn't wear pants until they were about grown; they wore instead, long homespun aprons.

"Young men, we didn't have kid gloves, as you do, to put on our hands, buggies to ride in, nor fine horses to drive. Our kids were those that nature gave us, tanned by the sun and hardened by toil. Our legs were our buggies, with the springs in the heels. Horses we had none, but sometimes we rode an ox with our fair lady on behind us. The young ladies of that day didn't wear silks and ruffles, nor friz and bang their hair; they were content with a linsey-woolsey dress, made by their hands. The loom was their piano and the spinning wheel their organ, and the music was just as sweet, if not sweeter, than we hear today on a \$500 piano or a costly organ, and I am quite sure the playing was much more profitable. They didn't punch holes in card-board and sew them up again with silken threads, but 'worked' honest buttonholes in their brother's Sunday coats, made of jeans, and knit comfortable socks instead of crocheting useless nicknacks. They sought the washtub and broom handle for exercise. Girls of the present day would almost faint at the sight of such things."

SUPT. OF U.S. MINT MARK SKINNER, WAS FORMER PULASKIAN

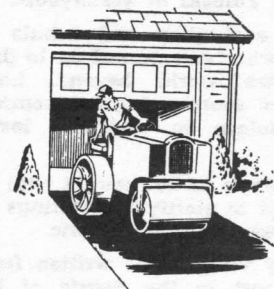
(Dec. 3, 1942)

Listening to the radio in his furniture store, Wednesday noon, John T. Hershey heard an announcement of the sudden death of Mark Skinner in Denver, Colo. Mr. Skinner had been superintendent of the U. S. Mint, there, for several years.

Mount Pulaski people will be interested because Mr. Skinner was born on a farm between this city and Latham, and spent most of his boyhood days here, attending the local schools. The family lived in a home that stood at the southwest corner of the property where Miss Clara Seyfer and Mrs. Katie Bloye reside. There are many here who will remember Mr. Skinner.

OUR CONGRATULATIONS

To the residents of Mount Pulaski on the celebration of the 125th ANNIVERSARY of the Founding of Their City. It is an achievement to be proud of.



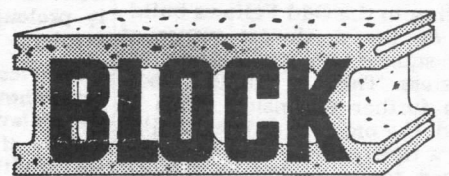
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BEST WISHES...

To All of Our Friends in the Mount Pulaski Community on the Celebration of their 125th Anniversary on July 22 to 29.

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