

Brown County Journal

August 15, 2011

Events:

Wilkerson Dedication
August 20

Old Settler's Reunion
Sept. 2 & 3

Brown County Historical
Society meeting
September 5

Brown County Genealogical
Society meeting
Sept. 13

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Introduction

I've been doing genealogy for about ten years now and have been working in the Historical Society Archives for the last three years. I have come across many good stories, read countless old newspaper articles, biographies, and researched many local subjects. Why do I get to have all the fun, laugh at the goings-on in Brown, and gasp at reading about the grave matters that occurred in our county. I now wish to share these stories with my fellow members. If you have any good stories you would like to share concerning Brown County and its people please send me your story. Enjoy.

Rhonda Dunn, President of the Brown County Genealogical Society
and Archivist of the Brown County Historical Society

Curious About the Cover Photo?

The photo in the title bar above was taken from an old photo from the Historical Society Archives. It is a 1907 photo of the Nashville Mail Carriers. There were 18 post offices in Brown County in 1907 with several being closed that year. The mail carriers were to take the mail from Nashville and deliver it to each of these outlying post offices in the county, most located in little country stores. The post offices that were in operation in Brown County in 1907 in Jackson township were Bean Blossom, Needmore, Richards*, Cornelius*, Helmsburg, Trevlac, in Hamblen township were Spearsville*, in Johnson township they were Elkinsville, Cooper, Youno, Gent*, in Van Buren township they were New Bellesville, Pikes Peak*, Story, Lockman*, Kelp, and in Washington township were Nashville, Mt. Liberty, and Belmont. The people in the photo are from left to right: Effie Poling, Mike Poling, Calvin Collins, Billy Gale, unknown person, John Allison, unknown, Jack Kephart, unknown, and an unknown. If you know of anyone that might have been a mail carrier at this time let us know,

he may be one of the unidentified persons in the photo. In 1907 six of these post offices were closed (the ones with an * by the name) and mail was sent to other post offices. Only speculating but the photo might have been a farewell photo for some of these mail carriers.

William Wilkerson, Revolutionary War Patriot

On Saturday, August 20, 2011, a rare event will occur here in Brown County. William Wilkerson, a Revolutionary War patriot will be honored and a military stone be placed on his grave 169 years and two days after his death. This is not just a story, but once upon a time there really was a war with ordinary Americans who became extraordinary people that believed in an ideal. The average American nowadays takes their freedom for granted and we go from day to day not even thinking about "how did we get here." We can appreciate it a little more now when we see our sons or daughters leave to fight in the Middle East. But we need to realize that this all really started over 235 years ago. These young men gave up some of their life for these ideals to have a free country. Many even lost their lives for these ideals. Unfortunately we may never know about the ones that we lost, but the ones that survived the war and lived to tell about it can give us a glimpse into this time.

William Wilkerson was one of these survivors or should I say patriots. What must he have been like? We know he was a young man when he first entered the war and was probably like any other young man we know that wants to get involved. We can get a glimpse of what his life was like from his military pension application. At the age of 94 he filed for a pension for his service in the Revolutionary War. The name on his military records were spelled as Wilkerson and Wilkinson. He gave many details not only of the battles he fought in but also of his family and his life since he was in the war. He entered the service at about 35 years of age and served four tours of duty. He was a volunteer in the Militia of North Carolina scouting for Tories and even fought in at least two battles, the Battle of Blackwater and the Battle of Guilford. From his pension he stated he had been married twice and had 21 children, 15 boys and 6 girls.

The paragraph that follows is from research done by a descendent of William Wilkerson. He was born Jan. 11 1735 in King George County, Virginia. He was the son of William Wilkerson Sr. When he was a young boy, his father moved the family to Granville Co. North Carolina, where years later, young William served as a soldier in the Revolutionary War. He married his first wife (name unknown) during this time and by his own statement, they had 11 children. After the war, he moved to Rowan County, North Carolina and there he married his second wife, Jemima Franklin. Jemima and William moved again to Knox County, Kentucky, and finally in 1830, they settled on a little farm near Crooked Creek in Monroe County, Indiana near the town of Elkinsville in what is now Brown County. On this farm they raised 10 children. The names of his children here were Davis, Valentine, William, Henry, Peggy, James, Emarine, Hammond, Isom, and Solomon Wilkerson who were all born in this area that is now Brown County. On March 4, 1835, William Wilkerson, with his sons Davis and Hammond, applied to the United States Government for Revolutionary War veteran benefits made available by an Act of Congress passed

June 7, 1832. He personally gave a sworn declaration of the events of his life, in particular when and where he served as a soldier. William died on a little farm that he owned on Crooked Creek in Brown County. Before he died, he went out on his farm and located the place where he wanted to be buried. On August 18, 1842 William Wilkerson died at the age of 107 years, seven months, and seven days. He was buried on the spot he had chosen. Jemima died July 6, 1846 and is probably buried in the grave found next to William, though no stone has been found. The location of these graves had eluded researchers for many years, until July 19, 1986, William's old gravestone, buried under a thin layer of dirt and leaves, was discovered in the Fleetwood Cemetery, originally called the Wilkerson Cemetery, near Crooked Creek in Brown County. The small cemetery contains approximately 30 graves, is overgrown with brush, and totally neglected (This note was made before 2002).

The Fleetwood Cemetery was disturbed a few years ago by the current property owner. There was a lengthy court case and he was sentenced to a year of probation on May 10, 2005. As part of probation, he was to restore Fleetwood Cemetery and put the grave markers back. The Brown County Veterans went out to the cemetery and cleaned it up in July 2011 to get the cemetery ready for the dedication. The good news is that all the grave stones have been put back where the graves were located.

GRAVE MARKER DEDICATION PRIVATE WILLIAM WILKERSON, AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Saturday, August 20, 2011 - 10:30 a.m.

Fleetwood Cemetery on Crooked Creek Road, Brown County,

Welcome and Greetings - Cmdr. Jerry Bell, American Legion 13

Invocation - Chaplain Ron Higgins, American Legion 13

Presentation of Colors - Indiana Society Sons of the American
Revolution Color Guard

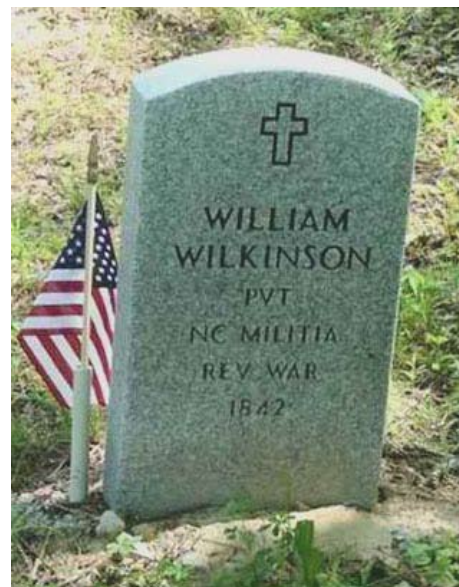
National Anthem - Pauline Hoover

Pledge of Allegiance to The Flag of the United States of America

Posting of the Colors – INSSAR Color Guard

“William Wilkerson, Patriot and Pioneer” – Jeanette Richart

Dedication of Marker (said in unison)



“Our Father in Heaven, we thank Thee for Thy abiding presence in the life of our country. We thank Thee for all those yesterdays of our human race, whose lessons and fulfillments have become a heritage to us. Today, we dedicate this grave marker to the memory of William Wilkerson, who served from North Carolina in the American Revolution. His memory lives on in his descendants and in Brown County. May all here present serve when needed as William Wilkerson did, each in his own way, by being patriotic citizens devoted to God, Home, and Country.”

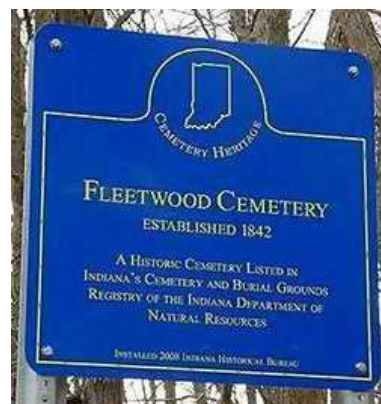
Laying of Wreaths - DAR & SAR

Gun Salute & Taps - Brown County Veterans

Thanks to all who made this dedication possible, especially the Brown County Veterans. There will be a meeting of William Wilkerson's descendants in the cemetery following the program.

Directions to cemetery:

The cemetery is located on a hillside on the northwest side of Crooked Creek Road about 2 1/3 miles northeast of the Boat Ramp and 4/10 of a mile southwest of Crooked Creek Lake. We can meet at the Brown County Veterans Affairs building at Dear Run Park and follow the veterans to the cemetery. There is limited parking at the cemetery so it will be advisable to carpool.



Old Settlers Reunion ~ Sept. 2 & 3

I hope you can attend the Brown County Old Settlers Reunion this year being held on September 2 & 3 at the Bill Monroe Music Park in Bean Blossom. We will have books to sell, a flea market, karaoke, musical entertainment including the Dixie Land Band, and a live auction. As usual we will hold the Pioneer program. They will have prizes for the oldest man, oldest woman, couple married the longest, person who attended the most old settlers reunions, person who traveled the farthest, youngest boy and youngest girl. There will be games for the kids, including a sack race, a three-legged race, a bubble-gum blowing contest, and the ever-popular sawdust scramble. In closing, I want to invite you to become a member of the Friends of The Brown County, Indiana Old Settlers, especially if you live in the Brown County area. So please join us and help keep the Reunion going. It's been an annual event since 1877. Julia Ottenweller, President

Brown County Historical Society ~ September program

Next month's meeting will be on Monday, September 5 at 6:30 p.m. Pete Bullard says the program will be "The Tailey Po Story" as told by Grover Garland Brown. Garland Brock will be the presenter. It should prove to be a scary tale so sit close to someone.

Brown County Genealogical Society ~ September program

Next month's meeting will be on Tuesday, September 13. We are going to have a new and exciting program. Bill Lutes, local historian of Van Buren township will be conducting a walking tour of the village of Pikes Peak. Bill has been researching his hometown for many years. He knows where all the old stores, factories, gas stations, etc. used to be located. If you plan to attend this program wear your walking shoes. We will meet at Pikes Peak Christian Church parking lot at 7:00 p.m. and will walk toward Crouch's Market. It will prove to be a fun event.
