

Linton Township

Linton township is situated in the south center of the county, and is composed of what was formerly part of Pierson and Prairie Creek townships. Its boundaries are, on the north, Honey Creek township, south, Sullivan county, east, Pierson township, and west, Prairie Creek township. It was organized in 1841, receiving its name from one of the early settlers, and contains thirty-six sections of some of the finest farming land in the state, and produces large crops of wheat and corn. Prairie Creek and its tributaries flow through the northwestern portion, and several other small streams in the south and east, furnishing plenty of water for cattle, sheep and hogs, large numbers of which are raised.

The most of the early settlers came from Kentucky, the first being Moses Evans, who arrived in 1812, and settled on the prairie now bearing his name. About the same time Thomas and William Pound and Hamilton Reed came in, also James French, who was a bell-maker and did a large business, trading bells to the Indians, who at the time were numerous in the vicinity. Shortly after his arrival he was driven off by them, but returned again when Fort Harrison was erected. David Goble came among the first, giving his name to the prairie on which he located. Elijah Pound, Ephraim and Joel Kester, the Frakes, William McGlone, R. Beauchamp, David, William and Arthur Boyll, Ephraim, Herman and Smith Sparks, John Carr, John Gunn and John Foxworthy, who was the first school trustee of the township, were among those who arrived at an early day. John Gunn put up the first mill, which was a simple affair run by horse-power, and a little later Bright Thomas, a colored man, an early settler and natural mechanic, erected a water-power mill, to which the pioneers from far and near used to come to have their corn ground.

The first school was held in a log building situated in the south of the township, furnished in the usual primitive fashion with puncheon floor, split poles for seats, the light being admitted through greased paper, which was pasted over an aperture running along one side of the building.

Here, as in most of the townships, we find that the Baptists were the first religions denomination in the field, the first church organized being what is known as Second Prairie Creek Baptist Church, which was constituted August 1, 1828, by a council of the Baptist Association, the Rev. William Stancil being moderator. Shortly afterward a log church was built which was used for worship until 1852, when the present structure, 35x60 feet, was erected on Sec. 17 at a cost of \$1,500. Asa Frakes, William Eldridge and other pioneer preachers filled the pulpit occasionally until 1820, when Absalom Stark was called and regularly installed as the pastor, which position he occupied until his death, which happened in 1837. The church has made steady and permanent growth, and now numbers 110 members, and is the only church outside the village in the township.

The only town in this township was formerly known as Hartford, but the name has recently been changed to Pimento. It is located on Sec. 11 on the Evansville, Terre Haute & Chicago railroad, which runs through the eastern half of the township. The town was laid out in 1852 on the land owned by Israel French, the first man to locate in it being Thomas French, who erected a store and dwelling house, and a year later Harvey Weeks arrived and went into partnership with him in general merchandising. In March, 1865, N.B. Kennet began business in the drug and general grocery line, and also attends to the post-office. The large flouring-mill erected in 1877 has assisted in encouraging the trade

done. Messrs. Leinberger & Co., dry-goods and grocery store, which has opened in the present year, and one or two other small stores, with a blacksmith shop and T. Halberstadt's tavern, complete the list of business establishments.

The building known as Town House was erected in 1858 by subscription, and is 30x60 feet, two stories high. The under story was occupied as a school-house for some time, but is now used for religious meetings. The trustees of the building are E.P. French, Joseph Liston, and Richard Sparks.

The upper floor of the Town House is used by Pimento Lodge, No. 292, A.F. and A.M., as a lodge-room. The lodge was instituted December 14, 1861, and the charter granted May 27, 1868, the first officers and organizers being: W.M., John Willey; S.W., William Brown; J.W., James Foreman; secretary, Joseph McGrew; treasurer, M.S. Gunn; G.T. Bailey, H. Boyll, W.O. Collins, G.F. Hampton, James G. Kester, C.W. Russell, E. Gaskins, J. French, O.P. Boyll, G.F. Dougherty, and R. Bennett. This is one of the leading lodges of the fraternity in the county, having assisted in organizing and building up the lodges at Lockport, Shelburn, Centreville and Fairbanks, and at present numbers over forty members. Their hall is large and comfortably furnished. The present officers are: W.M., J.W. Russell; S.W., W.M. Martin; J.W., E.W. Lloyd; treasurer, John A. McGee; secretary, P. Bledsoe.

The Christian (Disciples) congregation, which occupies the lower story of the Town House, was instituted March 17, 1867, at the Union school-house, with twenty-three members, Robert Allen, one of the pioneer preachers of the denomination, being the elder, and worshipped there until January 13, 1872, when they removed to Pimento, uniting with several brethren east of town. They now have a membership of thirty-six, with Elder Wilson as preacher.

The Pimento Baptist congregation meets once a month in the Town House, having been organized in 1876. The present membership is forty, and along with the Christians and Old Baptist denomination, assist in conducting a union Sabbath-school during the summer. Thirty-five is the average attendance.

The Regular Baptist meeting-house, 40x60, in Pimento, was built in 1869, at a cost of \$1,600. The present pastor, Rev. James Thompson, has held the position since 1861, the congregation having been organized some years earlier.

In the spring of 1880 the Odd-Fellows erected a large two-story building, 40x60, which cost \$1,400, the upper story containing the lodge and ante-rooms of Linton Lodge, No. 485, while the lower one is occupied by Leinberger & Co. as a store-room. Linton Lodge, No. 485, is one of the best in the county, numbering now sixty-one members. It was instituted April 10, 1875, the first officers and charter members being: N.G., N. Bledsoe; V.G., V.S. Carr; secretary, J.S. Bryon, J.R. McGrew, A. Eldridge, Thos. Sparks, J. Sparks, J.F. Bowler, T. Stout, W. Carr, and W.G. Boston. The present officers are: N.G., W.N. Kester; V.G., L.P. Boyll; permanent secretary, John Randolph; treasurer, D. Boyll, and secretary, A.K. Hedges.

A large hay-press, run by the Celts Brothers, is a feature of considerable importance in the business of the town.

There are nine school districts in the township and ten school-houses, two being situated in Pimento, one as a primary and the other as a high school. J.W. Moore is the present trustee.

A coal shaft was sunk about half a mile south of town a few years ago by a stock company, at a cost of over \$5,000, but was only operated two years, when, owing to the water breaking into it, making the expense great, the company collapsed. The property is now owned by Mr. Wyethe, of Terre Haute.

Source:

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