

Felton  
Family

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

*A Frontiersman's Memoirs: Jacob Felton's  
Sketch of His Early Life*

BY

JACOB FELTON

OFFPRINT from *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History  
and Biography*, Volume CVI, NUMBER 4, October, 1982



## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### *A Frontiersman's Memoirs: Jacob Felton's Sketch of His Early Life*

The westward migration from Pennsylvania into the Northwest Territory was a central event of American history in the decades following the Revolution. Jacob Felton (1814–1897) at age seventy-six composed a memoir describing his family's role in this process of colonization of Ohio and Indiana. Based partially upon stories told by his father William Felton (1770–1854), Jacob Felton's "Sketch"\* provides a valuable perspective on several important nineteenth-century phenomena: the nature of the impulse to migration, the same settlers moving several times in search of additional lands, eventual prosperity, Indian raids, a white entrepreneur's attempt to make money at treaty negotiations. Jacob Felton's account illuminates the impact of the Second Great Awakening, the appeal of the temperance crusade, and the influence of the cult of motherhood. There is even a sentimental re-enactment of the prodigal son parable.

Felton's narrative reveals the life of a wild young man as interpreted by a respectable old man. A most significant occurrence — not described in the memoir — was Jacob Felton's later conversion, reformed conduct, and eventual ordination as a minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on October 11, 1862.

The "Sketch" is based upon oral traditions and an elderly man's memory unaided by notes. The conclusions, therefore, have to be assessed with extreme care because Felton's emphasis upon his exotic and exciting past was strained through the blinders of evangelical Christianity. Unfortunately, the manuscript ends abruptly in the middle of the sentence and the last pages have been lost.

\*The manuscript is owned by Helen Spangler of Garden City, California, and Mari Lee Hageness of Onolaski, Wisconsin. It is published with their permission and reproduction rights should be secured from them. They also furnished the genealogical information on the Felton family.

Helen White Spangler

Garden Grove, CA 92641

*A Short Sketch of the life and labors of Jacob Felton*

in compliance with the Earnest Request of many friends, I will try to give a "sketch" of my life, and the life of my father and mother, as far back as my old and feeble mind will let me. I have kept no Journal — that was a fault, I confess, and now if I write anything in my 76th year I must depend chiefly on my memory. are these reasons not sufficient, my dear friends? you say, No, and still urge me to write! Well, then, by the help of God, and the assistance of sister M. Davis, I will try.

My father was born in the lowlands of Germany. his father and mother Broght him over to America when he was about 6 years of age. they died in a short time after they reached Pennsylvania, leaving my father, William Felton, then a small child, and two older brothers, John and Robert Felton, orphans in a strange land. My father was Bound To A man who Brought him up in the Presbyterian faith. He was sprinkled by a Presbyterian Minister.

My Mother was the Daughter of John and Margaret Mansfield. They were born in Ireland they moved from Tyroon Co. to Pennsylvania Where my Mother<sup>1</sup> was Born. She was christened by a Catholic priest and was brought up by Catholic Parents. She became acquainted with William Felton<sup>2</sup> and they Two were Joined in Marriage when she was 18 yrs. of age. they were married at the foot of the Shade Mountains in Pennsylvania. One child, (Katie), was born To them there, they then emigrated to Kentucky near Lexington Co. on the Head waters of the licking River. Two boys (John and Robert) were born to them there on the wild frontier.

My father was A Farmer and by the help of his trusty rifle Kept the family in wild meat such as bear, Elk, Deer, and wild Turkey.

How well I Remember the Old Hunting stories he used to tell us boys I will try and give you a sketch of a hunting expedition my father and three other men took on one of the head branches of the licking River they killed 16 Bear and A Number Deer they took their horses with them and they would tye one horse and the others wouldn't leave him they would then dig out troughs and pack the meat their horses couldn't

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Mansfield (b. 1774-d. 1857), Wayne County, Indiana.

<sup>2</sup> William Felton (b. 1770-d. 1854), Wayne County, Indiana.

carry home in Pack saddles they would pack the Meat in them troughs and split out puncheons and cover the meat with them and pin them down to keep the wolves from eating their meat till they took their first loads home and go back after it. They used the fat bear meat to cook the Deer meat with.

I remember many other adventures that he used to tell too numerous to mention they lived there five or six years, on the wild frontiers.

they then moved to Ohio, them and 25 or 30 more families Colonized together on the west side of the big Miami River about 25 or 30 miles Northwest of Cincinnati near the mouth of Indian Creek. on the old coal reign road the land was what they called squatters Claims. the Colony took with them a hand mill and the Women done the grinding. they put the mill as near the middle of the colony as they could to make it as convenient as possible for all the women to grind their corn they lived in rude log huts. their Beds were constructed of slabs stood on edge the same as we make flower Beds. now there was no floors in their huts and they carried leaves and put inside of those slabs and spread blankets over the leaves for a bed as there were no bedsteads or straw in them days in their colony to be had and the whole country abounded in game both north & west. the rivers and creeks abounded in fish and here they depended on their guns for their meat.

there were no soldiers Nearer than the fort at Cincinnati. while father was Back in Kentucky settling up some Business, word came to the little Colony that the Indians were Coming to make a raid on them this news put the whole Colony in comotion and preparations were made to fly to the fort at Cincinnati for safety as father was gone, mother had to do the best she could father had two horses and mother put the pack saddle on one and threw a salt sack (salt sacks were different in them days to what they are now as they were a long strip of hemp Cloth with a pocket in each side) over the saddle and put Robbie in one pocket and Johnny in the other one and she got on the other horse and took Katie on her lap and led the horse with the precious load on it and got to the fort in safety.

father came Back from Kentucky down the Licking river to Covington and crossed the Ohio river to Cincinnati and there he found Mother and the little ones safe at the fort. But on learning this to be a false alarm, they left the women and children at the fort and they took the

soldiers and went back to their claims and found their huts all right and there they built fort Derrah or Derrahs station when they got their fort completed, they went and Moved their families back in to it and went to work over their claims again and still they Depended on their guns for their meat and running short of meat they Detailed four men, Mother's brother, Charlie Mansfield, and Robert McLeland, William Crumm, and John Larison to go out on a little hunting Expedition they hadnt went more than one-half mile when McLeland shot a Deer and they had just got the intrails out and were just going to put it on a stick when the sentinels (Crumm and Larison) gave the alarm that the indians were coming for sure this time they thought the Report of the gun had attracted the indians attention and they had to Drop the Deer and run for the fort larison being the slowest on foot got Behind and one of the Indians being swifter on foot than the others placed poor Larison in a Close place the indian got close enough to give him a flesh wound in the Calf of the leg which greatly Impeded his speed this encouraged the indian, and throwing down his gun, he Grasped his Tomahawk and came on faster than ever. Crumm seeing the danger Johnny was in called to the others to stop and help save him and he jumped behing a tree and let larison pass and when the indian came close enough he stepped out and gave him the contents of his trusty Rifle and that gave them time to get larison into the fort before the other indians came up when the sentinel at the fort saw them coming they opened the gate and let them in and there was an old man at the fort about 80 yrs. of age and he got a musket and slipped out at the gate. he got down on his knees and rested his gun on a stump and said he was Bound to kill one of them redskins and they had to pull him in and close the gate then the Battle began. the men hurried to the portholes and Mother and Aunt Nancy Swimm and Aunt Becca Goble had to run Bullets all night and they Burned their hands into Blisters with the hot lead they fought hard all night. But when Morning came the Indians Took their dead and left the fort leaving the little colony with but one wounded man he got shot in the hand through the porthole.

From that time until the next summer their hostile movements ceased and the people at the fort began to feel so secure that they would [let] their little ones outside the fort to play. there was a small buckeye tree in a little brushy glade About one  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile from the fort and there

was a grapevine ran up this tree and little Johny crumm and his sister ran off down there to play and he spied the grapes and threw his little hat on the ground he climed up atter the grapes the little girl got tired or something caused her to go back to the fort and they asked her where johny was and she said he was there getting grapes and they went down after him and all they found was little Johny's hat and [the] dreaded moccasin tracks which told all too plain that little Johnie was gone Oh the agony that poor mother suffered when they brought back the sad sad news that the Indians had stolen her little Pet.

no one but a mother that had passed through that trying ordeal can know the void left in that poor mother's heart, but she had the sympathy of that little colony and they made all haste possible and the settlers and what soldiers they had set out to follow the Indians and bring Back the stolen boy but all to no purpose, for it seemed they had completely Disappeared with him, the people had their huts Built close to the blockhouse and they held church in the blockhouse and Everyone had to go for they were afraid to stay at their huts. they would all take their guns and stand them up in the corner till church was out. they had sentinels posted to watch for the Indians for they had not forgot the sad event that had hapened so short a time before, but they saw nothing of them till the next summer when father and uncle Henry Whitaker and some of the other men went over to the fields to see how their corn was doing and they heard a rail fall off the fence and looking up they saw the Indians right there, almost on them, and they broke and ran for the fort and uncle Henry being slower than the rest was left behind, and to make a bad matter worse catched his foot under a grapevine and threw him flat on the ground; seeing he couldn't make it to the fort, he cralled in under the large bunch of grapevine and hid until the Indians were gone past as soon as they found they could not catch the men, they turned and sneaked Back and when uncle henry heard them coming Back he laid quite still, but they turned and went a different path and when he thought it safe he crawled out again and ran for the blockhouse he had just got to the Bank of the creek when he saw an Indian Behind a tree his appearance seemed to frighten the Indian and he broke and run and Uncle Henry jumped in to ford the creek but when the indian saw he was alone, he whirled and shot at him but the bullet struck the water and Uncle Henry got home safe. the indians were defeated so many times they thought they would go

and make their raids somewhere else for they never came Back very close to the fort but once after that time there was an old indian scout in the fort who went out reconoitring about to see if there was any Indians around and he found plenty of them and he had to get, for they took after him and they thought they had him for they were Close Behind and on both sides and there was a big high log ahead of him and he suposed they thought when he got to the log they would have him, but he leaped that log like a deer and ran right on for the fort when they saw him jump the log, they turned and went back they were the Miami tribe and the whites kept moving in and pushing the indians Back till they didnt bother the colony anymore. they had Defeated the Indians so many times and the colony got so strong that after six or seven years there was a treaty effected and the indians had to Bring Back all the prisoners they had taken and the parents found that little johny had been adopted by an old Indian couple and this same two brought johny Back but he would not stay with that poor old father & mother who had mourned for him so long but prefered to go back with his adopted indian parents he stayed another year with them and then they brought him back again and his white parents Begged so hard for him to stay that he stayed he was now thirteen years of age and his own father bought him again and the next day after the Indian couple had gone, the boy was missed and his mother thought he had went back to the camp but they inquired of the Neighbors and they had seen them return alone and they then set out to search for him and found him up a small branch he had killed a deer and had built up a fire and was roasting the meat his gun was standing by the side of a tree.

I think while writing if we could but of seen those rude little huts with their fireplaces of stick and clay chimneys and their johny cake Boards and dutch ovens and their turnips scraped out and filled with Bears oil and some with potatoes scraped out and filled with bears oil and rag wicks we imagine we can see the potatoes roasting in the fire and the meat broiling on the coals and the Children Eating their Mush and milk out of wooden Bowls and iron spoons and the older ones using puter plates & the people with Buckskin clothes on it makes the cold chills run over me to think what danger they were in from the Indians and wild animals and yet they stuck to their claims and Improved them up and most of them got rich right there it was in these troublesome

times two more sons were born to them, william and charlie felton. the land was very rich and fertile and the large bottoms were covered with peavine while the grapevine hung suspended from the Buckeye hawthorn hackberry and walnut pawpaw giving it the appearance of an Eden while the fish by moonlight played in the broad ripples on the great Miami and the otter and the beaver Traversed the banks. While emigration came pouring in the Indians kept giving Back While the howl of the wolf and the whoop of the savage began to die out the sound of the Axe and Maul was heard with new energy and Many a big Buck Elk or Bear Covered the peavine with their rich blood drawn by the hunter's ball.

As there was no railroad and no steam boats, it made it very inconvenient to the people as their nearest trading point was cincinati About 25 or 30 miles away; yet as cultivation increased the farmers sowed flax and the women were busy scutching and hackling and spinning flax and weaving it into Cloth and making that into garments. But it wasnt long till villages began to spring up the people built a mill and a town on Indian creek and they named the town millville and another one rossville and one Hamilton, which finally became the capital of Butler Co.

father and mother had 9(nine) Children born in that colony (which finally became Butler Co three girls and six Boys willie and Charles Mansfield, James, george, agnes, Jacob, Eliza, and Mary. My oldest sister Katie was Married to a man by the name of John Cooper and robert was married to a second Cousin by the name of Eliza Felton. they were Both Married in Butler Co.

the people kept coming in there so fast and taking up claims that the land was all taken up at last clear to the Boundery line and father come to the conclusion he would sell out and go where he could get land for his children, so he sold his farm and left his family there he took his four oldest boys and two other men and went into Indiana on the Big Muskataktuk Bottom where he took a squatters claim and him and his men went to work and cleared out 4 or 5 Acres and piled their Brush and in the spring there came a fresh and took all their brush and the water stood a foot deep all over the ground and swam their logs all apart. So he left there and went farther North into the new Boundery on the west fork of Whitewater just below the junction of nettle creek.

He took a squatters claim there again and then went back into Ohio for his family and there was 25 or 30 families went back to indiana with him and they Colonized there again and took squatters claims they found the land there as rich and fertile there as it was in Ohio they went to work and built their huts and began to improve land we had to go to Connersville to do our trading that was about 20 miles from Nettle Creek junction and we had to go back to our old home in Ohio for our wheat for father thought it best not to sell it. when our new claims became saleable father bought out all the squatters and they took other lands he kept buying till he had six hundred acres all in one body he then told his Neighbors if they would help him he would Build a mill the people were well pleased with this and were willing to help what they could father willing to pay them in part for their labor so father Employed a millwright and the leveling up and work began by their help and by asking in [hands?] and making bees the first [saw mill?] was built in that colony there was more than 30 men there at work and father boarded them. the emigration kept pouring in and in a short time father built a grist mill he had plenty of money and he bought his three oldest children 80<sup>?</sup> acres of land apiece about 15 miles from his (600) six hundred acres and he had 6 sons left to work on his farm yet besides me I was then about 12 yrs. of age. I was the shepherd boy for my work was to tend the sheep and do other chores. Right here the reader perhaps would like to know the lay of the country. Well, river ran a southeast course the land was rich Bottom running the full length of the river those bottoms differed in width from one half to a mile wide the timber on this bench of land was Buckeye, hackberry, burr oak, Sycamore, Box elder interspersed with grapevine and willows bending their waving branches along the river Banks formed a cover for the otter mink coon muskrat and some Beaver the 2nd bench of land was about 10 or 12 feet higher than the first it was rich Black soil and the timber was wild cherry, walnut blue ash gray ash buckeye and pawpaw the land was well wattered and lots of fish in the water while upon the divide the land was level and good wheat land. It was about 40 feet above the level of the creek the timber up here was poplar sugar tree red oak white oak beechwood ironwood, and dogwood and an immense quantity of Blue grapes grew amongst the dogwood and Ironwood there was plenty of game here amongst the timber such as Bear, Deer, wildcat, catamount, and hundreds of

timber wolf and thousands of possum My brothers were all counted good hunters but I think my oldest one robt was the Best. I remember one time after father got too old to hunt robert went out and killed 5 deer and brought them home and threw them down in the yard for father to look at and one other time he went out and killed 4 young bear.

there was no church in the [area?] at this time and we were all very much pleased when we heard A Minister of the Gospel had moved right into our midst it was at this time Mother's faith was shaken for this minister (Goble by name) preached in the homes of the settlers. from my infancy Mother had brought me up in the catholic faith and made me read my catechism I was brought up at my Mother's feet like paul at the feet of gamaliel I and my two younger sisters were taught to pray to St. Peter and the Virgin Mary how well I Remember one day when I and Eliza were out in the harvest field and there was a storm coming up and father told us to go to the house and we started but had not got far when the storm began to rage and we ran in to an old deserted hut to wait till it would cease and we were scared very much and she prayed to the Virgin Mary and I to St. Peter

This minister wakened up such an interest in the colony that they went to work and built a log house to worship in and they named it harmony and after awhile there was another Minister came into the settlement by the name of Wm. McLucas and they got quite a number of members and after awhile a 3rd minister came by the name of Elijah and when Mother heard him preach her Catholic faith was gone and she became a member of the old Christian Church & I joined with her this was when I was 14 yrs. of age in the year 1831. We were taken into the church by this same Elijah Martindale and were Baptized by him I can remember as though it were yesterday. We were led down into a stream called Gobles run [I] stood in the edge of the water and waited till they brought my Dear old Mother out and she stood and waited till they baptized and brought me to her and she took me by the hand and led me away oh those were happy days how well I remember a scene that took place in Felton's Grove at camp meeting. My father and a fellow by the name of Adam stonebraker went to hear the sermon that our Christian minister would preach they both belonged to the presbyterian Church. it hapened to be in the time of the

falling exercise and this Adam got disgusted and started home and on the road he came to the conclusion he would look at the bible and the first verse he laid his eyes on, this he would believe and when he opened it this is what he read.

Behold, ye despisers wander and perish for I will work a work in your days ye will no wise Believe it though men declare it unto you he then closed the Bible and went back and joined the church and lived a Christian life till his death and most of his family became members of the Christian Church My brother, William married his Daughter Sallie Stonebraker and father bought him 80 acres of land joining his 600 acres He moved onto it and began to improve it up and done well for a while but the accursed appetite for whiskey grew faster than his improvements on the place and he went down his appetite grew worse for rum that he soon had to sell his farm that his father gave him and all he had left was a poor heartbroken wife but the love he had for this poor wife and the regard for his own health caused him to repent and he went to work again and bought 40 acres of land in Henry Co. about 15 miles from his old house he then joined a society called the Christians friend and he never touched strong drink again everything he done seemed to bring him in the cash and he Built a large Brick house and bought more land and sons and daughter were born to them he lived to be quite an old man he was 75 yrs. old when he died and was buried in the cemetery in Henry Co.

whiskey was a very common thing in those days and the older Felton boys Formed such an appetite for strong that it proved their curse and not Being satisfied with the gristmill and sawmill prevailed on father to let them build a copper distillery on the place for they couldnt let well enough alone and when they got this done the road to ruin was short and shure they took to card playing and then to gambleing in other ways and as they were thrown in all kinds of company at the distillery they soon formed other Bad habits that was a curse to our dear parents in their old age but amidst all these troubles our dear old Mother stood like a pillar of fire like old hannah at the temple<sup>3</sup> O how could that poor Mother of felt on seeing six hearty, robust boys all her own offspring on the very Brink of ruin I am a shamed to confess But I stood with and oh Dear Reader Whoever you may be, take

<sup>3</sup> Hannah, the mother of Samuel, appeared in the temple before Eli. I Samuel, ch. 1.

warning by this for I began Backsliding to the drinking of Eggnog and the Neglect of the Bro. & sisters in the church Oh Brethren be not too hasty to censure the Backsliding Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to Doubtful Disputations.

I went to a house raising never thinking satan would tempt me But they had the curse of the nation there and they took sugar, milk, and Eggs and stirred into the whiskey and [beget?] me to Drink of it and I was green enough to submit and drank too much I crawled away and lay down, trying to hide the Disgrace. poor old mother wept bitter tears when she heard of my Downfall and begged me to repent But all to no purpose for I was young and stubborn and waited for the brothers of the church to come and talk to me But they didn't miss the one lost sheep like our Savior does There was 90 and 9 in the fold but one was missing and the Brethren searched not for it and I kept going on from bad to worse. Drinking fighting gambling playing the fiddle for dances and a great many other things.

at the age of sixteen I Became tired of the restricting hand of my parents and ran away from hom but when I was gone I became sorry of my mad act and wished myself home again. But I was Determined to earn something before I went back But oh the long nights that I lay thinking of my dear old mother but I hired out to drive oxen for \$8 a month, and when my 5 months was up he gave me (50) fifty dollars instead of forty for my good conduct you had better think I was proud when I got my money and got started back home.

I forgot to say, that when I first left home I went to Indianapolis and hired out to James Ray, the governor of the state of indiana<sup>4</sup> at that time and I was doing well there But him and his wife had some trouble and she left and went Back to her people in centerville, wayne Co therefore I had to get a new place I started farther west I traveled awhile till I got tired and I sat down on a log and while I sat there I changed my mind and got up and went right Back to the suburbs of the same town and there I hired out to drive a dray wagon for a man by the name of McPherson he owned a grist mill and I delivered flour meal and feed this McPherson was a Bachelor and he hired our board of a man by the name of Mike Vanblarigan and they fell out at

<sup>4</sup> James Brown Ray (1794-1848) served as governor of Indiana 1825-1831.

something about boarding the mill hands and had quite A spat one day after that, McPherson had occasion to cross the river and the ferryboat was on the other side of the river and he hired a fellow to take him across in a canoe and just as they were starting Vanblarigan came up and wanted to cross too and the ferryman-took him in and when they got out into the middle of the river, Mike Vanblarigan said he was going to upset the canoe. McPherson begged Mike not to for he could not swim, but Mike got up, put one foot on either side and began Rocking the canoe and did upset it and as it went over, Van grasped McPherson as though he would save him But they went down to the very bottom and van came up all right but the authorities had to drag the river for the body of McPherson and when they found him, the side of his head looked like it had been struck with a rock they arrested vanblarigan and put him in jail and he came near getting out and only for the guard at the jail would have made his escape But they could not prove enough on him to condemn him and they had to set him free but if he escaped true justice there, there is a higher court where he will get his Just Deserts the death of McPherson caused me to change my place and I then [hired?] to McDermot to drive oxen as I stated Before as soon as I got my \$50 I started home I will never forget when I got to the Barn I saw my dear old mother out at the clay oven there was a little ravine between the barn and the house and I could scarcely get up the bank, but I took a little repentant cry and then started on, and my dear old mother met me at the gate and threw her dear old arms around my neck and said thank god the prodigal has returned, and with tears in my eyes I exclaimed Mother, I've come back to thee no other help I know, no spot of land do I possess, no cottage in the Wilderness a poor wayfaring boy, I plucked up courage and went on into the house to see father and all the welcome he gave me was "well," you've got back But my sisters and brothers gave me a warmer welcome.

Well father still run the grist mill and the sawmill and the Boys run the Distillery and a Tannery and kept on drinking and gambling and the farming kept going Down. I stayed at home about one year this time and I took a notion to go to Michigan myself and another young man went on foot through to southern Michigan, we traveled 30 miles through an Indian reserve with not one white man house The land

looked very fertile and we saw plenty of signs of game we passed through 6 or 7 indian villages and we saw their wigwam and the old squaws and their papooses. We passed through one wilderness about 8 miles long and we passed through the tamarac swamps and lakes and rivers we had to swim Eel River with our knapsacks on our Backs we overtook 5 other men before we got to yellow river and in the night I and one of those five men I spoke of planned to scare the rest of the boys we could hear the Indians up the river yelling and we thought it would be such [fun?] to play a trick on them and we tied our heads up in Indian style and slipped out and got us a club and came back in with an Indian whoop and our clubs raised and our handkerchiefs tied over our head but I tell you, we was glad to beg for life I think the stoutest one of that gang got hold of my throat and we dare not laugh that night or after ward if we had felt inclined to do, which I don't think either of us did it learned us not to play indian again, but we went on to Michigan together and took a parting glass and that is the last time I ever saw them one day we were passing on a ridge between two prairies and we saw four objects coming toward us and we stopped to see what they were. When they came closer, we saw they were three deer and a large timber wolf. the deer had their tongues run out and the wolf wasnt fifteen yards behind them and we had not a gun nor a revolver we went on a piece farther and came to an old shanty and Inquisitiveness caused us to take a peep into it and there sat an old Indian Chief dead we learned afterward that he had fell out with his son and had tried to kill him but the boy ran into the shanty where his mother was and the gun down and killed his father and they left him there he had his gun and his tomahawk and butcher knife with him and the woods [mice?] had eat off the toes of his moccassins and eat his toes off away back, and we went on and left him. (I forgot to say that I went there to see my sister and her husband who had moved there Before) we went on to my sister's house how glad she was to see me I stayed there all summer and worked at the Ironworks and the last time I Ever saw that sister was when I started home that fall she Stood outside the door with her head leaned against the wall weeping bitterly and she was Dead in less than one year from that time leaving 5 children with a drunkard for a father there was a man found dead awhile after that and the papers in his pocket bore the name, John Cooper, and as that was Katie's husband's name, we supposed it to be

him, but we couldn't find out whether he had been killed or had died in a drunken spree.

Willie their oldest boy procured homes for the other children.

I went on about 30 miles from there and took sick on the very place where we had camped and played the Indian as we were going but during this time a man by the name of pomroy had built a kind of a boarding house there and I lay sick about 2 weeks right where plymouth now is. It is now called Marshall Co But was then a wilderness they took good care of me and when I got able, I started on and passed right where peru now stands. There was but one house built there then. It also was a vast wilderness then, but is now Cass Co I think if I am not mistaken.

and all this time I had served the Devil well, and a short time after I got home we heard of the Indiands Counsel<sup>5</sup> with the government and my brother John and myself thought we would go an speculate among the indians, and having cattle and wagon of our own, we bought some sugar Tobacco shawls handkerchiefs rings Beads and a Barrel of whiskey we hitched 3 yoke of cattle to one wagon and set out through the swampy wilderness We had to go 150 miles to get to the treaty and some days we wouldn't go more than 6 or 8 miles but we kept right on and we got there at last but other men had took in so much whiskey that they could do nothing with the Indians for some of them would come to the counsel in war paint and the officers had to build a guardhouse and take the whiskey from them when they brought it in and they took our Barrel as soon as we came there and while the treaty was going on I often went to their Indian war dances they were all painted up in red paint they cleared off a great round circle so they could dance round & round I have saw as many as five hundred indians dancing at one time. they danced round a big fire kept up by two Indians who kept constantly poking dry stick on they had a large brass kettle hung over this fire willed with Deer meat their music was made by one of the tribe who had stretched a deer skin right tight over a hoop and for a drum stick he used the leg of a deer cut off at the knee with the foot left on he would beat a tune one the deer Skin and the

<sup>5</sup> The Miami Indians signed a treaty with the U.S. government at the Fork of the Wabash River, Oct. 23, 1834.

little bells on their leggings would keep time to the beating of the hoop & skin drum the women and men were next the fire or I should of said the squaws were in a circle around the fire and them men next and the warriors in a ring around the outside this I suppose was to show their protection over the weaker ones and when they would come to a certain post they would all give a war whoop that would almost make the hair raise on your head the warriors had butcher knives in their left hands and tomahawks in their right and they all went round and round to the left while the firelight reflecting on those weapons looked like an army with Banners they would wave their weapons over their heads in a perfect circle it made them look terrific I saw a horse run against a drunk man and it killed him Instantly and the next morning after this an indian got killed by his horse [?] running away I will here relate a little circumstance that occurred to me while there we had turned our cattle out to graze on the blue grass. We put a bell on each yoke so we could hear them and find them without any trouble, but someone had took the Bell off of one yoke and I couldn't find them so I got a young Indian to go with me to hunt them when we got in the wood I wanted to buy a blanket from him and I took my pocket Book out to show him how much I would give him for it and he wanted to lift my pocketbook to see how heavy it was a I like a f--l let him have it and he turned and run with it. But I was young and swift on foot and I got me a club and it didnt take me long to catch him. He stopped and gave it to me.

I saw a great many things while there. I was standing on the bank of the great Wabash river and I saw two squaws come down to the river with their Babes and I waited to see what they would do and they took them out of their blankets and dipped them into the water 9? times a piece to harden them for the future this was in the last of october and very cold and frosty. one other day I was hunting the cattle and I heard the sound of an ax in the forest? I was eager to see who it was away out there and I hurried forward and when I got close enough to see who was chopping, I saw an indian squaw chopping in the top side of a log. I was anxious to see what she was going to do I discovered she was chopping a trough in the log. I saw something laying on the log wrapped up in a blanket. I remained hid till she had finished and she then took the bundle up and laid it in the log covered it up the best she could. She then cut a small pole and tied a handkerchief