HISTORY OF

LOGAN COUNTY

ILLINOIS

A RECORD OF ITS SETTLEMENT, ORGANIZATION, PROGRESS
AND ACHIEVEMENT

By LAWRENCE B. STRINGER

"Local history is the ultimate substance of national history."—Wilson

VOLUME I

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CHAPTER IV.

THE ABORIGINES.

In the transfer of real estate, it is customary to require an abstract of title, showing the successive owners, from its first possessor. A similar interest should attach to the matter of the past occupants and owners of what is now known as Logan County. At different periods in the distant past, Logan County, in common with other portions of the wide Western World, was the home of vast populations. Here, events transpired as great and thrilling as have ever occurred since. Here were victories and defeats, scenes of happiness and horror. Here cities have risen and fallen. Here great peoples have risen, flourished, and utterly vanished, leaving behind them no record of existence but their voiceless graves. Passing over a consideration of the first primitive peoples, as well as what is known as the Mound Builders of a supposed more recent date, all of whom have left no discovered traces of their existence in this section of the state, and whose history is at best apochryphal and visionary, we come to the American Indian, who at the time the first white man, in his birch bark canoe, floated down the majestic Mississippi, was the real lord and owner of the soil of what is now Illinois.

These Indians were divided into powerful tribes, who held their hunting grounds, by the power of the tomahawk and club. Chief among these tribes were the Kickapoo, industrious, energetic, more civilized and cleanly than all their neighbors, but equally cruel, treacherous and unforgiving. From the earliest days, their bitter hatred of the encroaching white man was impicable and they were ever a fierce tribe. Their historical records run back to the first occupation of the St. Lawrence Valley, by the French. Champlain found them along the shores of Lake Huron. From that early day, they proved an intractable people, never forming any lasting alliance with either the French or the English. They reached Rock River from the north, about the same time as the white explorers of Illinois, and from that date remained prominent in all the savage warfare incident to early colonization, roaming, at different periods over nearly every county within the present limits of the state. They were almost among the first to commence war and
the last to submit and enter into treaties. They were in the field against Generals Harman, St. Clair and Wayne, and were leaders in all the bloody charges at Tippecanoe. For many years, they harassed the exposed settlements, were long the terror of the Illinois frontier and more than all the other tribes combined, advanced the advance of white settlement.

By 1818, the Kickapoo had become fixtures throughout the central portion of the state and their principal rendezvous was along Suh, Kickapoo and Sugar Creeks in what is now the County of Logan. Davidson and Stave's History of Illinois, page 39, says: "The Kickapoo, in 1809, occupied the country southwest of the southern extremity of Lake Michigan. They subsequently moved southward, and as a more recent date dwelt in portions of the territory, on the Mackinaw and Sangamon rivers and had a village on Kickapoo Creek and at Eldhart Grove." Parrish's Historic Illinois says: "The principal towns of the Kickapoo were located on Kickapoo Creek and at Eldhart Grove." In fact, Kickapoo Creek, rising in McLean and flowing principally through Logan County, was named in honor of the tribe. Ferdinand Ernst, mentioned heretofore, in his accounts of his travels in Central Illinois in 1809, recites, that after leaving Eldhart Grove, they journeyed northward to Salt Creek, (called by the Indians, the Omaquapasipi River), that they had intended to examine the locality of the Kickapoo town, but were forced to forego it, because unable, from high water, to get across Salt Creek, or as he terms it, the Omaquapasipi River.

Governor Reynolds, in his "Pioneer History of Illinois," in a thrilling account of the kidnapping of certain early settlers, in Kentucky, by Kickapoo braves, and their being carried by their captors to the principal Kickapoo town, located this Kickapoo town, "on Salt Creek, north east of the Elk Heart Grove, in Sangamon County." Reynolds wrote his history in the sixties and still includes in Sangamon County, the territory now known as Logan, as was frequently done at that time. As this account, (now out of print), gives a chronicle of the first historic event which connected Logan County with the white race (the same occurring in 1790, the first year after George Washington was inaugurated first president of the United States), it is reproduced here, in Gov. Reynolds' exact words:

"It will be recollected, that James Gilham, Sr., emigrated to Illinois at an early day, and at a still earlier one, he emigrated from South Carolina, and settled on the frontiers of Kentucky. In the year 1790, he had selected himself a residence in Kentucky, and was in the field plowing his corn, with one of his sons, Isaac, then a small boy. The boy was with his father, clearing the young corn from the cobs and sods, which the plow might throw on it, while the rest of the family were in the house. Several Kickapoo warriors went to the house and captured Gilh
ham's whole family, that were not with him in the field. The field was
some distance from the house, and he did not immediately discover the
disaster. These savages captured his wife, one girl and two sons. What
horrible feelings Gilham experienced, when he returned home from
his work, as he supposed, to his family and dinner; but discovered his
home sacked by the Indians, his family captured, and either killed or
doomed to savage bondage; but man was made to mourn.

"The Indians made the family, by signs, remain quiet, so as not to
alarm Gilham in the field. They made quick work of it and started for
the Kickapoo town, towards the sources of the Sangamon River, Illinois.
They cut open the bed-ticks, and took such articles out of the house as
they could carry away on their backs. They were afraid to take any
horses, lest the whites would follow their trail and destroy them. The
country where Gilham resided was thinly settled and before he could
get a party to pursue the Indians, they escaped. Mrs. Gilham was so
terrified that she was almost bereaved of her mind. After the Indians
had taken the house, and the family, the first she recollects was her son
Samuel, a small boy, saying; 'Mamma, we're all prisoners.' Gilham
and neighbors followed the Indian trail a considerable distance, but
could not overtake them. He, on his return, suffered misery and mental
anguish that is indescribable. Yet hope lingered with him, that, as the
Indians had not killed his people, he would again recover them. Hope
never entirely abandons any one, in almost any affliction.

"The Indians steered clear of the settlements and were extremely
cautious in their march. They kept a spy before and one behind, on the
trail, so that their retreat was guarded, as much as possible, by their
numbers. The party suffered from much hunger. The three white chil-
dren were in great misery, from their hurried march and the want of food.
But human nature can endure much and will contrive many expedients,
before suffering death. Mrs. Gilham patched up rags around the feet of
her children, to save them from the briars and thorns. They traveled
over a wilderness, without roads. A mother's love for her children
knows no bounds. Sympathy, at last, seized on the warriors, and they
treated the prisoners with all the savage kindness and mercy to their
power. They were out of provisions and one day they failed to hunt for
something, to save them from starving. The children had a small mor-
tel of dried meat to eat, and the grown ones nothing. Two of the best
hunters were sent out and one returned with a poor summer raccoon.
Mrs. Gilham said that the sight of this poor coon caused her more hap-
iness than any other earthly sight she ever saw. She was afraid her
children would either perish with hunger or the Indians would kill them,
to save them from starvation.

"The party could not hunt, near the white settlement, for fear of de-
tection and if they delayed, the whites would overtake them. This was
the reason of their going so long without food and almost suffering
dearth from hunger. This coon was not in Parishian style, but
most of the hair and fur were taken off, and some of the contents of
the extreme inside were thrown away, while the balance was put in a brass
kettle and placed over a fire. The coon was soon boiled into a nonde-
script dish, mixed together the meat, bones, hide, some hair, some en-
trails, claws and feet, of the animal. As soon as this mess was cool,
and before the iron and wooden spoons were in complete operation,
and the whole assembly, of white and red skins, got some relief from
absolute starvation.

"As they approached the Ohio River, they became more cautious
for fear of meeting the Americans on the river, either waylaying by
them, or in boats descending the river. They came to the Ohio a small
distance from Hawsville, "Kentucky, and camped near the river, until
rafts could be made on which to cross. They were detained more than
a day in making rafts. Dry logs were procured and tied together, with
red clover bark, and the rafts placed near the edge of the water, so that
they might be put in the river in a moment and not touch the water
before they started over, as they would not be so light, having received
some water before. The only savages were afraid to cross the river in
daylight. Mrs. Gilham was much terrified at the idea of crossing the
river with her children at night. The party had three rafts. The
largest one took Mrs. Gilham and her three children, with two prudent
old Indians, to paddle it over. The others crossed in the two rafts pre-
pared for them. The embarassment was in the night, as silent as if they
were in a grave yard, and the rafts were paddled over the Ohio with the
same secrecy.

"These warriors considered it a great triumph to take these four
prisoners and conduct them in safety to the Indian town. In this pro-
portion, they exercised all their talents of bravery and sagacity to as
complish it. But when they had crossed the Ohio, they considered
themselves safe and released their watchfulness and caution to some
extent. In the country south of White River, in the present state of
Indiana, they hunted, marched slow, and lived well, in comparison to the
time they ate the coon. They steered clear of the small white settle-
ments around Vincennes, and crossed the Wabash, below Terre Haute.
They marched through the present counties of Clark, Cole and Decatur,
Illinois, and, finally, after a long and hazardous travel, from the south-
western frontiers of Kentucky, three or four hundred miles, they reached
in safety, the Kickapoo town, which was situated on Salt Creek, north-
east of the Elk Heart Grove, in Sangamon County.

"What a horrid situation the Indian war placed the Gilham family in
Four with the Indians, and two in Kentucky, in great misery and affec-
tion. Gilham, as soon as he found his family were not killed, be
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taken prisoners by the Indians, took courage, and hoped again to see his wife and children. He sold his improvement in Kentucky, put his son, Isaac, with a friend and set out in search of his people. After much delay and fatigue of mind and body, he found they were alive, amongst the Indians, and made arrangements to purchase them. At last, he obtained all his lost family and they lived together, many years, in happiness. The young son, Clement, could not talk a word of English, when he was regained by his father. In 1815, Ann Gilham, wife of James Gilham, obtained a grant of land of 160 acres, from Congress, as an honorable testimonial of the suffering and hardships, in her captivity with the Indians, as above narrated."

The above quaint narrative is valuable for various reasons. It shows that as early as 1790, the Kickapoo tribe of Indians were in full possession of the hunting grounds of Central Illinois; that the principal town or capital of the tribe was in what is now Logan County, and not elsewhere, as frequently claimed; and that the Kickapoo Indians were not the exceedingly cruel and bloodthirsty tribe, they have been described to be. Mrs. Gilham and her children were undoubtedly the first white people to set foot on Logan County soil, even though under protest; and yet this was thirty years before a permanent settlement, by whites, was actually attempted.

The next record of a white person in Logan County is found in the annals of the Illinois Territory. About 1810, the Indian tribes, including the Kickapoo, had become hostile and were making forays on the scattering white settlers, in the southern portions of the state. Territorial Governor Harrison sent deputations to the various tribes in Illinois, to endeavor to settle, by treaty relations, the unsettled condition of affairs. Davidson and Stave's History of Illinois, page 256, says: "A mission in charge of Joseph Trotier, a sagacious French creole, of Cahokia, was also sent to the Kickapoo, who inhabited the country along Sugar Creek, in the northern part of the present county of Logan. The usual talks or speeches, with many fair promises, from this rather shrewd, but treacherous and implacable nation, were had, which were also written down as interpreted."

Following this, in 1812, Governor Edwards, of the Illinois Territory, arranged a protracted council, with the Indian chiefs and warriors. This was held at Cahokia, April 16th, and was attended by representatives of the Kickapoo, Pottawattomies, Ottawa, and Chippewas. The Kickapoo chiefs and warriors, (or what might be called Logan County's representatives), present, were Little Deer, Blue Eyes, Sun Fish, Blind of an Eye, Otter, Makkak, Yellow Lips, Dog Bird and Black Seed; these names being, of course, the English equivalent for the real Indian names. Gomo, of the Pottawattomies, was the spokesman of those assembled. On behalf of the Kickapoo, Little Deer, presented Gomo, in
the following words: "My father, I am of the village of the Great Lick. I give you my hand and wish to be peaceable. You might have heard
tale of me and I am well known by all these Indians here. It is well
known to them all that I never listened to the Prophet. I am the first
chief, who, after the battle of Tippecanoe, went to Governor Harrison
with my flag. My father, my chiefs and warriors are here, who all
know me to be a peaceable Indian. Gomo will speak to you and we will
all agree to what he will say. My father, the people of my village are now
anxious for my return, to hear the results of this council. We have re-
flected on your speech of yesterday and we have consulted together, and
Gomo will answer, in the name of us all." This eloquent introduction
of the speaker of the day, by one who at that time, before the day of
white settlement, was the most distinguished resident of what is now
Logan County, is well worth preservation here.

The Cahokia council did not accomplish its desired effect and hos-
tilities broke out later more fiercely than ever. Governor Edwards
then raised a small army, among the early settlers, to silence the war-
ing Indians. On the 18th of October, the defenses of the frontier
having been provided for, his crude army of 400 mounted men, took up
its line of march. Davidson and Stuve's History of Illinois, gives this
line of march, as follows: "The route pursued was upon the west side
of Cahokia creek, thence to the Macoupin, which was crossed, near the
present site of Carlinville; thence northeasterly, crossing the Sangamon
below the junction of the north and south forks, west of the present
capital of the state; passing thence east of Elkhart Grove, crossing Sal
Creek not far from the present City of Lincoln and thence in a north-
ward direction, striking an old deserted Kickapoo village on Supi
Creek." These tenacious bark wigwams were painted up with red
savage devices, representing the red skins scalping whites, and the
town was burned to ashes. From this point the "army" moved on to
Lake Pecoria.

From all of the above interesting Indian history, it can fairly be
deduced that the principal Kickapoo Indian town was in Logan County,
was located on Salt Creek and its site was probably slightly west of
and probably including the present Lincoln Chaustaqua grounds. The
nearest to an actual eye witness of this location was Ferdinand Ernst,
referred to before, who in a recital of his travels in 1819, describes Elk-
hart Hill, and then continues: "We continued our journey northward
(from Elkhart Hill) and soon reached the charming banks of the Oh-
quapasipasip, (the Indian name for Salt Creek). Alas, the river was too
high to be crossed on horseback. Here a passable road runs north-
ward to Fort Clark on Lake Pecoria," and then he adds, "unable to get
across the river (Salt creek), we were obliged to forego examination
of the locality of the Kickapoo town and we started on our return jour-
ney,"
Great Hick. have heard.

It is well known the first settler of the warfrontiers was a man named Harrison, who all and we who are now Ve have gathered, and introduced this day of the events in the history of the county, as well as the events in the history of the county.

The county of Logan was formed in 1816, and the county seat is now in the town of Rushville. The county was named in honor of Logan, the chief of the Shawnee Indians, who was killed in 1774 while opposing the expansion of the white settlements.

The county is located in the northeastern part of the state, on the Illinois River, and is bounded on the north by the Wisconsin River, on the east by the Door County, on the south by the Winnebago County, and on the west by the Wisconsin and Door Counties.

The county is divided into 10 townships, with a total area of 440 square miles. The population is estimated at 12,000, with Rushville being the largest town in the county. The county seat is located in Rushville, and is the site of the Rushville State Hospital.

The county is known for its beautiful parks and recreational areas, including the Rushville State Park, which features hiking trails, picnicking areas, and a lake for fishing and boating. The county also has a rich history, with many historic sites and landmarks to visit, including the Rushville State Hospital and the Rushville State Park.

The county is served by the Rushville School District, which offers a K-12 education to over 2,000 students. The district has a strong commitment to providing a quality education for all its students, and offers a variety of programs and extracurricular activities to support their academic and personal growth.

The county is also home to a number of businesses and industries, including agriculture, manufacturing, and services. The county is a hub for commerce and industry, with a diverse economy that supports a wide range of jobs and career opportunities.

In summary, the county of Logan is a beautiful and vibrant place to live, work, and play. With its rich history, stunning scenery, and thriving economy, it is a great place to call home.
name. Here the wild animals came for miles around, to satisfy their
taste, by slowly eating the saltly earth and here the Indian hunter was
always sure to find wild game. It will be remembered that Little Deer
at the Cahokia Council stated that he was from the village of the Great
Lick. It is even possible that this was the Indian name of the Logan
County Kickapoo town.

The beginning of the end of the Kickapoo, in Logan County, oc-
curred July 30, 1819. Prior to that, they were the rightful owners of
the soil and claimed all that scope of country south of Kankakee River,
east of the Illinois River and north of a line drawn from the mouth
of the Illinois to the Wabash. This, they claimed as their property, by
descent from their ancestors, by conquest from the Illinois and uninter-
rupted possession for more than fifty years. The treaty, by which they
ceded the above tract of land, to the United States, and retired forever
from the home they loved so well, was made at Edwardsville, on the
date above given. The negotiations on the part of the United States
were made by August Choteau and Benjamin Stevenson. The Kicka-
poos were represented by Pemontan, Penasee, Keetatta, Shekoan,
Mawntoio and eighty dusky chiefs and warriors, with their plumes,
paint and warpaint, acting for themselves and their tribe. Reluctantly
and substantially under duress, they made their scrawls and marks to the
instrument, by which they easily gave up forever their old time home,
the graves of their ancestors, their fertile fields and hunting grounds.
The land ceded by them is estimated to have contained ten million acres.
For this, they were to receive $2,000, in silver, annually, for fifteen con-
secutive years, at their new location on the waters of the Osage River,
the government guaranteeing them peaceable possession of their country
on the Osage and to restrain all white persons from hunting or settling
thereon. The government also agreed to furnish boats to transport
their property down the Illinois River, and to select some judicious
person to accompany them in their journey through the white settlement.
Ferdinand Ernst, before referred to, was present at the making of
his treaty, at Edwardsville. Of the event he says, "The most remark-
able curiosity, which met me at Edwardsville, was the camp of the Kick-
apoo Indians, who were sojourning here, in order to conclude a treaty
with the plenipotentiaries of the United States, whereby they renounced
all rights and claims to the lands on the Sangaunon, Omasipasipipi, and
the entire State of Illinois, ceding the same to congress and to imme-
diately vacate the State of Illinois. Their color is reddish brown; their
face irregular, often horribly colored with red paint; their hair is cut
to a tuft, upon the crown of the head and painted various colors. Very
few are clothed. In summer, a woolen covering; in winter, a buffalo
skin is their only covering. They seem to be very fond of ornaments,
as of old; they wear a kind of a leather shield belt on their back.

Proc. only 400 to come.

After the Kickapoos had vacated the country along the Wabash,
the Council on the bank of the Kickapoo, where the Illinois and
Wabash will be met, and where the Kickapoo and Wabash come together
in a straight line. The Kickapoo Indians, it is said, are slender and
refined in habit, and live in the naked state. They have long hair,
in an intricate style, and paint their bodies. Their skin is taken
in stripes, to dry in the sun, and ride painted on horses. They
notches cut in their logs. They tattoo their faces, and from them free.
their people wear wigwams. They cut their hair to dry in the sun,
in these cases come in standing and ride painted on horses. As
soon as they moved to the plains, the Kickapoo Indians took
in a circle, on the plains, and gradually became, from the
After not be kept by the Indians to hunt or settle.

They were surrounded by Creek Indians, and dwindled to
these were not to support the
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as of silver rings about the neck and arms. They likewise carry a shield before the breast."

Proclamation was made of this treaty January 13, 1821. By 1822, only 400 Kickapoos were left in Illinois. As the white settlers began to come in, these gradually withdrew, until by 1876, none were left. After the establishment of Indian agencies, Indians of other tribes, principally Delawareans and Pottawatomies, would occasionally pass through the country, for a number of years following the withdrawal of the Kickapoos, and many of the Kickapoos themselves remained for years, along the creeks and about the timber, loath to leave their old home. In passing through, these Indians of other tribes would stop a day or two, near the creeks, and hunt, in order to obtain a supply of food, principally deer meat.

Referring to the Indians, C. C. Ewing, an early settler in the county, in an interview, said: "The Indians about our place were of the Kickapo tribe. The government permitted them to remain and hunt, after having treated with them for their lands. These savages were a lawful sight to us boys, they being the first we had ever seen. Some were painted, different colors; others had heavy rings in their ears, or had knives cut in them. Their camp was close to our place and we visited them frequently. They were quite friendly and we could easily learn their peculiarities. They would spread their deer hides around their wigwams and cut the venison in small slices and place these on the hides to dry in the sun. Their dogs, which were numerous, had first choice in these pieces and were generally undisturbed. When a deer would come in sight, the entire squad of braves would rush for their ponies and ride pell-mell after it, shooting from the backs of their ponies. As soon as the deer fell, it would be taken across the back of a pony, trained to the purpose and brought to camp. When their dinner was prepared, of venison and soup, the warriors arranged themselves around the pot in a circle, spoon or ladle in hand. The chief placed himself in a prominent position, and amid deep silence, pronounced a harangue in the Indian tongue, which we supposed was saying grace. The moment he concluded, each Indian rushed for the pot, as it is on a race for life, and rapidly began to devour its contents."

After the Kickapoos retired to the Osage County, the tribe could not be kept intact. Some settled down to cultivate; more rambled off, to hunt on the grounds of southern tribes, entering Texas and Mexico. They were sent out of the Chickasaw country in 1841, but were allowed in Creek territory for some time. In 1858, the agency band had dwindled to 225; in 1839 to 419. In 1845, it had increased to 516 and these were in a thriving condition, raising enough vegetables and grain, to support themselves and supply Fort Leavenworth. They refused to be Christianized, by any sect. A leading chief, one Kenned-o-s, set him-
self up as a prophet and had quite a following. He was said to have been unusually eloquent. In 1854, they were removed to a reservation in Atchison County, Kansas, part of their large tract being ceded for $300,000. Soon after, the tribe lost by smallpox and by 1863, there were only 343 on the reservation, the southern or wild band only appearing when the annuities were to be paid. Soon after, the Atchison and Pike's Peak Railroad bought part of their lands at $1.25 per acre.

In 1865, thirty families took land in servility, 160 acres to each family, and seventy-nine families took their land in common. The roving Kickapoo numbered about a thousand in 1873, when about 300 returned from Mexico and were placed in the Indian territory. In 1873, there were 274 at the Kansas reservation and there were 46 children in their schools.

The Kickapoo Indian, like all others of his mysterious, untraceable race, has contended against fate; his once mighty power is broken, the charm of his ancient glory is among those things that are past and the country, once his country, with its limpid streams, its enchanting forests and its magnificent plains, knows him no more. Pursued to his retiring footsteps, by the onward march of civilized man, he sees his final extinction of his race, under the crushing decrees of ineradicable destiny. The murmuring streams of the valley, the requiem winds of the surviving forests tell of his wrongs and units in tones of mournful cadence, in condemnation of his fate. "Lo, the poor Indian."