



HISTORY OF VERMILION COUNTY

This county adjoins the Illinois line, and is near the middle of the State, from north to south. The Wabash River forms its eastern boundary; on the south is Vigo County, and on the north Wayne. The county is one of the longest and narrowest in the State, it being but from five to ten miles in breadth, and thirty-six miles in length. The area is 249 square miles.

Vermillion was organized as an independent county in 1824. Previous to that time, it had been attached to Parke County. The first meeting of the Board of County Commissioners was held early in March, at James Blair's house. William W. Kennedy was appointed Clerk of the Board of Commissioners, and Caleb Bales, County Assessor. John Collett was appointed County Agent for the purpose of laying out a county seat, and selling such lots as were donated by John Justice and George Miner to the county. Alexander Bailey was appointed Collector of Taxes, and James Blair, Agent for the County Library.

The name of Newport was given to the county seat at the May session of the Commissioners, following.

The first term of the Circuit Court began May 6, 1824, at the house of James Blair. The Presiding Judge was Jacob Call; the first Clerk of the Court was William S. Kennedy; the first Sheriff, William Fulton; the first Prosecuting Attorney, George R. C. Sullivan.

The first civil suit on the docket was an action for divorce begun by Mark Hays against his wife, on the ground that she had refused to follow him in his migration into the State.

The first marriage ceremony performed after the organization of the county was solemnized by the Rev. McGee. The first bride was Elizabeth Mardic.

The first naturalization papers issued by a foreigner were granted to Henry Miner, a native of Ozenberg, Germany.

The first court house was erected not long after the location of the seat of justice at Newport. This was destroyed by fire in 1846, and a second court house was built to replace it, and shared the same fate a few years after. Another court house started in 1875, was completed in 1866, at a cost of over \$30,000. A jail was erected in 1868, at a cost of \$10,000.

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