

# **Early LaFollette History**



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**At the request of the Floyd County Historical Society, the history of the life and decendents of Robert LaFollette, early Floyd County settler is being compiled. At completion, copies will be given to the Historical Society and will be distributed to the interested decendents. Please send any information about his decendents to:**

**ROBERT E. LaFOLLETTE, M. D.  
2515 Glenwood Park  
New Albany, Indiana**



Near the summit of one of the rolling hills in a secluded area of Franklin Township, Floyd County, Indiana approximately 6 miles from New Albany, the Hopewell Cemetery which is one of the oldest landmarks in Indiana contains the single gravestone which marks the resting place of the body of Robert LaFollette, believed to have been the first white settler in what is now Floyd County. This tiny burying ground, long abandoned, now has full grown trees in its midst and the grave markers are partly broken by the cattle which now roam the surrounding pasture.

The tiny Hopewell Baptist Church and its burying ground were scheduled to be reclaimed from the remote past in the early 1930's when the Pianskeshaw Chapter of New Albany, Daughters of the American Revolution, included them on its restoration program. However, a fire of unknown origin destroyed the small single-room log structure and the plans were abandoned. Apparently there are no written records of the church left behind but its establishment has been credited to William Syphers who began preaching in 1814 when only a boy. The church prospered until 1858 when, according to history there came a rift in the congregation and part of the congregation set up a new church nearby. Robert LaFollette was a charter member of the Hopewell congregation and this family worshiped there for over 50 years.

The history of the LaFollette family in America is typical of many of the pioneer families who braved the hardships of the wilderness to find a better opportunity for the future families. Perhaps some of this adventuresome tendency can be traced back to the origin of the name. The original name "Le Follett" - the reckless - was given to an ancestor Usuel (still a frequent "given name" in France), because of his reckless gallantry in battle in a war (AD 1085) between the Duke of Mairne and Anjou and the "Twin Counts of Toulouse" in which Usuel killed one of the twin counts. He was rewarded with a farm which the Le Follett family held until the Revolution (1793).

The Le Follett family originated in Anjou on the southern limit of Normandy in the Valley of the River Loire. At the time of the St. Bartholomew Massacre (1572) some of the family owned a silk mill in Angers, on the Loire, between Tours and Nantes. John Le Follett, my great-great-great-great grandfather, was engaged in the manufacture of silk. He acted as sales agent for the mill, dividing his time between Angers and Paris. Most of the family were Calvinists of Huguenots, Protestants, and were swept out of their native country on the tide of emigration which brought so many families to America in the days of religious persecution. Many of the family were Anjou and Norman peasant farmers who fled to the Isle of Jersey in the English Channel

where many of their descendents still live. There is some disagreement as to whether John LeFollett emigrated to America or died in his native country.

The four sons of John LeFollett ((Joseph, Isaac, George and Guillaume (William) )) were the forefathers of the LaFollette descendents, who now live in the United States. The oldest son, Joseph LeFollett (my great-great-great-grandfather, born 1745, apparently came to America in the early 1760's. Records at Morristown, New Jersey, Presbyterian Church record his marriage to Lydia Carter on January 18, 1764. This couple apparently had one son named Isaac. Records at the same church reveal his marriage to Phoebe Goble on May 1, 1771. In the Revolutionary war he served 3 years in Capt. Henry Belden's company or troop, in "Pulaski's Foreign Legion" and then became a head Wagoner in Washington's Army Commissariat. He is also said to have participated with his brothers in the Battle of Brandywine, where he was wounded. The three younger brothers, Isaac, Georges and Guillaume (William) had come to America with LaFayette from Nantes (on the Loire) via Bordeaux to pick up arms, ammunition, and military supplies. The men of barque 14, including these three, landed, fought under LaFayette until the end of the war and then remained in America, in Virginia, where they took up land in the Shenandoah Valley and in Berkley Co. (now West Virginia) just west of Harper's Ferry.

Of the four LeFollett brothers who were immigrants to America, Georges married near Winchester, Va. (These records were saved when the Court House burned in 1863 and are still there.) Later, he moved to Hardin Co., Kentucky; thence to Van Wert Co., Ohio, where he is buried. Isaac married in Berkley Co., Va. and later moved to the southern part of Guernsey Co. Ohio where many of his descendents now live. He lost a wife and baby in France and was a widower, while his two younger brothers were boys when they came with LaFayette. They were mustered out at Norfolk, Va. in 1783. This record is in the State Library at Richmond, Va. Guillaume, (William) married a French Huguenot girl named Latelle, near Winchester, Va. and settled in Berkley Co. Of passing interest, his great grandson, Latelle M. LaFollette was reared near Grafton, W. Va., served as states attorney for that county, then from 1901 to 1905 served as State Auditor, and then became a banker as well as lawyer in Charlestown, W. Va.

After the Revolution, Joseph LaFollette and his wife Phoebe Gobel moved to join his brothers in Virginia. In the meantime, because of the brothers great admiration for General LaFayette, the family name had been changed from the masculine form of LeFollett to the feminine LaFollette, in imitation to LaFayette. Later the family moved with other early pioneer families across

the mountains to the center of Kentucky. This area was originally Nelson Co., but new boundries placed the home later in Hardin Co. and still later in LaRue Co.

According to the family Bible of Joseph and Phoebe Goble LaFollette, the following birth records were made of the children.

1. Isaac LeFollett, born June 6, 1769 (Son of first wife)
2. Usal (Uſual) LeFollett, born June 6, 1773
3. Jacob LeFollett, Born Aug. 8, 1774
4. Rachel LeFollett, born Sept. 10, 1776
5. Robert LeFollett, born Jan. 17, 1778
6. Abigail LeFollett, born May 3, 1779
7. Jesse LaFollett, born Aug. 23, 1781
8. Isaac LaFollett, born May 28, 1783
9. Jacob LaFollett, born July 18, 1785
10. John LaFollett, born Jan. 13, 1787

There were possibly other children. Records reveal that Mary LaFollett (birth date not known) was probably a child of Joseph and Phoebe. It will be noted that part of the birth records of this family use the masculine and part use the feminine prefix of the name. The LaFollette family lived on the farm in the region of Knob Creek until 1826.

An interesting sidelight of the LaFollette history was the fact that the family of Thomas Lincoln moved to an adjoining farm on Knob Creek in 1811. The two families lived in close proximity because of their common problems. Abraham and Sarah Lincoln played with the grandchildren of Joseph and Phoebe LaFollette along Knob Creek. Jacob LaFollette served on a jury with Thomas Lincoln at Hardin Co. Circuit Court during the September session in 1811. Records reveal purchases by both Isaac LaFollette and Thomas Lincoln in a sale near Knob Creek. Jesse LaFollette and Thomas Lincoln were co-defendents in an ejectment suit. A grand-daughter of Joseph and Phoebe, Elizabeth LaFollette married Joel Gollaher, who was a brother of Austin Gollaher, who rescued Abraham Lincoln from drowning when he was a child. Both of the families were associated with the anti-slavery group in Kentucky.

Of the children of Joseph and Phoebe, Isaac and John remained in Kentucky and many of their descendents are still in this section of the state. Isaac married Susannah Crowder and John married Nellie Good. Mary LaFollette married John Lee in Nelson County on July 27, 1790. Defective land titles and slavery were the main contributing factors in the removal of most of this family from Kentucky. In 1826, Joseph LaFollette, with several of his children and their families, moved from Kentucky (slave country) to Indiana (free country). Thus many of the

descendents of this pioneer served on both sides during the Civil War, since some lived in free territory and others in slave territory. Usal LaFollette married Nancy Lee and moved near to what is now Parkersburg, Indiana in 1826 and reared his family there. The 1953 Indianapolis fall class of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, "The Charles LaFollette Class" was named in honor of a great-grandson of Usal. The late Charles LaFollette was a mortician at Thorntown, Indiana.

Jesse LaFollette married Mary Lee and migrated to Putman County Indiana in 1828. Jesse LaFollette was the grandfather of Harvey M. LaFollette, who served three terms as State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Indiana in the 1880's and 1890's. Part of the family migrated northward toward Wisconsin. Probably the most famous grandson of Jesse LaFollette was Robert M. LaFollette, ("Fighting Bob LaFollette"), who served as the leader of the Progressive Party as U. S. Senator under five presidents. His sons, Philip, and "Young Bob" continued to serve the State of Wisconsin for many years as Governor and U. S. Senator. A recent two volume history of Robert M. LaFollette has just been published and gives a very comprehensive study of the liberal Senator.

Another son of Joseph and Phoebe, Robert LaFollette, my great-great-grandfather, was the first to leave Kentucky soil. On Feb. 13, 1804 he married Martha (Patsey) Sampson. This marriage license is recorded at the court house in Louisville, Ky. in the first book of marriage certificates in Jefferson Co. Kentucky. He and his wife crossed the Ohio River in 1804 to become the first white settlers in what is now Floyd County Indiana. The remainder of this article will be centered about the life and descendents of these early Floyd County residents. Jacob LaFollette married Lydia Dodge and followed his older brother to Floyd County a few years later.

The rugged and active life of the early pioneer, Joseph LaFollette, came to an end in 1834. He is buried in the family cemetery in Russell Township, Putman County, Indiana. There is a bronze plate for him and a few other Revolutionary soldiers in the court house at Greencastle, Indiana.

The old historical records mention Robert LaFollette as the first settler in Floyd County. In one of the books, however, Patricia Shields was recorded as also settling in Floyd County in 1804. The life of the early pioneers was indeed rugged as is depicted from the pages of two of the early Indiana histories which are quoted below. Although there is some repetition in these articles, they will be quoted directly for the purpose of completion.



The following report is taken from The History of the Ohio Falls Cities and Their Counties, which was published in 1881. This book is on file at the New Albany Public Library.

"The first white settler in what is now Floyd County was Robert La Follette, father of Judge D. W. La Follette, of New Albany. Robert La Follette was a Kentuckian, and on the 4th day of November, 1804, was married in that State. On the next day after his marriage, accompanied by his young wife, he crossed the Ohio River into the then Indiana Territory, and the same night pitched his camp about three-quarters of a mile east of the mouth of Knob Creek, a location he had selected prior to his marriage.

Here he remained, living in his camp until he had chopped down the trees, cut the logs into proper lengths, cleared off a small spot of ground, and erected his humble log cabin--the first house built within the present limits of Floyd County--and then removed from this temporary tent into the cabin.

This house was built in the most primitive style. It was one story high, and contained but one room. The cracks between the logs were "chinked" with small slabs of wood split from logs, and then daubed with mortar made of clay and water. There was no window in it, for at that time a pane of eight-by-ten window glass, that now sells at five cents could not be bought for less than seventy-five cents, and the early settlers were too poor to indulge in so costly a luxury. A large fire-place, extending half the width of one end of the house, and from which a chimney made of sticks and daubed with mud conducted the smoke, supplied the place now usurped by our modern health-destroying stoves, and answered the double purpose of furnishing heat by day and heat and light by night. Even tallow candles could not be afforded, except by a few, in those early days. The roof was of clapboards, split from the oak timber that composed the principal growth with which our hardy pioneers were surrounded; and as nails were then worth sixty-two and a half cents per pound, their purchase was impossible, and heavy poles were laid upon the clapboards and pinned with wooden pins into the house-log at either end. This made an excellent roof.

In the way of furniture, Mr. La Follette had nothing besides some bedding, a few rude cooking utensils, and a scanty supply of cupboard ware. For a bedstead, holes were bored into the logs on the inside of the house, and long wooden pins driven into them. Upon these pins were placed two or three puncheons hewn out by Mr. La Follette, and on these puncheons the bed was placed. This rude bedstead, thus improvised, was quite common among the early settlers of Indiana, and upon such bedsteads have our fathers and mothers passed hundreds of nights in the sweetest and most invigorating repose after a hard day's labor. Thus slept Robert

La Follette and his wife many a time and oft; and on such a bed their first-born was ushered into existence, and though his birthplace was so humble, he now lives honored and respected by all who know him. For a table plain boards were fastened upon wooden legs with wooden pins. No leaves were required, and but two or three narrow and short boards were necessary for a top, and the table was complete. Wooden benches supplied the place of chairs, and a few wooden shelves placed upon wooden pins driven in the logs answered for cupboard, bureau, and clothes-press. The floor was of puncheons. This was the home and furnishings of the first settler within the present limits of Floyd county. It was finished and first occupied in December, 1804.

Mr. La Follette's nearest neighbors at this time lived about ten miles below him in Harrison County, and twelve miles above him in Clarksville, opposite the falls. He brought with him from Kentucky a few sacks of corn, and getting out of meal about Christmas he took a small sack of the grain in a canoe and paddled his little vessel and grist up to Tarascon's mill, at the falls. But a few hours after arriving at the mill, and before his corn could be ground an immense field of ice from above began moving down the river over the falls. The ice continued to increase in amount, and for twelve days completely blockaded the river and rendered it impossible to cross. All this time Mr. La Follette was detained at the mill.

During his absence Mrs. La Follette's scanty store of provisions gave out and for five or six days the only food she had to subsist upon was parched corn. In those days the only meats used were what was afforded by the wild game, and this was generally easily killed as it was required. Mr. La Follette has frequently stated that he could almost any morning kill all the game he needed in half an hour, within fifty yards of his house. Bear, deer, wolves, panthers, and wild-cats were numerous in the woods around him, and the hills back of Knob Creek seemed to be a favorite resort for these wild animals. Bears and wolves not unfrequently came within his enclosure and close up to his cabin door; and so plenty were wild turkeys, and so tame, that he often shot them from his own door-yard.

This section of the State was, at that early day, frequently visited by wandering gangs of Shawnee and Miami Indians. Mr. & Mrs. La Follette had for their nearest neighbors a small party of Shawnese. They lived on the most amicable terms with these Indians; and whenever the marauding Miamis and Shawnese came from White River and the Wabash into the white settlements along the Ohio, for purposes of robbery and murder, Mr. La Follette was at once informed of the danger by his friendly Indian neighbors, and his wife would be sent over the river into Kentucky for safety while he would join the expeditions of the settlers above and below him to aid in driving back the savage foe.

Mr. La Follette continued to reside where he first settled until the division lines between the counties of Harrison and Clarke had been definitely run, and Charlestown fixed as the county seat of Clark County. He resided within the limits of Clarke County, and paid his proportion of the special tax levied to build the first court house at Charlestown. A few years later he removed to Harrison County, and there paid a special tax levied to build the court house at Corydon. When Floyd County was organized in 1819, he was thrown into this county, and when the court house was built at New Albany, he paid his proportion of the tax levied to build it. He thus, in the period of fourteen years, paid special taxes to build three court houses.

Mr. La Follette continued to reside on the farm to which he removed from the vicinity of Knob Creek until his death, which occurred in January, 1867. At the time of his death he was eighty-nine years old, and had resided within the territory of what is now Floyd County sixty-two years and two months. His wife died about one year earlier, at the age of seventy-nine, and sixty-one years after her settlement here.

In all the relations of life Robert La Follette was a good man. He was conscientiously religious; his house was for many years a preaching place for the Regular Baptists, and the pioneer ministers of that denomination, as well as of all others, always made his home a stopping place and ever found there a cordial welcome. He subscribed for the first newspaper ever published in Floyd County, and continued to take a paper up to the day of his death. He is now with the companion of his youth's pioneer life, enjoying the rewards of a well spent life in that house not made with hands--eternal in the heavens.

Mr. La Follette's family was followed into this section by Clement Nance, Sr., and his family."

There is little doubt that Knob Creek in Floyd County was named by Robert LaFollette since the family lived for several years near Knob Creek in Kentucky. Since some of the early settlers arrived in Indiana before the days of land grants, one of the problems of early America was also described in the above mentioned book as follows.

"The matter of "jumping" a claim, or dispossessing a squatter of his rights, was considered a very serious matter among the pioneers, and often led to the bitterest of feuds which continued many years among neighbors, and was often continued by the children for several generations, breaking out occasionally in bloodshed and murder. From this fact and the further fact that land was plenty--there was enough for all--

it was seldom resorted to, unless for spite, as appears to have been the case in some instances. Sometimes, however, when a squatter had occupied and partially cleared a piece of desirable land, the temptation to possess it was too strong, and it was entered by some stranger, regardless of consequences. Such was the case with Mr. La Follette, probably the first settler of the county. After toiling upon his farm in the woods for several years, building the cabin, clearing off fifteen or twenty acres of the heaviest of woodland, and otherwise improving it, he suddenly became aware that some other person had entered it and was owner of it, and all his years of labor were going for naught. The distance to Vincennes being great, and having no way to get there, except on foot, he neglected going, not thinking any one mean enough to dispossess him, or hoping that the fact of his not having entered it would remain unknown until he could go to Vincennes and perform that duty. He was disappointed, and was accordingly compelled to start anew on another farm in the wilderness, leaving all his improvements behind.

Robert LaFollette was apparently dispossessed from his land about 1819, for records at the Floyd County court house reveal that he acquired a land grant on April 12, 1819.

The following are quotations from History of Clark, Crawford, Harrison, Floyd, Jefferson, Jennings, Scott and Washington Counties, published in 1889. This book is on file at the New Albany Public Library.

"Robert La Follette, who emigrated to the Territory of Indiana November 4, 1804. The preceding day he had married Miss Martha Sampson and together they had crossed the Ohio river and pitched their tent about three-fourths of a mile east of Knob Creek, which location he had previously selected. Here in the unbroken wilderness surrounded by the dusky forms of the unfriendly Indians, they resolved to make their future home and commenced the battle of life. They remained in camp until Mr. La Follette had made a clearing, cut logs and built a cabin. This was the first house built in Floyd County, and the young wife was the first white woman who settled there. Their nearest neighbors were ten miles below there, in Harrison County. The Shawanee Indians were their immediate neighbors and with them they lived on the most peaceful terms; when marauding tribes from other sections made their appearance in the vicinity, Mrs. La Follette was warned by her Indian friends and sent across the river to her people, while her husband joined the expedition to drive them back. They underwent all the hardships of pioneer life; a crude cabin with a floor of split logs sheltered them, and a bed, table, and other furniture of split boards were the household equipments of the young settlers. Mr. La Follette

continued to reside where he first settled and when the division line between Clark and Harrison counties was drawn, he was thrown into Clark County and paid his share towards building the first court house at Charlestown, the county seat. A few years later he moved into Harrison County and helped to build, by special tax, the court house at Corydon, and afterward, when Floyd County was organized, he found himself in that county and paid his proportion of the levy to build the first court house at New Albany. He remained on the farm to which he had removed from the vicinity of Knob Creek, until his death, which occurred in January, 1867, when he was eighty nine years of age. He had resided in the limits of what is now Floyd County for sixty two years, and his wife sixty one years. Robert La Follette's house was for many years used for meetings by the regular Baptist minister, and pioneer preachers of all denominations were cordially welcomed. While he was conscientiously religious, he was also religiously conscious of his duty to kill hostile Indians and never missed an opportunity of joining in the chase."

Another article from the same book is recorded as follows:

"The first persons to settle in Floyd County were Patrick Shields and wife. They came into the county in the spring of 1804 and "squatted" upon a half section of land near the western border of the county, in Georgetown township, and near the town of Georgetown.

The next family to come in to Floyd County was that of Robert La Follette. This family also came from Kentucky. They reached Floyd County in the autumn of 1804, and settled upon Government land on Knob Creek, in Franklin township. Robert La Follette and his wife were a sturdy couple, possessing all the material to make them pioneers of a new country. They were courageous and physically strong and healthy, of sterling integrity and distinguished for industry. They were poor financially, but rich in resources, and while they were often in great straits there was never a time when they were in want. Both were good shots with the rifle, and when other resources for provisions began to fail, either of them could take down the trusty rifle from its resting place on buckhorn brackets above the cabin door and speedily replenish the larder with a deer, a few wild turkeys, and an occasional bear. Squirrels, while numerous, were considered too small game to waste costly ammunition upon. It was thirteen miles from their home to the nearest mill--Tarascan's Mill at Shipping Port, and a journey "to mill" was attended by dangers. Mr. La Follette usually made this trip in a flat-bottomed box shaped skiff, rowing up the river near the shore to avoid the strong current. The trip homeward was much easier, for the skiff would float with the current at the rate of four miles per hour, requiring but little rowing and only guidance. On a cold day in the latter part of December, 1806,

Mr. La Follette started in his skiff, with a sack of grain, to Tarascan's Mill. The weather grew colder steadily, and when he finally reached the mill the mercury was several degrees below zero and the river rapidly filling with floating ice. The next morning heavy ice filled the Ohio from shore to shore, and the pioneer felt that he was cut off from home where his wife and baby were alone and unprotected. He determined to reach the Indiana shore, feeling a presentiment of danger to his family; but in his effort he was nearly drowned, his rescue from the ice being effected by several brave men at imminent peril. He could only wait for the river to close by ice, and this it did in a few days, as the weather grew intensely cold. As soon as he thought the ice would bear his weight, he placed his sack of corn meal in his skiff, which he pushed over the ice ahead of him till he came to Sand Island. Here he crossed over to the Indiana shore, hid his skiff in the undergrowth of bushes, and taking his sack of corn meal on his shoulders started for his home, which he reached by evening. He found his wife without provisions of any kind except meat, and almost without fire. She stated that on his second night from home, two Indians had come to the cabin and tried to gain entrance. She took down the rifle and carefully loaded it, and then placed her flax hackle near for use in an emergency. The Indians were ordered away and she permitted them to see her rifle that they might know she was prepared for defense. She kept up a steady conversation as if with someone in the house with her, and in this way deceived the Indians, who left after an hour's stay in the vicinity of the house. They returned the next afternoon and begged to be admitted and given something to eat, but Mrs. La Follette once more warned them away with her rifle and they disappeared over the hills and were seen no more."

The family Bible of Robert and Martha LaFollette revealed the following births to this early Floyd County couple.

1. Phebe LaFollette, born April 7, 1807.
2. Elizabeth LaFollette, born January 5, 1810
3. Susan LaFollette, born January 25, 1812.
4. Joseph LaFollette)
5. William LaFollette), born April 19, 1814.
6. Isaiah LaFollette, born December 9, 1816.
7. Evevilla LaFollette, born September 19, 1819.
8. Rozilia LaFollette, born March 26, 1823.
9. David Waler LaFollette, born September 13, 1825.
10. Malinda LaFollette, born March 2, 1828.
11. Marian LaFollette, born October 24, 1832.

The life of Robert LaFollette was summarized in his obituary, which was found on page 1 of the December 24, 1866 copy of The New Albany Daily Ledger. A copy of this paper is on file at the New Albany Public Library. The obituary is as follows:

Obituary

Mr. Robert LaFollette whose death was chronicled a few days ago was the earliest settler of Floyd County. It was the ring of his axe that vocalized the unbroken wilderness, then inhabited by the Indians and wild beasts, with the prelude of that civilization which worked such wonderful and almost magical changes about him, before his death. He was born in Culpepper county, Virginia on the 17th day of January 1778. At the age of nineteen, he emigrated to Kentucky and settled near Louisville in what was then called, and is yet known, as the Pond settlement. At this time Louisville was a rude frontier village; there was not a brick house in that now large and rapidly growing city. He saw the first one constructed. After remaining about seven years in Kentucky, he visited this State, and built near the mouth of Knob Creek, a cabin which was the first house constructed in this county. Having completed his cabin he returned to the Pond settlement and on the 4th day of November, 1804, was married. This was the day upon which Thomas Jefferson was elected President, for whom he voted. On the day following, he crossed over into Indiana, and domiciled himself and wife in the cabin built on his previous visit to this State. His nearest neighbor was over ten miles distant. The site where this now flourishing and beautiful city stands was a dense forest. The knobs near the city were covered with caves, from which fact they received the name of Cavey Knobs, which name they still bear. The present site of New Albany was the favorite hunting ground of the red men at that time. Bears, deer, wolves, and panthers were abundant. For some time Mr. LaFollette was compelled to take the little corn he raised to a mill at the falls on the Kentucky side of the river. This mill was known as the Tarascon mill and was the only one within many miles of Louisville. There being no ferry at New Albany or Clarksville, he went to mill in a small canoe. One winter after he had crossed the river in his canoe and had reached the mill with his bag of corn, the ice, which was gorged above the falls, gave way, and prevented his return home for over ten days. In the meantime, his wife was alone at home in her little cabin near the mouth of Knob Creek, suffering the most intense anxiety and agony on account of his absence, not knowing what fate had befallen her husband. During his absence she subsisted on parched corn. The savages were the only persons she saw while he was gone.

In consequence of the unhealthiness of the river bottom, he moved over the knobs and squatted upon a tract of land and built another cabin which was the second one built in this county. He cleared twenty acres of this tract, which, about this time, was thrown into market by the government, and was entered by another man, who compelled him to vacate it without recompensing for the improvements made upon it. He then squatted on

a neighboring tract, where he resided for fifty-five years, until the time of his decease, which occurred on the 14th day of December at 7 o'clock. Apple trees that he planted fifty-five years ago are still growing upon the farm where he recently resided. During the early settlements in this country, massacres of the whites by the savages were not unfrequent. Mr. LaFollette was always warned by faithful Indians of these outbreaks in time to enable him to remove his family across into Kentucky for safety. He was a man of urbane manners and genial disposition, and by his kind treatment of the red men, made many warm friends among them. While residing on the farm where he died, he was taxed to build three court houses by reason of the changes in county lines. He was taxed to build a court house in Charles-town, this being then a part of Clark County. Afterwards his residence was transferred to Harrison County and he assisted in building a court house in Corydon. Finally Floyd County was formed and he was taxed to build a court house in New Albany. Before these court houses were built, court in the summer season was held in some grove near the county seat. He frequently sat on juries that wrangled all night under a tree, before bringing in a verdict. Mr. LaFollette was among the first, if not the first, to cross the ferry established by John Paul at New Albany. This ferry was a rough flat boat propelled by oars. A man by the name of Wood was the ferryman, having leased the ferry from Paul. Wood also erected the first house constructed within the present limits of this city. Although a cripple and not subject to military duty, Mr. LaFollette was out in many of the expeditions against the Indians and made many a red skin bite the dust. He was a noted marksman. Several years after removing to Indiana he joined the Baptist church of which he was an exemplary member over fifty-five years. Both he and his wife joined the same church at the same time, and both were members at the time of their death. They at the time of Mrs. LaFollette's death had been married over sixty-one years.

Robert LaFollette was a modest man, always preferring a quiet, unobtrusive life. Although frequently urged to accept places of honor and profit, he studiously avoided them, never, we believe, having held a public office. He was tenacious in all his opinions. Yet he was not a partisan. He subscribed for the first paper published in the county and he always sustained by his patronage the county paper. When he could not get one consonant with his political views, he took one on the other side if any such was published. He believed it the duty of every citizen to take at least a county paper, a duty he owed alike to himself, his family, to civilization and to learning. He was a liberal, high-toned gentleman, respected and loved by all who knew him. The death of this early pioneer has been deeply lamented, not only by a large family connection, but by all his neighbors and friends.



Robert LaFollette, whose courage and daring prompted him to blaze the way for the immense population that now throngs Floyd County has gone to the grave full of years and full of usefulness. Peace to his ashes."

