

MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
MIAMI VALLEY

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divided between the Lutherans, Baptists, United Brethren, and Reformed, each having its own house of worship.

There is but one village in the township, which was platted by Peter Becher, who owned the land, in the year 1815, but it is only a center for the small trading activities characteristic of a small country community. But to Jefferson township belongs the glory and honor of having within its boundaries one of the great landmarks of the Republic, the National Soldiers Home, than which no finer institution of the kind can be found in the entire world. A full description of the magnificent estate will be found elsewhere.

**Butler Township** includes about forty-five sections and fractional sections of territory, which originally were parts of Randolph and Wayne townships. On the south and north it is bounded respectively by Harrison township and Miami county, and is approximately six miles in length and seven miles in width, its eastern and western limitations being the two streams, Miami and Stillwater rivers.

At the time of the formation of Butler township, in the year 1817, the northern part of the district was mainly swamp land, but scientific farming has developed it into one of the richest grain-producing areas of Montgomery county. Settlements had been made in that region years before the formation of the township. Pioneer records chronicle names associated with the first development of that portion of Montgomery county: John Quillan, whose son William is said to have been the first child born in Butler township; Sinks, Waymire, Plummer, Sunderland, Compton, Swallow, Hutchins, Pearson, Curtis, Jones, Mooney, Stokes, Fox, Miller, Sloan, Johnson, Engle, Cooper, Furnas and Johnson, are a few of the long list of men who braved the dangers of frontier life in founding homes in the wilderness for their families, and will always be held in respectful and affectionate memory by generations who, today, are happy and prosperous through their great sacrifices.

Butler township has the advantage of splendid turnpikes, which enable the farmers to reach neighboring markets; while the Dayton, Toledo & Chicago railroad which runs along the eastern line of the township affords ample shipping facilities for all produce raised in that section of the country. The population of Butler township numbers about twenty-one hundred people, and in the century that has elapsed since the formation of the township, three villages have sprung from the desire for community life. The oldest settlement, Little York, was platted in the fall of 1817 by Andrew Waymire. Its existence was due to the wish that the pioneers had to be near a mill, for both saw mills and grist mills were essential to the comfort of the pioneers, they typified shelter and food. The building of a distillery in that locality followed in the near future. It is now one of the quiet little farm villages that dot the middle west, through which runs the county road, and is not far from the Dayton, Toledo & Chicago railroad. Little York antedated the birth of Chambersburg by thirteen years. This latter village was laid out by William Kennedy and Robert Hosier in the month of January, 1830, and is located in the southern part of Butler township on the Dayton and Troy pike.

Vandalia, with its population of five hundred souls, might almost be called the township seat of Butler. Laid out in the mid-summer of the year 1838 by Benjamin Wilhelm, it was not incorporated as a village until February 7, 1848, when Mr. Wilhelm was honored with the official title of mayor of the new corporation. The following year the little settlement was almost swept out of earthly existence by the cholera; of a population of two hundred people, fifty died from the dread scourge, another fifty fled in terror from the settlement, leaving only one-half the original number to again take up the life of the village. Though small in population, the residents of Vandalia are wide awake to many things that indicate a true progressive spirit. The shaded streets with their cement sidewalks are brilliantly lighted with electricity, and the Dayton & Troy Electric railway hourly carries passengers to other community centers. There is no need for a fortunate investor to sleep with a revolver near at hand, or a frugal housewife to secrete her savings in a carefully hung stocking in a smoky chimney, for the Vandalia State bank, organized in the year 1912, is a trustworthy place for all depositors. The officers of the institution are Mr. Ed O. Rankin, president; Mr. W. H. Riley, vice-president, and Mr. F. W. Rosnagle, cashier.

In two churches is centered the religious life of the village, the English Lutheran church, under the pastoral care of the Reverend Joseph Keyser, and the church of the United Brethren in Christ, whose pulpit is regularly filled by the Reverend Ivory Zimmerman. In common with other townships of Montgomery county, the schools of Vandalia are in line with the best methods of modern education; six hundred and ten pupils are enrolled under the able superintendency of Professor Adam Puterbaugh. No factories or mills are located in the village, but two garages plainly indicate that horseless carriages are fast crowding out the necessity for "livery barns" or stables. Two well-stocked stores and one grocery supply the physical needs of the villagers, and a handsome town hall draws the best line of entertainments for appreciative audiences. The daily mail is competently looked after by Uncle Sam's official, Mr. Cory Brusman. Vandalia's war activities in Red Cross work are told elsewhere. The total subscriptions of Butler township towards the purchasing of Liberty bonds amounted to the handsome sum of \$200,000. But even a greater gift is recorded. For of the sixty valiant young hearts that, obedient to patriotic duty, enlisted in defense of a world-right to freedom of thought, conscience and political rights, one brave boy sealed his devotion to the common cause of humanity with his life blood.

**Miami Township.** In the winter of the year 1829 the commissioners of Montgomery county ordered that territory be taken from Washington township, and a new township formed to be called Miami township; land was also taken from the townships of Dayton and German. The boundaries of Miami township are as follows: On the east by Washington township, and on the west by Jefferson and German townships; its south line guards Warren county, while its northern line separates it from Harrison, Jefferson and Van Buren townships. The township is crossed by the Miami river, whose