

Rush County Genealogical Society

VOLUME XI, ISSUE 3

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2018-2019 RCGS Programs

Our Officers:

- *President:*
Carol Jones
- *Vice-President:*
Bill Baetz
- *Secretary:*
Katrina Cole-Cooper
- *Treasurer:*
Marilyn Yager

November 10—Circuit Riders—Katrina Cooper, presenter

*****Election of Officers

*****Time for Dues!!!!

December—No Meeting

Tentative Meeting Topics for 2019

January—Voyage to America— from Germany—Carol Jones

February—DNA—guest speaker—Drawing for Ancestry DNA test

March—Using Shadow Boxes to Preserve Family History—Marilyn Yager

April—Eleanor Arnold program

May—Steve Mahan, Civil War

June—Get Ready for the booth at Rush County Fair

July—Roots Conference, July 19-20, Eastside Indy—No meeting

August—Field Trip to Ft Wayne Library

September—Cemetery Scavenger Hut—East Hill—Wilkie Days

October—Ancestry, Fold 3, Newspapers.com—Finding Ghosts in Your

Family

November—Preservation of Documents—Marilyn Yager

Election of Officers, Dues

December—No Meeting

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Rush County People, Buildings and Businesses



Judge William M. Sparks



524 N. Perkins, Rushville

William Morris Sparks was born April 28, 1872 at Charlottesville in Hancock County, Indiana. He was the son of Dr. James Bascomb and Harriet Jane Johnson Sparks. The family moved to Carthage when he was 8 years old and he attended school there, graduating from Carthage High School in 1890. He enrolled in DePauw University where he obtained the degree of Bachelor of Arts; going on to Indiana Law School at Indianapolis. He was admitted to the practice of law Rushville in 1896.

Soon after, he was appointed deputy prosecuting attorney for two years. In 1897 he formed a law practice with Gates Sexton and this partnership continued until 1901 when he was elected to the Indiana Legislature as a representative and was re-elected in 1903. In 1904 he was elected on the Republican ticket as judge of the combined Rush-Shelby Circuit Court in a district that was mostly Democratic. In 1910 he ran again, but was defeated by just 19 votes so he resumed private practice until 1913 when the Indiana Legislature created a separate circuit for Rush County and the next year, he was elected as the first judge. He served in this position until he received his federal appointment in Chicago in 1929. He always retained his home at 524 North Perkins Street and returned to Rushville after his retirement on November 20, 1948.

Judge Sparks was a student of history, of the classics and of the Bible. He was the organist at St. Paul's Methodist Church and for over 20 years taught a men's Sunday School Class. He

Judge Will and Mrs. Della Young Sparks Family

was active in the Masonic Lodge locally and in the state serving in the Grand Lodge, Knights Templar and Grand Commander of the State. He was a member of the Rotary Club, Delta Theta fraternity, and the Rush County Bar Association. He was president of the Library Board at its inception in 1910.

Will Sparks was a great lover of sports, and in his college days at DePauw was a baseball pitcher of prominence. He was a strong follower of the local high school basketball team back in the years of his Model T. Ford.

On November 23, 1897 he married Della Young, native of Rushville – the daughter of George W. and Nancy Hinchman Young. She was born October 19, 1877 and graduated from Rushville High School and Western College at Oxford, Ohio. She was a member of St. Paul's Methodist Church and was a patroness of Tri Kappa Sorority. She expired after being ill for two days with a heart ailment on November 14, 1947 in Chicago. They maintained a home in Chicago when the Federal Court was in session. They were the parents of two children: William George and Dorothy Young Sparks who married Horace Foster, Jr. Judge Sparks died January 7, 1950 following a stroke. He and his wife are both buried in East Hill Cemetery, Rushville.

Daughter, Dorothy was born December 31, 1900 and was a graduate of Rushville High School and Indiana University. She was first employed for four years in the Children's Bureau of the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania City Welfare Department. Dorothy served as Rush County Attendance Officer for one year. May, 1938 she was appointed Junior Visitor of the Rush County Public Welfare Department. Dorothy became the Executive Secretary of the American Red Cross Chapters in Rush and Delaware counties during World War II and served as a volunteer field consultant for the Red Cross in the eastern area for 15 years. She was a member of the Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority, remained active in the Theta alumnae chapter and served on the executive council of Psi Iota Psi Sorority. She was a member of St. Paul United Methodist Church and had two sons, James S. Foster and Robert R. Foster. She died September 4, 1968 and interment was at the East Hill Cemetery, Rushville.

Son, William was born April 25, 1904. He graduated from Rushville High School and Indiana University. He was also a graduate of Harvard Law School. In 1932, he married Louise Spillman, a well-known musician. William was a member of the Law Firm of Davis, Baltzell, and Sparks in Indianapolis. He was a member of the Indianapolis Country Club, the Columbia Club, the Indiana University Club, the Players Club, the Lambs Club, Beta Theta Pi, Mystic Tie Masonic Lodge and the Scottish Rite. William suffered a heart attack while talking with his wife and died a few minutes later at their home at 1501 East Maple Road. He was buried in East Hill Cemetery, Rushville.

Sparks Family

Dr. Jerome Walter Sparks was a brother to Judge Will Sparks. He was born on November 9, 1866 in Kentucky. J. W. was a graduate of the Cincinnati College of Dentistry and he had a dental practice in Greenfield, Indiana for twenty-six years. On June 27, 1894, he married Myrtle Lawinn Pierce, the daughter of William D. and Anna Maria Pierce. She was born in Henry County, attended common schools in Liberty Township and later attended high school at New Castle and Carthage. She died January, 1914 at her home at 312 North State Street. They had six children, four of whom survived: Mildred, Robert, Josephine and Marjorie. They were members of Bradley United Methodist Church. J. W. moved to Florida approximately 1925 and passed away there at St. Petersburg on January 31, 1955 and was buried at Park Cemetery, Greenfield, Indiana.



Dr. Frank McGee Sparks was also a brother of Judge Sparks. He was born November 5, 1868 at Knightstown, Indiana. He graduated from Carthage High School and then attended Ohio College of Dentistry. After graduating March 11, 1891, he began his dental practice in Carthage until July 1, 1897 when he moved the practice to Rushville above the clothing store of Frank Wilson. He was married on December 25, 1893 to Nora Davis, of Richmond, Indiana. They had a son, Donald and two daughters, Marion Ellen and Jean Frances. The family lived on the corner of Main and Eighth Streets. He was a member of the Eastern Indiana Dental Association, the Masons, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias and the Methodist Church. He retired from active practice in 1940 and died November 1, 1945 with interment at East Hill Cemetery,

Sparks-Young Family



Dr. Frank McGee Sparks



Dr. F.M. Sparks' Home—Corner of Main & 8th

Della Young Sparks' family was rich in Rush County history as well. She was the daughter of George W. Young, born in Center Township on January 29, 1947, son of James and Margaret Davis Young. James was from Ohio and came here as a carpenter at the age of 21. After coming to Center Township, he purchased a quarter of a section of land and spent the rest of his life as a farmer. James married Margaret Davis who was from Ireland. They had ten children: George W. and Samuel H. were twins and lived well past their other siblings.

George received his education in the Center Township schools and supplemented his education with a course at the Spiceland Academy. He taught school for four years in Jackson and Union Township schools and decided he wanted to study law. He entered the law office of William Cullen and Benjamin Smith in Rushville under whose training he was prepared for admission to the bar. He practiced law in Rushville and later his son, James V., joined him in his practice for several years. In 1894 George W. was elected on the Republican ticket as prosecuting attorney of the judicial district for Rush and Decatur Counties, serving one term. He served sixteen years as attorney for the city of Rushville and when he resigned in 1923, his son James was appointed to the position. Nancy, G.W.'s wife died at their home at 414 North Main Street, Rushville January 19, 1922 from a long illness of heart trouble and complications, having had a recent fall. George W. died June 19, 1927 due to Chronic Nephritis and they are both buried in East Hill Cemetery, Rushville.

Samuel H. Young, twin brother of George W. Young lived his entire life in Rush County, the last forty years in Rushville. He was a stock broker and was associated with Aaron Wellman in that business for many years. He married Melvina Billings of Rush County who passed away April 11, 1934. Until his brother's death in 1937 the Young brothers were known throughout the state as the oldest living twins to attend the annual twin reunion held in New Castle. They were said to be the first set of twins born in Center Township. He and his wife were parents to Dr. Elmer Young of Kokomo and Mrs. Frank McBride of Mays. Samuel died at his home at 325 North Perkins Street at the age of 88 on March 14, 1935 and was buried in East Hill Cemetery, Rushville.

**RUSH COUNTY
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

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Our Mission:

*To bring together those interested in the
history and genealogy
of Rush County*

Captain John Fleehart

Capt. Fleehart was born in Rush County, Indiana on May 22, 1838. John was the son of Hugh Stewart and Jane Woods. He married his cousin Harriet Woods in 1865.

He was Captain of Company E of the 123 Regiment of the Indiana Volunteer Infantry. The company was comprised largely of Rush County men and some of the men who served under him were Luther B. Downey, Joe Endicott, Gilbert Boys, Dan M. Kinney, Elliott Palmer, Samuel Bosley, Will O. Smith, Solomon Smith and Roll Young. His comrades said of him that he was always in the thick of the fray and was a valiant leader. He was a member of the Joel Wolfe post of the G. A. R. and took a very active part in the work of the organization.

John spent several years in agricultural pursuits and then in the lumber and mill business. In 1876 Capt. Fleehart was elected Rush County Treasurer and served two terms. After retiring from office, he again engaged in the lumber and mill business. In March, 1895, he purchased an interest in the Rushville Steam Laundry with Mr. Gibbons who later sold his share to William J. Finney. Rushville sent their laundry to other cities until this partnership recognized the necessity of securing the entire home trade and they equipped their laundry with the very best and modern machinery and appliances and set up a service for the collection and delivery of laundry superior to all others in promptness, courtesy and care.

John died of pneumonia on February 16, 1910 at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Charles (Emma Jane) Swanson in Chicago, Illinois. He was buried in Chicago at the Mount Hope Cemetery.

