

EARLY PIONEER HISTORY, LOCAL AND NEW HARMONY

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GRADE LEVEL: Elementary

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UNIT: EARLY PIONEER HISTORY, LOCAL AND NEW HARMONY

Objectives: (1) to discover one's own town's pioneer past  
(2) learn the facts of New Harmony's first era  
(3) compare the two

Possible Resources: Family letters, diaries, or journals from this period (Check with local historical society and have students ask their families). Local libraries for family histories, county histories and directories, information file, program booklets for celebrations of centennials, etc., old newspaper accounts of observances of founding and historical fact columns (such as "100 Years Ago"), early census reports (which may be on microfilm, but can be printed)

Posey County will find particularly helpful: History of Posey County, Goodspeed Publishing Company; Was It Yesterday, James Morlock; The John Stephen McFaddin Family, Maude A. McFaddin; History of Trinity Church, Elfrieda Lang; Posey County, Indiana A Documentary History 1815-1900, Carol Cox and Gloria Cox; Mt. Vernon Indiana Sesquicentennial 1816-1916

General Interest: Early Indiana travel books, especially Harlow Lindley's Indiana as Seen by Early Travelers and Notes on a Journey in America by Morris Birkbeck The Indiana Home by Logan Esarey, and "Home Life in Early Indiana", William F. Vogel, Indiana Magazine of History, (Sept. 1914)

New Harmony: The Angel and the Serpent, William E. Wilson; "New Harmony's First Utopians," Donald Pitzer and Josephine Elliott, Indiana Magazine of History, (Sept. 1979); "Education in Utopia: The New Harmony Experience," from Indiana Historical Society Lectures, 1976-1977; George Rapp's Harmony Society 1785-1847, Karl J. R. Arndt; and "County Seats and County Seat Wars," Ernest V. Shockley, Indiana Magazine of History, (March 1914).

Some books which are not on open shelves locally, may be available through interlibrary loan. Such books should be requested a month or so ahead to avoid disappointment.

Lesson I LOCAL SETTLEMENT

Focus: Tell students to draw a home as they think it might have looked in the first days of your town. Direct them to write a brief description of what life would have been like then as they think of it.

Ask: How many people do you think were in our town in 1816 (or founding date for your town)? Do you think you might have liked being an early settler?

Develop factual information through research questions, such as: Who first settled here? (See Was It Yesterday).

For younger students, fact cards might be prepared to match with a question card, such as: THE ANDREW AND WILLIAM MCFADIN FAMILIES CROSSED THE OHIO RIVER FROM KENTUCKY IN 1806 with WHO FIRST SETTLED HERE? The cards could be distributed for a game of matching.

Extension Activities: Build a model of a pioneer home.  
Prepare a real or make-believe pioneer meal (Esarey's book will be useful).

Lesson II (This lesson is specific to Posey County, but a similar use of the earliest census compared with a later one should prove fruitful).

Focus: Introduce the 1818 township map. Note the county seat at that time. Ask: What differences do you see between this map and our present one? How many settlers would you guess were in Black and in Harmony Townships (which also had an early settlement) at the time of the Census of 1820? What kind of jobs do you think the men and women had? Do you think there might have been any slaves? Record the answers to the last 3 questions.

Furnish the students with a copy of the 1820 census to examine. Are any of the family names familiar? What else can be learned? Organize some "census teams" to tally the numbers of the two townships.

Present a copy of the 1830 census. Compare. Discuss possible reasons for changes. Return to these theories later. The continuing research or fact cards should include the importance of the location of the county seat at that time and the changes which occurred in its location. (A small village named Blackford, now non-existent, was the county seat from 1814 until 1817. Springfield was the next until immediately after the departure of the Harmonists in 1825 when the county seat was finally moved to Mt. Vernon).

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY FOR OLDER OR ADVANCED STUDENTS:

Compare the reasons for moving the Posey County court to Springfield presented by Arndt, Wilson and Shockley. Which seems most logical?

### Lesson III NEW HARMONY'S FIRST ERA

Focus: Without naming the place, read a description of New Harmony from The Angel and the Serpent, pages 59 and 57. Ask the class what place they think this could be. Would they be surprised to learn that it is a very early frontier town in Indiana?

Ask students to pretend they are visitors as you read aloud from Chapter 5. Ask what they found particularly interesting on this "tour". How does this place compare with our town's earliest days? If you were really visiting New Harmony, wouldn't you be curious about these people? (Indeed, many visitors were quite curious). Tell them you will give them some clues. See if they can discover some facts about these different frontiersmen and this unusual place. What would people talk about when they left there?

Clues will be found in various readings. Suggested ones follow: Impressive churches - The Angel and Serpent, pp. 21 and 48, "New Harmony's First Utopians", p.274; Store - "N. H. First Utopians", p.234; Daily routine - The Angel and Serpent, p.55; School - "Education in Utopia: The New Harmony Experience", p.86; Appearance - "N. H. First Utopians", p. 237. Ask the "visitors" what they discovered.

Explain that they would not have been able to talk with the Harmonists since they spoke chiefly German (although English was taught in their school). Why did these folk leave their homeland? The explanation of their particular troubles in Germany is given in a number of sources, one of which is "N. H. First Utopians", pp. 227-229.

Ask for opinions about why this group seemed to do so well. Introduce the communalism concept and the term "Utopia". The Harmonists' plan is explained on p. 230 on "New Harmony's First Utopians".

An interesting "first-hand view" can be gained by using a hand lens to inspect the illustrations in "N. H. First Utopians", pp. 262, 272, 277, 282, and the labyrinth on p. 289. The Golden Rose trademark on p. 285 might be of interest, also.

Extension Activities: Make a church model.  
Make a model of Jonathan Lenz's flat-boat and load as described on p. 61 of The Angel and the Serpent.

COMPARE: Ask if they would have rather lived as a pioneer in their own hometown or in New Harmony. Why?

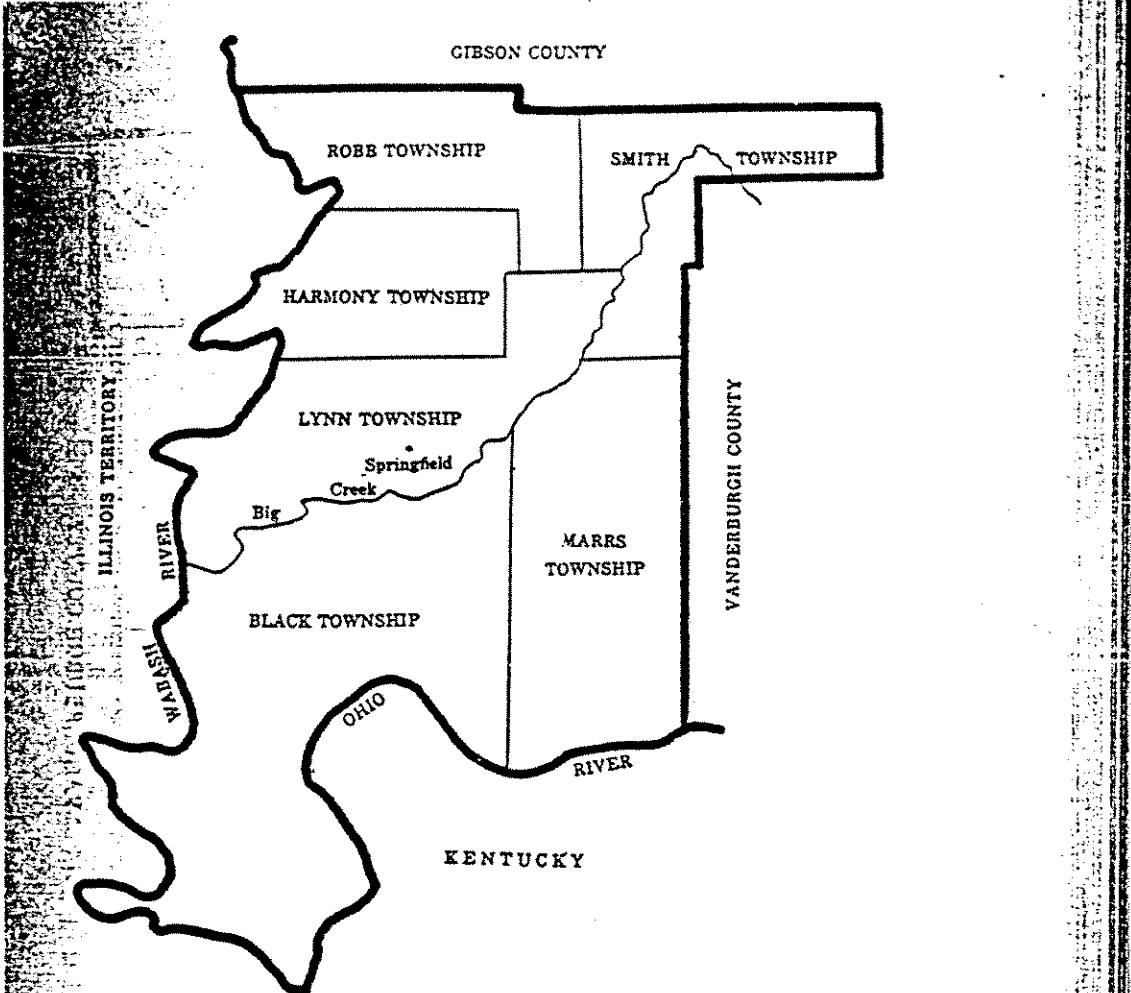
Extension Activities: Develop role plays of local pioneer child and Harmonist child or a skit as they might meet.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR OLDER OR ADVANCED STUDENTS:

Compare the "Article of Agreement" of 1805 with the one of 1821.\* What changes are there? Why might they have been made? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such a plan for a group of people?

Consider the popular myths about Father Rapp's tunnel and Gabriel's footprint; see The Angel and the Serpent, pp. 49 and 70 - 77. What might the true stories be? Why are these stories still about?

\* Both can be found in Karl J.R. Arndt, George Rapp's Harmony Society 1785-1847 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965) 1805 Articles of Agreement are on pages 72-74; Agreement of 1821 is on pages 198-199.



Map of Posey County in 1818

From: History of Trinity Church, Elfrida Lang

Mrs. Meckle McFadin



MOUNT VERNON - McFADDIN'S BLUFF <sup>BLUFF</sup>  
by Mrs. Meckle McFadin 1826 (PRESENT SITE OF WATER WORKS)

Appendix AArticle of Agreement  
February 15, 1805

Be it hereby known to all who need to know it, that the following agreement has this day been made and concluded between us, the subscribers of the one part, and George Rapp and his Society of the other part.

Firstly. We, the subscribers, on our part and on the part of our heirs and descendants, deliver up, renounce, and transfer all our estate and property consisting of cash, land, cattle, or whatever else it may be, to George Rapp and his Society in Harmony, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as a free gift or donation, for the benefit and use of the congregation there, and bind ourselves on our part, as well as on the part of our heirs and descendants, to make free renunciation thereof, and to leave the same as the disposal of the superintendents of the congregation, as if we never had nor possessed the same.

Secondly. We do pledge ourselves jointly and severally to submit to the laws and regulations of the congregation, and to show due and ready obedience toward those who are appointed and chosen by the congregation as superintendents in such a manner that not only we ourselves endeavor, by the work of our hands, to promote the good and interest of the congregation, but also to hold our children and families to do the same.

Thirdly. If, contrary to our expectation, the case should happen that we jointly or severally could not endure in the congregation and would within a few years or more abstain from our promises and withdraw from the community, for whatever cause it may be, we will never demand any reward, either for ourselves or our children or those belonging to us, for work or services rendered, but whatever we jointly and severally have done or shall do, we will have done as a voluntary service for our brethren.

On the other hand, George Rapp and his Society adopt the subscribers jointly and severally as members of the congregation whereby each of them obtains the privilege to attend all religious meetings, not only they themselves, but also their children and families, shall and will receive the necessary instruction in church and school which is needful and requisite for temporal and eternal felicity.

Secondly. George Rapp and his Society promise to supply the subscribers jointly and severally with all the necessities of life, as lodging, meat,



drink, and clothing, etc., and not only during their healthful days, but also when one or several of them should become sick or otherwise unfit for labor, they shall have and enjoy the same care and maintenance as before; and if, after a short or long period, the father or mother of a family should die, or be otherwise separated from the community and leave a family behind, none of those left behind shall be left widows or orphans, but receive and enjoy the same rights and care as long as they live or remain in the congregation, as well in sick as healthful days, the same as before, or as their circumstances or needs may require.

Thirdly. And if, as stated above, the case should happen that one or several of the subscribers after a short or long period should abstain from their promise and could or would not submit to the laws and regulations of the church or congregation, and for this or another cause would leave the Harmonie, George Rapp and his Society promise to refund him or them, the property brought into the the Harmonie without interest, and that in one, two or three annual installments, as the sum may be, large or small; and if one or more of them was poor and brought nothing into the congregation, they shall, provided they depart openly and orderly, receive a donation in cash, according to their conduct while here, or as their circumstances and needs may require, which George Rapp and his Society shall determine at his or their departure.

In confirmation whereof, both parties have signed their names.

So done, Harmonie, February 15, 1805

Karl J. R. Arndt, George Rapp's Harmony Society 1785-1847  
(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965)  
72, 74.

Appendix B

## Agreement of 1821

Be it known, that today 20th Jan: 1821 in the year of our Lord, one thousand, eight hundred and twenty one, the present agreement, treaty and alliance was made and concluded between us the following persons, to wit: N.N. of the one part and Geo. Rapp and his association of the other part.

After the aforesaid Persons became sufficiently acquainted with the Principles, Rules and regulations of the Community of George Rapp and his association, by Virtue of their Religious Principles they have after long and mature Reflection, out of their own free will, determined to join the Community of said George Rapp and his Association in Harmony, Posey County, State of Indiana. To that Purpose the aforesaid Persons bind themselves and promise solemnly by these presents; to comply with the Ordinances, Rules and Regulations of the Community, and render due obedience to the superintendents ordained by the Community, and to perform as much as possible all occupations and Labors to which they are ordered, and help to promote the benefit, happiness and prosperity of the community. And if the case should happen that the aforesaid persons jointly or singly after a short or a long time leave the community for any cause whatever, they hereby bind themselves jointly and each for himself separately, never and in no case to bring any account, nor make any claim, either against the association or any individual member thereof for their labor and services rendered; Also never to make any demand, ask or claim any other payment under any name and description whatever, but will do and have done all things out of christian love for the good and benefit of the community; or else take it as a gift, if Geo. Rapp and his association willingly give them some thing.

However, George Rapp and his Association in return adopt the aforesaid Persons into their community, whereby they obtain the prerogative to partake of all meetings for divine Services by which they receive in church and school the necessary instructions, requisite and needful for their temporal Benefit and happiness and eternal felicity. Geo. Rapp and his association bind themselves further, to supply the aforesaid persons with all the wants and necessaries of life to wit: meat, drink, Clothing, etc. And indeed not only during their healthful days, but also if all or any of them get sick or otherwise infirm

and unable to work, they shall, as long as they remain members of the Community, receive and enjoy the same support as before during their better days or as their circumstances may require.

In confirmation of these presents both parties have hereunto set our hands and seals. Done in Harmony the day and year above stated.

Karl J. R. Arndt, George Rapp's Harmony Society 1785-1847  
(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965)  
198. 199.