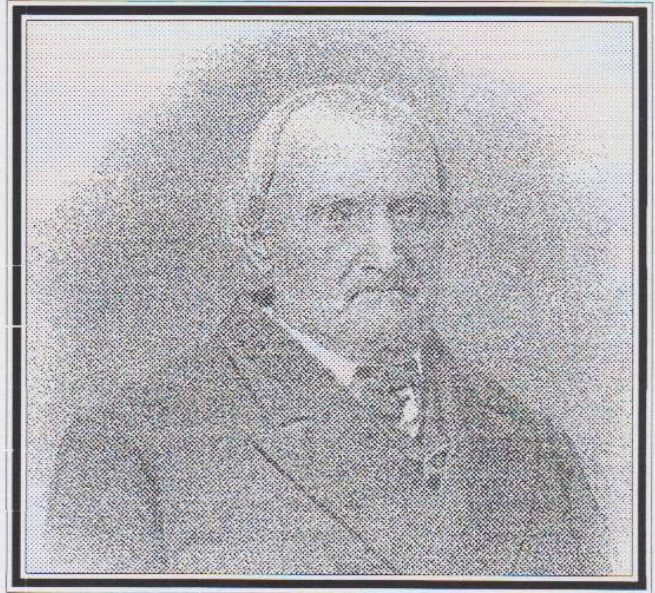


CANAWLERS AT REST

JOHN BEARD

b. January 4, 1795
d. September 29, 1874

By Carolyn I. Schmidt



John Beard was born in Guilford County, North Carolina on January 4, 1795 to Thomas Carson Beard and Elizabeth Dicks Beard. His father, Thomas, who was born in Randolph County, North Carolina, moved his family to Wayne County, Indiana, in the later part of 1811. He was a very early settler and had to cut his way through the wilderness to land he had purchased that was about a mile below Green's Fork on the west side of the Whitewater River.

Shortly after Thomas and his family were in their new home Judge Martin, Samuel Jobe and Isaac Dyer came to warn him and about six of his neighbors that they were in danger from the Indians. They were advised to move or build a fort. Four of them decided to take their families and flee. Others decided to stay as did Thomas. Three men went home, got about 12 family members, guns and rifles, and returned to build three block-houses around Thomas' log cabin. All of these

people then lived in his crowded cabin. Their fort was not attacked. However, the danger was very real. About a hundred yards from the next fort closest to theirs two young men were shot and scalped. The government later kept a garrison in Thomas' fort.

Thomas Beard was elected to Wayne county's first board of county commissioners, which met in February 1817. John Beard, our subject, was his only son.

John Beard married Maria (Burriss) Burroughs on March 4, 1816. He was 21 years of age and Maria was 19.

John turned twenty-one just three months before delegates were elected to the convention that framed Indiana's constitution. John voted for the first time.

THOMAS & ELIZABETH BEARD AND CHILDREN

Name	Born	Died
Thomas Carson Beard	1-14-1768	7-28-1830
Elizabeth Dicks Beard	7-19-1775	9-9-1816
<u>Children</u>		
Sarah C. Beard	11-10-1792	1861
John Beard	1-4-1795	9-29-1874
Martha Beard	11-5-1797	3-3-1886
Rachel Beard	10-21-1799	?
Jane Beard	11-6-1801	2-6-1835
Hannah Beard	12-12-1803	11-19-1886
Dorothy Beard	1805	?
Polly Dolly Beard	10-4-1806	?
Mary Beard	2-12-1810	7-23-1887

Compiled from information found on six Beard charts on Ancestry.com

JOHN & MARIA BEARD AND CHILDREN

Name	Born	Died	
John Beard	1-4-1795	9-29-1874	
Married 3-4-1816			
Maria (Burriss) Burroughs	7-1797	1-8-1882	
<u>Children</u>			
Name	Born	Died	Married
Elizabeth D.	1817		1. Phillip E. Engle 2. George P. Tiffany Susan Tiffany
Thomas J.	2-19-1822		Nathan L. Graham
Mary M	ca. 1832		Bennett W. Engle
Wilhelminia B.	3-1-1835	2-?-1901	
Rachel	ca. 1835 (twin?)		
Letty			Mr. Evans
Hannah C.			Joseph S. Allen
Martha Jane			Mr. Terhune

From information compiled by Linda Benson Cox & 1850 Census

For several years Wayne County residents battled a great amount of sickness. John's family had its share of it.

On July 31, 1823 John purchased 74.41 acres in section 6 in Montgomery County, Indiana, near the newly laid out town of Crawfordsville. That fall they moved there. John farmed his land.

Around this time he was elected a justice of the peace. He really had no litigation at this time. His main duty was to post stray horses or marry young people if no minister was available. The young people liked to have John officiate since he was young like them. He never charged for his service nor ever received any fee.

In 1827 a subscription library was established in Montgomery County, Indiana. A patron could attain the privilege of borrowing a book for a subscription of 75 cents per year or 6¼cents per month. The library kept a record of all books borrowed from 1827-1856. It is now in the District Public Library's archives in Crawfordsville, Indiana. Patronage of this library declined after the new school law of 1852 was passed that included a special tax providing for township libraries. John Beard was an early trustee of this subscription library along with John B. Chapman, Moses Cox, Williamson Dunn, and Isaac C. Elston.

In 1827 John was elected to represent Montgomery, Fountain, a portion of Vermillion county and other surrounding territory in the Indiana House of Representatives. He was elected again in 1829 and 30 with Tippecanoe, Carroll and Warren counties being added to his district. In 1831 he was elected to the Indiana Senate representing Montgomery and Clinton counties.

John was a supporter of the Wabash band that wanted to begin building a canal between Lake Erie and the Wabash river. Other areas not along the Wabash were reluctant or opposed to the canal. In his old home county of Wayne, representatives John Finley and William Elliot were canal supporters, but by 1831 opinions had turned. Wayne County senator, James Rariden of Cambridge City was not only opposed to a Wabash Canal, he was probably its biggest opponent speaking and voting against it. John Beard, a major proponent, along with his fellow senators and representatives were finally able to achieve the passage of the Wabash Canal Bill on January 9, 1832, just as the terms prescribed in the Federal land grant of 1827 were about to expire. You will recall that the terms required construction begin within five years, which was March 2, 1832. They finally broke ground on February 22, 1832 just a few weeks before its expiration.

John served as Indiana State Senator from 1831-41 for Montgomery and Clinton counties. He resigned on April 26, 1841 and was replaced by Robert Crocket Gregory, who completed his term.

While a senator in 1833 a bill to incorporate a state bank had passed the house and was to be voted on in the senate. John and other senators opposed it because of the great loss the government had sustained from the old

State Bank at Vincennes and its branches. The bill lost by one vote. Then John, who believed the people were determined to have a bank, proposed a resolution that provided for a report to be given at the next session of a plan designed to secure the public against such losses in the future. His resolution passed.

When the new State Bank of Indiana was chartered, the State had taken half of the stock in the bank. John suggested that a fund be set up for public schools. It became commonly know as the "Sinking Fund" and was set forth in the one hundred fourteenth section of the charter. It ordered that the State's profits from the stock be applied first to the payment of the interest and principal of the bonds, which the State issued to make the investment, and the remainder to the school fund. The measure was completely successful and its advantages were well remembered for years following.

As a legislator John gained a great reputation. He actively and efficiently supported bills for abolishing imprisonment for debt; liberally exempting property from liability to execution; investing the governor with the power to commute capital punishment for imprisonment for life; and creating a free public school system.

In the 1837 journal of the Indiana State Senate, John took part on Act No. 211 An act to incorporate the Crawfordsville and Williamsport Turnpike Company. He motioned that the rules be suspended twice and the bill read twice after which it was referred to the committee on canals and internal improvements. He also made a motion after No. 240, An act authorizing an additional justice of peace be given to Scott and Coal Creek township in Montgomery County, Indiana, had been read that it be read again after which Mr. Morgan moved to amend it by taking out the word Indiana. This was



JOHN BEARD

agreed to and it was to be re-read the following day.

In 1841 President William Henry Harrison appointed John to the office of Receiver of Public Moneys in the Crawfordsville land office. Because of this he resigned as state senator before his term officially ended. John was the receiver until after Martin Van Buren became president.

In 1846-49 John was again elected a state senator. Once again he successfully influenced the passage of several measures of importance to the public. During his political career he was a legislator in either the house or senate for a total of about fifteen years. He was thought to be "a walking history of Indiana. He is called the father of Montgomery County.

When delegates to the 1860 Republican National Convention from Indiana were being chosen, John was elected to attend. He was the nephew of Patrick Beard, who was also a delegate to the Indiana Constitutional Convention and an Indiana State Senator. He was also a cousin of Isaac N. Beard, who was an Indiana State Representative. They were all Quakers.

While at the convention there was a meeting on May 16, 1860 in the "Wigwam" in Chicago. So many thousands wanted to attend but were unable to gain admission. After the meeting was called to order David P. Wilmot was made the temporary chairman. John Beard was made a vice-president and D. D. Pratt was made one of the secretaries. William T. Otto represented Indiana on the Platform Committee. J. R. Cravens represented Indiana on the Committee on Credentials and P. A. Hackleman on the Committee of Permanent Organization.

The platform sought to have the duties on imports adjusted to benefit the industry of the people and protect home industries. It denounced that the constitution carried slavery into the territories and denied congress or any territorial legislature the authority to allow the existence of slavery. It demanded a Homestead Law. It opposed any law that would abridge the rights of citizenship.

During the convention Indiana cast twenty-six votes for Lincoln on every ballot. On the third ballot Ohio changed its votes and Lincoln was nominated as their presidential candidate.

John was a member of the governing board of the State Blind Asylum from around 1868 until his death. He passed away in Montgomery County, Indiana on September 29, 1874. The location of his grave is unknown.

Although no obituary has been found for John

Beard, no better tributes could be made than those written by two of his contemporaries. In 1857, prior to John's death, the Honorable Oliver H. Smith wrote the following sketch:

"While I am sketching a few more of the pioneers of Indiana, I can not pass my friend, John Beard, of Montgomery. I knew him in early days, as well as his father before him. He was of the class of men in a new country called useful. Mr. Beard made no show nor parade. He was plain, practical, sensible, with a strong common-sense mind, and a clear judgment. His opinions had great weight wherever he was placed. He rose by his native powers, without the benefit of an early education, to the Senate of the State, where he stood for years among the very first. He held the office of Receiver under the Government for many years, and discharged its duties to the entire satisfaction of the Government. He still lives to enjoy the remainder of his well-spent life. I love to speak of these plain, honest pioneers of the West. Such men are truly the bone and sinew of all new countries."

General John Coburn, of Mooresville, Morgan County, Indiana, contributed the following:

"I venture to say again, that not one man in a hundred in our State knows the name of him who proposed that the surplus of the proceeds of the stock of the State in the State Bank of Indiana should be appropriated as a school fund. He is one of our greatest public benefactors, a venerable, simple-hearted, clear-headed, sound-minded old gentleman, living in Montgomery county, named JOHN BEARD. His name ought to be precious in the heart of every boy and girl who enjoys the benefit of free schools. When he proposed the measure, it was hardly treated seriously. Nobody thought anything would be left as a surplus; he himself, doubtless, did not realize its importance. But so it was he put the net where it caught the golden fish, and we thank him for it ten thousand times; and we thank those steady, straightforward, strictly upright financiers who husbanded these funds for us. This measure has been the means of producing our present fund of eight hundred thousand dollars for the support of common schools."

The Pioneer Association prepared the following tribute to John Beard in a meeting at the Lahr House in Lafayette on November 20, 1879:

"That in Mr. Beard, whose far-seeing sagacity saw in the unlimited resources of the state and in the future a vast population, and recognizing the fact that to make the state really great and prosperous, intelligence and education must keep pace with its national progress; and that by his indefatigable energy and perseverance, and his powerful influence in the legislature of

1833-4, succeeded, by his amendment to the state bank charter, in transferring the sinking fund to the common school fund, by which \$4,000,000 was added to the cause of education, we recognize a true statesman, a man of pure and unselfish patriotism, and a benefactor to his state and his race. We therefore recommend that this association memorialize the legislature at its coming session, and that petitions be circulated asking the legislature to make an appropriation for the purpose of erecting a suitable monument to his memory, with a proper inscription commemorative of his services to the state and cause of education.

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W&E CANAL TOURED DURING HUNTINGTON'S HERITAGE DAYS

Dwight Ericsson, CSI member from Huntington, Indiana, led two tours of the Wabash & Erie Canal during Huntington's Heritage Days, June 16-20, 2010. The tours started at the new canal exhibit at the Huntington County Historical Museum where Dwight gave a preview of the tour using exhibits to enhance his talk. Visitors then boarded a bus to see canal sites. The first stop was at the site of Tipton Lock at the corner of First and Tipton streets. This was the first lock west of Dickey Lock in Roanoke. He then pointed out the sites of two other of the 5 locks located in Huntington before going to the Historic Forks of the Wabash, where the 6th lock was located, to see part of a canal boat. Tipton's Lock was Lock No. 5 on the Wabash & Erie Canal, Burke's Lock was No. 6, Davies' Lock was No. 7, we don't know the name of Lock No. 8, Madison's Lock was No. 9, and Fork's Lock was No. 10.

tage: The Wabash and Erie Canal" on June 10, 2010. The first article gave the history of the canal while the second dealt with the tour.

The first noted that a short three weeks after then Governor Noah Noble had approved an act establishing the counties of Huntington, Miami and Wabash in Indiana, ground was broken at Fort Wayne, for the Wabash & Erie Canal. Although the land for the canal had been granted in 1827 in the Treaty of Paradise Spring, canal construction had not begun. Time was running out so the anniversary of George Washington's birthday, February 22, 1832, was chosen for the ground breaking ceremony. Elias Murray, the nephew of Samuel Huntington, turned the first spade filled with earth in Fort Wayne, Indiana. It was hoped the canal would speed population growth in the newly established counties. Landings at the towns along its route would be shipping points to load and unload the boats with the rural farmers' produce and the merchandise from the east coast.

The *Huntington Herald Press* carried an article entitled "Exploring the Heritage of the Canal" on April 20, 2010, and an article entitled "Exploring Our Heri-

When 25 miles of canal had been completed between Fort Wayne and Burke's Lock in Huntington there was a celebration. The first boat reached Burke's Lock on July 4, 1835. Jerry Goar, CSI member, Costa Mesa, CA