

**Henderson County Genealogy  
and Family History Society**  
110 Hill Crest Dr., Biggsville, IL 61418  
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Summer 2025 Edition

### **Upcoming Meetings**

The next meeting will be held on June 26, 2025 at 7:00 at Trish Alexander's barn (1539 US Route 34, Biggsville), just east of West Central School on old 34. The topic will be viewing and discussion of a vintage 1868 Henderson County map, and opportunity to view some of Russell Liston's county scrapbooks.

*\*Please note the change in date for the August meeting.* We will not meet in August as we have been invited to the Henderson County Historical Society strategic planning event in September. It will be held on Saturday, September 13 from 9:00-12:00 at the Biggsville Community Building. The general public is invited to share thoughts and ideas about the future mission and vision of the society. Brunch will be served. Please call or email Melinda Whiteman if you have questions about this event. (309-221-2711, or [hendersoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:hendersoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com))

As always, contact Trish ([Buzzardwest@gmail.com](mailto:Buzzardwest@gmail.com)) with ideas or questions regarding the genealogy newsletter or meetings. Fran puts notices about meetings, etc., on the Henderson County Public Library Facebook page and in The Quill.

A note from Fran regarding Dues for the 2025 Year -- "Unless you have a lifetime membership in our society, your newsletter includes a green dues notice for 2025. You may mail your dues to the address at the top of the newsletter or drop them off at the library in Biggsville. Thank you for your continuing support of our society and its endeavors.

I'm sorry this notice is six months late, but my "medical adventure" prevented me from being of any help to Trish in producing the December and March newsletter. My sincere thanks to Trish for continuing her position of co-editor and to Jane Alexander for coming on board to help compile the quarterly newsletter."



As always, if you have updates or additions to the information we share, we are happy to include it in the next newsletter. Please contact Trish Alexander with your information.

## 1. Carman

Illinois.outfitters.com provides the following historical information for Carman. "William Marsden settled in Carman in 1842. The first business opened in 1866 and contributed to the town being platted in 1870 by Joseph Carman." Mississippi Valley Traveler adds the following information: "Platted by W. H. McChesney in 1870 on acreage formerly owned by Joseph Carman, the original village was just four blocks of real estate that ran parallel to the Carthage and Burlington railroad tracks. A few businesses sprouted (some were re-potted from nearby Shokokon), including general stores, an ice cream parlor, a hotel, a restaurant, a boarding house, and blacksmiths. Early residents included a number of immigrants from England and Germany. Carman was a shipping point for grain grown by area farmers, but never grew into a large community and never incorporated. The village today is primarily residential, home to fewer than 300 people. You'll pass by it as you drive the Illinois portion of the Great River Road."

The following historical information on Carman and Shokokon is shared from the collection of Russell Liston.

The article is written by Donald Good and James Bundy, and is dated 1950.

History of the Carman, Illinois area

### EARLY SETTLEMENT AND THE BLACKHAWK WAR

Settlement of the new state was restricted almost completely to the south of a line that would run due east from St Louis. Of the 19 counties of the new state, only 4 were located north of this line. In 1818, there were no settlers in Henderson or any county surrounding it. A Captain Redman (War of 1812) and his family were the first family to settle in the county and did so in what is now Lomax township. There were probably less than a dozen families in the county in 1830 and most of these lived in the Oquawka area. An estimated 10,000 Sac and Fox Indians lived in 3 principal villages near Rock Island. In 1825, Warren County was established. It was composed of Warren, Mercer, and Henderson Counties. The population was so small that the county was attached to Peoria County for political purposes. The first move to force the Sac and Fox from Illinois was in 1831, but the Indians, learning of the coming of the militia, crossed the river and waited until the soldiers left.

The militia, finding the Indian villages vacated, burned them to the ground and turned to their homes in the south. Keokuk, chief of the Fox Indians, took his people and most of the Sac tribe down the Mississippi and then up the Iowa River and formed a new settlement near the Iowa town that bears his name. Blackhawk, incensed by the destruction of his village and adopting counsel from White Cloud, the prophet, took about 700 braves and crossed back into Illinois to get revenge. A 2,000 man militia gathered at Beardstown in the spring of 1832 and marched northward to do battle with Blackhawk and his men. By the end of the same summer the Blackhawk War was over, most of Blackhawk's men had been killed. Blackhawk was put into custody for about a year and was then set free in Iowa, to be with his people. In 1838, Blackhawk died and his remains were taken to the museum at Burlington. (The museum and everything in it was later destroyed by fire.) It should be mentioned that Abe Lincoln was captain of one of the militia regiments that saw action in the Blackhawk War. He and his men crossed Henderson County on their way to do battle. With the Indian problem settled and with the stories of fine land to the north being told by the soldiers, people started streaming into the area in large numbers.

The original Warren County was divided into 3 counties with Mercer being formed from the north part in 1835 and Henderson County being carved off the west side in 1841. The first town to be platted in Henderson County was Oquawka (Indian word meaning "Yellow Banks") on July 9, 1836. July 16, 1836, Shokokon was platted.

## SHOKOKON HISTORY

The town of Shokokon (Spelled earlier Shoquokon) is unquestionably of Indian origin. Shokokon, Illinois was not the first to be given that name. Five miles up river and on the opposite shore there was a trading post settlement by that name in the 1820's. This town had changed its name to Burlington about 1830. The name "Shokokon" is supposed to mean "a rocky place". The name fitted the Iowa town well, the region there being a site where the Indians went to mine flint for tools and weapons. I suspect that the location where the town was to be platted in 1836, was known by this name prior to that date: the purpose of the name not being for descriptive use, but for location. Shokokon was not totally without rocks, however, there being much flint chips and arrowheads found in the north part of the village, marking what had once been an Indian settlement. This spot is presently owned by the Good family and is the highest ground around for almost a mile.

Shokokon was a logical place to start a town. It was one of only 3 spots along the river waterway that allowed movement from it without much swampland, in the whole length of the county. Robert McQueen had the town platted on July 16, 1836 after John Talbott surveyed it. It consisted of 4 blocks parallel to the river and 4 blocks going in a perpendicular to them. Besides accessibility, the location was a natural site to go for the settlers to catch a boat going to the trading center of the area (Burlington) for necessities. Shipping could be accomplished from this site only during high water. The town also was very important as a lumbering town. The new settlers needed lumber to build their homesteads and it could be purchased at Shokokon. Local timber

was used and pine logs were rafted downstreams from Wisconsin. The last lumber mill closed with the death of Thomas Marsden in 1889.

The known names of the ferries that made daily trips to Burlington with passengers were the John Taylor, the Mary Hill, the Gubeis boat, and a ferry run by Charlie and Anna Gorber.

Specific details about this old town were hard to find. When life became easier, histories were written. By this time the value of river towns was greatly decreased. Many of the better buildings were moved to Carmen. The remainder of the buildings quickly fell into disrepair. Another difficulty is the way the locations were described. An abstract of the Shokokon site, recorded in 1853, stated the following (in part): "beginning 6 feet north of a black walnut tree 16 inches in diameter, near the northwest corner of Solon Whitney's warehouse..."

Shokokon is thought to have had a population that never exceeded 300 in number.

Some of the early settlers of the area and the year in which they came include: John F. Curts (before 1836), Alfred and Dr. Knowles (1836), Henry Babcock (1836), John Campbell (1836), Michael Crane (1836), Robert Lomax (1830), H.H. Barnes and J.K. Barnes (1837), William W. Anderson (1838), Judge John Logan (1839), Hamilton Evans (1836), John Pence (1838), Risdon and James Kirby (1837), Robert McQueen (by 1836), Charles A. Smith (by 1836), William Gittings (1839), Robert Cownover (1842), Charles Sparrow (1846), Thomas Marsden (1843), Lambert Hopper (1842), Solon Whitney (before 1853), Bert Moore (1853), ? Roberts ?, James U. and Charles Vaughn (1850-51), John Hugenschutz (1856), Zelile and Enoch Cisna (1866), Wm. T. Hopkins (1865), Cornelius Clover (1852), J.B. McClune (1865), Joseph Carman?, ?Hamblin ?.

By the year 1866, Horatio Curts owned nearly all of Shokokon. By 1879, nearly the whole town was owned by Thomas Marsden. Mr. Marsden had vacated all 24 lots of the town except 6, 7, and 20, in 1881 and 1882.

## CARMAN HISTORY

September 3, 1870, Mr. W. H. McChesney platted out a small four block town parallel to the C.B. &Q. railroad lines. The land through which this railway came was part of 320 acres above Shokokon owned by Joseph Carman. The town was named after Mr. Carman and this was the beginning of the town of Carman.

With the railroad doing such a prosperous trade, many began to flock to Carman from the surrounding area. Among businessmen to do this was Zelile and Enoch Cisna. They moved business from Shokokon and opened a stock of general merchandising in Carman in 1872. Another general store and ice cream parlor was opened in the Rehling house. Among other businesses to locate there from 1870-75 was a restaurant which was run by Mrs. Twilly (Bill Gullberg has the sign from this restaurant), a boarding house run by Elisa Brown, and a hotel moved up from Shokokon. Many blacksmith shops were open in Carman, as this was the main way of fixing things in that time period. In 1875, another section was added to Carman because of the need for more room. The new section contained four full blocks and four half blocks, which was later called "rotten row". On December 18, 1875 the balance of lots were sold to the highest bidders. The terms were 1/3 down and the remainder in two semi-annual installments with 10% interest per annum. These lots were sold and many of the present day buildings were built. With the addition of new lots in Carman, more businesses were started. Two pool halls were built and five blacksmith shops were going strong. Then with the coming of the automobile,

garages began to spring up. In Carman there were two such garages. One was a Ford garage run by Mr. Eagles and the second was a model T garage run by Walter Burnett. The second garage was for overhauls on the Model Ts. In 1875, a substantial church was built on land bought by Samuel E. Vaughn, William A. Vaughn, Jacob Millman, Elisha Babcock, George Howell, and Abraham Asher. The church was very active in the community, but at one point in Carman history, it almost collapsed. But, with the help of many men such as Joseph Clover and others, it was revived. Today the church has an active Sunday School, youth, and holds regular church services. The people of Carman built a large roomy, two-story school in 1878. In the 1800's, the average salary for a teacher was \$25-30 a month. In the early days the curriculum was such that students had the equivalent of a high school education. As many as seventy students were enrolled at a time. There were four grades in the lower room and four grades in the upper room. In 1946, the upper portion of the school was closed and in 1959, the school district #21 consolidated with the Stronghurst school system to be Unit #120.

A structure still standing in Carman today is the Alice Crane house. This house is special in Carman history. It not only served as a boarding house, but also was the first house to have indoor plumbing. This was installed around 1939 and marked the era of progress. This era brought electricity and plumbing to Carman. The Carman Cemetery is an old landmark. It has burials back to 1858, which was pre civil war time. There are presently three parts to the cemetery, 'the original part which no date has been established. 'the dates of the two additions are 1908 and 1959, and 1988. Interesting epitaphs are located throughout the old sections.

#### SOME HISTORY OF CARMAN

There are only 2 towns named Carman in the United States, Carman, IL . and Carman, NY. Population of Carman, IL in 1915 was 261 , in 1986 it was 60. The population in 1915 in Raritan, IL was 931 making Raritan the largest town in Henderson County . In the early 1830 's this area was a haven for many immigrants from England and Germany. Jacob and Elizabeth Parry and 2 children, Jack and Hannah, set sail from England to Minnesota. They changed to smaller boats down the Ohio River and up the Mississippi River. The children became ill and the captain requested them to leave the ship at the next Port of Entry for help, which was Gerber Landing now Shokokon. Later Gerbers had a ferry to Burlington for 25¢ a round trip. They were well treated in this area by what few people lived around which were called colonies. Curts 1836 who owned most all the land from Lomax to Hwy 34, Mississippi to the Bluff. Clovers, Johnson, Finch, Vaughan, Dannenbergs, Rehlings and Marsdens. in 1828 the Phelps of Burlington, Iowa founded a trading post at Yellow Banks, now Oquawka. In 1834 Oquawka was linked to Springfield, IL by a stagecoach. Leaving Oquawka Wednesday morning and arriving Saturday at noon, 3 days later in Springfield. Shortly after that a stage left Springfield and came through Macomb to East Burlington, now Gulfport. In 1855 a Ten Car Special arrived at East Burlington. In 1868, August 13 the Railroad Bridge connected the East to the West. The first mail for this area was a stage stop near Lyn and Bill Brown's homes. The people had to go get their mail. The stage drivers were guided by Big Cottonwood trees. A Wagon Bridge was built across the Mississippi to Burlington, Iowa on March 29, 1917.

## 2. Hopper

Hopper, Illinois was originally called Warren, Illinois, and was laid out by Lambert Hopper in 1840. The village was known as Hopper's Mill in the 19th century because of the lumber mill operated by Lambert and his son, Wesley. This information was found on Wikipedia, and lacks a reference to authenticate it.

## 3. Stronghurst

Illinois.outfitter.com states the following, "Platted Nov. 18, 1887 on land purchased by the Santa Fe Railroad. According to the 1911 Henderson Co. history, it was the "metropolis of the southern part of the county, located on rich farmland and noted for its business enterprise." Joseph Dixson was the founder of Stronghurst.

## 4. Media

The village of Media is located on the Santa Fe Railroad, halfway between Chicago and Kansas City. Illinois.outfitters.com states, "Nathan Wever laid out and platted Media in 1888. In 1892 a United Presbyterian church building was built there by members of the Ellison church and others, and in 1905 the Walnut Grove church disbanded and joined the Media church."

## 5. Lomax

According to illinois.outfitter.com, "Laid out by Robert Lomax in 1882. A railroad station and businesses were located here many years before the town was platted. Lomax was the home of an early airplane factory (circa 1910) and later had a modern tomato canning factory." Mississippi Valley traveler adds, "Located in the floodplain but not on the river, Lomax got a later start than some of its neighbors. Platted by R.A. Lomax, a local farmer, in 1882, the village's fortunes were closely associated with railroads. Lomax was at the junction of three railroads in the 1910s, and uncomfortably close to the crash site of the Sante Fe Railroad's *Texas Chief* in April 1963.

Many of the early residents were from Pennsylvania and the northern reaches of the South. Lomax got off to a slow start, even after the railroad station was built, because a commercial center for the region had already developed just six miles down the road at Dallas City, on the Mississippi River.

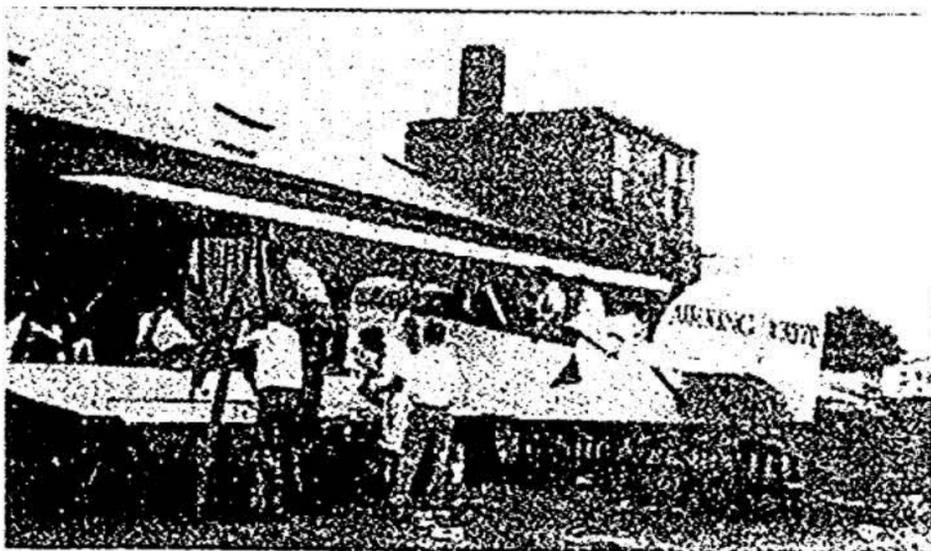
In spite of the competition, there were high hopes that Lomax would be the next Chicago, especially after construction of "Mr. William Love's New City" in 1912, an addition to the original village plat. While the new

subdivision didn't bring on a population boom, it did earn a nickname for Lomax: "White City", because of the rows of tidy, small white houses.

A couple of generations of residents, including immigrants from Jamaica and Mexico, worked at the Lomax Canning Company. Between 1912 and 1968, the factory canned a whole bunch of vegetables under the brand names *Mississippi Valley* and *New Lake Brand*.

The most interesting business in the town's history was probably the Lomax National Airways factory that operated from 1925 to 1929. Founder Shukri Tannus emigrated from his native Lebanon after being orphaned at age 9, living in Europe for a while before moving to the US in 1897. He sold rugs to pay for his education in pharmaceutical chemistry at Northwestern University. He landed a job at the Keokuk Medical College as a chemist's assistant, but eye troubles forced him to quit. He next founded a broom factory at Canton, Missouri that didn't do too well, then moved to Lomax in 1917 to open another broom factory that did well enough to give him the means to buy a general store, a printing shop, and a good amount of land.

With a little extra cash in his pocket, he partnered with barnstormer Glenn Romkey to open the National Airway System (NAS), an aircraft plant that eventually grew to have 60 employees; Romkey designed and tested the planes. They built about 70 planes in total, with the NAS Air King as their flagship. The company didn't do all that well, but some of their planes were flown by barnstormers and another flew in the Mexican revolution. Tannus moved his operation to Peoria with plans to go big but the Depression hit, killing his business and ruining him financially. He went back to selling rugs, and died of a heart attack in South Dakota on August 30, 1932.



Russell Liston's archives provided the following article.

## CAPT. REDMAN CAME IN 1826

WAS NOT ONLY FIRST IN  
TOWNSHIP BUT ALSO IN  
TWO COUNTIES

The first permanent settler in Lomax township, previously Honey Creek precinct, was also the first in Warren county which then included what is now Henderson.

This was Captain Rezin Redman, who located along the Mississippi river near where Honey creek (from which the precinct took its early name) enters into the larger stream. Captain Redman arrived about 1825 or 1826 with his family, before a foot of the county's virgin soil had been polluted by the touch of man. He immediately built a small house, which for many years was the home of the family. Captain Redman was an officer in the second war with England (1812), and there became imbued with that daring spirit, dauntless resolution and matchless strategy which were such necessary characteristics in the frontiersman and pioneer.

Historians have told considerably more about Dr. Isaac Garland who came to the present site of Oquawka, then known as Yellow Banks, and erected the first house there in 1827, later selling out in 1828 to Stephen S. Phelps. Dr. Garland subsequently owned the site of Nauvoo, developed a few years later by the Mormons.

Because Honey Creek precinct wasn't the same as Lomax township, in area, it is difficult to de-

termine just where Captain Redman located, but it was probably along Shokokon Slough, between Honey Creek and Ellison Creek which empty the slough in reaching the Mississippi river. Captain Redman was one of three men named to appraise the property of Daniel Harris, murdered in March, 1831, and first Warren county man to die a violent death; and he was a member of the first grand jury in 1832.

Although first township settled, Lomax township was slow to develop and 18 years went by before the country began filling up. The Pence family arrived in 1838. John Pence was a native of Pennsylvania, born in Lycoming county in 1803, and married to Hannah Pence in 1829. With his family he landed at Shokokon, northwest of the present city of Lomax, on June 2, 1838, having traveled down the Ohio and up the Mississippi. The family moved into an unchinked log house, one end of which was occupied by a family by the name of Tull, who had preceded them a short time. This was on Section 11, near Honey creek. The next spring they built a cabin for themselves on section 15. When the Pencses came, Jonathan Nichols lived on section 22, Robert Crownover, a New Yorker, lived on section 14, and Andrew Stice lived

below, on Honey creek. During the autumn of the year in which the Pencses came, Samuel Logan came from Fayette county, Indiana, and settled on the south side of the precinct. Noble McKim also came that year, and located in the southeast part of the precinct.

W. H. Gittings, (a family name still familiar at Lomax) came up from Kentucky to Hancock county in 1834 and to Henderson county (then part of Warren) in 1838. Jacob Millman, a native of Virginia, where he was born in 1797, came in 1837. Mr. Millman's father was a Hessian soldier in the employ of the British, and was taken prisoner at Trenton, and later settled in Greenbrier county, Va., where Jacob was born.

Joseph Kirby came out to west-

ern Illinois in 1837; Michael Crane arrived from Lycoming county, Pa. in 1835; George W. Logan came from Indiana in 1841; Captain Samuel Summers came in the mid-thirties.

### 6. Terre Haute

Illinois.outfitter.com lists the following information, "This community was platted in 1854 by Wm. C. Rice, deputy county surveyor of Henderson County. The first building, a brick structure, was built in 1854."

### 7. Raritan

Illinois.outfitters.com lists, "Platted on April 16, 1856 by Isaac V.D. Kelly, Tunis Q. Hixson, and Peter Tharp, the town was given its name by the many settlers who migrated there from along the Raritan River in New Jersey. Visit their historic, refurbished, and used opera house."

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Henderson Co. Library

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Genealogy meetings held on the third Thursday of February, April, June, August, and October