

WEST JEFFERSON IN DAYS GONE BY

By Charlie Miller

Series 76

___From West Jefferson correspondents in the *Madison County Democrat*:

___May 20, 1874 - William Putnam is opening a new drug store in West Jefferson.

___June 17, 1874 – A petition is being circulated and numerically signed for extending the incorporation limits of the village. This is undoubtedly done with a view to getting Mrs. Riourdon (owner of the Railroad House) under the control of the council when the question of beer will be at once settled! (*At this particular time, the question of selling alcoholic beverages within West Jefferson was hotly contested. The town was “dry.” The Railroad House was in the Railroad Addition, not the village limits. This building still sets on the North West corner of Depot Street and Pennsylvania Ave. just as you go through the viaduct. The railroad was not elevated, and evidently, many persons were crossing the railroad tracks and consuming all of the alcohol that they fancied as the Railroad House was not only a hotel but a saloon. Many rallies had been held by the temperance people and the taverns in town had closed in March of 1874, but it was to be just like prohibition of later years people still drank and later the taverns open again.)

___Mr. James Peene is putting up a large frame dwelling in the west end of town, cost, \$2,500.00. (This is the current site of Hampton Court Nursing Home.)

___July 14, 1874 – Post Office Master, McCollough, pulled up stakes on Tuesday week and established this office in the Mantle House.

___July 22, 1874 – A BIG FIRE—At an early hour on Tuesday morning, the town was startled by the fearful cry of Fire, and it was soon discovered that the large woodshed at the depot belonging to the Little Miami R.R. was in flames, caused no doubt by the sparks from an early morning train. The shed contained between 400 and 500 cords of wood, which was soon being licked up at a rapid rate by the fire. About 250 cords of wood were burned. The shed which was old and rickety and not much loss to the company was entirely destroyed, also the roof of the water tank building. The station and offices remained uninjured.

___August 19, 1874 – We are glad to note that the old dentist, Dr. J. J. Winthers, has established his office here.

___October 28, 1874 – The American House is almost daily supplied with fine bass from the waters of Big Darby Creek. (The American House Hotel stood on the current site of the bank parking lot.)

___Ordinances that were passes in 1874 were posted at the following places: The hotel of Wm. Fickey, E. R.Hill Restaurant, Gearheart’s Bakery, and The William Stutsoon.