

CHRISTMAS - 1844
with the Bond Family in
Richmond & Wayne County
Indiana

THIS PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS MORNING, WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25th, 1844....

"Speech may be as silver, but (now) Silence is Golden".

A quiet knock at the door of the Levi Coffin House in old Newport, Indiana was heard. The side door opened and out came "Aunt Katie" Coffin. A light fast wagon from the South stood there. "Conductor" John Bond had a load of "Xmas Presents", Goods, (and a concealed slave) (fugitive) from Cincinnati. The "Underground R. R." had delivered again. Tonight "Conductor" Levi Bond, John's younger brother would drive it 20 miles north to Cabin Creek Settlement & School in Randolph County. Dr. Way, from down the street was already on his way to treat a leg wound. The Xmas dinner would have another sudden guest, - as it had since 1826. "Uncle Levi" Coffin was now in Canada, so extra guests were welcomed. These Quaker Abolitionists from the New Garden Meeting, a half mile south were to aid in nearly 3,000 slave escapes before the UGRR closed. However, in 1843, the Indiana Yearly Meeting was divided and separated over the slavery issue for nearly 13 years, but not these Newporters.

THE EARLY COFFIN FAMILY....

In 1660, Tristram Coffin settled Nantucket Is. He, and 9 other men bought it. Coffin himself later owned 1/4 of it. Levi was of the 5th generation from Tristram. Levi Coffin's father (also Levi) married Prudence Williams, (Welsh extr.) and in 1773 moved to New Garden, N. C. (Guilford Co.) where the Bonds had been since 1758. It was Levi Coffin's grandfather Richard Williams (his mother's father) who donated land in 1752 for the New Garden, N. C. Meetinghouse. It was Levi's grandfather who married Prudence Beals (Bales), whose father Thomas was the minister of this Church. Thos. Beals was also the father of Elizabeth Beals Bond, - the grand old lady mentioned in a previous Xmas Card. He, Thos. Beals (Bales) was the first minister to the Indians in Ohio. He died near Chillicothe, O. and was buried in a hollowed out log. His horse, taken by Indians turned up 1 year later, loose, in N. C.!

Another interesting sidelight was this: The Church of Thos. Beals (Bales), back in New Garden, N. C. was used as a Hospital during the Rev. War Battle at Guilford C. H. in 1781. At that time, L. Coffin's Grandfather Coffin's house was used as a hospital for wounded U. S. Officers. The adjoining farm of his Grandfather Williams was also used as a hospital (house), but for wounded British Officers! Small Pox broke out at the British "hospital" and killed his grandfather Williams! This man also was a direct ancestor of the artists' Gt. Grandmother, Lydia Williams Bond. (Pictured) Both the Bond and Williams families were directly related by blood and marriage to the Coffins, hence this background picture this Xmas.

THE COFFIN FAMILY IN 1844.... (and later)

The Coffin Family lived in Newport 20 years. Levi had a store there, then later in Cincinnati. Fugitive slaves came to Newport from 3 directions - Madison, Jeffersonville, and Cincinnati. An, "La Me, Eliza Harris (and daughter, age 2) of Uncle Tom's Cabin fame stayed here before leaving for Greenville, Sandusky, and Canada. Slave owners paid Richmond toughs (from a tavern frequented by Ky. slave holders) to aid in tracking slaves. Often Coffin was threatened and all Newport "was to be burned". He was sued, but never lost. A good female slave was worth \$1,000. It was illegal to own slaves in Indiana, but it was a Federal crime to aid and abett escape. Coffin also was a director of the Richmond Br. of the Indiana State Bank, (1834-65) which his cousin Elijah ran.

In Cincinnati later....

Levi Coffin's "free trade" store in Cincinnati was later aided financially by New Garden Quakers. Coffin's home (S. W. corner Broadway at Franklin Sts.) was headquarters of UGRR. He traveled throughout the south seeking "free trade" goods. Now widely known, he later went to Europe twice to aid Abolitionists and slaves. Once when the then Prince of Wales visited Cincinnati, his carriage was taken past Coffin's house. He paused and doffed his hat to Levi and Aunt Katie, standing in their yard. Judge Taft later joined other Cincinnatians in honoring Coffin after the Civil War at the closing of the UGRR.

THE U. S. PICTURE, NOW, IN 1844....

John Tyler was U. S. President. J. S. Polk was just nominated. Texas and Florida were not yet states (1845). Howe's Sewing Machine was not invented. (1846) Nor was the Cylinder Printing Press. (1847) S. B. Morse's Telegraph line, ("what God hath wrought!") was just starting in the 40 miles between Washington & Baltimore. No Oil was yet drilled in Pa. Nor was gold mined in the west. (1849) Mormon leaders Jos. Smith and his brother were shot and Mormons mobbed at Navoo, Ill. (June 22nd) Dan'l Webster had just dedicated the Bunker Hill Monument. Indians now were mostly west of the Mississippi. Pres. Andrew Jackson (ex) was still alive and living at his beloved Hermitage at Nashville. Henry Clay had just lost the Presidency in 1844, reputedly as a result of his slave speech in Richmond in 1842.

RICHMOND PICTURE IN 1844....

Richmond had over 3,000 people now. Indiana had 685,866. The Richmond-Brookville Canal was under construction. Jos. Gilbert still ran the Stage lines and John Saylor was Mayor. Sam'l Lippencott had just started making carriages at Main & Franklin Sts. (7th) (1840) Room and board was \$1.50 a week. Horse and carriage rental was \$1.25 a day. Sixth St. (9th) was not yet Richmond. St. Paul's Church had been started 3 years. As yet, no Catholic churches were here. (St. Andrews - 1847) Beards were not in vogue. Peter Harter's Tavern had burned, but J. Bayles's Green Tree Tavern was still at Main and Pearl Sts. (5th) Stores ran from Front St. (Court House) to Franklin (7th).

THE BOND FAMILY, (Artist's line) IN 1844....

Jos. Bond, Gt. Grandfather Levi's father had been "summoned to his rest" 4 years before, (age 61) while his wife Rachel (age 62) joined him 2 years later. Old Elizabeth Bond was still alive (age 88), still exhorting the Quakers in Meetings that "Honesty, Industry and Truth" were to be desired. Gt. Grandfather Levi was age 29, while his wife Lydia was 27. Son Jehiel, was age 2. (see picture)

SO..... 1970

Now, 126 years after this 1844 Christmas in Wayne County, over 50 people (from Hawaii to Alaska, to Miami, to N. Y.) have written to the artist who created these cards about the old Bond family's early Xmas's in Richmond and old Wayne.... So we just added another chapter, -which you have read.

sincerely,

BYRON & MARY AGNES BOND
(who still live at old 5th & Mulberry Sts.)
(and who got well larnt about kinsmen)



★
So when you see this sign,
up where we live and shine,
remember, from me and mine,
we also wish that thee and thine
will have the following line...

A Happy 1971

Levi Bond
& wife
Lydia Bond
from an
old tintype
taken about
1850

Merry Christmas