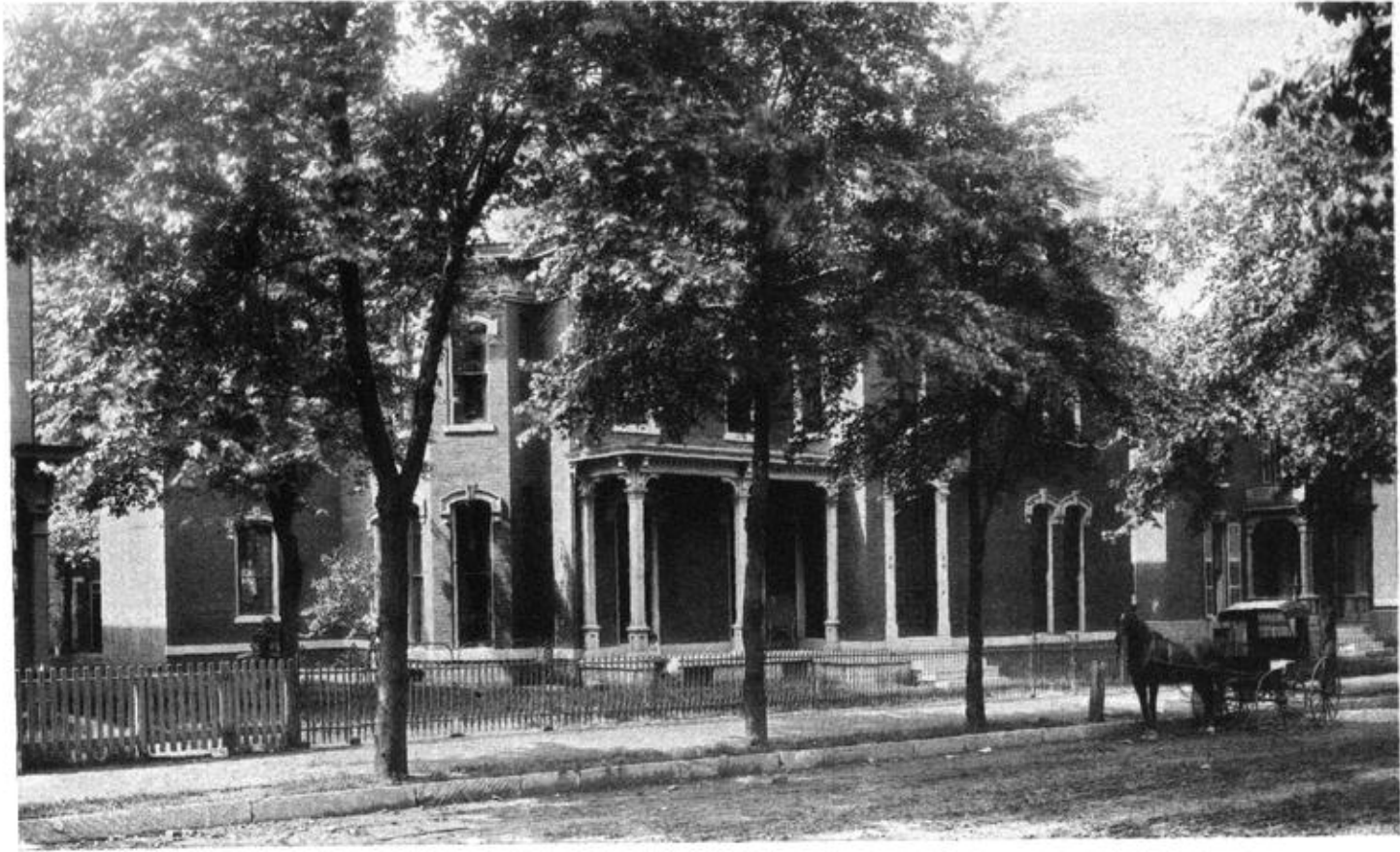


300 people. The work on the National road continued through many years, and led to the growth of the town, which in 1832 had 600 people, and a trade much more extensive than that number would indicate. This was one of the most interesting periods of its history. There was little of the rough element peculiar to many frontier settlements. Among its people were men and women of education and refinement, and the social life was very pleasant. A study of the files of the old newspapers present an inviting picture of the hospitality and gayety which existed when log houses were the prevailing style, and a little extra style was put on by boarding over the logs and painting the roof red. A newspaper was published as early as 1823 by John W. Osborn. It was a very good paper and gave foreign news as fresh as "two weeks later from Europe." When communications with Louisville were cut off the supply of paper might give out, but then the paper would be cut down to a quarter-sheet till the roads and river were open again. Mr. Osborn was a man of great hopefulness, but when, on the establishment of a weekly line of stages, he predicted that Terre Haute would have a daily line and a daily mail, he was considered too sanguine. As this good citizen lived until 1866, he saw the home of his adoption become a great railroad center with numerous trains on many railroads arriving every day.

A small library was early established; a branch of the Bible society was organized, and a Sunday-school taught in the court-house, but for the first twelve years there was no religious society; nor any church building for twenty years. Occasional missionaries of various creeds, including Joe Smith and Sydney Rigdon, the Mormon leaders, held services in the court-house. A missionary in 1825 wrote of Terre Haute: "It is a very singular place; it has a population of 200 and much mercantile business; no religious society of any order, but there is a great disposition to hear preaching, and several gentlemen have formed a Sunday-reading meeting at the court-house and take turns in reading printed sermons."

Until the canal was opened the river was the all important avenue of trade. Merchandise was received in this roundabout course from Louisville and the East, and a great fleet of flat-boats floated down every year bound for the Mississippi and New Orleans. It was estimated that 1700 flat-boats, worth, with the cargoes, over a million dollars passed the lower Wabash in a season. From 1832 to 1835 was a very brisk period, and a census taken by Chas. T. Noble showed a population of 1,214, nearly double that of three years



RESIDENCE OF THEODORE HUDNUT.

before. There were nineteen brick and twelve wooden stores; a branch of the State bank was organized with Demas Deming, president, and James Farrington, cashier. There was a scarcity of dwelling houses; business was very active and pork was packed extensively. This happy period terminated in the financial straits and reverses which overwhelmed the State. The extensive internal improvements and the heavy public debt, the suspension of the banks and the stagnation of business made this one of the most trying eras in the city's history. The early settlers were evidently men of tenacity and grit. They preserved their own credit and their city's fame. It is not easy to realize to-day what struggles their property, bequeathed by the old citizens to their fortunate heirs, cost. They knew what it meant to be land poor even when taxes were from $13\frac{1}{4}$ cents to 50 cents per hundred acres of land. Great hopes were entertained of further progress when the Wabash and Erie Canal should be finished. The whole state had struggled for this waterway to connect the lakes and the Ohio river, and it cost Indiana very dear. The first canal boat arrived in Terre Haute in 1849. It was a great event and the local newspapers indulged in glowing prophecies of our glorious future, when the river and canal should be swarming with