Coffin was written in Long Beach, California during the past summer at the age of 93. Though born in 1842, Theophilus Wiley Morrison saw service in the Civil War. He afterwards joined the regular army and was killed at San Juan Hill on July 1, 1898. At that time he was a Captain in the Fifteenth Infantry. He was buried at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was named for Professor Theophilus Wiley of Indiana University.

RECOLLECTIONS OF SALEM

By Theophilus Wiley Morrison

Commencing May 1st, 1861, I taught a public school in Salem, Indiana, for a term of three months, with the exception of the last few days of July. I had been engaged in teaching a district school the previous winter, on Walnut Ridge, Washington County, Indiana, for a term of three months. Going back still further, my boyhood was passed in Salem, attending school irregularly, and working in the printing office as compositor for nearly two years, the principal time in the Washington County Democrat office. I clerked in the store of E. L. H. Hennock for three months, and also a week or so for Simon Drum, Clothing Store, and for Eli Malott, grocery and provision store, on the occasion of their making trips to Louisville, Ky., for goods; having sole charge during their absence.

I was clerk in the office for my father who was Treasurer of the County, during his last term, after which I was employed for a few weeks at a time in the office of the Auditor of the County, Wm. Williams. My grandfather and Uncle Robert and Jep Morris had me work for them on their farms occasionally, but more than I liked in corn planting and harvest time and when the wheat was thrashed, and the oats, and when the corn was gathered. When I was a boy of six or seven years old, my father moved his family from the old homestead known as the Institute Building, to the Dunham place near town, which he purchased. While we lived there I did all kinds of work, such as feeding stock, milking cows, cutting stove wood, working in the garden, gathering apples, repairing fences, etc. It was an unprofitable seven years of my life in many respects. The farm consisted of only twenty-odd acres, but enough to give me many a ache in body, as well as mind, for I was too healthy, and I never took kindly to work by myself, and it was very lonesome to me on the farm, and it seemed to me that it would be a good thing if I could be with a hired boy who would do a portion of my work, just for the sake of his company. I was the only dependence for months at a time in the various duties that could not be left undone. My father was away from home a good deal of the time we lived on the farm, attending to his duties as County Surveyor, and member of the State Legislature. The heavy farm work such as cultivation of the crops, and building fences was done by hired hands. When at home father stepped into the hired boys shoes to my satisfaction.

The first coat that was made for me from measure taken by a tailor, was a nice brown cloth. It was on the occasion of my going to Bloomington with my father who attended the exercises at Commencement, of the State University, when my brother was at College in the third year of his term. I was always very proud of this coat until one day at Salem I wore it when I went to see the sights in Tom Allen's cotton factory. One of the girls at work there took the privilege of calling me a nice little Quaker boy. When I inquired her reason for calling me a Quaker boy she said, Oh I can tell by the cut of your coat. My early inclinations were strongly averse to the observance of the requirements of the oddities of dress as well as the peculiarities of speech of persons of that denomination, for the reason that I thought the chances for a Circus coming to Salem greater in proportion to the number of inhabitants in that vicinity who were not Quakers. My Mother, though a member of the Friends Church and of Quaker parentage, dressed, and allowed her children to dress, in modern style, and never tried to make us appear as Quakers, and none of us did, intentionally. T. B. Combs made this coat for me, and my Father could not understand my opposition to Mr. Combs making any more clothing for me. He laughed when I told him what the factory girl said, took me over to Henshors after that and got me clothing that fit just like the paper on the wall.

I attended school first the session my father commenced teaching at the Washington County Seminary in the year 1849, and progressed as far as fractions in Davies arithmetic and then quit studying because father had me recite to some of his scholars who were of my own age, but who were advanced farther than I was by reason of longer and more regular attendance at school. The grade for graduation in father's school was as high as in any college in the United States, and he could not devote much time during school hours teaching the first lessons in the little books. I was allowed to attend school pretty much as I pleased and eventually quit. I had not been to school for a good while when Marmaduke Hobbs first commenced teaching in the Seminary building—The High School as he called it. I was then anxious to go to school and was in attendance the first day, but after school was out an accident happened to me that kept me at home for several weeks. I rode our pony to watch him at the creek. It had been raining that day, and the pony fell with me on a slippery place in a lane by the yard. He fell heavily on my leg. Some men at their work at the tan yard came and helped me on the pony, and I rode back home suffering intensely. When I went back to school I found that the class that I belonged to was too hard for me at first, but I caught up in time and got along very well until Hobbs attempted to punish me for whispering in school. I picked up my books and said goodbye to the boys and girls, and told Hobbs to go the d—l, and walked out of the school house. On reaching home I told my father that I was not going to school to that dog raiser any more. He required me to give the circumstances, and then told me I need not attend school any more. While attending the High School I bought a pup, I named Pinto, of the Hobbs family. I paid a silver quarter for Pinto. I had him in my arms carrying him away, but just as I was leaving the yard...
Ponto's mother sneaked up and gave me a savage bite on that part of the body that didn't give her any trouble to reach up to, and sneaked away again without a growl. Ponto was a cheap dog though for all that, with a good deal of sense, and like the most of dogs would fight when cornered, and sometimes when he wasn't. As it was, it was the dog Ponto who saved me from compulsory attendance at the High School as father told me many years afterwards.

After the seven years spent on the farm our family moved back to the Institute Building in consequence of the failure of the parties who bought it to pay for it, and I passed the time we lived there much more agreeably. I still had plenty of work to do about the house and garden. I did more if I had been sole judge of what constituted plenty. Prof. Wilson taught school in the basement. The building was our home, and I always considered him and his school as being of place there. It was a school for girls and young ladies. Noble C. Butler and myself were the only boys admitted to scholarship. I didn't like it and quit after a few weeks. Noble was a bright scholar and on his best behavior all the time. After teaching a session there Prof. Wilson opened school in the Seminary building. I attended school again but only strived to be foremost in all games we had at school and studied books as little as possible. I got along pretty well until I was wrongfully accused by him of discharging the contents of a shot gun through the window into the 'blackbird.' The boy who did it grew up to be a man. His body was buried in the graveyard at Salem. I left the school in consequence of keeping my word not to tell who did it. My next, last and best teacher in school was Prof. James G. May, who always treated me kindly. Prof. Wilson gave me a bad name and Prof. May had heard of it when he came to teach, but under Mr. May I was as good as the average school boy as I informed me, and progressed very well in my studies. I stopped going to school from a desire to earn some money. When I left Prof. May's school I was competent to teach any public or district school in the County. I taught my district school on Walnut Ridge, and the public school of the North district of Salem successfully and had scarcely any trouble with my scholars. It was during my scholarship under Prof. May that I was sure that I had a good moral character, as I was admitted to membership in a literary society having that important feature in the Constitution and By Laws as one of the requirements of membership, besides the payment of the initiation fee of $1. The society went to pieces though owing to the small number of members who attended the meetings, and on the last one [meeting], as previously resolved by the society, we had some high fun over an oyster stew and nick-nacks purchased with the sum total of the funds of the Society, amounting to five or six dollars. Our meeting on that occasion, as before, was in the Seminary and held at night—no Honoray members present. Our family lived the second time several years in the Institute building. No place has been so much to me like home sweet home as that capacious building was. It was at last sold to Prof. James G. May, and we moved to Grandfathers, and lived there several months, and then bought the place my Uncle Nixon Morris owned, and moved there, where the family lived the balance of the time we resided in Salem. I performed similar duties about the house and farm as when we lived on the other farm that we still owned and rented, earning a few dollars occasionally by working for other folks, and teaching, as I have before stated. I was painting our wood house when that most terrible and destructive tornado of 1858 first gave indication of its approach, and with father's warning that it would be a great storm, I got inside the residence none too soon. It did great damage throughout its track from Southwest to East of North—in width twenty miles—through the State and on into Ohio. It caused the death of my cousin, Annie Morris. It damaged our property to the extent of several hundred dollars in fences, trees, and the tin roof of the L of our residence. It was blown entirely off and fell in the garden. I have never witnessed as great a storm since. It was a grand sight—sublime—of portentous splendor.

I left Salem with a company of volunteers for Indianapolis, the latter part of July 1861, to enlist for the war. We were accepted and mustered in the United States service as Company C. 18th Ind. Vol. Infy. I remember well the time the soldiers left Salem for the Mexican war, and their drills held on the Common adjoining the Institute, and remember particularly that all the family and some visitors were posted in the best places for observation, at the upper windows of our residence, watching the soldiers ascending the hill beyond town on the New Albany dirt road. I watched the soldiers as long as they were in sight. Some of the visitors were crying but I did not understand the import of their sorrow. I thought of it only as a pleasant and interesting sight to see the soldiers marching away. The recollection of this came to my mind vividly when aboard the train with my Company rounding the curve as we left Salem, and I then felt the reality of the fact for the first time in a sorrowful way, that we were going to war—and I had relatives and friends, an affectionate mother and loving sisters whom I knew were in distress at that time; and I had my last look at Salem and our house with my eyes affected to tears, and a heart that fit. Oh beautiful Salem! I love you better than I knew. My comfort was that I had left the impression that I was glad to have the opportunity to serve my country as a soldier, even though my feelings, then, suggested the contrary. My patriotism was at a low ebb just at that time, and I did not care to have it known.

About the time of the Mexican War my brother and sister and myself were in an engagement that might have proved to be the death of myself and sister if the attacking party had shown better discrimination. As it was, the attack was directed against my brother, who, after a desperate struggle, succeeded in getting out of it safe and sound. We went in company to gather berries at a briar thicket in a field back of the Seminary, and in the midst of the thickest of the thicket, and whilst we were picking berries, we heard a squealing of pigs—poor things—and then a blood-curdling shriek ensued in the twinkling of a second. A large savage sow rushed furiously at my brother, at which I got terribly frightened and badly entangled in the briars. My sister heroically helped me to get out of my predicament, but it took some moments, and some of
my clothing, and there, near us, my brother was fighting the hog away
with all his might. There was no chance for him to run, as the hog was
right at him before he could even turn around, and that may have been
fortunate. The briars were very thick, and even with a first class in-
tention to run, it is a feat too difficult of accomplishment in the midst of
a dense briar thicket. The hog had a clear space for advance in the first
instance and came quickly, suddenly and savagely. My brother's only de-
ference was to use his feet in staying per force his ground, and back out
fighting, in doing which he exerted himself to the utmost of his strength,
as the hog was determined it seemed to kill him, and my brother could
see that plain enough. He stumbled and fell backwards, but kept on
vicking the hog away in that humble and scored position, the briar bed
and pillow helping to keep up his spirits. The hog left him and made
search for us, but owing to my sister's bravery and dexterity we were by
this time out of harms way in the open field paddling for home, and it
remains unknown whether the hog went back to find out whether my
brother was there for a stand up fight. I think it is on that account
that the “Theophilus Thistle stuck ten thousand thistles through the
thick of his thumb”, was repeated so often about that time, and not so
much because the first word belonged to me but because I had some title
to the ownership of the whole sentence. I didn't mind it any more than
my sister did to hear me say “Listen to the little pigs, poor things”, my
version of “The Mocking Bird.”

My father was editor, proprietor and founder of the Washington
County Democrat, and the paper was published at one time, for a con-
siderable while, in the basement of our residence, the Institute building.
Father's habit was to write editorials and read proofs and cut clippings
from exchanges in the South East room of the third story. There was
in consequence quite a large amount of combustible material remaining
in this room from day to day. A huge pile of old papers and manuscript
was stuffed in around a Franklin stove, which was there as a kind of
waste-basket. The pipe of the stove had been disconnected from the flue
in the wall, but I was not aware of the fact, and considered it a proper
thing to set fire to the miscellaneous collection in the stove, and put into
the fire the stuff outside of it in detail. The first part of this programme
was a success. Never since has smoke or flame seemed so portentous as
the ominous roaring that announced the calamity the lighting of a match
at that time brought about. The fire at once leaped to the ceiling and
poured out of the stove and pipe in an appalling manner. I had not at
that time heard of the George Washington hatchet story, and rushed
downstairs and announced the condition in the earnestness called for by
the immediate peril of the situation. Mamma! Mamma! the house is on fire
and I don't know who did it! I suppose that there was some smoke in
that room than ever before or since. Upon Mother's arrival the discovery
was made that waste papers were not as plentiful as they had been. The
Democrat office was in the course of time moved to the DePauw block.
Frank Williams, Tom Telly and I did all the office work for many a day
in that building. At last we struck for higher wages ostensibly, but we
were tired of the business, and William Williams, the publisher and pro-
nrietor, knew that fact, and felt pretty sure that though he should con-
cede to our demands that day that we would strike soon again, and keep
on striking, and he wisely paid us off, and closed the office temporarily
as other competent help was not at that time available in Salem. Mr.
Williams made a trip to New Albany and employed help and continued
the publication regularly.

Sometimes a person can't help crying over spilled milk, or "some-
whereas" about the time milk is spilled. When a boy I milked a kicking
cow, one of those certain and sure kickers that become expert by prac-
tice, and was kicked over many a time. I attempted kindness time and
time again, but it wouldn't work. By the time I made up my mind to
what may be termed heroic treatment, I was sure that nothing else would
do that cow any good. I stroked the meek looking animal, named Pink,
kindly and said, Now Pink if you kick again I will shoot you, and that
time I got a good one that made me wonder how people could take such
risks as getting within reach of a cow's heels, and on recovering breath
I banged away at her sure enough, with aim, and put about an ounce of
squirrel shot back of her ears. It was too mad to milk, but the next morn-
ing I proceeded to the task and Pink never kicked the again. We were
offered sixty dollars for Pink after that, and I wanted fail to sell her
as I thought I detected the fact that she had a short memory. It was
a good big price for a cow at that time, but the money was not tendered,
and selling to an Editor must be for cash when that editor was Mr. Coe
of the Salem Times, my father said, which was the universal opinion of
everybody who knew Coe before he took his departure.

SALEM'S FIRST TRAIN
By Annie Morrison Coffin

The first Railroad train that came into Salem, Washington County,
Indiana, [ran on a railroad that] was built by subscription. My father,
John I. Morrison, gave $40.00, all the money he could spare.

It was a narrow gauge, flat rail, and was only 36 miles long. It was
called the New Albany and Salem Railroad and afterwards became part
of the great Monon road.

My Mother thought it would be interesting to go down to the station
and see the train come in, so she prepared a picnic basket and filled it
with good things to eat for our lunch. We went on the train at Harris-
town, the last station before entering Salem. There was one coach at-
tached to the engine, and an Engineer, Fireman and Brakeman.

Just after the train left Salem there was a sharp curve to avoid a
hill and the little dinky engine went promptly off the track—bumpity,
bumpity, bump. My Father told one of the men to bring him a fence rail
and he had them put one end under the engine and the other end over a
large stump, which he called a fulcrum. That was the first time I ever