

**Welcome
to
Oglesby and Grant
at the
Mansion**

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For Use in Local History Classrooms**

RICHARD OGLESBY and PRESIDENT GRANT AT THE MANSION

A Study Guide

by William L. Horton

Richard Oglesby is one of the most famous and interesting people who have called Decatur their home. He was a gold miner, soldier, farmer, cabinetmaker, governor, businessman, and senator. For several decades he was on a small list of the top people to know in Illinois.

To understand what made him an important and famous Illinois citizen requires people to know about several events and about people who helped make him what he became. No well-respected and important people have gotten very much out of life without the help of others. Their participation in both unimportant and important activities and events is always part of their success. They also have had to understand how to deal with hardships, setbacks, failures, and success. Other people have wanted to help them throughout their lives, and they have helped others as well.

Richard Oglesby's Early Life

Richard Oglesby was born in 1824 to a Kentucky farming family. Both of his parents and two brothers died in an 1833 cholera epidemic. Cholera is a deadly disease that killed many people before it was understood how important clean water and food was.

When the family farm was sold he had to watch a close friend he called "Uncle Tim" be sold to help pay his parents' debts. He promised Uncle Tim that, if he could, he would save enough money to some day

buy his freedom. From that day on, Richard was an abolitionist, which was a person who thought that slavery should be ended.

He and his brothers and sisters were sent to live with relatives, and Richard came to live with his Uncle Richard when he was 14 years old. His uncle traveled between Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois as a cabinetmaker, and taught Richard that trade. When they traveled through Decatur Richard stayed to live with another aunt and uncle.

When he was 19 he rented a farm near Decatur to raise a crop of hemp, which was used to make rope. In order to sell the hemp he had to soak it in a pond of water. Several horses drank the water and the chemicals from the hemp plants caused them to die, and by the time Richard paid the farmer for the horses, he had only \$6.50 for a whole summer's work.

Next he decided to work for a Springfield lawyer so that he could become a lawyer himself. That was how they did that in those days. He soon realized that he was poorly educated for the training since he had only three months of schooling. With hard work and study he was finally "admitted to the bar" in 1845. This meant that he was allowed to be a lawyer in Illinois. He opened a law office in Sullivan but only worked there for six months. He returned to Decatur and volunteered to be in the army to help in the war with Mexico.

Richard Oglesby's Early Life

1. _____ When and where was Richard Oglesby born?

2. _____ What is cholera,
and what causes it?
3. _____ Why did
Richard have to go live with his uncle?
4. _____ Who was Uncle Tim?
5. _____ What was an
abolitionist?
6. _____ Name the city in Illinois where Richard
came to live as a boy?
7. _____ For what
was hemp used?
8. _____ What would a
“member of the bar” do for a living?
9. _____ Where did Richard first
practice law?
10. _____ Why did he leave
Sullivan to return to Decatur?

The Mexican War

The United State fought a war with Mexico from 1846 to 1848, President James Polk asked the states to help raise an army, and Richard Oglesby was one of the thousands of young men who volunteered. In those days the soldiers elected some of their officers, and Richard was elected to be a lieutenant in the 4th Illinois Infantry Regiment.

Many Americans did not want their country to fight a war with Mexico. They felt that disagreements between the two countries could be settled peacefully. Also, many felt that the war was simply to take parts of Mexico for the United States.

However, there were many Americans who thought that the borders of the U. S. should reach from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. And that part of Mexico needed to become part of the United States. Slave holding states saw the war as a chance to add more slave holding territory to our country. Many Americans had money owed to them by the Mexican government, and it looked like they would never get it back. Finally, the government of Mexico was having problems of its own. They couldn't govern much of their own territory very well, and could not help to peacefully solve the problems between the two countries.

During the war Mexican California became independent and decided to become part of the United States. An American Army defeated a Mexican army in Texas, and settled the problem of where the Texas-Mexican border would be, and that Texas would be part of the United States.

The American army also fought several battles in Mexico. Richard

Oglesby fought in the Battle of Buena Vista, which kept Mexico from attacking Texas. There the American army of 5,000 soldiers defeated the Mexican army of 20,000 soldiers. He also fought in the Battle of Cerro Gordo, where 9,000 American soldiers attacked and defeated 13,000 Mexican soldiers. This battle cleared the way for the American forces to later capture Mexico City, which is the capitol of Mexico. It was during this battle that some soldiers found a wooden leg that had belonged to the famous Mexican general Santa Anna. As a joke they gave it to the popular Richard Oglesby as a souvenir, and it can be seen at the National Guard Museum in Springfield, Illinois.



While some Americans may not have wanted a war with Mexico, our country certainly gained a lot from it. After the peace treaty was signed in 1848, the United States got more than 500,000 square miles of new land, which includes the Rio Grande River Valley, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming. Two streets in Decatur are named after events in the war. They are Cerro Gordo Street and Buena Vista Avenue.

The Mexican War caused very hard feelings in Mexico, since they lost nearly half of their country, and of course they hated that loss. The war also added to the problems of how the United States was going to deal with the problem of slavery. This eventually led to the American Civil War.

Many soldiers who fought in the Mexican War became very important leaders in the American Civil War that began in 1861. They include Ulysses Grant, Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, Winfield Scott, William T. Sherman, George McClellan, George Meade, and Thomas Jackson.

The U.S. lost over 13,000 soldiers in that war. One out of every five American soldiers died, mostly from disease. For every fifty men who died, 8 died from battle wounds, and 42 died from disease and accidents.

The Mexican War

1. _____ With what country did the U.S. fight the Mexican War?

2. _____ With what country did Mexico fight the Mexican War?

3. _____ and _____ Between what years was the Mexican War fought

4. _____ Who was the American President during the Mexican War?

5. Write three causes of the Mexican War _____

6. _____ Which battle kept the Mexican army away from Texas?

7. _____ Which battle helped clear the way for the U.S. to capture Mexico city?

8. What do we have in Decatur to remind us of the Mexican War?

9. Name seven states that used to be part of Mexico

10, Describe a problem the war caused. _____

11. Write a list of five American soldiers who became important people in the American Civil War _____

12. What was the most frequent cause of death of American soldiers during the war? _____

Oglesby's Travels

After the Mexican War, Oglesby returned to Decatur, but soon headed west with seven friends to search for gold during the California Gold Rush. They were quite lucky. In two years he returned to Decatur with \$5,000, which today would be like having about \$1,000,000. In those days that was a small fortune, and it made him one of the richest men in Decatur. First he saw to it that Uncle Tim had his freedom bought. He also bought and sold land in Decatur and made even more money. He named two streets that were next to his property. They were Cerro Gordo Street, for the battle he fought in, and Eldorado Street, which was a Gold Rush word that meant "a place where there is a lot of gold."



In 1856 he left Decatur for over a year and visited Europe and the Holy Land. The Holy Land is the area talked about in the Bible. It was really an unusual decision for him to make, because in those days very few people traveled very far from their homes.

When he returned home, many people wanted to hear about his travels in these mysterious lands. He developed into a popular and fascinating speaker, giving many lectures to people who love to hear about new and strange people, animals, places and ideas. Since there was no TV, movies, radio, or recordings, this form of entertainment was a popular way to spend an evening. It also made Oglesby well known in Illinois, and gave him much experience in speaking to audiences.

Oglesby's popularity soon led him into politics, which means he wanted people to vote for him in elections. He was elected as an Illinois senator in 1860. As he became active in politics he developed a friendship with another lawyer named Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln, Oglesby, and the Civil War



Abraham Lincoln had grown up a poor boy on the frontier. He was raised by pioneer farmers who had very little money or luck. He came to Illinois when he was twenty-one and through hard work and good friends he became a lawyer. In those days many Illinois lawyers had to travel all over the state to help with trials and court cases. He met many important and popular people on these trips including Richard Oglesby. The two men became good friends, and it was Oglesby who gave Lincoln the nickname

“Railsplitter.” With the help of Oglesby and other powerful men, Lincoln was elected President of the United States in 1860.

While Lincoln was President the American Civil War began. It was caused by leaders not being able to settle the legal, moral, and practical problems caused by slavery. Too many people refused to find a way to solve this issue if they could not get their own way. Violence seemed to be the only way to settle this disagreement.

Fighting between the northern and southern states started in 1861, and President Lincoln found it very difficult to find a way to bring the two sides back together again to be one country. It would take four years of our bloodiest war to solve this problem.

Lincoln needed to build up our army and navy. He asked loyal states to raise regiments, which are groups of about a thousand soldiers. Richard Oglesby gave up his job as state senator and joined the army. He was made a colonel (which is pronounced “KER-nul”) and put in charge of the 8th Illinois Infantry Regiment, usually called “The 8th Illinois.” Infantry are soldiers who fight battles on the ground.

The Civil War was fought mostly in the southern states. At first Oglesby helped train men and get them their supplies and equipment. While he was in charge of the army post in Cairo, Illinois, he met General Ulysses S. Grant. They became close friends as the war went on. When Grant was ordered to capture the enemy’s Fort Donnellson in Tennessee, he chose Oglesby to be in charge of part of that battle. It was so cold that some soldiers froze to death the night before the battle. Oglesby encouraged his soldiers, and told them, “We came here to take the fort, and we will take it!”

The northern Union army defeated the southern Confederate army. Grant and his soldiers received a lot of fame for the victory. Oglesby was given a higher rank. A few months later he was at the Battle of Corinth in Mississippi, and was shot in the lung while leading several regiments. In those days lung wounds usually caused death, so all of his doctors thought he would die.

He didn't, however. His wife Anna came to take him home to Decatur to take care of him. When he was well enough to return to the army, he was given the job of being a judge in army court cases. In 1864 Abraham Lincoln asked him to run for Illinois governor. Oglesby won this election. While he was governor he visited his old friend in the White House, which is the home of American Presidents. The war had just ended that week in 1865. After this meeting Lincoln asked Oglesby to go to the theater with him and Mrs. Lincoln to see a play. Oglesby declined, or said no, since he was so tired from his trip to Washington.

That night Lincoln was shot in the head at a place called Ford's Theater. Oglesby was in the room the next day when Lincoln died. He helped take Lincoln's body back to Springfield, Illinois for burial. Later he was in charge of planning Lincoln's Tomb.

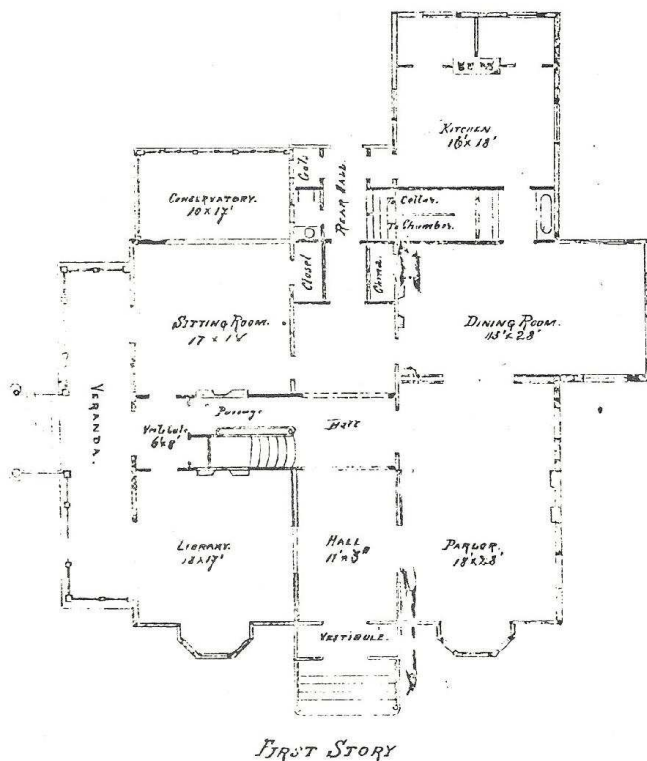
Lincoln, Oglesby, and the Civil War

1. _____ What job career did both Lincoln and Oglesby have as adults?

2. _____ Name the war that started when Lincoln was President.
3. _____ Where did Oglesby first meet General Ulysses S. Grant?
4. _____ In what battle did Oglesby lead his soldiers to victory in the Civil War?
5. _____ In what battle was Oglesby wounded?
6. _____ Where on his body was he wounded?
7. _____ In 1864, what election did Oglesby win?
8. _____ What Illinois friend of Oglesby was shot at Ford's Theater?
9. _____ Why wasn't Oglesby not with Lincoln that night?
10. _____ What was the last thing Oglesby did for Abraham Lincoln?

After the Civil War

Richard Oglesby completed his four year term as governor after the Civil War. During this time his first wife, Anna, died. His son, Dickie, also died of diphtheria. Diphtheria is a disease that can keep a person from breathing. Probably before Anna's death, they asked William Le Baron Jenney, an architect from Chicago who had also served in the war under General Grant, to design a new home in Decatur for them. This is the design for the first floor that Jenney created:



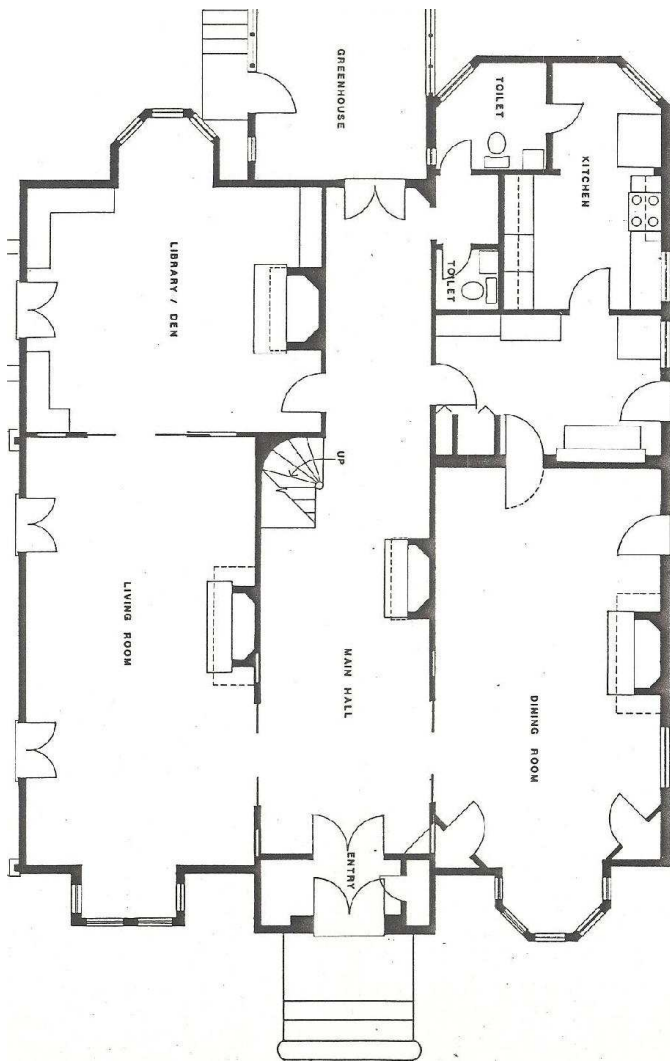
Oglesby left office in 1869, and returned to Decatur with his two surviving children. He put his business affairs in order but the designs for the new house were put away. He still remained active and interested in

politics, and was again elected governor of Illinois in 1872. He did not serve long, however. The law in those days was that the Illinois General

Assembly, which is the state's law makers, would choose the Senators who would work to make our country's laws in our capitol, Washington D.C. Oglesby did this for six years, and during this time he married Emma. They had four children: Felicity, Richard, John and Jasper. Starting in 1873, they built a new house in Decatur using some of Mr. Jenney's plans but changing the inside of the house in many ways. They built it onto the first house that Richard and Anna had lived in. This is what the Mansion looked like when Richard and Emma lived in it.



The new house is the big square on the left and the old house is the smaller part on the right. The building on the far right of the picture is a stable for horses and a carriage house. In 1880 when President Grant came to visit ten people lived in the house: Richard and Emma, Emma's son from her first marriage, Richard's two children from his marriage to Anna, and their three oldest children. There was also an 18 year old maid and a 12 year old nursery maid who lived in the old part of the



Mansion on the right. That part of the house also held the kitchen. There were no other houses on this side of the block so the Mansion had lots of yard and looked pretty important sitting all by itself.

Richard and Emma changed the inside of the house from Mr. Jenney's original drawings. This is

what the first floor looks like now. The old house is no longer part of the main house. It was moved in 1906.

After Richard finished being Senator in 1879, he brought his family back to Decatur to live in the Mansion full time. The family lived there until 1882. They moved out when Jasper, the youngest of their children, was only two weeks old. They moved to Lincoln, Illinois, and later to Elkhart, Illinois which was Emma's hometown.

After the Civil War

1. _____ Who designed the Oglesby Mansion?
2. _____ Why did Richard not finish his second term as Governor of Illinois?
3. Look at the two drawings of the first floor of the Oglesby Mansion. Find two changes that Richard and Emma made in the rooms when they built the Mansion.
 - a. _____

b. _____

4. _____ How many people lived in the house when President Grant came to visit?

5. _____ How old were the servants in 1880?

Ulysses S. Grant

Failure, Failure, Failure! These are the words we would probably have used to describe Ulysses S. Grant before his success in the Civil War. Americans have always shaken their heads at how a man who accomplished so much could have started his life by failing at so many things. His family, his friends, and his attitude helped him climb from the lowest pits of failure to the highest posts in the United States.

Grant was born in Ohio in 1822 to a farm family. His father was also a successful tanner and leatherworker. Tanners take animal skins and make leather out of them. Since work animals used leather equipment, and shoes, boots, clothing, and various items used daily were made out of leather, tanners were found in many towns. Many things that plastic is used for today were made of leather because plastic had not been invented then.

Ulysses liked working on the farm and was very good at working with horses. His father made sure that his son went to the available schools, and in 1839 got him an appointment to attend the United State Military Academy. This school trains young people to become army officers, and is usually called “West Point.” Grant disliked army life, but stayed with it and did very well in mathematics and horsemanship. Mathematics help teach a person to think logically and methodically. Horsemanship was a very important skill since officers rode horses.

When he finished West Point he was sent to Louisiana, then Texas, and was put in charge of supplies for his regiment during the Mexican War. There he was promoted for his skill and bravery under fire. He learned much from his experiences in the war.

When the war was over he married Julia, and they eventually had four children. Grant had to leave his family in Ohio when the army sent him to Oregon and California. He could not afford to take his family with him. He became so lonely and bored that he began to abuse alcohol. He resigned from the army and moved to St. Louis, Missouri with his family. He tried farming, rent collecting, and a government job, and he failed at all of them. He finally went to Galena, Illinois, and became a clerk in his brother’s harness store. Harnesses are the leather straps that attach animals to farming and riding equipment.

When the Civil War started in 1861 Grant volunteered to get young men ready to be soldiers. He soon was made a one-star general, called a brigadier. As the four year war went on Grant became successful at winning battles, and was promoted three more times until he became a four-star general in charge of the Union army.



Grant's success has been credited to his talent to see clearly what must be done to solve a problem, what steps were needed to solve the problem, how to give very clear orders, and his ability to pick the men who could get the job done. He learned from other people's mistakes, and did not repeat them or the ones that he made. He also did not like to go back the same way he had come.

Grant is given credit for defeating the famous and brilliant Confederate general Robert E. Lee in 1865, and bringing the war to an end. He was tremendously popular in the victorious northern states, and he was appreciated by the southern states for his generous surrender terms to them.

Grant was elected president twice, for the years 1869 to 1877. While he was an honest and popular President, several of the men he chose to help run the government were not honest. Historians view his presidency as a time of great corruption in the government.

When he retired from the presidency he traveled a lot and wrote magazine articles about the Civil War. He moved to New York City in 1884. He was cheated out of his money by a dishonest banker. When he realized that he was dying from throat cancer, he was worried that his family would not have enough money to live on. He decided to write his autobiography, which is a book that a person writes about his own life. Mark Twain, his friend and a famous author, helped him publish his book, which was a great success. It is still read today by many people

who want to learn more about this remarkable failure who became such a success. He died in 1885, just a few days after he finished his book.

Ulysses S. Grant

1. _____ How old was Grant when he died? Subtract the year he was born from the year that he died.
2. _____ From what military school did he graduate?
3. _____ Name the war he fought in Mexico
4. Besides the army, what jobs did he fail to do well? _____

5. _____ to _____ From what year to what year did the Civil War last?
6. Name three things that helped Grant be a successful leader in the Civil War
a. _____
b. _____
c. _____

7. Why did he become broke after he was done being President?

8. What kind of book did he write that is still famous today?

9. Draw a scene from Grant's life that you thought was interesting.

Grant's Visit

The children of Decatur were so excited! On October 6, 1880, they were off from school so that they could watch the Grand Encampment. The GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) was in charge of the two day event. The Grand Encampment was a big meeting attended by over 3,000 men who had been soldiers in the Union army and navy during the Civil War. Thousands of other visitors came to watch, listen to speeches and bands, and to show their respect to the veterans. The war had been over for only fifteen years, and most people had a relative or friend who had been in the war, and many of their leaders had been soldiers in the war.

The GAR was also a very important group of voters who wanted the war's orphans and disabled veterans taken care of by the government. Many politicians were interested in being seen and heard at GAR meetings.

On Wednesday the Grand Encampment began in a very exciting way. Forty-six cannon shots were fired early in the morning to start the activities. The visiting veterans then spent the day registering, or

signing in. Then they were able to start visiting “comrades in arms” (soldiers they had fought with.)

That afternoon thousands of people met President Grant at the train station near Eldorado Street. When he arrived on the train he was with his old friend Richard Oglesby, as well as General John Logan, James Millikin, Grant’s son Jesse, and other important people. They were supposed to lead a parade to Oglesby’s home, but the crowd was so thick that they had to sneak off on the wrong side of the train and dash around to the other side to get to the front of the parade! It finally got started and went down the main city streets which were lined with thousands of people anxious to see the town’s famous guests.

When the parade reached Governor Oglesby’s porch, the mayor of the city gave a speech welcoming the honored guest to Decatur. Grant thanked the mayor and the people and went inside to the parlor, which is a room for meeting visitors. Oglesby introduced Grant to some Decatur citizens, and then they had dinner with several guests.

Thursday started with a huge parade that drew thousands more visitors to Decatur. People had spent several days decorating telephone poles, carriages, houses and businesses with flags, streamers, banners, and bunting.



President Grant led the parade. Several bands played. There were veterans (retired soldiers) from the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the Civil War. The Decatur fire department was in the parade. There were cavalry and artillery pieces. The committees, guests, and city leaders all got to be in the parade. You can imagine the excitement people felt as they waited for the parade to start. The parade marched through the downtown streets, and then on Eldorado Street to Fairview Park. In those days it was called “the fair grounds” because that was where the Macon County Fairs were held before it became a city park several years later.

The veterans slept in 150 tents that had been put up for them. They were fed there and called the place “Camp Sheridan” after a famous Civil War general. A twenty-one gun salute from the cannons was fired for President Grant, which is the correct number for a president. There were speeches by Grant, Generals Jesse Moore, A.E. Smith, John Logan, and other famous Decatur men. Oglesby was made honorary president of the day. He invited everyone to attend the reception for Grant that evening.

There, Grant shook hands with about 5,000 people. The meeting ended with a lady singing a new, popular song called “In the Sweet By and By,” and the audience sang along on the choruses. Grant and his son then got on a train for Chicago. The Grand Encampment was over.

Grant’s Visit

1. Why were children excused from school in October of 1880? _____

2. _____ What does GAR stand for?

3. _____ Who
were the people coming to the encampment?

4. Why would politicians want to be at a GAR meeting? _____

5. _____ Who was the most important
guest at the Grand Encampment?

6. _____ Why did
Grant stay with Oglesby that night?

7. If you were in Decatur and did not know what was going on, what
might be a clue to give you a hint? _____

8. If you asked someone then how to get to Fairview Park, why wouldn't
they know what you were talking about? _____

9. What difficult thing did Grant do at the reception? _____

10. Name the last song that people sang when the meeting was over.

After the Grand Encampment

The Oglesby family moved away from Decatur in 1882 and lived in Lincoln, Illinois for three years. Richard was elected Governor for a third time, which rarely happens. He then lived in Springfield for four years. After he finished being governor in 1889, he and Emma built a mansion near Elkhart, Illinois. A mansion is a large expensive house. They lived there until he died in 1899 and Emma died in 1928.

Decatur Children in 1880

Governor Oglesby and President Grant would have asked children about themselves. Both had children of their own.

If you were a Decatur school student in 1880, you would have been dismissed from school so that you could watch the Grand Encampment parade and see Governor Oglesby and President Grant. If you were introduced to these men you would probably have been asked about your family, school, play activities, and what you wanted to do when you grew up.

Like today, there were many kinds of families. They tended to be larger than today, and often relatives would live with you in the same house. The fathers would go to work at factories and stores, and women

would work at taking care of the home and family. If a woman had a paying job it was usually in housekeeping, clerking, teaching, or nursing.

In 1880 your father might work for one of these major employers:

1. Railroads
2. Iron Mills
3. Textile Mills
4. Garment Industry
5. Cigar factories
6. Brick Factories
7. Mueller's Iron Works
8. Breweries
9. Manufacturing
10. Grain Mills

There was no mall, Sears, Caterpillar, ADM, Millikin University, Walmart, Richland Community College, nursing homes, gas stations, interstates, McDonald's, or professional sports.

You might have been asked about your education. Only Jones School at 2495 North Water Street is still standing today, and it is now a dentist's office. You might have gone to "The Big Brick" on the corner of North Church Street and West North Street which is now a parking lot. Governor Oglesby had signed a law in 1865 which helped Decatur improve its public schools. There was no kindergarten in those days. Your school would probably have first through eighth grades in it. You would study "the three R's – Readin', Ritin', and 'Rithmetic."

Good spelling was very important, even more than knowing what the words meant. School spelling bees were some of the most exciting things at school, and often had prizes for the best spellers.

At school you would do these things:

1. You would recite your lessons out loud.
2. You would learn and memorize moral beliefs.
3. You would have a basic reader, math, and spelling books.
4. You would copy your work off the blackboard. There were no worksheets or workbooks.
5. You would study arithmetic, penmanship, geography, reading, government, and elocution (speaking to audiences.)

School started in September and ended in May. Country children had shorter school years so they could help their families on the farm.

If you got in trouble in school you might be paddled, kept after, wear a dunce hat and sit in the front of the room, or clean the blackboards or classroom after school. You would also be in trouble at home. Parents did not listen to children's excuses.

Students who did well in their subjects were highly respected, and were given ribbons, medals, and certificates at the end of the year. Parents would probably want their sons to finish eighth grade or high school, and daughters were expected to finish sixth or eighth grade. If you had your eighth grade certificate and passed a test, you could get a job as a teacher in many places.

Children were not taught how to print. They started writing in cursive in the first grade. Hot lunches were not served. Children either

brought their lunch or walked home and had one hour before they had to be back in school.

Before and after school you would have chores to do. Girls would help with child care, cooking, laundry, cleaning, sewing, or help their mothers at work. Boys would bring in wood or coal, help with the cleaning, run errands, and take care of the garden. In 1880 many townspeople kept milk cows, chickens, and horses in their back yard and boys would help their fathers take care of them. It wasn't unusual for boys to have jobs in stores or factories.

There was no electricity in 1880 Decatur, so children's fun could not include TV, electronic games, movies, or traveling very far from their homes. There were no cars so if you could, you would ride a street car, train, or bicycle if you had a very long way to go.

If children had time to play after chores, church, and school, then they could play board games such as checkers, chess, or backgammon. Most of the other board games popular then are not played any more. Outdoor fun included croquet, horseshoes, tag, fishing, statues, red rover, follow-the-leader, blind man's bluff, marbles, jacks, ice skating, or sledding.

Children in Decatur's 1880 would have many of the same activities and feelings as children do now. They just had different ways of doing them. What would you like to be when you grow up: the president, governor, soldier or teacher? Think about being a kid in 1880 and pick a career.

Children in 1880 Decatur

1. _____ What famous president visited Decatur in 1880?

2. _____ Who did the president visit in Decatur in 1880?

3. _____ Name an 1880 Decatur public school.

4. _____ Where was it?

5. _____ What would you study in school?

6. _____ What chores would you have?

7. _____ Why couldn't your father work at Millikin University?

8. _____ What would you have liked to do for fun?

9. _____ Why might you have a cow or chickens in your back yard?

10. _____ If you were a kid in 1880 Decatur, what would you like to be when you grew up?

Richard Oglesby and 1880's Health

Oglesby's first wife was Anna. They lived in Decatur and had four children. One died at the age of two, and another at age five. The other two grew to be adults. In those days it was not unusual for children to die young. One reason was that people did not understand how pregnant women should take care of themselves. It was not known that they should not drink liquor, smoke, use certain types of medicine, or expose themselves to sick people. These dangerous behaviors can cause many health problems for unborn babies and young children.

Another reason that "infant mortality" was so high was that there were few good medicines that could be used to cure diseases. Some of the main causes for children dying young in Decatur were tuberculosis, cholera, typhoid, typhus, yellow fever, malaria (called "ague" then), smallpox, diphtheria, infected wounds, measles, whooping cough, dysentery, scarlet fever, pneumonia, and food poisoning. The fact that you have not heard of some of these diseases says a lot about how fortunate it is that we know how to treat and prevent them. Often, doctors didn't know what was wrong with a sick person.

Another cause of so many children's deaths was poor sanitation. Sanitation means keeping germs away from people. Very few people even knew about germs then. They did not worry very much about

keeping insects off of food, washing hands, protecting water supplies, and treating human and animal waste as we now do.

If a person lived to be a grown up, they were very healthy – and very lucky.

Richard Oglesby and 1800's Health

1. _____ Name Oglesby's first wife.
2. _____ How many children did she have?
3. _____ Where did Richard and Anna Oglesby live?
4. _____ What problems should pregnant women know about?
5. _____
Name three examples of good sanitation.
6. _____ What does "infant mortality" mean?
7. _____

Name eight deadly diseases that the Oglesbys had to worry about.

8. _____ What is “ague” now called?