

2017 IBA Junior All-State Band Commission

The small town of Vincennes would stand as the territorial capital of Indiana until 1813, when the government was moved to Corydon, a location more central to the populace. When the federal government moved to grant the territory admission into the Union, the need for a state constitution arose. In June, 1816, 43 delegates met at the new capital of Corydon to draft the document on which the government and laws of Indiana would be based. As the summer session was quite warm, the territory delegates often sought refuge from the sweltering capitol building in the shade of a nearby elm tree. By all accounts, Indiana's constitution was ultimately drafted beneath this massive tree. While the legendary tree would die in 1925 of Dutch Elm disease, its trunk (five feet in diameter) stands today at Corydon in proud preservation. This is the Indiana saga set to music...*Constitution Elm: A Tale of Statehood*.

Chapter 1: The Territory Unknown

During the early 1700s, French explorers would come to the strange new land, establishing the very first settlement at Vincennes. American settlement would begin in the late 1700s and increase significantly after the war of 1812. Beginning with great majesty, *The Territory Unknown* paints a vivid picture of the splendor and mystery the vast new land offered. After the bold opening statement, the music becomes quite thoughtful and melancholy, depicting the great rivers, pristine forests and countless unknown species of animals. The mood again grows bold and ends strongly as the new arrivals stake their claim on a wondrous new land.

Chapter 2: Old Tippecanoe

By all accounts, *William Henry Harrison* (who would rise to become the 9th President of the United States) was a gracious, good-humored man who was quite slow to speak out on controversial issues. While the musical mood of this chapter hardly attests to these favorable character traits, it attempts to portray the Governor-General from the perspective of the Native people who consider him a threat to their way of life. With an intrepid military feel, this quirky musical chapter begins quietly and gradually builds into a flurry of bold determination as native-settler tensions rapidly approach fever pitch. Harrison would gain the moniker *Old Tippecanoe* after his subsequent victory at Prophetstown, near the Tippecanoe River.

Chapter 3: Tecumseh

A skilled and fearless warrior, Shawnee chieftain *Tecumseh* (*Shooting Star*) was held in high esteem by both friend and foe. He staunchly pledged to protect Native territory and traditions at all costs, for once their land was lost, their freedom would soon follow. The thoughtful, solemn music of Chapter 3 peers into a philosophical and introspective soul. Though the outwardly brash combatant bristles at the peril of being evicted from his homeland, the compassionate spirit within cannot be contained; consider his words, reflecting how he wished his people to live...

Live your life that the fear of death can never enter your heart. Respect others in their views and demand they respect yours. Love your life, perfect your life, beautify all things in your life. Seek to make your life long and of service to your people. Show respect to all people, but grovel to none.

When you rise in the morning, give thanks for the light, for your life, for your strength. Give thanks for your food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason to give thanks, the

fault lies in yourself.

Chief Tecumseh (1768-1813)

Chapter 4: Conflict at Prophetstown

In August 1811, Tecumseh and his brother Tenskatawa (known as The Prophet) met with Harrison to assure him they wished to remain at peace with the United States. Leaving Tenskatawa in charge, Tecumseh embarked on a mission into the South to recruit allies for the inevitable conflict. Upon receiving this news, Harrison preemptively marched his 1000+ man army along the Wabash River to urge the Shawnee to either accept peace or be subject to attack. Before dawn on November 6, 1811, Tenskatawa (quite against Tecumseh's orders) attacked. Despite the surprise ambush, Harrison's men forced the Indians from *Prophetstown* (named after Tenskatawa) and burned the village to the ground. With driving percussion and strong melodic statements, the music is a vivid depiction of the savagely fierce epic conflict.

Chapter 5: Statehood: Corydon, 1816

Following the Conflict at Prophetstown and the War of 1812, the Indiana Territory was ready for statehood. A constitution was drafted in June, 1816, and underneath a great elm tree, the Nation's 19th state was born. While not flawless by any means, the original constitution was well-written for its time. Positive aspects of the document included the prohibition of slavery, the extension of voting rights to non-property owners, and the establishment of a state-funded school system, the very first in the nation. The final chapter begins with a distant military drum cadence and bugle call. A stately theme serves as a reverent accompaniment to words from the preamble of the new state's constitution. The music builds with increasing grandeur as the bold climax is reached, symbolizing the arrival of a glorious new federation.... ***The Great State of Indiana – THE CROSSROADS OF AMERICA!***

William Owens, 2016