

out of Newton County.

"You may acquire peace of mind by listening to the breeze in the trees," he said, "but you will not get any man-sized experiences out of botany. If you wish to keep tab on the human race you must go, once in a while, to where the interesting specimens are assembled." — George Ade

Ade, McCutcheon and friend Edward Holloway establish the Indiana Society of Chicago. At this time, Indiana was second only to New York in published authors. The Society's Hoosiers would gather from all across the country at annual dinners and outings, some were held at Hazelden. Members included James Whitcomb Riley, Booth Tarkington, Meredith Nicholson, Kin Hubbard and George Barr McCutcheon.

1905 would also be the first year that three of Ade's plays would bomb, which marked the beginning of the end of Ade's reign on Broadway. Despite the declining popularity of his plays, he wrote four more plays, including his last, "The Old Town." It would appear on Broadway in 1910.

- 1906 Ade, now in his forties, retired from play writing, but continued to write essays, short stories and fables for various magazines and newspapers. He also ventured into the new field of moving pictures, where he wrote over a hundred silent movie scripts and directed ten films.
- 1908 Ade turned much of his interests to politics and to Purdue University and his beloved fraternity, Sigma Chi.

He served for seven years as a Trustee at Purdue. Along with fellow alumnus David Ross, Ade offered financial support to enable the university to build a new football stadium, which the college named Ross-Ade Stadium in their honor in 1923.

A Republican, he was a delegate to the national convention, which nominated William Howard Taft for president.

September, William Howard Taft kicked off his successful Presidential campaign on Ade's front lawn before a crowd of 25,000.

- 1909 Ade was elected to the highest honor of Grand Consul of the Sigma Chi Fraternity.

Ade helped the Purdue chapter build a new home which remains active today.

- 1912 Ade hosts a rally for Theodore Roosevelt's Bull Moose Party.
- 1918 During World War One, he was a member of the Indiana State Council of Defense. He hosted a golf benefit for the American Red Cross that was attended by 5,000.

Hazelden became the center of the social activity in the area. He brought the best orchestras from Chicago to the dance pavilion to play for dances; he personally put up the cash guarantee to the Hagenback-Wallace Circus to play at Kentland, which over 12,000 people attended. While he enjoyed hosting Roosevelt and Taft, he also enjoyed the regular trips to the barber shop in Brook for a shave and shooting the breeze with the boys in the back room of John Ryan's store in Kentland. Fourth of July parties were a regular feature at Hazelden. Ade loved children, and the lavish children's parties he threw annually are fond memories of citizens today. The parties were held every summer and featured games, clowns, magicians, prizes, treats and his favorite, daylight fireworks. No-one got more pleasure out of watching 800 children and their parents have a good time than their host.

In addition to the large scale events, Ade hosted many of the nation's most notable personalities who came to enjoy private visits with the humorist. This guest list included Theodore Roosevelt, Warren G. Harding, Calvin Coolidge, Douglas MacArthur, Will Rogers, Elsie Janis, Tom Mix, the famous show business Bennett family, and heavyweight champion Gene Tunney. Golf greats Gene Sarazen, Tommy Armour and Chick Evans came to play golf at the Hazelden course.

A frequent guest was Ade's dear friend Hoosier poet James Whitcomb Riley. They would sit under a big hickory tree located at the back of the house by the hour swapping stories - while Riley would spit tobacco juice at ants. In 1939, a tornado came through the area and took down one of its big limbs. Ade referred to that hickory tree as the "Jim Riley" tree.

- 1919 Ade hosts a homecoming celebration on July 4 for the soldiers and sailors of WWI at Hazelden. Over 10,000 attend the festivities.
- 1924 Hazelden was the location for the closing event of the 1924 Presidential campaign and a rally for Vice Presidential candidate Charles Dawes that was attended by 24,000.
- 1928 He violently opposed prohibition, and penned a letter to Irving Fisher, professor of economics at Yale in October, which attracted considerable notice. "I don't think that the founders of the Republic meant that we should ever use the Constitution for the regulation of social habits," he wrote. His final book, entitled "The Old-Time Saloon," was written as a gentle nostalgic reminder of an age when the town saloon was a gathering place for local characters.
- 1933 He was a member of the Indiana Commission for the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago.
- 1944 After several months of illness, plagued with heart problems and a series of strokes, George Ade died on May 16, 1944, in Brook, Indiana.



A rear view of Hazelden.

Ade once said that he wanted to be buried on his estate, in the backyard near the great trees. He had also intended for the grounds to be given to the State so that they might turn it into a park. He changed his mind a few years before his death, "because you never know what a politician will do with a park," he stated.

He decided to let a board of his friends decide what to do with the place and he decided also that he would rest better at Fairlawn Cemetery in Kentland close to his relatives.

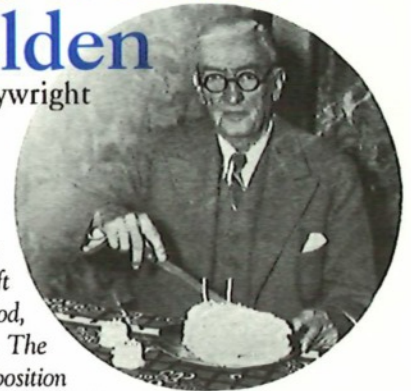
Following his death, Hazelden became vacant. The fate of the home went undecided for two decades and fell into deprivation. Ultimately, the house and grounds were given to Newton County. In the early 1960s, it was decided by a group of area residents to launch a campaign to restore the home. Over \$150,000 was raised through private subscription, and a two-year reconstruction project was carried out. The doors were opened once again in 1964, and many private and civic events and celebrations have been held there. In 1976, the Department of the Interior placed George Ade's Hazelden home on the National Register of Historic Sites.

Another three-year restoration project began in 1994. It was carried out under grants totaling \$550,000 from the Indiana Department of Commerce and Newton County. In 2016, Hazelden and the outbuildings continue to function under the ownership of Newton County.

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George Ade and Hazelden

Author, Humorist and Playwright



George Ade was a tall, slender man with thick eyebrows arching over pale blue eyes. He was described as a neat and well-dressed man with a soft voice and kindly manners and mood, who held a leisurely air about him. The humorist was a man of amiable disposition who was charming to everyone he met, especially after an initial shyness was dispelled. In all of the tales about George Ade I have been told by people who knew him well in his hometown, I have never heard of one instance of a display of bad temper by Ade. That simply was not part of his personality.



Ade — a three-letter word for American playwright. A fitting tribute of the son of a pioneer, politician and clerk that he became such a basic part of Americana, that forty years after his death his name remains a staple of that fixture of our popular culture, the crossword puzzle. During his lifetime, he enjoyed a phenomenal measure of celebrity.

Whom else do you know who has had a college football stadium, a WWII Liberty Ship, an Interstate Oasis, a soft drink, a cigar, a hospital, a country club, and a highway, named after themselves?

"His generosity of spirit and his love of people made Newton County, and, indeed America, a better place



in which to live. It is for these personal characteristics as well as for the humor of his work that we remember George Ade. It is our misfortune that we may never see this kind again."

— John J. Yost, 1984



Left, John and Adeline Ade; Right, George Ade's birthplace, Kentland.

- **1866** Born February 2, 1866, at home in Kentland, Indiana. Died, Brook, Indiana, 1944. Buried at Fairlawn Cemetery, Kentland, Indiana. Parents: John, (1828-1914), and Adeline (Bush), (1833-1907), Ade. John Ade was Newton County's first Recorder, was a teller at the Discount and Deposit Bank of Kentland, later in 1875, became a partner in the bank. Adeline was a homemaker and cared for their seven children. Siblings: Anna, (1852-1926), married John Randall; William, (1860-1920); Alice, (1855-1937), married George Davis; Joseph, (1862-1927); Emma, (1861-1865); Ella, (1867-1947), married Warren T. McCray.
- **1881** Attended school at Kentland, where in his senior year the local paper published his essay, "A Basket of Potatoes." His father recognizes that George was not interested in farming, so George's teacher urges John to apply for a scholarship for him at Purdue, where George was accepted. However, George's mother felt he was too young to be out on his own, so he attended the Kentland school another year taking preparatory classes.
- **1883** At age 17, George enters Purdue University, listing science as his major. George has commented that "when he arrived at Purdue the plaster was still wet in the corners," as Purdue was only 14 years old at the time with an enrollment of 200 students and four buildings. He joins the newly established Sigma Chi Fraternity.
- **1886** An academic performance alert was sent to him regarding his poor grades in Physics and Zoology. Ade would later joke that he was "at the top of my class ... alphabetically." Ade once said, "My father sent me to an engineering school to prepare me for a literary career." Indeed, he enjoyed his English classes and became the leader of the literary society and founded the yearbook.

Ade develops one of his most important friendships of his life, that of his fraternity brother John T. McCutcheon, who was to become the Dean of American editorial cartoonists.

Another Purdue student caught Ade's attention as well, Lillian Howard. Ade courted the fair-haired Lafayette girl for four years until she broke his heart by marrying a Baptist minister. Ade often claimed he was a life-long bachelor because "another man married my girl."

"There was much speculation regarding Ade's bachelorhood. Ade had stated that at the point in life when most men were having families, he was tied up in the frantic world of publishing and Broadway, and that these pursuits had filled his life. In his references to Lillian Howard, he writes that it was during a period of time in which he held low paying jobs in Lafayette, and he did not see how he could ever have the income to adequately support a wife and family. It was religion that actually brought an end to



Ade and Howard

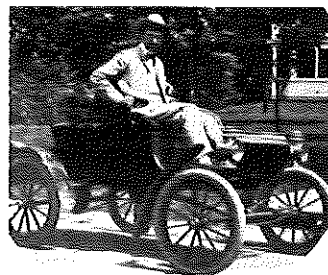
that romance. Ade was a man who had little enthusiasm for religion, despite the childhood training from his mother which enabled him to retain from memory the words and music to every song in the Methodist hymnal. Lillian's mother continually raised questions of religion and Ade's lack of church attendance whenever he came to call on Miss Lillian, and eventually the calls became less and less frequent. Ms. Howard soon thereafter met and married a Baptist minister, but George Ade never forgot her." —John J. Yost

- **1887** Ade graduates from Purdue, one of eight in his class. He briefly thought about becoming a lawyer and studied law for about seven weeks before he quit and joined the Lafayette newspaper, "The Morning News," as a reporter. However the "News" soon went under and he found work at another Lafayette paper, "The Call," where a friendly rivalry began with another reporter there, George Barr McCutcheon, brother to John McCutcheon.

Ade eventually leaves "The Call" for higher pay, at a patent medicine company, where he was in charge of promoting several products, among them a smoking cure called No-Tobac. The first instruction he included in its pamphlet was "to quit using tobacco immediately."

- **1889** John McCutcheon graduates from Purdue and takes a job in Chicago as an illustrator for "The Morning News," later known as "The Chicago Record." He urges Ade to join him in Chicago, which he accepts.
- **1890** Ade accepts the position of weather reporter at the "Record." His big break came when the steamer Tioga exploded in the Chicago River and he was assigned to cover the story. The articles were well received; by 1892, his reporting included the Sullivan-Corbett fight.

- **1893** Ade was assigned to cover the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, using the heading: "All Roads Lead to the World's Fair." His colorful reporting style earned him a permanent column in the paper entitled "Stories of the Streets and of the Towns," which became a regular feature in the "Chicago Record."



Ade's first motor car he named the Rolling Peanut.

- **1896** Ade "fleshes out" two of the stories and characters well-known from his column and publishes his first books, "Artie," 1896, and "Pink Marsh," 1897, that became national bestsellers.

- **1897** Ade begins experimenting with stories written in fable form using modern day slang,

published under a sustaining feature entitled "Fables in Slang." The public loved the fables and by the late 1890s, Ade was well-known throughout America and had acquired many notable fans.

- **1898** Ade writes a one-act farce for the actress Mary Irwin for \$200 which seemed like a fortune to him at the time. Irwin kept the play in a trunk for years before dusting it off and using it as a filler in one of her shows. The play "Mrs. Peckham's Carouse" became Irwin's biggest hit.

Ade also had written a comedy, "The Night of the Fourth," which was lambasted by the critics so badly that he never put his name on it, and quickly sold all rights.

- **1899** Ade's third book, "Doc Horne," is published.

He quits the "Chicago Record," and began syndicating his "Fables in Slang" in newspapers across the country. These would also be compiled into book form and published in 1899, which carried the same title.

By the early 1900s, Ade had become financially successful and began sending his substantial earnings home to his father's bank to prove to the town that college hadn't

been a waste of time after all. Ade trusted his brother Will's investment skills and eventually ended up owning 2500 acres of productive farmland in Newton County.

- **1901** Ade pens "The Sultan of Sulu," based upon an idea given to him by friend John McCutcheon. In addition to writing the script for the show, Ade also wrote the lyrics for the songs. Working with the musician Wathall, their production changed the course of American Musical Comedy Theater. This was the first musical comedy produced as we know it today. The success of "The Sultan of Sulu" on Broadway in 1902, transformed Ade into a full-time playwright.



The only time Ade sported a mustache was when he traveled abroad.

- **1902** One of the farms purchased by his brother Will containing 417 acres near Brook, Indiana, contained a grove of trees alongside the Iroquois River that Ade became particularly fond of. He envisioned a summer cottage where he could escape the ever-increasing pressures of fame. With the help of an old Purdue chum, William Manns who was a Chicago architect, the ideal cottage with a budget of \$2500 grew and eventually expanded into an estate costing nearly ten times the initial budget.
- **1903** Other plays, "Peggy From Paris" and "The County Chairman" quickly follow the success of "Sultan."
- **1904** "The Sho-Gun" is penned by Ade.

Upon completion of Ade's cottage in the grove, it had developed into a two-story, fourteen room Tudor Revival Style frame dwelling. It features 1/2 timbering stucco on the upper floor, leaded glass windows with beamed and vaulted ceilings. Decorators came from Chicago with plans for the interior of the house, to which Ade contributed tapestries, furniture, and art objects he had collected on travels to the Far East. The result was somewhat eclectic — the living rooms made an exotic oriental effect while the bedrooms were in Early American — but it was comfortable. He christened it with the name Hazelden, a paternal family name. The grounds were landscaped and elaborate gardens had a variety of flowers and plants that were surrounded with grape and rose arbors made into the shape of the State of Indiana. Also on the grounds was a pool, pool house, garage, greenhouse, barns, a well house, a dance pavilion, a carriage house with a second floor apartment, a guest house and a forty foot well tower, all designed in the same Tudor theme. The grounds also included a baseball field and tennis courts; in 1910, he added a 9-hole golf course and began the Hazelden Country Club. Ade soon found himself staying less and less often in his suite at the Chicago Athletic Club and writing more and more behind the huge desk in his study at the "homestead." This would be his first permanent home since leaving his home in Kentland. Ade would spend the last 40 years of his life summering at Hazelden, while winters were spent at his home in Florida.

Three weeks after moving into Hazelden, Ade sat down at his desk, took up his favorite writing tools, a thick carpenter's pencil and yellow pad, and penned the play "The College Widow," where it joined "The County Chairman" and "The Sho-Gun" on Broadway, making George Ade the first playwright in history to have three plays running simultaneously. "College" (a pseudonym for Purdue), became his most successful play.

- **1905** The stress of fame begins to affect Ade's health, and he returns to live permanently at Hazelden. The business of publishing his books and producing his plays and the pleasure of the company of friends elsewhere frequently drew him