

OBSERVATIONS ON WOODPECKERS.

BY JOHN T. CAMPBELL.

In May, 1883, I was surveying to build a levee along the east side of the Wabash River in Parke County, Indiana, from the mouth of Big Raccoon Creek southward to within a mile of the south boundary of the county—twelve miles long. Near the south end of this levee was a wide bottom, in which I had surveyed before it was cleared. Joseph J. Daniels, of Rockville, Indiana, bought this land, cut out the saw timber and deadened the remainder. In the spring of 1882, these deadened trees had decayed enough for the woodpeckers to bore holes for their nests. There were easily one thousand such trees on this seven hundred acres. Each tree had from three to twenty woodpecker holes. The marks of the great flood of 1883, in February, were very plain and could be recognized several years later. Of all those, probably ten thousand holes, not one was below the flood mark of the water of 1883. On the east side of the bottom the ground was very low, which made the flood marks about twenty feet above ground. The flood was twenty-eight feet above summer low water. Out west, near the river, the bottom was high, and the flood marks only about eight feet above the ground. Some of the holes were within two feet, but above the flood mark. The next year many holes were made below the flood mark, but whether they were kept above the top of the next and smaller flood, I did not think to notice. I ran the level over the land to grade it for assessment, and had a good opportunity to observe the holes. What is the explanation?

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