**Document of the Month: Annual Report of the Indiana State Board of Agriculture**

This month’s document is dedicated to the Indiana State Fair! The Indiana State Fair’s origins begin with the Indiana State Board of Agriculture. In a Circular dated June 4, 1851, the State Board expressed its desire to hold a State Fair. The Board believed that holding a State Fair would place Indiana in a distinguished position among the first agricultural states in the Union. These annual reports contain Indiana’s agricultural history and some interesting information about agriculture in Indiana. The reports contain proceedings of the Board meetings which offer a procedural account of the ‘business of agriculture’ in Indiana at its earliest conception. County Agricultural Societies were formed and each county provided a detailed report about their various crops, issues, premiums awarded, treasurers’ reports, and other items that may be of interest to historians or anyone interested in Indiana’s farming/agricultural history. Marion County’s Agricultural Society was organized on September 9, 1851; the first elected President was Calvin Fletcher of American Fletcher National Bank. In 1901, the State Board received official laws from the Legislation that gave the Board powers to hold State Fairs, purchase lands, and provided tax exempt status for the real and personal estate of the Board. These and other interesting facts can be found in the annual reports, available in the Indiana Collection at the Indiana State Library under call number I 630 I for the years 1851 through 1976.