

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MOORESVILLE, INDIANA



For 3rd Graders at
Neil Armstrong Elementary School

1822: Samuel Moore's Trading Post

- Samuel Moore started his log cabin trading post in 1822, on the hill where the V.F.W. Post stands today (next to Taco Bell).
- In 1824, Moore built his general store on the northeast corner of Indiana & Main Streets in downtown Mooresville (the town's first wood-frame business building). Bicentennial Park stands there today.



1824: Founding of Mooresville

- Town of Mooresville was founded in 1824 by Samuel Moore.
- Samuel's wife, Eliza Moore, founded the Methodist Episcopal Church in Mooresville (where Old Cemetery is, on West Washington Street) and helped start the schools in Mooresville (on East Washington Street)



Samuel & Eliza Moore



Great Fire of November, 1842

- Destroyed nearly all of Mooresville except Samuel Moore's general store and home.
- For those who couldn't afford to rebuild, Samuel Moore rebuilt their homes & businesses, free-of-charge.

Fire at Mooresville.

We learn verbally that a large portion of the town of Mooresville, in Morgan county, was destroyed by fire on Tuesday night last. As yet, Thursday, we have but very few particulars.

Underground Railroad in Mooresville & Morgan County

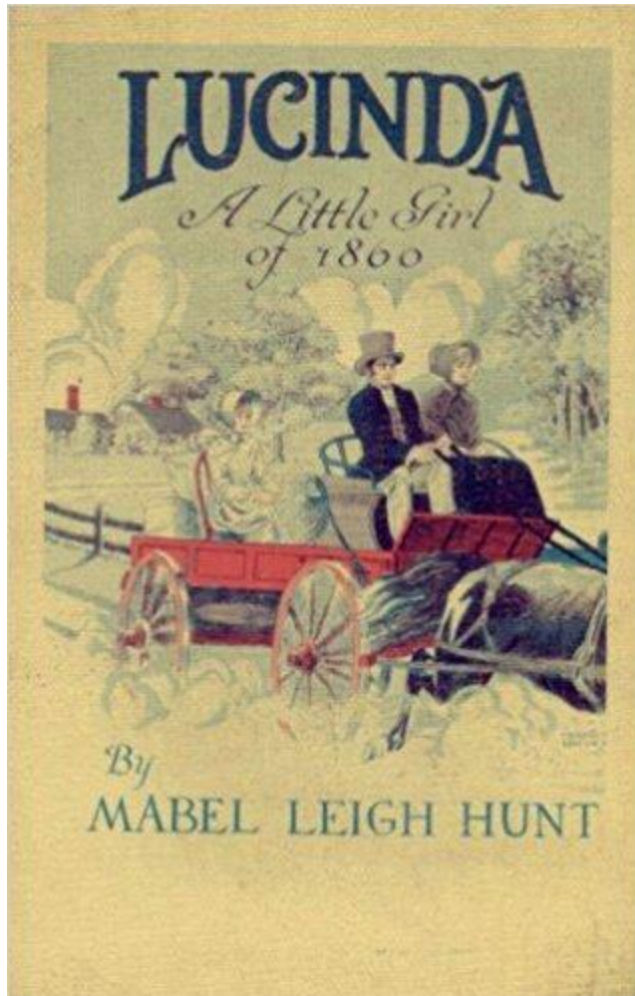
- **Several local citizens, especially Quakers & Methodists, helped fleeing slaves on the “underground railroad.”**
- **Simon Moon, who lived near Bethel Road, had secret hiding places built into his home where slaves could hide from Southern slave owners who came looking for them.**

Simon Moon's Cabin, by Paul Hadley



Simon Moon's Cabin. Moon was a devoted Quaker and lived just west of the Bethel Friends meetinghouse near Mooresville.

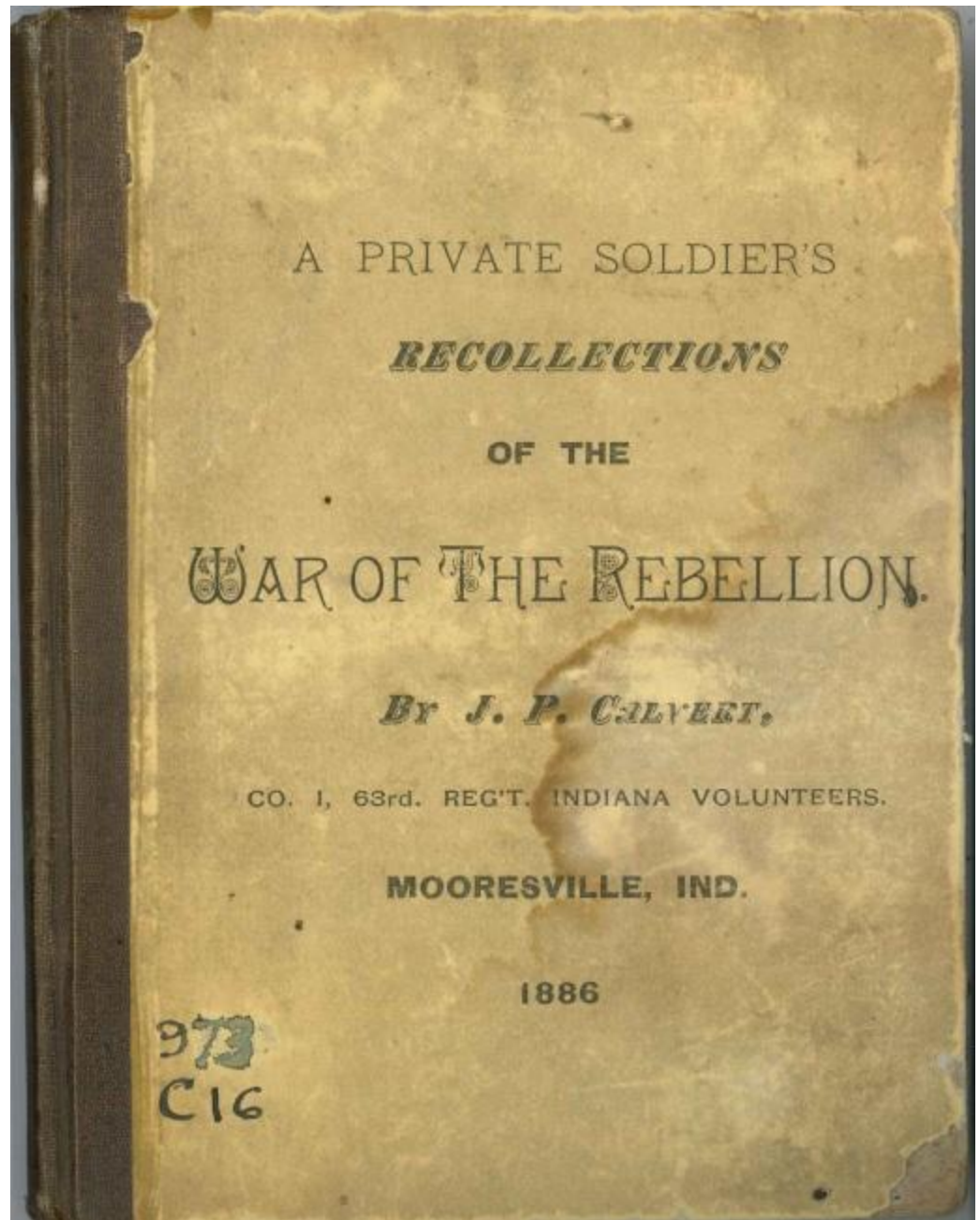
***Lucinda*, by Mabel Leigh Hunt**



- Novel about life in 1860, based on the real lives of people who lived in and around Mooresville and Plainfield.
- Children's book is available to checkout from the library's Indiana Room.

Civil War Diary

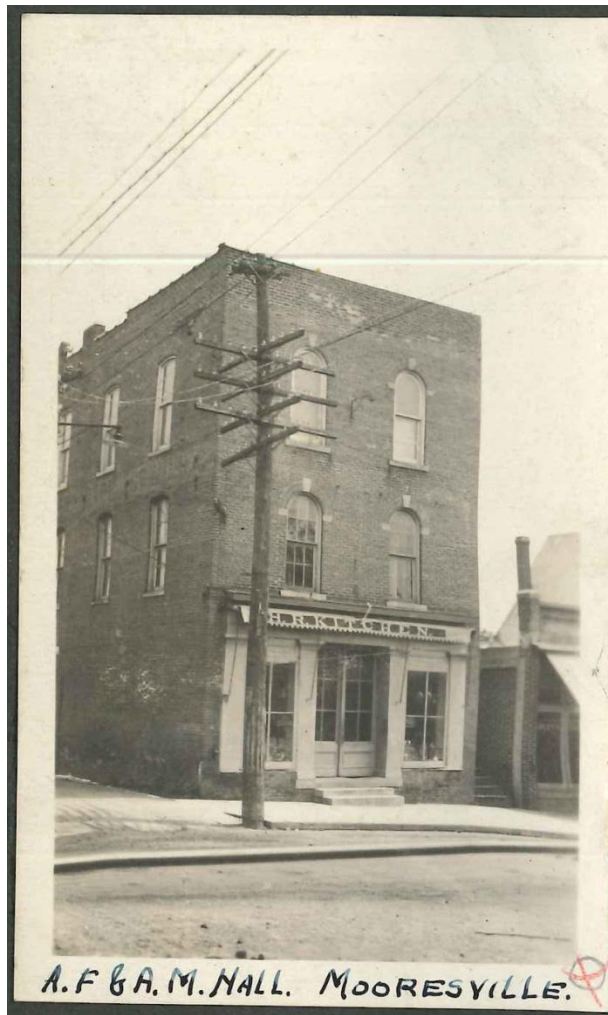
- Mooresville Public Library has the world's ONLY known copy of Jarvis P. Calvert's Civil War diary. Calvert served in an Indiana regiment of the Union army. You can see it online (go to the library's "local history" web page).



Famous Poet Painted Signs in Mooreville

- **Famous Hoosier poet James Whitcomb Riley (about 1873) worked in Mooreville as a sign painter and wrote verses and jokes for the *Mooreville Enterprise*, a local newspaper.**
- **Riley worked on South Indiana Street in the town's oldest standing business building, the Perce Building (built about 1865).**

**James
Whitcomb
Riley &
the Perce Building**



1890s—World's Largest Sorghum (Molasses) Factory in Mooresville

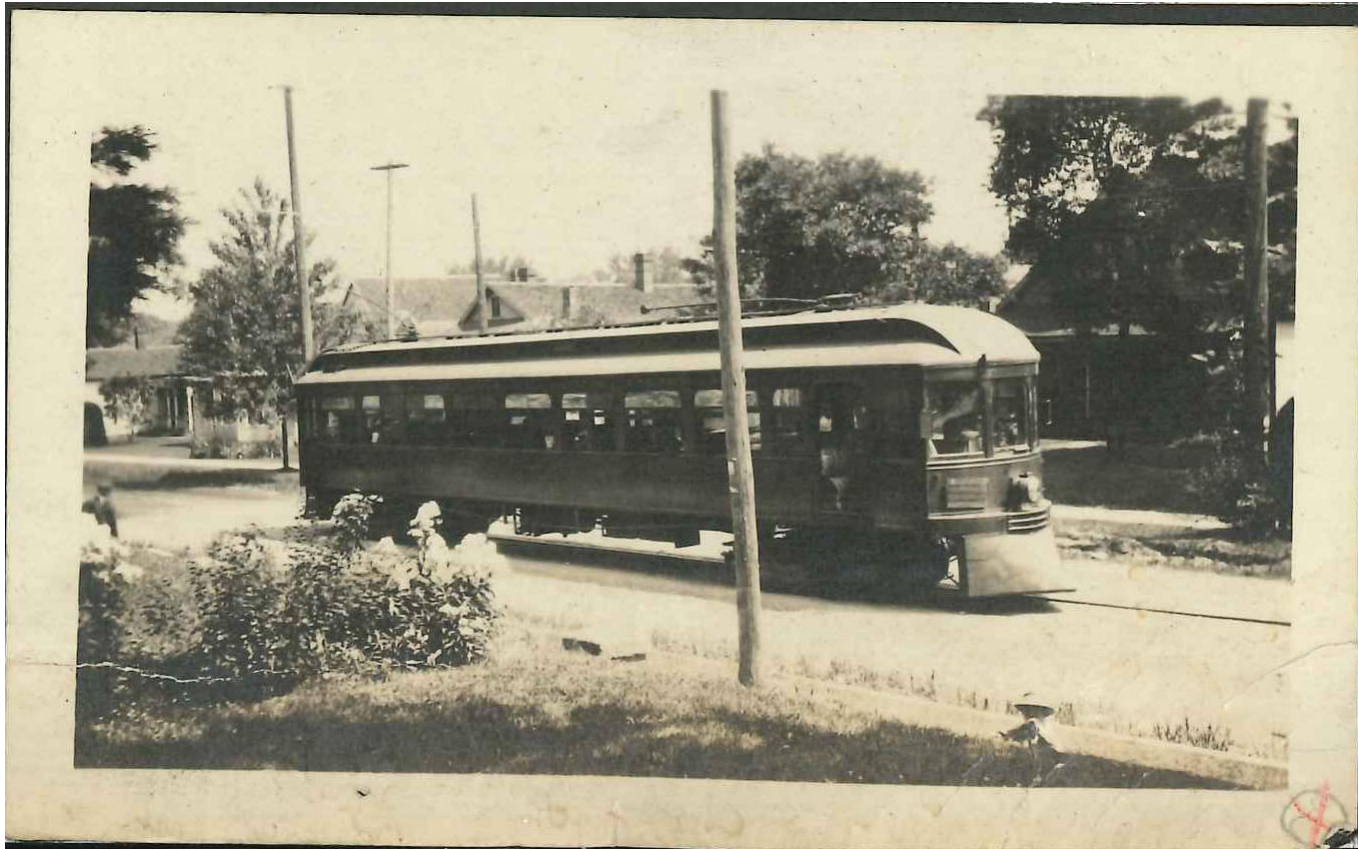
**Bolton
Sorghum
Factory**



Boom Town Years (1890s-1920s)

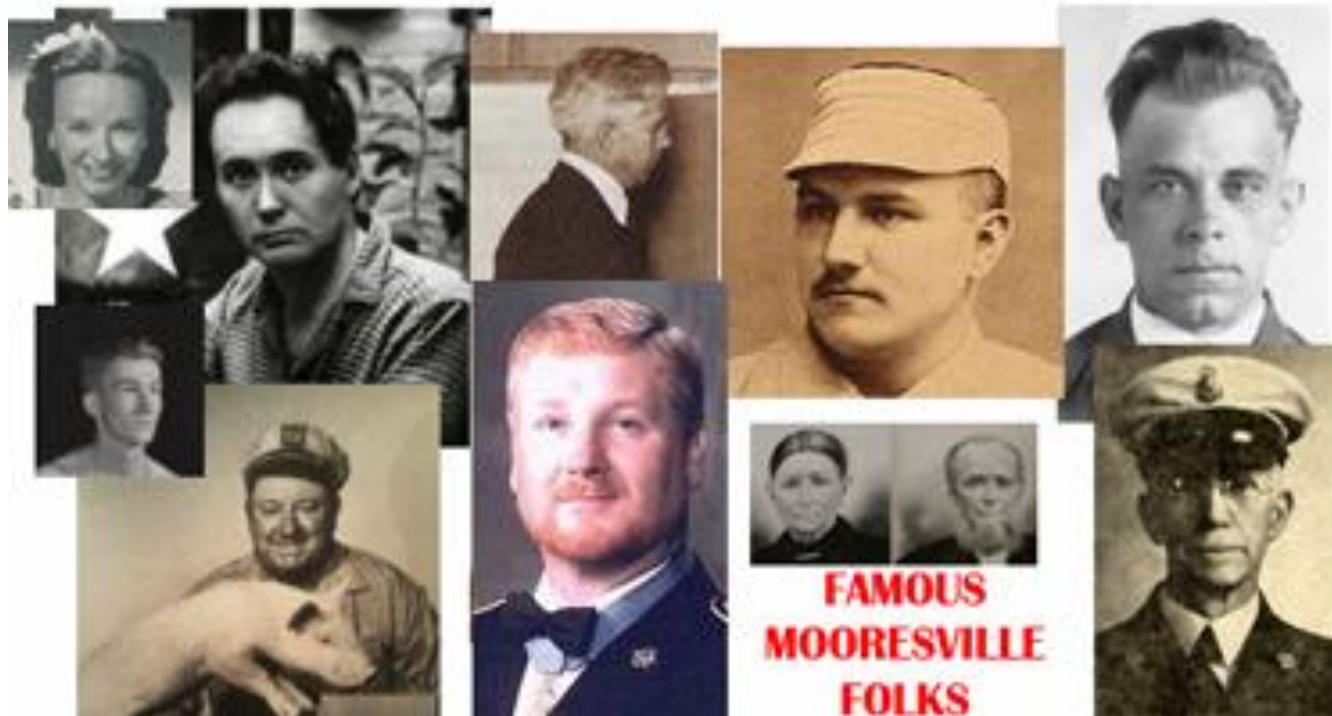
- **During the early 1900s, Mooresville had 1,200 residents but employed over 2,500 workers (in factories that made sorghum molasses, furniture, iron bed frames & mattresses, bricks, lumber, and electricity).**
- **Workers used the Interurban Railway from 1902 to 1930 to travel to and from work from nearby cities and towns in central Indiana.**

Interurban Railway



Some Famous Mooresvillians

- Many famous people grew up and lived in Mooresville. Learn more about them on the library's "famous Mooresvillians" web page.



Frank Inn: Hollywood Animal Trailer

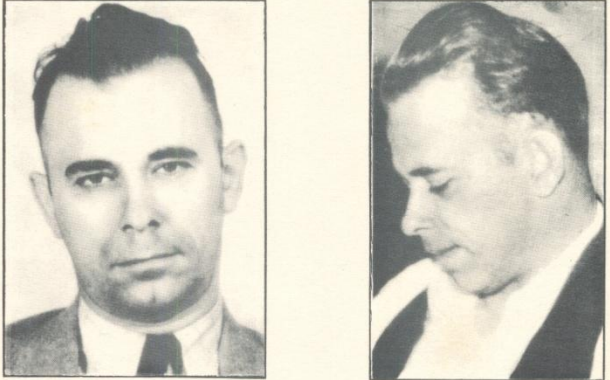
- **His parents owned Freeman Florists in Mooresville.**
- **He trained Benji, the famous movie dog.**



John Dillinger, Bank Robber

- He grew up on his father's farm on the northwest side of Mooresville.

WANTED



JOHN HERBERT DILLINGER

On June 23, 1934, HOMER S. CUMMINGS, Attorney General of the United States, under the authority vested in him by an Act of Congress approved June 6, 1934, offered a reward of

\$10,000.00

for the capture of John Herbert Dillinger or a reward of

\$5,000.00

for information leading to the arrest of John Herbert Dillinger.

DESCRIPTION

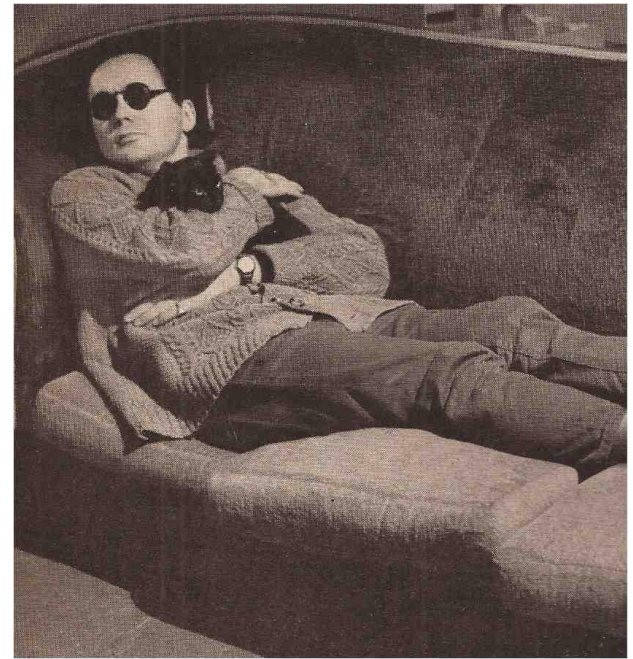
Age, 32 years; Height, 5 feet 7-1/8 inches; Weight, 153 pounds; Build, medium; Hair, medium chestnut; Eyes, gray; Complexion, medium; Occupation, machinist; Marks and scars, 1/2 inch scar back left hand, scar middle upper lip, brown mole between eye-brows.

All claims to any of the aforesaid rewards and all questions and disputes that may arise as among claimants to the foregoing rewards shall be passed upon by the Attorney General and his decisions shall be final and conclusive. The right is reserved to divide and allocate portions of any of said rewards as between several claimants. No part of the aforesaid rewards shall be paid to any official or employee of the Department of Justice.

If you are in possession of any information concerning the whereabouts of John Herbert Dillinger, communicate immediately by telephone or telegraph collect to the nearest office of the Division of Investigation, United States Department of Justice,

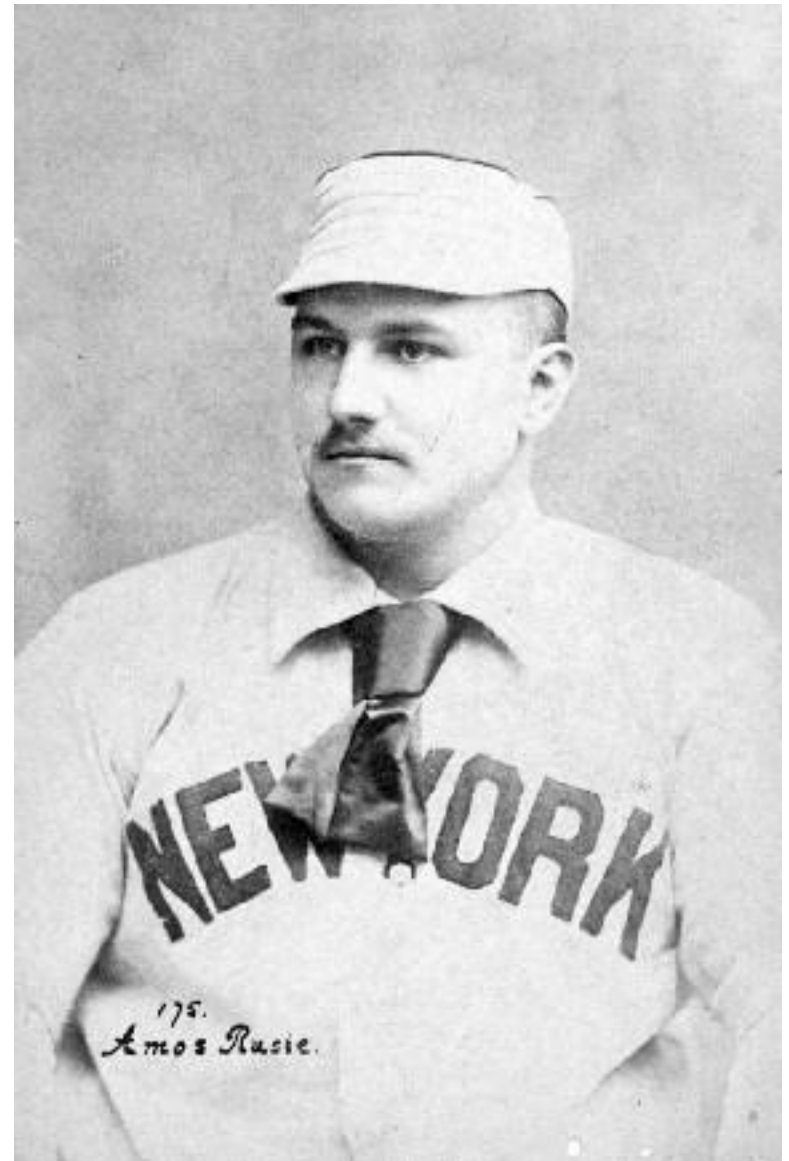
Robert Indiana, artist

- He attended elementary school at the Academy school and Newby in Mooresville.
- His 1st-grade teacher at the Academy school encouraged him to become an artist, so he did.



Amos Rusie, “the Hoosier Thunderbolt”

- Mooresville’s Amos Rusie became the fastest professional baseball pitcher during the 1890s (playing for the New York Giants).



PAUL HADLEY, artist/architect

- **Paul Hadley lived most of his life in Mooresville.**
- **He designed the Indiana State Flag in 1916 (adopted in 1917).**
- **Several of his paintings are on display at Mooresville Public Library.**



PAUL HADLEY...created state symbol.

QUESTIONS?

- Learn more on the library's website (moorevillelib.org) (local history & famous Mooresvillians web pages) and our blog, "Mooreville Treasure Trove," and on our YouTube channel (local history videos).
- Also read "Cauli 4 Kids," a blog written by Cauli Le Chat, MPL feline roving reporter.

