

“MOORE” FACTS ABOUT MOORESVILLE & SAMUEL & ELIZA MOORE

(From Fogleman, Margaret W., 1884, *Early Mooresville, 1824-1924*, Call No. I 977.2513 EAR)

- Great Fire of 1842: “About 1842 Mooresville was visited by the greatest fire it has ever known. Beginning with Pa’s [Samuel Moore’s] store there were ten houses and shops before the fire. Next morning there was Pa’s [Samuel Moore’s] store and our house left. The Dr’s shop at the west and a dwelling house at the east were torn down to check the fire.”

(From Blanchard, Charles. *Counties of Morgan, Monroe & Brown, Indiana: Historical & Biographical* (F.A. Battey & Co., 1884) (Call No. I 977.2513 BLA)

- Length of Samuel Moore’s general mercantile business: 44 consecutive years (1823-1867). “He was the leading business man of his day in the northern part of [Morgan] county.”
- First Settlers in Brown Township: William Ballard (probably the first to settle), Hiram Matthews, Benjamin Cuthbert, Charles Reynolds, Thomas Lee, Samuel Barlow.
- Brown Township Settlers between 1820-1823: Asa Bales, William Bales, Thomas Ballard, Samuel Barlow, John H. Bray, Harris Bray, Edward Bray, Barclay Burris, R. G. Burris, John D. Carter (then a child), Joshua Carter, Nathaniel Carter, Richard Day, Joel Dixon, William Gregory, Eli Hadley, James Hadley, Eli Harvey, Samuel Jones, Henry McCracken, William McCracken, Thomas McNeff, William McNeff, William McPherson, William Matlock, Ira Mendenhall, Joseph Moon, Samuel Moore, Levi Plummer, William Reason, I.W. Rooker, William Rooker, Benjamin Thornburg, Charles Vertrees, Benjamin White, John Wilson
- White Lick Creek, first corn mill: “Richard Day built a small corn cracker [mill] on the [White Lick] creek as early as 1822.”
- Raccoon skin tall tale: “It is told on the venerable Samuel Moore, that, on one occasion, a coon skin was traded him for a drink of whisky. He threw the skin up on the loft and resumed his place behind the counter. Some thirsty fellow took it down unnoticed by Mr. Moore, and traded it to him a second time for a drink. The crowd assembled caught the idea, and the cheat was repeated again and again until Mr. Moore imagined he had a loft full of fine skins. It is quite likely that the fellow who told this story had been reading the life of David Crockett, and had borrowed the tale to tell at Mr. Moore’s expense. Mr. Moore bought and traded for coon skins, however, but he recollects

nothing about finding his loft full of emptiness. The tale is a myth. How foolishly credulous some persons are, and how many will base fact on fiction!”

- Wildlife in Brown Twp. In the 1820s: “Mr. Moore says that when he reached the township in 1823, wolves, bears and numerous herds of deer were almost every-day sights where Mooresville now stands.”
- Brown Twp.’s Productivity: “The settlers were so intelligent, moral and thrifty that the north part of [Morgan] county was not surpassed by any other portion in general advancement and excellence.”
- Mooresville Populations:
 - 1831: Over 200
 - Late 1830s: Over 300
 - 1850: About 500
 - 1920: About 1,200
- Mooresville Founding: 1824
- Mooresville Incorporation (as a town under Indiana law): March, 1831, by majority of citizens’ votes (24 of 32 in favor of).
- 1824 Plat: Four blocks of 16 lots each (64 lots total).
- 1831 Addition: 140 lots added and for sale.
- 1831 Town Trustees: Samuel Moore, Asa Bales, W.C. Cline, J.S. Kelley, and James Bradshaw.
- Town Jail: First built in the late 1830s.
- Town Ordinances: Published in the *Mooresville Chronicle* (1846-1851; T.J. Worth, editor)
- Wool Fulling Mills & Cards, & Cotton Bales: “John H. Bray started the first [wool] fulling mill in the central part of Indiana. It was located a short distance west of Mooresville, and commenced operation a year or two before 1830. It was a rude affair, but it served the purposes of the neighborhood. He did not even card. The settlers were obliged to do that themselves by hand. They bought their cards of Samuel Moore, who purchased them in the East with his goods. Mr. Moore also brought in huge bales of cotton, which were purchased and transformed into cloth by hundreds of wives for miles around. A calico dress at 37-1/2 cents per yard (only four yards), was then regarded as the most stylish costume in the woods.”

[From Hadley, Almira Harvey. *A Brief History of Mooresville and Vicinity* (1918). Call No. I 977.251 HAD]

- “Far West” / Port Royal / Waverly: Near present-day Waverly, on the Bluffs along the White River, was situated Port Royal, “but pioneers called it Far West.”

- William Ballard as first Brown Twp. Settler: “We have reason to believe that Whetzel trace was continued this side [i.e., west] of the [White] river at least as far as Mooresville, for our fathers have always told us that William Ballard built the first cabin on the brink of the hill in the south edge of town on the Whetzel trace, and later opened a tavern there in 1820.” [This would be approximately where Day’s Hill was located, or where today’s Wendy’s restaurant is situated.]
- Wildlife in Morgan County: “[The county] seemed to be a favorite rendezvous for bear, panther, wild cats, wolves, and herds of deer.”
- Eli Hadley homestead: “Very early in our history, Eli Hadley, father of the late Ann H. Dakin, came and entered the land now owned by J.W. Miles on the Plainfield road.” [This would have been on the northeast corner of East Washington and North Indiana Streets in Mooresville. The Jeff Miles house, still standing, was built in 1865.]
- Panthers just north of town: [In the early 1820s, at the home of Eli Hadley], soon after they were settled in their new home he made a trip to Orange county and one evening during his absence Mrs. Hadley heard the screams of panthers, and after dark some of them came and climbed onto the cabin roof and made the night hideous with their cries, and she was compelled to sit up all night long and keep a blazing fire to prevent them from coming in by way of the big mouthed stick and clay chimney.”
- Moore’s charitable gestures toward settlers: “In 1836 the Sheets, House and Rusie families were on their way from Virginia to Illinois traveling in covered wagons. When the caravan reached Indianapolis they were out of bread stuff but could obtain neither flour nor meal there. They had no better success at Bridgeport and were in a dilemma, until some one directed them to the [Moore] mill at Mooresville. When they arrived here the children were very hungry and Mrs. Moore gave them all the bread she had baked that day. As winter was near, and the cold increasing, Mr. Moore prevailed upon them to remain at least until spring. When spring came, they had no desire to go farther and they have been identified with the interests of this locality ever since. Michael Rusie was a plasterer and, although long since dead, much of his work remains in good condition. John H. Rusie, who has lived in Mooresville longer than any other person, was a small boy then and the only one of the original number left.”
- Banner Mills & Moore’s son-in-law: “The old part of the present [1918] Banner Mills, now greatly enlarged and owned by A.L. Wheeler was built in the spring and summer of 1868 by Captain S.M. [Samuel Moore] Rooker and David Fogleman [Samuel & Eliza Moore’s son-in-law, who married their daughter, Margaret “Maggie” Moore, on Dec. 30, 1869; Fogleman’s first wife, Mary M. Conduitt, whom he married on Feb. 14, 1857, died in Oct. 1867. David & Maggie Fogleman’s daughter was Ida Fogleman, the Moore’s granddaughter. Samuel Moore Rooker was the first Caucasian baby born in Mooresville in 1824. Rooker built the Cook house on West Harrison Street]. The I. & V. railroad was

in process of construction but could only bring freight to the road crossing at Tanglewood and in order to be ready for harvest they had all their machinery hauled from that point. The first year they handled fourteen thousand bushels of wheat and elevated all of it in bags to the third story by a hand turned windlass. The first passengers over the I. & V. boarded the cars from a room in the southeast corner of the [Banner] mill until a station was built.”

- Margaret Moore’s schooling: [In the 1830s], a brick [school] building was erected [on East Washington Street] at a cost of six hundred dollars. It is pretty certain that Willis Conduitt taught the first school in this building. John Williams who later moved to Bowling Green, was a pioneer teacher. Mrs. Margaret Moore Fogleman, daughter of the founder of our town, attended her first school when Mr. Williams was teacher. She completed her education in a school for girls only, taught by Miss Ruth Hunt in James Kelly’s parlor.”
- Power of faith vs. selling alcohol: [In discussing the Mooresville Methodist Episcopal church], Harris Bray had been operating a distillery east of town that added materially to his income. After his conversion [to Methodism] he emptied the contents of the still on the ground, but another problem remained to be solved; he had done quite an amount of credit business and his books represented a goodly sum. After musing awhile the books were burned and not a penny collected.”
- Mooresville Methodists were a noisy lot: “[During the early 1830s], all the Methodists were so noisy they were refused the use of the school house, fearing they would set it on fire and they returned to Cline’s Cabinet shop to worship. [This was before 1839, when the M.E. Church was built on West Washington Street.] In time the schoolhouse burned, but through no fault of the Methodists, and when the brick school house was built they were re-admitted. Rev. Hiram Griggs was one of the early ministers.”
- Tolling the M.E. Church bell for Samuel Moore’s death: “The last interment in the old cemetery was that of Samuel Moore, who lived to be ninety years old and was buried March 1, 1889 beside the wife and children who had preceded him to the grave many years. The bell that calls the children to the Mooresville schools is the one formerly used in the old [M.E.] church. When our beloved founder realized the time of his departure was near, he said to his daughter, Mrs. Fogleman, “Have them toll the old bell, Maggie.” This was done alternately with the church bell, but who can tell the flood of memories that filled the soul of the dying man when he made the request!”
- Underground Railroad in Morgan County: “Eli J. Sumner was the first man to make an anti-slavery speech in this community. These were the days of the so-called underground railway, when fugitive slaves would be taken from station to station and hidden until they could safely be furthered on their way to Canada. An old log house near Monrovia road on John Edwards’ farm [west of Mooresville] was one of these

hiding places, and it is said two or three colored children were buried there. The next station was east of the Watson farm [. . .] Friends were especially active and all who were interested were law abiding citizens in all things except their fight against the traffic in slaves. This was certainly a charity in which the right hand had no desire to boast to the left of what it was doing, and great care and tact had to be exercised. I cannot remember the name of the party, but I do remember distinctly that on one occasion, especially, a clever ruse was resorted to to assist a run-away slave. The problem was solved by some Friends in the vicinity of Monrovia deciding to attend a meeting in Hamilton county. The weather was sufficiently cool for the women of the party to wear shawls and heavy veils over their plain bonnets. The fugitive was dressed like the Quaker women and rode in the carriage with them to the next station [in Hamilton County] in safety. This practice continued at intervals several years, or until Lincoln, the great emancipator, by a masterful stroke, liberated the race.”

- Post-Civil War Growth in Mooresville: “After the [Civil] war, and with the coming of the I. & V. railroad, Mooresville began to take on new life and other enterprises located here. A number of new houses were built and older ones remodeled and improved and a general air of prosperity prevailed.”
- Mooresville Enterprise Newspaper: “In 1872 [Benjamin] Dakin and E.H. Dorland launched the Mooresville Enterprise.” [We have some pages on display in the Indiana Room.]

[From Potts, Wanda. “Mooresville Moments.” *Mooresville-Decatur Times* (1999). Call No. I 977.251 POT].

- “Bells for Founder”: [See March 24, 1999 article]
- “Mooresville Remembers Town Founder”: [See Feb. 17, 1999 article]
- “Upright in Character Seen as Desirable Inhabitants”: [See Feb. 24, 1999 article]
- Marriage of Samuel Moore & Eliza Worthington: [See March 3, 1999 article]
- Eliza Moore: [See March 10, 1999 article]
- “Mementos Honored Samuel Moore”: [See march 17, 1999 article]
- “100 Facts About Mooresville”: [See April 7, 1999 article]
- “Methodist Church bell Fondly Remembered”: [See April 14, 1999 article]
- “Miss Ida”: [Mary Ida Fogleman, granddaughter of Samuel & Eliza Moore]: [See April 21-28, 1999 article]
- “Mooresville Sustains Serious Fire Damage”: (Including discussion of the Great Fire of 1842 and the July 8, 1881 fire that destroyed the first I.O.O.F. Building, where Samuel Moore’s general mercantile store had been located): [See June 23, 1999 article]
- “Moore Donates Land for Old Settlers”: [See Aug. 4, 1999 article]

- “The Old Bell”: “A tribute to Samuel Moore, founder of Mooresville, by Sarah K. Marine.” [See Sept. 22, 1999 article]
- “Sarah Marine was Mooresville’s Earliest Writer”: [See Sept. 15, 1999 article]

Learn more about Samuel Moore, Eliza Moore, and the history of Mooresville and surrounding area on our website at <http://moorvillelib.org/services/mpl-treasure-trove-historical-resources/>

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