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Mooreville's Treasure Trove (April 2015)

William R. Buckley, Adult Information/Reference Services Director

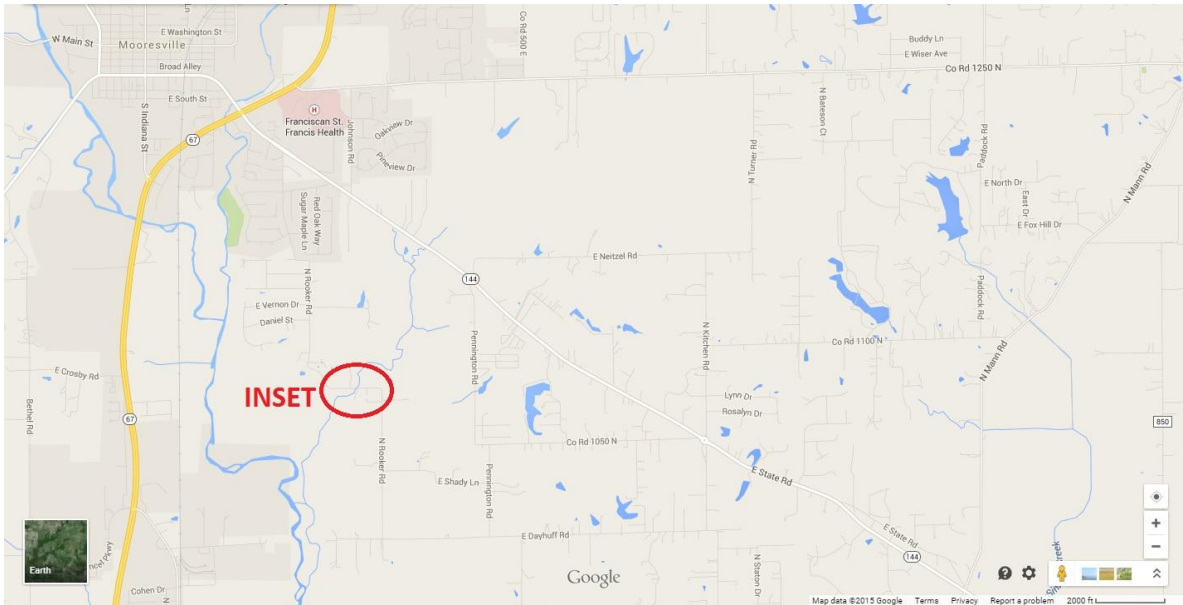
1901 BRIDGE AT "HOUSE'S BRANCH"

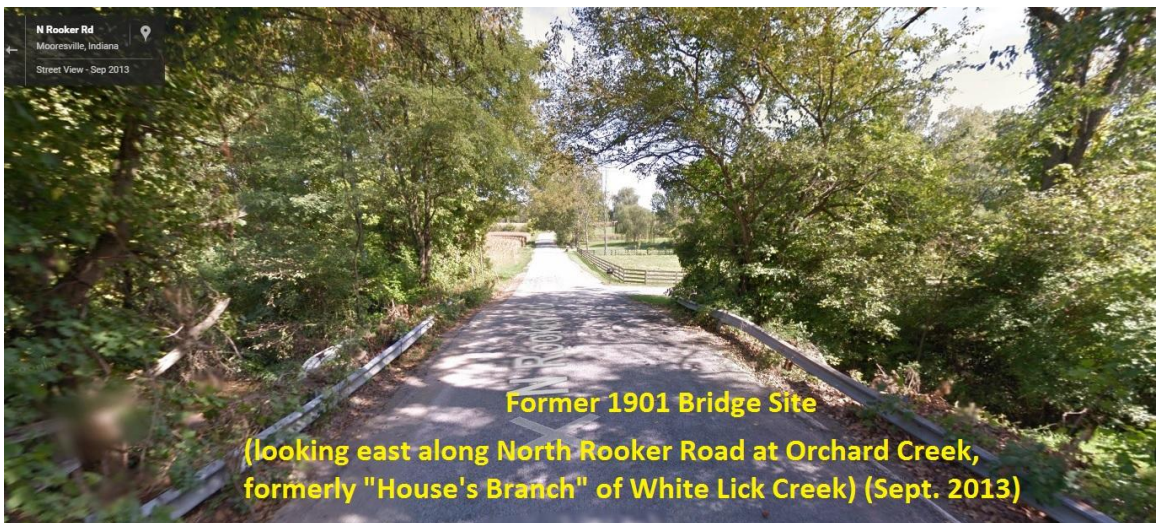
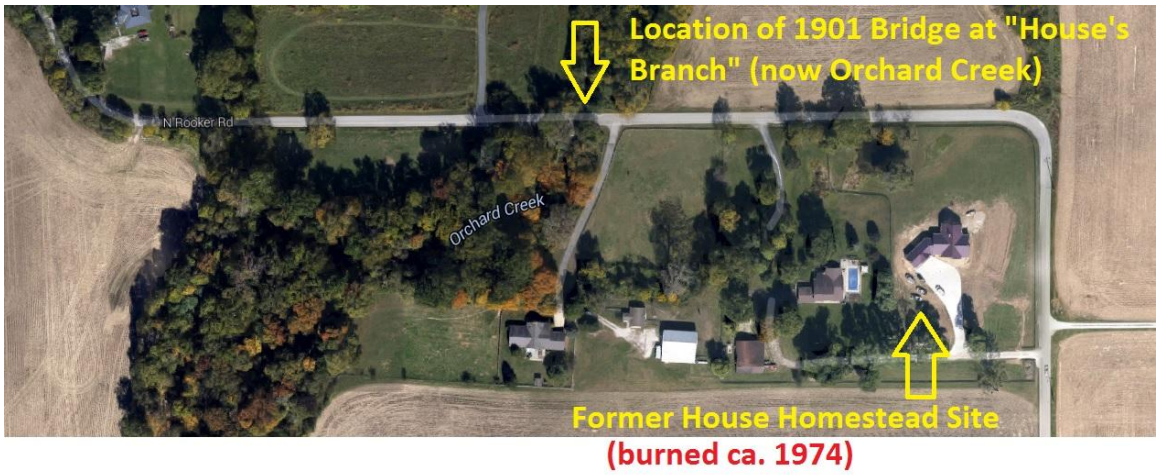
On August 17, 1901, several citizens and taxpayers of Mooreville and Brown Township (in Morgan County, Indiana) petitioned the Morgan County Board of Commissioners to construct a timber beam bridge across "House's Branch" of a creek, which merged with White Lick Creek to the south, on the public road that ran between the Mooreville-to-Waverly Road and Henderson's Ford on the White River. Today, we know this "public road" as Rooker Road (originally, the Rooker Trace, a pioneer trail used since the early 1820s by settlers), and "House's Branch" is called Orchard Creek today. The House family owned the surrounding farmland for generations. The "House house," which was the House family homestead, burned *circa* 1974.

The original 1901 petition (and accompanying transcription) is included at the end of this handout.

In September, 1912, the Morgan County Council appropriated \$800 to construct a new bridge at "House's Branch" to replace the 1901 wooden beam structure. (The replacement bridge was built in Spring, 1913.) In February, 1913, the Morgan County Commissioners approved construction specifications and plans prepared by H.A. Blunk, who was paid \$8.60 for his plans. The lowest construction bid (\$754) came from James A. Parish, of Greenfield, Indiana. The 1913 bridge was likely to have been a reinforced concrete structure.

The following maps, aerial photos, and street-level photos (courtesy of Google Maps) show the former location of the 1901 bridge. (North is “up” on the maps.)





SOURCES:

"1901 Bridge Petition" from "Mooreville Bridges" vertical file, Indiana Room collections, Mooreville Public Library (accessed April 22, 2015).

Images from Google Maps (<https://www.google.com/maps>), accessed April 22, 2015, by the author.

Cooper, James L., email communication, April 25, 2015.

Morgan County Council Record, 1: 120 (1912).

Morgan County Commissioners Record, 24: 353, 367, 388-394 (1913).

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Last revised on 4/25/2015 by wrb.

The following pages are original
documents regarding the
building of the Bridge
in Brown Twp. over
a certain Water Course
Known as "HOUSE'S BRANCH"

1901

Whereas, it is proposed to construct a bridge over a certain water course, commonly known as House's Branch, on the public highway leading from the Mooresville and Waverly Gravel Road in Brown Township, Morgan County, Indiana, to the Henderson Bridge over White River, in said County; and Whereas, the probable costs of constructing and building the necessary approaches to said bridge will be one hundred dollars. Now we, the undersigned, in consideration that said bridge is to be built and constructed by the proper township and county authorities, do hereby promise and agree to pay the sums set opposite our respective names for the purpose of defraying the cost, to-wit, one hundred dollars, of building and constructing direct approaches to said bridge; said sums being payable in money or work, at the option of the subscribers.

August 17, 1901

Names:

>>> House	\$4.00	Frank Cox	\$1.50
W. H. Morgan??	\$5.00	Tilden McNeff ?	\$?
John M. House	\$5.00	Burt Cox	\$1.00
?? Webb	\$10.00	Roscoe Farmer	\$1.50
George Pennington	\$5.00	Wiley Quinn	\$1.00
?? House	\$5.00		
...??? Park	\$?		

State of Indiana
Morgan County} SS

To the Honorable Board of Commissioners of Morgan County in the State of Indiana:

The undersigned citizens and taxpayers of said County respectfully petition and show that the erection of a bridge over a certain water course, commonly known as House's Branch, over the public highway leading from the Mooresville and Waverly Gravel road in Brown Township to the Henderson Bridge over White River in said County and State would be a public convenience and public utility. Wherefore, your petitioners pray that your Honorable Board grand to Brown Township such aid as may be necessary for the erection of said bridge, and to take such further action in the premises as may be warranted by law.

Names:

John C. Webb
O. E. Rooker ??
D. Fogleman
G.W. Bass ??
Robert R. Scott
Geo Scruggs
A.K. Cooper ??
W, C, Greeson ??
J.A. Thompson ??
Clark Robbi???
Allred
B ass
C. B. Rairden?
J. P. ????
L.A. Shanafelt
A. ?? Mills
O. G. Warren
A.L. Wheeler ??
J. S. Comesr
Elam Harvey
???
?? Leathers
O. A. House ??
John M. House
Roscoe Farmer????
?? House
?? den McNeff
George Pennington

Names:

John H. Rusie ??
Charles Cook
Fred J. Lindley ???
J.E. Overton
P. Thompson ??
B. ?? Trogdon ??
O. ?? Park
?? H. Morgan

State of Indiana,
Morgan County. } ss.

To The Honorable Board of Commissioners
of Morgan County in the State of
Indiana:

The Undersigned Citizens
and tax payers of said County respect-
fully petition and show that the
erection of a bridge over a certain
water course, commonly known as
Stouse's Branch, on the public highway
leading from the Morrisville and
Waverly Grand Road in Brown Township
to the Anderson Bridge over White River
in said County and State would be
a public convenience and of public
utility. Wherefore, Your petitioners
pray that your Honorable Board grant
to Brown Township such aid as may
be necessary for the erection of said
bridge, and to take such further action
in the premises as may be warranted
by law.

Names:

John C. Webb.
D. E. Rooker
D. Hogloman
L. W. Bass
Robt R. Scott
C. G. Spriggs

Names:

John H. Ruseil.
Chas Cook
Fred. Pindley
J. E. Overton
J. P. Thompson
B. H. Hoggson

Whereas, it is proposed to construct a bridge over a certain water course, commonly known as House's Branch on the public highway leading from the Merresville and Waverly Gravel Road in Brown Township, Morgan County, Indiana, to The Henderson Bridge over White River in said County; and Whereas, the probable costs of constructing and building the necessary approaches to said bridge will be one hundred dollars. Now, we, the undersigned, in consideration that said bridge is to be built and constructed by the proper Township and County authorities, do hereby promise and agree to pay the sum set opposite our respective names for the purpose of defraying the cost, to-wit, one hundred dollars, of building and constructing said bridge; said sum being payable in money or work, at the option of the subscribers -

Aug. 17, 1901.

Names:

D. H. House	4.00
W. H. Marzen	5.00
John M. House	5.00
C. H. House	10.00
George Pennington	5.00
C. H. House	5.00
C. W. Park	5.00

Names:

Frank Cox	\$1.50
Tilden McKeff	\$5.00
Burt Cox	1.00
Roseve Farmer	\$1.50
Wiley Quinn	\$1.00

to said approaches