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Mooresville's Treasure Trove #8 (May 2008)

Bill Buckley, Indiana Room Librarian

Then . . . and Now

Historic Mooresville, IN Scenes and Places

Taken from the Past and Brought into the Present

Then... 11 West Main Street: Pace Thompson's Dry Goods Store (circa 1900-1920); Thompson Auto Supply (circa 1920-1952)

An unidentified photograph (see Figure 1) was discovered in the Mooresville Public Library's Indiana Room historical photo collection. It appears to be a photograph of an older photograph, and the original picture appears to be turn-of-the-20th century, based upon the appearances of the people and the structural characteristics of the premises.

Several architectural clues reveal that this photograph shows Pace Thompson's Dry Goods Store, which was located at 11 West Main Street. The 1902 Sanborn Insurance fire map shows this one-story brick building housing a "general store," and Pace Thompson ran his dry goods store here between at least 1902 (possibly earlier) and 1920. The photo in *Figure 1* shows two tall windows and a bi-fold doorway crowned with three semicircular "sunrise" windows, which were popular between the 1880s-1910s and appeared on at least a half dozen buildings in Mooresville during this time period. Two dark stars appear above the points at which the three semicircular windows meet. There are three limestone capstones at the top of each semicircular window, along with brick that mimics their semicircular shape. Four concrete or limestone caps show the level at which lentils were placed to support the downward weight of the brick where the semicircular windows meet the tall, narrow windows and doorway. There are four concrete (or limestone) blocks at the bottom of the brick just above sidewalk level, on either side of the doorway and to the left and right of the two

long, narrow windows. At the top of the building is a brick “offset” line, just below the brick parapet at the roofline. Each of these features is also clearly visible in other photographs (see *Figures 2 and 6*) that have been definitely identified as 11 West Main Street during this time period. *Figure 3* shows the inside of Pace Thompson’s dry goods store as it looked in the early 1900s.



Figure 1. Although this photograph of a photograph was unidentified, it shows the Pace Thompson Dry Goods Store (circa early 1900s) located at 11 West Main Street. (Original photographer unknown – possibly J. P. Calvert.)

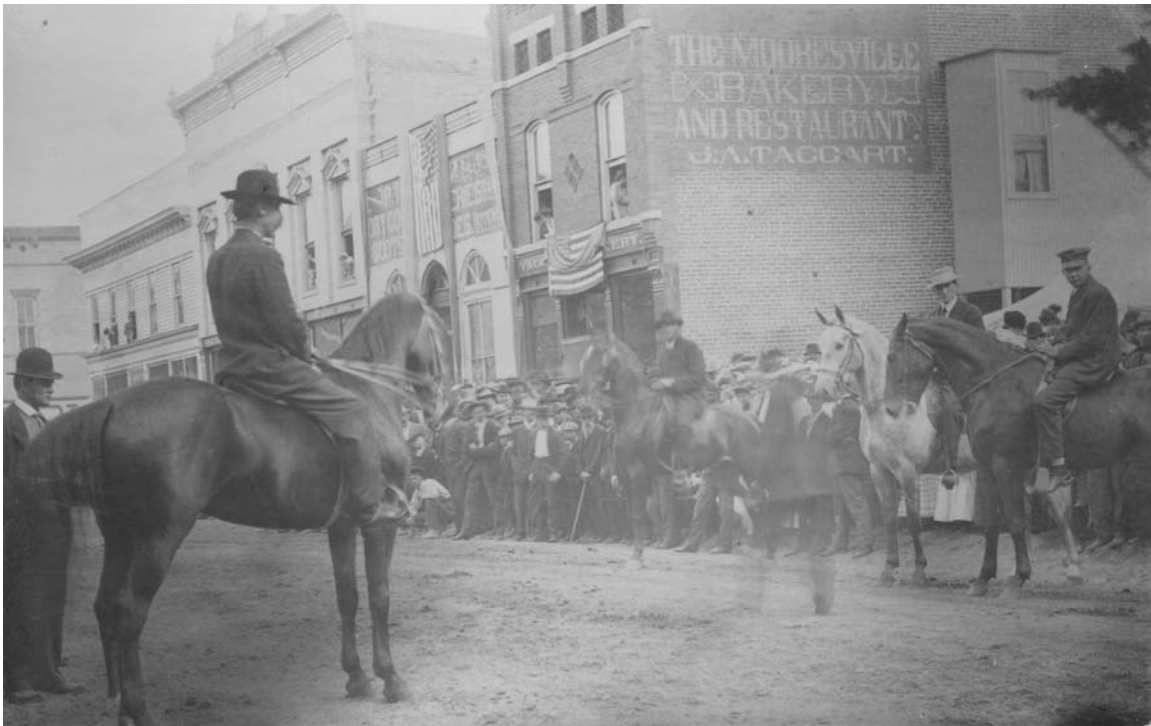


Figure 2. The 1910 Horse Show in downtown Mooresville, which shows the one-story building at 11 West Main Street (middle, above the left horse's head), between the two-story 1895 Carlisle & Gilbert Building (left, behind the horse rider on the left) and the two-story structure (right, see sign on side of building) housing the Mooresville Bakery & Restaurant, owned by Lena Taggart, who ran the business with her husband, John, from 1888 until John's death in 1907, and thereafter until selling out to Ross "Dinty" Moore in 1913. Note the semicircular windows, brick "offset" line above the business name, and brick parapet. (The American flag was displayed between two supports temporarily suspended from the parapet). Although the firm name "P. Thompson's" and "dry goods" are obscured by the flag, the letters "P. T" and "dry go" are clearly visible. (Photograph by J. P. Calvert.)

The structure at 11 West Main Street was briefly vacant around 1920 until Pace Thompson and his son, Walter Thompson, opened Thompson's Auto Supply, which continued until 1952. Thompson's was the first business in Mooresville to exclusively sell automobile parts. The shop was repeatedly bought and sold between 1952 until the 1980s, when it closed. Carl Crowe's appliance store operated there beginning in 1989. The building was listed for sale in June, 2008.



Figure 3. Pace Thompson's dry goods store as it looked during the early 1900s.
(Photograph by J. P. Calvert.)

Phone 27

P. THOMPSON
FOR DRY GOODS
AND SHOES

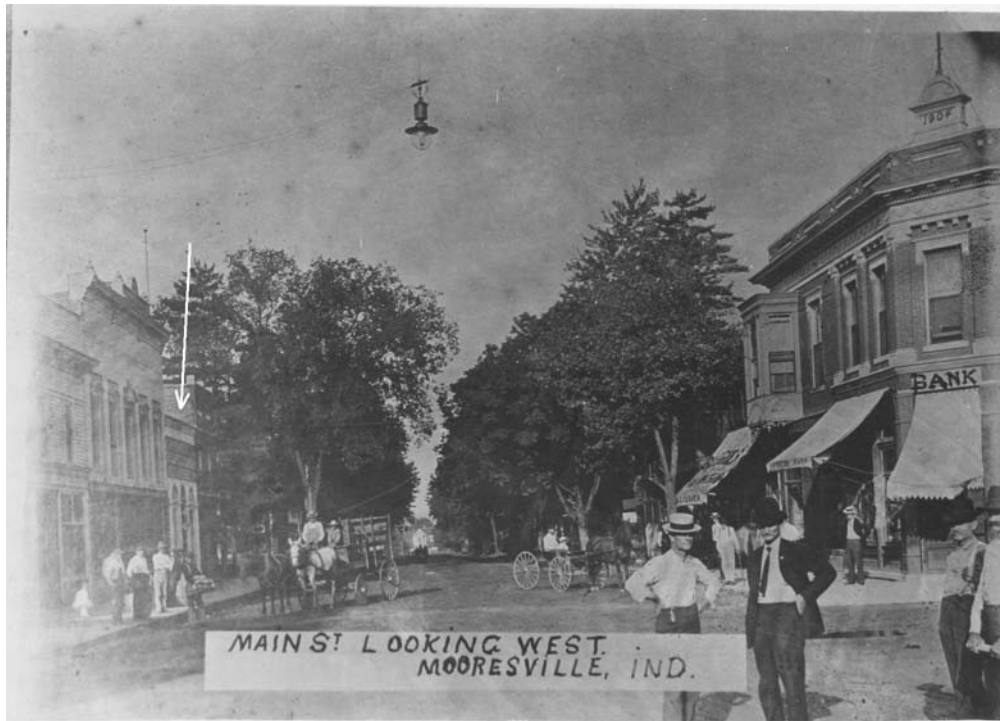
MOORESVILLE :: :: INDIANA

P. Thompson

DRY GOODS, NOTIONS, HATS,
CAPS, SHOES, CARPETS, WIN-
DOW SHADES and GROCERIES

Agent for the Beacon and Selz Shoes
✻ Terms Cash ✻

Figures 4A & 4B. Advertisements for Pace Thompson's dry goods store appearing in the 1909 Mooresville High School Senior Annual (above, right) and the 1917 Packet (Mooresville High School yearbook) (above, left).



Pace Thompson's dry goods store, at 11 West Main Street, is indicated by the white arrows (left, above; right, below).

Figure 5A. (1912) Looking west from the intersection of Main and Indiana Streets.



Figure 5B. (Circa 1910) Looking east toward the intersection of Main and Indiana Streets (photograph by J. P. Calvert)

Now... 11 West Main Street (May 2008)



Figure 6. 11 West Main Street as it appeared in May, 2008.

In *Figure 6* (above), notice the semicircular windows filled-in with bricks (above the existing square windows and doorway), the two stars above the windows and doorway, the three concrete/limestone capstones above the semicircular windows, the four limestone/concrete lentil markers, two of the four concrete/limestone blocks just above the sidewalk, and the brick "offset" line near the parapet at the top of the structure. Compare these with comparable elements in the *Figure 1* photo. From this evidence, we may confidently infer that the unidentified picture in *Figure 1* shows the building at 11 West Main Street.

Then... Old Methodist Episcopal (M.E.) Church (1839) & Old Cemetery (est. 1829)

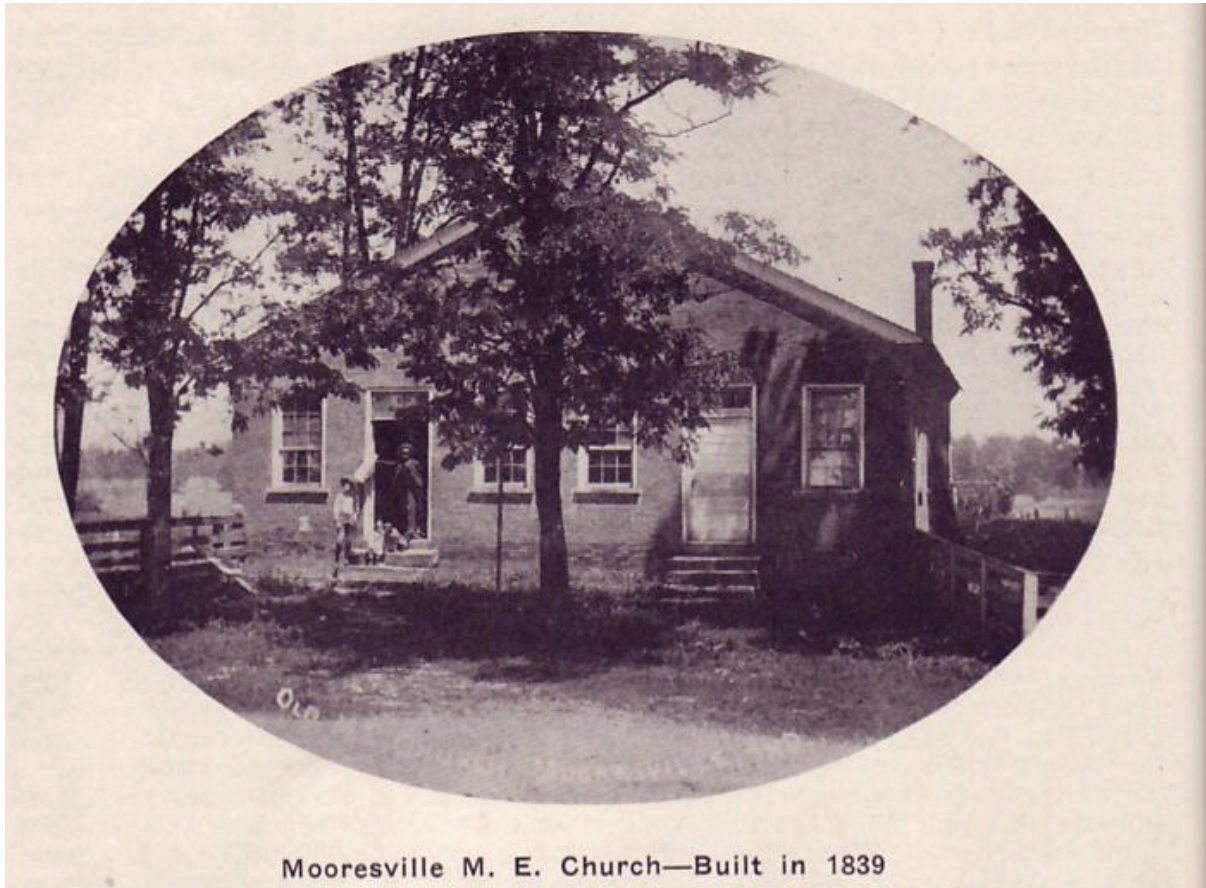


Figure 7. The old Methodist Episcopal (M.E.) Church (circa 1880s) [Photo reprinted from p. 28 of Hadley, Almira Harvey. A Brief History of Moorsville and Vicinity (1918)].

The old Methodist Episcopal (M. E.) Church (*Figure 7*) was built in 1839, adjacent to Old Cemetery, which was established in 1829. Part of the cemetery is on the right. Samuel and Eliza Moore donated two lots on West Washington Street in Moorsville so that the M. E. Church and cemetery could be established there. It was used until 1882, when the M. E. Church moved to the corner of Harrison and Indiana Streets (Photo by J. P. Calvert, who was choir director at the church for 40 years).

Now... Old Cemetery (est. 1829) (Oct. 2007)



The stone in the front of the photo, next to the sidewalk (in the shade), commemorates the original location of the M. E. Church on West Washington Street. Old Cemetery is in the background.

PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS:

All black-and-white photographs courtesy of Mooresville Public Library, Indiana Room historical photograph collection, unless otherwise noted.

All May, 2008 and Oct. 2007 color photographs taken by William R. Buckley.

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Last revised on 7/3/2008 by wrb.