

JACKSON COUNTY PRIOR TO 1850

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INTRODUCTION

In undertaking an article of this sort, there must naturally be some limitations and the writer has limited himself to the four subjects indicated by the titles of the four chapters. This limits us to the consideration of the history of only two towns. Prior to 1815, Vallonia was the only settlement, and the history prior to that time, of course, centers around that settlement.

After the location of the county seat at Brownstown, in 1816, that town became the center of activities and Vallonia made little progress. Seymour, by far the largest town in the county, was not established till 1852 and hence is not included in the scope of this account.

In the history, prior to 1815, there are many traditions to be dealt with, and little means of verifying them exist. The writer has compared the various accounts and has given what seems to be the most satisfactory version. Authorities are quoted in nearly every instance and where there seems to be doubt as to the authenticity of a statement, it is indicated.

In the last three chapters, the establishment of the county, its organization, and the construction of county buildings are considered in more or less detail, in order to give an idea of the early county business and the methods by which it was carried on. Most of this information is taken directly from the county records, especially the commissioners' records, and hence it is well substantiated.

CHAPTER I. JACKSON COUNTY PRIOR TO 1815

When one travels over the Driftwood and the Muscatatuck bottoms of Jackson county today, it is difficult to realize the changes that the land has witnessed during the last hundred years. On every hand are beautiful and comfortable homes. Near them are well filled barns and surrounding both are well tilled fields, where one may see at the proper time of the year, bountiful crops of corn, wheat, oats, watermelons, nutmegs, and cow peas together with gardens and orchards, while here and there still remain small tracts of virgin forests, whose stately oaks, ashes and beeches remind one of the time when only the Indian hunters broke the silence of the

forests, as they hunted bear, deer and wild turkey for their daily meat supply. According to early accounts, a week's supply of game could be killed in a half day.¹ Single flocks of wild turkeys numbered five hundred. Deer in winter ranged in herds of ten to twenty. There were shoals of fish in the river covering half an acre. Despite this abundance of game we of today find it difficult to realize the hard conditions that confronted the early settlers. We can picture them as they made their way up, or down the river or laboriously toiled through the trackless forests on foot, or horseback, or in ox-wagons; one can imagine them hewing out the logs for their new cabin home, or clearing the forest for the first crops, but we can never realize the hardships that such labor entailed.

We can see thriving towns and villages now and do not stop to think that at one time none of these existed, or that the little village of Vallonia was once the only business center in the community or county. On August 15, and 16, of this year, this little village, the oldest in the county, celebrated its one hundredth anniversary. The earliest settlers came several years earlier than this but business activities really began in 1813.

Tradition holds that there was a French settlement made at Vallonia in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and some persist in claiming the honor of its being the second oldest town in the State, although this last statement is the merest conjecture. However, the descendants of the earliest settlers, such as the Durhams, Schewmakers and Ewings, assert on the authority of their fathers, that log cabins stood in the field once owned by Jackson Miller near Vallonia, when the first settlers came.² Men such as Harrison, Durham, and Josiah Shewmaker, who died only a few years ago, and Columbus Ewing, still living, mention seeing these old log cabins in their early days. It is certain that there was a piece of cleared land here at the coming of the earliest settlers, but this may have been the work of Indians as Vallonia was on the direct line of travel between the settlements at Vincennes and Detroit, and as there was an abundance of fur-bearing animals in these regions, such a settlement is not at all unlikely.³

¹ Josiah Schewmaker, *Brownstown Banner*, August 26, 1874.

² Brandt and Fuller, *History of Jackson County*, 1886, 380 ff.

³ There is little doubt but that this neighborhood was a much frequented rendezvous for Indians. The fact that it was a hunting ground of the Indians makes it probable that at one time an outlying post from Vincennes was established here. The sluggish Driftwood was easily navigated, much more so than the swift Wabash or Ohio.

According to Benton's *Reminiscences*⁴ there was a French and Indian trading post located, for facility in transportation, at the confluence of the Muscatatuck and White rivers and there was a smaller post over at the site of Vallonia bearing the French name of "Vallon" meaning "a little valley." This may have had some connection with the name Valloniai. However he attributes the real origin of the name to Thomas Ewing, who being a great reader came across the word in Worcester's Dictionary, meaning or signifying "Valley of Valleys" and thought it an appropriate name for the settlement, because of its situation in the beautiful White River Valley.⁵

The territory embraced in Jackson county was acquired from the Indians by three different treaties. The treaty of 1805, made Aug. 21, 1805 at Grouseland near Vincennes, ceded all the land lying south of a line running from near Brookville in Franklin county to the northeast corner of the Vincennes tract in Orange county and included the southeast corner of Jackson county. The second treaty was known as the Harrison Purchase and was made at Fort Wayne, September 30, 1809. It included the northwest corner of Jackson county by a line running from a point on the Wabash in Parke county to its intersection with the line of 1805, in Hamilton township, two and a half miles west of Seymour. The final treaty of 1818, the "New Purchase," carried with it the remaining northeast corner of the county. The treaty of 1805 was ratified by the Senate in 1806 and in 1807 the boundary line above described was located.⁶

There is a mass of traditions as to the first settlers, and there are no means of substantiating them. In the County History of 1886 mention is made of Peter Audrian who settled with his family near Vallonia in 1805.⁷ This is the earliest settlement of which any

⁴ John H. Benton in his "Early History and Indian Reminiscences of Vallonia and Jackson County." (This sketch was written by John H. Benton, now past his eightieth year and residing in Washington, D. C., to be read at the Vallonia Centennial held this year. Mr. Benton is a member of the well known Benton family of Brownstown, and is always referred to by citizens of Jackson County as the best local authority on its history. His work will be frequently referred to in this work as "*Benton's Reminiscences*." They are published in the Brownstown *Banner* of August 20, 27 and September 3, 1913.)

⁵ Mr. Benton quotes as his authority for this statement an article published more than fifty years ago by the Honorable Wm. H. Graham, but he does not state where the article may be found. Possibly he has it as a clipping. Mr. Graham was quite a scholar and a member of the Territorial Legislature and of the First Constitutional Convention, which facts would tend to confirm his authority. The word "Vallonia" can be found in the dictionary to-day, derived from a Greek word "balania," "balanidia," which relates to a certain kind of an oak tree.

⁶ Benton's *Reminiscences*.

⁷ Ref.; Brandt and Fuller's *History of Jackson County*, 381, ff. The history quotes as its authority a published article of nearly fifty years ago, previous to 1886, when the history was published, but it does not name its authority.

mention has been found. Not long after 1805 Silas McCullick settled here, married a squaw of the Ox tribe of Indians and raised several children by her.⁸

It is a generally accepted fact that Aquilla and Henry Rogers settled near Vallonia in the fall of 1807 or in the spring of 1808.⁹ The Rogerses were said to have been associates of Aaron Burr, who sought refuge in the wilds of Jackson county. They are said to have come down the Ohio in canoes and landed at Charlestown landing. From there they made their way to Jackson county. Aquilla Rogers settled about two miles south of Vallonia on what is now the Peter Meahl place.¹⁰ The cabin, which he is said to have built, is still standing and its picture appeared not long ago in the *Indianapolis Star*. Later, Aquilla Rogers went away and returned with a wife. They continued to live here till 1819 when they went farther to the northwest where it is said their descendants live to this day.¹¹

An article in the *Jackson County Democrat* of 1852 mentions a man by the name of Huffman who is believed to have settled in Jackson county but the exact spot is not known.¹² His son was captured at the Pigeon Roost Massacre, carried off to Canada, and was afterward restored through efforts of the United States government. According to a statement by Columbus Ewing, James Hutchinson and others settled here as early as 1807.¹³

The first land entries were made in June, 1808, by Thomas Ewing and William Pravens, both of Clark county.¹⁴ They entered the northwest and southwest quarters of section 31 town 5, range 4, lying along the river at or below the present railroad bridge below Vallonia. In 1809, Samuel Ewing of Perryville, Ky., and father of Thomas entered fractional sections 29 and 30 containing 1006 acres, the entire tract lying along the Indian boundary line east of the town. However, it is not known that Ewing ever visited the town at any time. In 1809, entries were also made by James Hutchinson, Isaac Holeman and Thomas Smith. In 1810 there were

⁸ This is also mentioned by Jas. Burcham, in his reminiscences, published in the *Brownstown Banner*, January 3, 1874, but the name is spelled slightly differently.

⁹ This fact is mentioned in nearly all the articles and authorities investigated, but there is a difference of opinion as to whether Aquilla was accompanied by his brother Henry or not.

¹⁰ *Seymour Daily Republican*, August 6, 1913.

¹¹ The date 1819 is evidently wrong, for there is mention of Aquilla Rogers in the *Commissioners' Record of Jackson County* for August 22, 1822.

¹² This article is quoted in Brandt and Fuller's *History of Jackson County*, p. 282, but there are no files of the *Brownstown* papers earlier than that of the *Banner*, beginning in 1869.

¹³ This is a statement quoted by Mr. Benton. Columbus K. Ewing, son of Thomas Ewing and grandson of James Hutchinson, who were among the early settlers, is still living near Vallonia. He was born in 1833, but is still remarkably active for a man of eighty.

¹⁴ Benton's *Reminiscences*.

five entries, including the names of James McGee, Samuel Burcham, Abraham Hart, and Robert Sturgeon who was later killed by the Indians. His entry, section 8, town 4, range 4, was completed in 1815 by William Graham, member of the Convention of 1816, who lived on it till his death in 1853. In 1811, William Davenport, Jacob Persinger, and Thomas Ewing were the only patentees. Ewing entered the southwest quarter of section 20, town 4, range 4, situated along the Muscatatuck at Millport, and it was assigned to John DePauw for mill and ferry purposes. There was no entry in 1812 and only one, by James Dowden, in 1813. The lands entered prior to 1811 were generally occupied by their owners.

James Burcham in his reminiscences tells how his father and family came in 1810, and settled a little northwest of the M. B. Singer place. He relates how they came up the river, landed in the evening, made preparations to camp for the night, and how they prepared to build a home. The building was small, but eight families, all there were in the county, were called in to help. However, more people came in that year and the next. He gives the names and the locations of the farms of several of the neighboring settlers. There were no civil officers, except the justice and constable, till after the war, and Mr. Burcham claims that persons desiring to marry had only to post three notices ten days ahead and call in a justice.

According to the *Indiana Gazetteer*, Vallonia was laid out in 1810 by John McAfee, Thomas Ewing, and J. B. Durham. This was the frontier settlement during the War of 1812 and was much exposed. The houses were well fortified and the citizens were always ready when called upon for ranger service.¹⁵ Other early settlers besides those mentioned, were Judge McGee, McKinney Carter, William Crenshaw, William Graham, Vincent Lockman, Major Beem, George Isminger, Leonard C. Schewmaker, Thomas Carr, Daniel McCoy, William Dowden, Robert Holmes, John Sage, and many others who have been prominent in Jackson county history.

Ewing, McAfee and Durham together with Thomas Carr all had been residents of Mercer county, Kentucky, but had lately moved over to Clark county, Indiana Territory, and had come from there to form the settlement at Vallonia. William Graham, already mentioned as a scholar and a man of political influence, came directly from Kentucky. Josiah Schewmaker estimates that between thirty and forty families were in the county in 1814. Of these, three-fourths were from Kentucky, and the other fourth from Tennessee, Virginia, and a few from the eastern States. Most of the families were above

¹⁵ Chamberlain's *Indiana Gazetteer*, 1849, 406.

the average in intelligence.¹⁶ Food was scarce for the early settlers. The first of them had to bring their corn with them. Sassafras tea was used. Hominy could always be had when there was a good corn crop, and generally some kind of meal, though it had to be ground in a hand mortar at first.¹⁷ Burcham says that Aquila Rogers had a mill on the branch at Vallonia in 1810, but other statements differ as to who owned it and as to the time of starting it. Other mills were built later, but they could not supply the demand, and usually standing grists were kept at the mill. Saw mills and distilleries were often found in connection with the grist mills. One of the best patronized mills was that run by the DePauws at Millport on the Muscatatuck.

The Indians were peaceable until the early part of 1812,¹⁸ when the War of 1812 broke out there were signs of Indian hostility. Captain John Berry, Thomas Ewing, James Rogers, Michael Beem, Alexander Craig, and William Graham, constituted a party of six, who, in 1811 went in search of a horse stolen from a man named Lindsey in Washington county. They pursued the Indians ten miles north of the site of Indianapolis and had many thrilling experiences. Thomas Ewing came near shooting a friendly Delaware Indian. When one of the party woke up in the morning after a heavy rain, he found himself sleeping in a puddle of water. However, they finally met some friendly Delaware Indians who guided them back to Fort Vallonia which they reached in January 1812.¹⁹

Ketcham, in his autobiography, as quoted by Benton (*Benton's Reminiscences*) also gives an account of the killing of Hinton in the Cherry Bottoms near the Shield's bridge on April 7, 1812. Hinton with his family lived with the families of Cox and Ruddick about two and one half miles above where Brownstown now stands. Hinton's killing, while in search of his horse, was the first act of Indian hostility. He was scalped and his body thrown into the shallow water at the river's edge. Most of the horses were stolen. As a result two companies of rangers were sent to Vallonia to guard the settlers. Two other men were killed about the same time, who, according to James F. Burcham, were Daniel and Jacob Solida who were killed the same day, one a few miles, the other several miles southeast of Sparks, then McGowan's ferry.

¹⁶ Josiah Schewmaker, *Brownstown Banner*, August 26, 1874.

¹⁷ *Brownstown Banner*, September 2, 1874.

¹⁸ Mr. Benton quotes from an autobiography of John Ketcham, which he possesses, as follows: "In April, 1811, he settled on fractional section 4, town 5, range 4 (at Brownstown.) The Indians were numerous and friendly in that portion of the territory until after the Tippecanoe battle, November 7, 1811, at which the Delaware tribes expressed dissatisfaction and many Indians, but not all, left our part of the county for the North."

¹⁹ Brändt and Fuller's *History of Jackson County*, 316.

Ketcham also says that there were upwards of seventy families here at the beginning of the War.²⁰ Those remaining built block houses and forts for their safety. John Sage built a fort on his place near the site of the White Church; Abraham Huff and others built one near the mouth of what is now Huff creek; John Ketcham and other built one where Brownstown now stands, although this is disputed by some; and James Burcham one on what is now the M. B. Singer farm. James Burcham, in his reminiscences, gives a good description of the fort and states that it was occupied by nine families during the War. There were two skirmishes and frequent alarms there during the war but no bloodshed.

However, the principal fort was at Vallonia. This fort consisted of a stockade enclosing about one and one half acres, and was formed of puncheons ten feet in height, planted three feet in the ground. Blockhouses were built at each corner to guard against approach to its sides, and the Vallonia branch running through it furnished a bountiful supply of fresh water. It was not completed until January, 1813. There were no attacks, but frequent alarms and constant efforts at horse stealing by the Indians.²¹

Mr. Benton mentions the fact that there was published in the *Brownstown Banner* in the fall of 1864 a letter from Captain John Zenor, dated at Corydon in 1812. The letter relates that he came on the invitation of the settlers from that place to Vallonia in that year to help eat a Fourth of July dinner. In the same letter he relates that he helped draw a seine in White River that afternoon, that the "rumors of Indian disturbances were without foundation" and that on their return some of the men drank too much whiskey of which there was always a bountiful supply. One of the men lost his blanket over on Walnut Ridge and failed to find it on a return trip of several miles. Captain John Tipton, who left Corydon July 5, was at Vallonia about the same time, and the two companions returned together according to the Captain's account.

The Pigeon Roost Massacre occurred September 3, 1812, at which twenty-three men, women and children were killed. This caused great alarm on the part of the settlers and increased watchfulness

²⁰ Other authorities say there were ninety. Brandt and Fuller's *History of Jackson County*, 315, says there were ninety-three, of whom seventy moved away and the names of the twenty-three remaining are given.

²¹ This description of the fort was given Mr. Benton by Josiah Schewmaker before his death in 1893. Mr. Schewmaker saw the fort while it was still occupied, when he came with his parents from Knox County, Kentucky, in 1814.

in the various forts.²² In the same month occurred the murder of Buskirk and Sturgeon. Ketcham's account says that Absalom Buskirk and his brother-in-law, said to be either Ketcham or Reddick, took a two-horse team to the fields to get corn and pumpkins.²³ Either in the fields or on the return home Buskirk was killed, and his two horses were taken by the Indians. The body was brought to Ketcham's fort that evening. The next day John Johnson, Robert Sturgeon, and others, came and took it to Huff's fort for burial. As they returned home Sturgeon was killed. Mr. Benton relates the details of the killing as they were given to him, in 1855, by Frederick Miller, who was a nine-year-old boy in the fort at the time. He says that Sturgeon, in the face of warning from the rest, proposed to be the first to reach the fort. The rest of the party had hardly reached the top of the hill by the Half-mile Branch, above Vallonia, when they heard shots, and rushing forward, they saw Sturgeon down on the ground and surrounded by savages. A shot had broken the wrist of his bridle hand which caused him to be thrown from his horse and placed at the mercy of the savages. That night a party of six composed of Abraham Miller, Thomas Ewing, Richard and Neely Beem, Joseph Breton and a sixth whose name could not be recalled,²⁴ went to the scene of the murder, tied up the body in a blanket, and brought it to the fort. They were accompanied on this errand by fierce dogs.

In 1812, Captain Duvall of Salem, according to Ketcham's account, while scouting up White river with a squad of men, came across the Indians laden with the spoils of the Pigeon Roost Massacre. Those that were mounted cast off their packs and escaped, but two that were on foot shot John Zink who pursued them. He was taken to Ketcham's fort, was attended by Dr. Lamb, of Salem, but died before reaching Vallonia, on his way to Salem.²⁵

²² Columbus Ewing says his mother related to him that some of the settlers of Vallonia visited the scene of the Massacre and brought home some of the bloody clothing, which was washed and used. He accounts for the settlers being there because of the scarcity of mills in the vicinity of Vallonia, which caused the settlers to visit mills in that locality.

²³ There are various conflicting accounts of these murders. The one given, is that by John H. Benton, based on Ketcham's "Autobiography." Columbus Ewing asserts that Buskirk was hunting when shot, and not hauling corn and pumpkins; and that Sturgeon's foolhardiness was caused by intoxication. Mr. Benton states, on the authority of his mother, that Buskirk was murdered near the crossing of Brownstown and Ewing streets in the town of Brownstown. Ketcham's account is the one most frequently given.

²⁴ This is the authority of Columbus Ewing, whose father, Thomas Ewing, was in the company.

²⁵ Ketcham mentions in this connection the killing of old Mr. Huffman, the wounding of his wife and daughter, and the capture of his son, which is referred to earlier as happening at the Pigeon Roost Massacre. Ketcham says it occurred later in the year at or near the scene of the Massacre. He says the boy went away with the Indians again after he was ransomed.

In 1813, trouble began by the killing of George Doom, (in some cases spelled Dome) a militiaman, and the severe wounding of Ketcham himself, according to Ketcham's account, while they were returning from an errand at the home of Joshua Lindsey, a couple of miles above the site of Brownstown, on what is now the Rockport road. A lieutenant, with twenty men, came from Vallonia and carried the dead body back to Lindsey's where they stayed all night. Next day they left William Ruddick and two others to bury him, and went on a fruitless search after the Indians. On the same day Ruddick and his companions were ambushed. In the affray Ruddick was slightly injured and one of the Indians was severely injured.

Captain John Tipton mentions the killing of Doom in his official report of "Aprille" 24, 1813, as occurring on March 18. In the same spring Tipton was promoted to the rank of major, and placed in command of the fort at Vallonia. When he arrived at the fort, evidently, after the killing of Doom, he took twenty-nine men, went up Driftwood river twenty-five miles, and met a party of Indians on an island in the river. Here a fight ensued, which Tipton characterized as a "smart skirmish" lasting only twenty minutes. He dislodged the Indians from the island, and forced them to swim to safety, leaving their boats behind. According to the Captain's account, one Indian was killed on the ground and several were seen to sink in the river.²⁶ The battle must have been fought shortly before or after April 1, 1813.

The Captain's report, as given by Benton, further states that on April 16, 1813, two men were killed, one wounded and eight horses stolen by the Indians eight miles northwest of Vallonia. Ketcham in his autobiography says that this happened in the Flinn settlement near Leesville. One of the men killed was a Mr. Guthrie, the other, reported killed, was a Mr. Flinn, who was captured, but escaped and made his way back in the fall of 1814.²⁷ Burcham tells of the great alarm caused by the news and how all the neighbors sought refuge in his father's fort. Captain John Tipton, according to his journal, followed the Indians for three days with thirty-one men. But a surprise was prevented by the premature firing by one of the advance guards. Ketcham relates that Tipton was so angry over this that he wept like a child and was tempted to tomahawk the offending person.

²⁶ The hundredth anniversary of the battle of Tipton's Island was celebrated by a sham battle and the erection of a monument on the site of the battle about two miles north of Seymour. The thousand-dollar monument was contributed by Tipton S. Blist, of Seymour, a descendant of General Tipton. For a fuller account, see the *Indianapolis News*, June 14, 1913. See also *Indiana Magazine of History*, December, 1913.

²⁷ *Brownstown Banner*, July 15, 1874.

Ketcham also relates that in the spring of 1813, four companies of mounted rangers were authorized by the general government to be organized at Lawrenceburg, Madison, Charleston, and Vincennes. The Charleston company, commanded by Captain James Bigger, was made up mainly at that place but was recruited at Vallonia by ten or twelve men who had been shut up in blockhouses and forts in the fork of White river for more than a year. Ketcham was the orderly sergeant of the company. The companies of Captain Bigger, and of Captain Williamson Dunn from Madison, which had collected at Vallonia about the middle of June, went, under General Joseph Bartholomew, to the upper Indian towns on the West Fork of White river. During the two years service that followed, the only encounter was at Strawtown in Hamilton county. Ketcham described the battle and told of the wounding of David Hayes. He was carried on a horse litter to the mouth of Flatrock above Columbus where two canoes were made to carry him to Vallonia, where his wife and family were; but he died soon after reaching there.

According to Benton, the son of Hayes, George W., contests with Ewing Durham the distinction of being the first white child born in the county. Both were born in the fort in January 1812. Ewing Durham was born January 3, 1812, but Hayes could not tell the exact date of his birth which leaves the matter in doubt.²⁸ Another authority claims that Catharine Miller, daughter of Abraham Miller, was the first, being born in 1811.

A considerable number of peaceful Indians remained in Jackson county after 1813, the stockades at Vallonia and the neighboring places continued to be kept up until 1814, and the settlers were careful to avoid surprises.²⁹ Burcham says that the settlers kept soldiers in the field during the summer and fall of 1814. Captain Bigger was still in command at Vallonia and different families kept from one to five soldiers as they were able.

In 1813, when the territorial General Assembly met at Vincennes, the capital was changed to Corydon. William Graham from Vallonia, representative from Washington county, Samuel Milroy and an unnamed third person were appointed as a committee to select the new capital. Mr. Graham cast the minority vote for Vallonia which made it lack one vote of becoming the capital of the territory and for a while the capital of the State.³⁰ While it is a little past

²⁸ Brandt and Fuller's *History of Jackson County*, 391.

²⁹ *Brownstown Banner*, July 15, 1874.

³⁰ This is Mr. Benton's account. He designates it as a story. The citizens of Vallonia are fond of repeating it, but the writer is rather skeptical, as he has never seen it verified from the official records.

the period with which we are dealing, Tipton's account of his journey to Indianapolis in 1820 to select a site for the new State capital is also worth noticing at this point. His daily account of the journey sheds some interesting light on his sojourn here in earlier years.³¹ Tipton started from Corydon May 17, 1820, stopped at Salem on the 18th, and left there at eleven a.m. He crossed the Muscatatuck at a cost of 25 cts. and stopped at Colonel Durham's in Vallonia who was also a commissioner. Here they found Gen. Joseph Bartholomew, also one of the commissioners, Gen. John Carr, and Captain Dueson (spelling doubtful) of Charleston, who were going out to look at the country. From here the account is given in his own words as follows:

Friday 19:—We set out early. Stopped at Brownstown, had breakfast, paid 50c. Set out at ½ p. 9. At 1 stopt at Captain J. Shields. After dinner we set out. Captain Shields went with us. This evening crossed the river at the lower rapids. After traveling about seven miles thru good land, encamped and stretched our tents near a pond. This is the first time I have stretched or slept in a tent since 1814. Sat. 20th, Capt. Shields left us and returned home. We set out before sunrise. At 45 p. 6, came to John Ruddick's who lives on section 9, Township 8, north of range 6 west. Fine land. Paid 62½ cts. At 15 p. 12 came to upper rapids of Driftwood at the place where we made a bark canoe to carry a wounded man down to Vallonia, on the 20th of June 1813.³¹ Stopt. Let our horses graze. Set out at one and at 15 p. came to John Berry's who lives on S. 5, T. 10 N., R. 5, E. Good land, good water and timber.

Following this is the account of his trip to the present site of Indianapolis, and the picking of the site. In this account, he mentions camping on Sunday, May 21, 1820, at a place where he camped with General Bartholomew in June 1813. On the same day he found a tree on which he had carved his initials when he was there seven years before. On his return trip he stopped over night with Captain J. Shields, breakfasted at Brownstown, called on Colonel Durham and William Graham at Vallonia, and on General DePauw at Millport. From there he went to Salem for the night and then on to Corydon. He was gone, in all, twenty-seven days for which he received \$58.

³¹ This portion of the diary is copied from the *Indianapolis News*, April 17 and 19, 1879.

³¹ This must have been David Hayes, previously referred to in connection with the battle at Strawtown, Hamilton County.

CHAPTER II. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COUNTY AND ITS DIVISIONS

Jackson county was created by the act of the territorial General Assembly, approved December 18, 1815. By that act, the boundaries were laid down as follows: Beginning at a point on the East Fork of the White river, where the line dividing sections 4 and 5, in range 2, east, town 3, north, crosses the same, thence due north to the Indian Boundary line, thence with said boundary line eastward to the point where the said line intersects the northern boundary line of the Grouseland purchase, thence with the last mentioned line eastwardly to the point where the line dividing ranges 7 and 8, east, crosses the same, thence with the last mentioned line west to the east fork of Muscatatuck river, thence down said river, with the meanders thereof, to the junction of Driftwood Fork of White river thence down the same, with the meanders thereof, to the place of beginning.

The county was called Jackson after the hero of New Orleans, and was granted all the rights, privileges and jurisdiction which belong to a separate county, with the provision that all legal proceedings already begun in the then counties of Washington and Jefferson, from which the new county was formed, should be completed in those counties and that all territorial and county taxes already due in the bounds of the new county should be collected and paid in the same manner as if the new county had not been formed.

Alexander A. Meek, a well known lawyer of Jefferson county, Joseph Bartholomew of Clark county, Peter McIntosh of Harrison county, Ralph Cotton of Switzerland county, and William Lindley of Washington county were appointed to select a permanent seat of justice for the county, and were directed to meet at the house of John Ketcham on Driftwood river on the second Monday of February next, 1816. The associate judges of the circuit court, were, within twelve months after establishing the seat of justice, to erect the necessary buildings thereon. Until the county seat was selected and suitable accommodations made, all county business was to be transacted at Vallonia.

As soon as the Indian title to the lands north of and adjoining the lands already purchased, and sold by the United State was secured, all that tract of country north of the said county of Jackson, and south of the line dividing townships 7 and 8, north, and lying between ranges 3 and 8, east, was to be attached to and become a part of the said county of Jackson, and the said line dividing townships

7 and 8, north, should be the permanent northern boundary of the county. The permanent northern boundary of Jefferson county was established in the same act and provision was made for the organization of a new county to the east of Jackson as soon as the inhabitants amounted to two hundred rank and file on the muster roll. This became Jennings county in 1816, and a small strip off the eastern part of Jackson county was added to it.

At the session of the special court for county purposes, held at Vallonia on May 7, 1816, by Associate Judges Kitchell and Ketcham, the county was divided into Jackson, Brownstown, Driftwood, and Flinn townships.³² Jackson township began on the Muscatatuck river,³³ two miles east of range 4, thence running due north to the Indian boundary. All east of said boundary or line was to form the one township named as above.

Brownstown township was bounded by the western line of Jackson township. Beginning at the mouth of Griffey's creek, it extended up the said creek, thence with the knobs to opposite the Half-Mile Branch above Vallonia, thence to the mouth of the Branch and finally in a north course to the Indian boundary.

Driftwood township was bounded on the east side by Brownstown township to the Driftwood river, thence down said river to a point where the line east would leave Samuel Burcham on the south side of the said line and a line south from that point would divide the farms of the said Burcham and McKinney Carter and to continue till it strikes the Muscatatuck, thence with the boundary of the county to the beginning.

All the rest of the county was to be called Flinn township, as the Flinn's were prominent settlers there. On May 8, 1816, slight changes were made in the boundaries of Brownstown and Jackson townships and of Brownstown and Flinn townships. On December 6th, 1816, and February 10th, 1817 the boundaries of Driftwood and Flinn townships were rearranged.

On May 11, 1818, Jesse Evans, John Arthur, and others petitioned the commissioners for a new township southeast of Brownstown township. The commissioners ordered that the township be called Grassy Fork and that it be laid out beginning at the Muscatatuck where line crosses that river in range 4, town 4, thence between sections

³² Most of the following account is gathered from the County Commissioners' Records in the auditor's office at Brownstown. Separate references are not given, as they can be found by the date, which will be given in most instances.

³³ It is interesting to note the various ways of spelling this name. In the early records, it is spelled in every conceivable way. The most usual way now is Muscatatuck. See the article on "Indiana Geographical Nomenclature" in the *Indiana Magazine of History*, September, 1912.

21 and 22, thence north to the line dividing towns 4 and 5 to Grassy Fork creek, thence up that creek to an east line dividing section 17 and 18 to the river.

On May 8, 1820, in response to a petition from sundry inhabitants of Brownstown township, the new township of Hamilton was established on the north side of Driftwood river so as to include all that part of Brownstown township which lay on the north side of said river above White creek, including all that part of the New Purchase on the north side of the river as far as the county line.

At the May session, 1821, a petition from sundry inhabitants of Jackson county from the Salt creek settlement asked for a new township running eastward with the line between townships 5 and 6, from the county line to the White river Knobs, thence running with the Knobs to the county line adjoining the late purchase, thence with the county line to the place of beginning. In response to the petition, the board ordered the township, or election district, to be established, agreeable to the above petition, with the boundaries named and bearing the name of Salt creek township.

On August 13, 1821, Redding township was established. As laid out, the boundaries began on the Brookville road above Crane's where the said road crossed the section line dividing the sections 23 and 24 in town 6, range 5, thence on the Brookville road to the county line, thence north to Sand creek, down that creek to Driftwood river, thence down the river to the section line dividing sections 13 and 14, and along that line south to the beginning. Arrangements were also made for the time and place of holding elections. On February 11, 1822, a small part of Jackson township was added to Redding township.

Since the General Assembly had taken off the west part of the county which was then a part of Flinn township, and attached it to Lawrence county,³⁴ on February 10, 1823 Flinn township was abolished. All of Driftwood township west of Driftwood river was attached to the township formerly named Flinn and the whole was to be called Carr township after a prominent family of the district. The only other change in the county boundary was in 1828, when the northern boundary of the county was extended. Slight changes were also made in the boundary between Brownstown and Jackson townships on February 13, 1831. On January 3, 1832, the commissioners ordered all land on the east side of Vernon Fork of the Muscatatuck to be separated from Grassy Fork township and to be called Vernon township. May 6, 1833, upon the petition of citizens

³⁴ *Laws of Indiana, 1822-23, 27.*

of Carr and Salt creek townships, the Board of Commissioners took into consideration the propriety of laying off the new township of Owen and making three out of the two named above. This was ordered to be done, but the boundaries as laid down by the commissioners are ill defined.

Finally in the early part of 1841, the boundaries of each township were rearranged and clearly defined, and Washington township was created. Since then, slight changes have been made among them, changes in the boundaries of Carr and Owen townships, on June 7, 1842, and March 7, 1843. Other changes were made but the general outline of the townships has remained practically the same to the present day.

CHAPTER III. COUNTY ORGANIZATION

Agreeable to the action of the General Assembly of the Indiana Territory authorizing the associate judges of the circuit courts to hold special courts for county purposes etc., the associate judges of Jackson county met in the town of Vallonia January 3, 1816.³⁶ The commission of Joseph Kitchell as first associate judge was produced; and being sworn according to law to support the constitution of the United States, and having taken the oath more effectually to prevent duelling, passed by the General Assembly in 1814, Kitchell took his seat, as soon as the said oaths were certified on the back of the commission and the commission publicly read. The same procedure was followed in the case of John Ketcham, the second associate judge, and the two were seated together. John Milroy took the oath as clerk and recorder, and Wickliff Kitchell as sheriff.

At the same session, it was ordered, on motion, that the petition of sundry inhabitants for a review of a road from John Ketcham's to the corner of section 24 on the Indian boundary be read, and that viewers be appointed to view and lay out a road by the nearest and best way from said Ketcham's to the corner of said section. The same petition further prayed that viewers be appointed to view and lay out a road from Joseph Kitchell's where the Quaker road now turns off from the road above mentioned, then to get the "nearest" and best way to intersect the county road leading from Madison to Deputy's settlement. Said petition being read the first time it was ordered to be filed. On motion, ordered that the court adjourn till nine o'clock the next day. Such were the proceedings of the first day.

³⁶ Most of the material for this chapter has been drawn from Commissioners' Records, but some other sources are used. Reference to the records may be made by the date given.

On the second day, William Graham, Henry Rogers, and John Sage were appointed trustees to lease School section 16, town 4, range 4. Isaac Scott was recommended for coroner, and Richard Wells and Charles Cole for justices of the peace. On motion it was ordered that James Hutchinson be appointed supervisor of roads, to have all the hands above the creek running through Vallonia to the creek on which Crabb's mill is built, and to work the road from Vallonia to the creek between John Ketcham's and Robert Rogers'. John McCormick and Isaac Holman were also appointed road supervisors, and the limits of their jurisdiction laid down including New Natchez.³⁷ Isaac Scott, James Salmon, and John Lindsey were appointed viewers of the road from Ketcham's to the Indian boundary. Solomon Reddick, William Reddick, and Enoch Cox were appointed viewers to view the road from the house of Joseph Kitchell to intersect the road from Madison to Deputy's settlement. Samuel Burham and Zephaniah Dowden were appointed supervisors from the creek in Vallonia to the "Mishachatack." Jesse Durham, John Reddick, and William Reddick were appointed overseers of the poor. McKinney Carter was appointed constable. The court then adjourned sine die.

At a special session, February 15, 1816, the report of the commissioners, appointed at the last session of the General Assembly, to fix the county seat was heard, but this will be treated in another chapter.

On May 6, 1816, William Flinn and James Trotter were appointed justices of the peace for Guthrie's or Flinn's settlement. On May 8, tavernkeeper's were ordered to pay \$1.00 to the clerk and \$2.00 to the local authorities at the place of business. The list of charges for victuals and drink is left vacant.

On July 10, 1816, the salary of the judges was rated at two dollars per day and the sheriff was allowed \$8.75 for keeping William Shields as prisoner for eight days. His bill included charges for the board of the prisoner and for the board and hire of the guard.

On September 16, 1816, Cyrus Douglass succeeded Joseph Kitchell as first associate judge. On January 7, 1817 associate judges, Cyrus Douglas, and John Ketcham, were each allowed twenty dollars for their year's services, and sheriff Wickliff Kitchell was allowed fifty dollars as his salary for the year 1816. On June 30, 1817, there was a special session of court under Leonard C. Schewmacher and James McGee, but here the commissioners supplant the judges and the

³⁷ This was a town laid off on paper, North-east of Brownstown, by Joseph Kitchell, as a rival claimant for county seat honors. No town was ever built there.

court records change to the commissioners' record. On February 10, 1817, Abraham Huff, John Reddick, and Thomas Carr qualified as commissioners according to the law passed by the General Assembly, December 17, 1816. They ordered that the qualified electors elect three justices of the peace in Driftwood township, three in Brownstown township, two in Jackson, and two in Flinn township, the election to be held on February 22, 1817. May 13, 1817, Alexander C. Craig was appointed county treasurer. On August 11, 1817 Leonard C. Schewmaker and James McGee were allowed \$18.00 each for services as associate judges, and Cyrus Douglas was allowed \$4.00 for the same. Wickliff Kitchell, former sheriff, was allowed \$19.01 for former services. On November 11, 1817, William Creshaw is mentioned as clerk and was ordered to procure a county seal in the shape of a piece of ordnance. On May 11, 1818, Charles Crabb was appointed lister with about the same duties as the present assessor. On February 18, 1819 the same Mr. Crabb was appointed commissioner by the associate judges in place of John Reddick who resigned. Crabb was succeeded on August 9, 1819 by Mordecai Reddick. May 11, of that year, Jonas Crane was appointed inspector of flour, beef, and pork in the county. Mordecai Reddick was succeeded by James Hamilton, as commissioner, on August 12, 1822. August 13, of that year, John Elliot was appointed county treasurer in place of Alexander C. Craig, deceased, and he was succeeded February 10, 1823, by David Benton who was reappointed in 1824. May 12, 1823, Obadiah M. Crane was appointed by the associate judges as commissioner to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Abraham Huff. August 11, 1823, General Iseminger qualified as commissioner. In August 1824, Abel Finley and Jesse Roland appeared with McGee and Schewmaker as associate judges. On January 3, 1825, Charles Crabb was appointed treasurer and Jonathan Tullis, pound-keeper.

On September 13, 1824, was the first meeting of the board of justices agreeable to an act of the General Assembly to regulate the method of doing county business, approved January 31, 1824. William Williams was elected president of the board. May 5, 1829, Allen Shepherd was recommended to the governor for the office of surveyor as the office had been vacant heretofore. Such is the record of the early office holders. The board of justices held sway until 1831 when at a general election, held in the county on the first Monday in August 1831, Jacob Wells was elected county commissioner for three years, Matthew Tanner for two years and Mordecai Reddick for one year. They and their successors have continued to constitute the commissioners' court.

In this connection it should be mentioned that on May 14, 1822, Ben, a man of color, was allowed \$3.00 for services for four days attending "fiers" for the board of county commissioners. The same allowance was made on August 13, 1822. Another of the several accounts is on September 8, 1829, when Anthony Goodwin, a man of color, was allowed \$1.50 for janitor work in the court house. On March 5, 1824, mention is made of help rendered to Richard, a man of color, under the Poor Act. Mention is made of these instances because of the prevalence of negroes, especially mulattoes, in the county in its earlier days. Columbus Ewing says they were the best laborers to be had. He also describes the practice of roping negroes as carried on at his father's store in Vallonia. They usually came for something to eat and were immediately roped and handcuffed. If any reward was offered for them at the post office, they were held for it.

Turning now to the county finances, on Thursday, September 19, 1816, the first rate of taxation was laid down as follows:

First rate land	37½ cts. per 100 acres
Second rate land	25 cts. per 100 acres
Third rate land	12½ cts. per 100 acres
For each horse	37½ cts
For each store	\$20.00
For each tavern	\$2.00

It is interesting to note that each horse was rated as high as 100 acres of first rate land. On January 17, 1817, Sheriff Kitchell reported that all the taxes, after deducting delinquents and the per centum for collecting, were \$228.93½. County orders were taken up, and wolf scalps paid for amounting to \$158.21, leaving a balance of \$70.72½.

A new tax rate was levied on May 12, 1817, which is worthy of comparison with that of September 19, 1816. It is as follows:

First rate land, 100 acres	\$.50
Second rate land, per 100 acres .....	.43¾
Third rate land, per 100 acres .....	.25
For each horse .....	.37½
For every retail store	20.00
For every tavern license	10.00

Wolf scalps were paid for at the rate of \$1.00 each. The report of A. C. Craig, county treasurer was made November 10, 1817. The amount received was \$445.09¾. The amount paid out was \$431.50¾, leaving a balance of \$13.59. A comparison with the report of Jan-

uary 7, 1817, shows that the receipts and expenditures during the year had nearly doubled. In the tax levy of May 11, 1818 some changes are worth noting. Third rate land had risen to 31¼ cts. per 100 acres. Town lots were assessed 50 cts. on the \$100.00. In 1821 were further changes. The collector was ordered to collect a poll tax of 50 cts. on all male persons over twenty-one years of age, 37½ cts. on all horses, mules, or asses; 50 cts. on gold watches; 25 cts. on silver watches; what the law directs on pleasure carriages; 25 cts. on each head of work oxen; \$5.00 on all ferriages except that of Stephen Sparks' and \$7.50 on that. On March 14, 1822, the tax subject to collection for county purposes on all lands was ordered to be the amount of one third the State tax, and on other articles the same as before.

On May 3, 1825, the board of justices laid down the following rates of taxation which show some radical increases:

Horses, mules, etc., over three years old	\$.37
Work oxen .....	.25
Four-wheel pleasure carriages	2.00
Two-wheel pleasure carriages	1.00
Gold watches	1.00
Silver and pinch-back watches .....	.25
Each poll .....	.25
First rate land, per 100 acres	1.00
Second rate land, per 100 acres .....	.75
Third rate land, per 100 acres .....	.50
Town lots, on each \$100 value .....	.50
Retailing merchandise, over \$1000. in value	\$15.00 per yr.
Retailing merchandise under \$1000. in value	\$10.00 per yr.

On May 2, 1837, taxation began to be levied on the hundred dollars of value and by poll tax, a method which still continues in force.

In this connection, also, we may note the rate of ferriage laid down by the commissioners for the various ferries in this county. On May 11, 1818, William Cockerham was granted the right to establish a ferry across Dirftwood in section 16, town 5 north, range 4 east, and rates were laid down as follows:

Wagon and horses	\$.75
Man and horse .....	.12½
Footman .....	.06¼
Single horse .....	.06¼
Cattle per head .....	.04
Cart and team .....	.37½
Sheep and hogs .....	.02

These rates do not vary much from time to time but gradually become lower. The following rates established June 4, 1844, will show how far they were reduced by that time:

One horse or oxen, wagon, driver and load	\$.12½
Two horses or oxen, wagon, driver and load .....	.15
Three horses or oxen, wagon, driver and load .....	.20
Four horses or oxen, wagon, driver and load .....	.25
Five horses or oxen, wagon, driver and load .....	.30
Six horses or oxen, wagon, driver and load .....	.35
Man and horse .....	.10
Footman .....	.05
Each loose horse .....	.05
Each head of No. 1 cattle .....	.04
Each sheep or hog .....	.01

In addition to rates of taxation and rates for ferriage, tavern rates were laid down also. The first rates were fixed on May 11, 1818 as follows:

Breakfast and supper, each	\$.25
Dinner .....	.25
Lodging per night .....	.12½
Whiskey per pint .....	.12½
Rum, French brandy, and wine, per pint .....	.12½
Pasturage per night .....	.12½
Corn and oats, per gallon .....	.12½
Horse to hay, per night .....	.25

These rates varied from time to time. On May 13, 1819, dinner cost 37½ cts; rum, French brandy and wine 50 cts. per half pint; peach brandy, 18¾ cts; and whiskey and apple brandy 12½ cts. per half pint; corn and oats 12½ cts. per gallon; and horse in pasture for 24 hours, 12 cts.

The commissioners' records are of course, largely taken up with the establishment of roads over the country. In the account of the first two days' session of the judges' court is given the usual plan of petitioning and laying out roads. The Indiana Statutes are also full of references to the establishment of State roads and to the incorporation of toll road companies.³⁸ Mr. Burcham, in his "Reminiscences," says the first road was built according to law in 1815 or 1816 from the Muscatatuck river to Vallonia. The workmen were divided into four gangs and the road was divided into sections. Each gang was allotted its section, and the gang reaching Vallonia

³⁸Brownstown *Banner*, July 22, 1874.

first was to get all the whiskey they could drink. Needless to say, they were not long in reaching Vallonia. Whiskey was cheap then as it cost only 25 cts. per gallon.

One of the most frequently mentioned roads in the Indiana State Laws is the Indianapolis-Mauck's Ferry State road which passed through Jackson county by way of Millport, Vallonia, Brownstown, and Rockford. At the Seventh Session of the General Assembly Robert Weathers, Henry Boas, and Thomas Kindall of Jackson county were appointed to relocate part of this road.³⁹ They were to meet in Brownstown the first Monday in February next, or on some subsequent date, qualify, and employ a force to mark a road beginning at the south end of Main street in Brownstown, and then by way of Vallonia to where the State road leading from Mauck's Ferry to Indianapolis crosses the Muscatatuck, by the best possible route. Contractors Charles Crabb of Jackson county and Jesse Stanley of Washington county agreed to transfer their contracts to the new route. At the Ninth Session additional funds were granted contractor William Rodman who was forced to enlarge the bridge over the Muscatatuck.⁴⁰ In an act approved February 11, 1825, provision is made to pay Charles Crabb for cutting and clearing three fourths of a mile between the fifty-fifth mile post and Brownstown, such fraction having been created by a change in the road and not being included in the original contract. Laws for the relocation of parts of this road are found in the State laws of 1830, page 116, 1830-31 page 144 and 1848 page 270.

Mention has been made of the building of the bridge over the Muscatatuck in 1825. In 1832, a law passed authorizing the sale of the remaining material of the Muscatatuck bridge to the highest bidder, the proceeds to be applied to the improvement of the ford and river hill.⁴¹ The fact that the purchaser was, within sixty days, to remove all parts of the bridge that obstructed navigation, indicates that it must have been destroyed in some way.⁴² At the Eighteenth Session of the General Assembly was passed an act to incorporate a toll bridge over the Muscatatuck here.⁴³ Directors were named to act till a regular election could be held, and rates of toll were fixed. The bridge was to be completed in four years.

³⁹ *Laws of Indiana*, 1822-3, 31.

⁴⁰ *Laws of Indiana*, 1824-5, 51.

⁴¹ *Laws of Indiana*, 1831-2, 26.

⁴² Article entitled "More Jackson County History," *Brownstown Banner*, September 3, 1913. This article states that the bridge fell in 1824.

⁴³ *Laws of Indiana*, 1833-4, 46.

Among the other State roads established running through the county were the McDonald's Ferry-Brownstown road,⁴⁴ the Columbus-Brownstown State road established February 1, 1834,⁴⁵ the Madison-Bloomington State road from Madison via Paris and Brownstown to Bloomington⁴⁶ and the Madison-Brownstown State road.⁴⁷

Among the toll road companies incorporated by State law were the Brownstown Turnpike Company⁴⁸ two Madison and Brownstown Turnpike Companies incorporated in 1848,⁴⁹ and the Brownstown-Charleston Plank Road Company, to run between the two places named via Mt. Sidney.⁵⁰ The organization of these companies was very similar and that of the Brownstown Turnpike Company will be given as illustrative. According to the act, Jonas Berkey, Jesse B. Durham, Samuel P. Mooney, Abel Finley, Sr., Obadiah M. Crane, and Hiram Kress of Jackson county together with four citizens of Washington county and six from Bartholomew county incorporated the Brownstown Turnpike Company. The capital stock was \$150,000 in shares of \$50.00 each, with the power to increase the capital stock. The corporation was to have power to carry on the work, keep records, make payments, and sell stock. The directors were to be elected as soon as two thousand shares were sold and three dollars paid on each share. Twenty-five per cent of the stock was to be demanded every six months on sixty days notice, and the stock was to be forfeited if demands were not met. The road was to run from Columbus by way of Rockford and Brownstown to Salem. The land was to be taken by sale or legal means and the road was to be laid on county or State roads with the commissioner's consent, to be started in three years and completed in ten years. It was to be not exceeding 100 feet wide with at least twenty feet of stone, gravel or sand and was to be kept in repair. Rates of toll were set varying from 18¾ cts. for one horse and each four-wheeled vehicle, and 6¼ cts. for each horse in addition, down to a half cent for hogs and sheep. People going to or coming from public worship, militia muster, or funeral were to travel free, but the rates applied to all conveyances carrying United States mail. Provisions were made for keeping it up, and for punishing offenders. The charter was to last fifty years.

⁴⁴ *Laws of Indiana*, 1821-2, 157.

⁴⁵ *Laws of Indiana*, 1833-4, 278.

⁴⁶ *Laws of Indiana*, 1833-4, 271.

⁴⁷ *Laws of Indiana*, 1831-2, 75.

⁴⁸ *Laws of Indiana*, 1835-6, 257.

⁴⁹ *Laws of Indiana*, 1847-8, 40 and 448.

⁵⁰ *Laws of Indiana*, 1850-1, approved February 8, 1851.

Lastly, is the account of the first circuit court, as distinguished from the court for transacting county business, which was held by David Rayman, presiding judge of the Jackson circuit and Joseph Kitchell and John Ketcham, his associates, at the home of William Crenshaw, in the town of Vallonia, at the April term, 1816.⁵¹ The first case recorded is that of Joseph Kitchell vs. James Hutchinson for slander. Hutchinson was put under \$4,000 bond, and the case was submitted to John Ketcham, Cyrus Douglas, John Reddicks and William Reddicks as arbitrators who gave judgment for \$150 and costs.

⁵¹ Clerk's Record, Book A, p. 1.