

# Early settlers literate men

In the early days of Indiana statehood, the newly-formed county governments were, for the most part, run by frontiersmen who had no previous experience in holding office. Most local Indiana officials at that time went through some-on-the-job training, and Monroe Countians were no exception.

The county was, however, fortunate enough to be the new home of an assortment of literate men who were willing to help the fledgling county operate as smoothly as its older neighbors.

Bear in mind that in those days, literate persons were the exception, rather than the rule. A man could consider himself fortunate if he could read, write and cipher a bit.

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## Looking Back

*By Rose H. McIlveen*

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Among the 1816 land buyers who bid on parcels of Monroe County acreage were nine men whose birthplaces are unknown, because they did not survive to the 1850 census, which was the first to include birthplaces. Of the remaining eight, two each came from Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Maryland and North Carolina.

**JOSEPH BERRY** OF Van Buren Township, served the county as an associate judge. A member of the Church of Christ, he made his home available for Sunday school classes.

One of the Pennsylvanians, James Borland, served his governmental apprenticeship as a justice of the peace and as the county's second treasurer, as well as surveyor. In 1822 he and his brother, Edward, did some carpentry work on one of IU's first two buildings in Seminary Square. James later served as the university's treasurer from 1828-35. He owned land in both Van Buren and Bloomington townships.

Michael Buskirk, a Clear Creek farmer, was elected a

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