

Richland first name

Stop most any Monroe County resident on the street and ask the way to the town of Richland and the response will be either perplexity or you'll be sent south to Warrick County.

If, however, you had asked an 1837 Monroe County resident how to get to Richland, you would have been sent to Ellettsville.

WHY? WELL, "RICHLAND" was the first name of the community known today as Ellettsville. It was renamed in honor of an early settler, Edward Ellett.

As early settlers in that part of the county went, Edward was most certainly not the first, although a relative of his, Samuel, was listed as an 1816 buyer of land.

William Edmundson is reputed to be the very first settler. Close seconds were James Parks, George Sharp, Lewis Noel, Coleman Puett, William Mulligan, Jonathan Gilbert and Joseph Reeves, all of whom came in a group from North Carolina in the winter of 1816-17.

CURIOUSLY. ALTHOUGH the

Looking back

By Rose McIlveen

Elletts were no doubt among the pioneers who settled that area of the county before 1820, that name did not turn up in the county census until 1840.

Edward Ellett ran a tavern, which also doubled as an inn and a stopover for the stagecoaches that ran from Louisville to parts north.

James Woodburn, an IU professor and author of the *History of Indiana University*, wrote that during the cholera epidemic which swept across Indiana and Monroe County in the summer of 1833, the IU students were sent home until it was safe to return to Bloomington.

Woodburn continued: "A few families fled the town, one in par-

ticular seeking safety at Ellett's tavern on the road to Gosport. When the students reached the place, the landlord and his wife were both found in the agonies of death from the dread disease."

EDWARD ELLETT GOT into the blacksmithing business and later started what historian "Pop" Hall called "a small, old-fashioned 'up and down' saw mill." He also ground corn at the mill.

In February of 1837 a man by the name of Reuben Tompkins hired John Sedwick, Monroe County surveyor, to lay out some lots for the settlement that had grown up near Jack's Defeat Creek. The settlement was duly named "Richland" after the township where it was located.

The name for the village was destined to have a short life. Later in the year (1837) the residents petitioned the U.S. government for a post office, only to learn that the name, "Richland, Indiana," was already taken.