

Illinois State University

## ISU ReD: Research and eData

---

Department Publications – Geography, Geology,  
and the Environment

Geography, Geology, and the Environment

---

2010

### Selling Location: Illinois Town Advertisements 1835-1837

William D. Walters Jr.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/dpgge>



Part of the [Geography Commons](#), and the [Geology Commons](#)

---

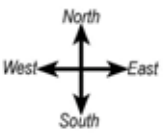
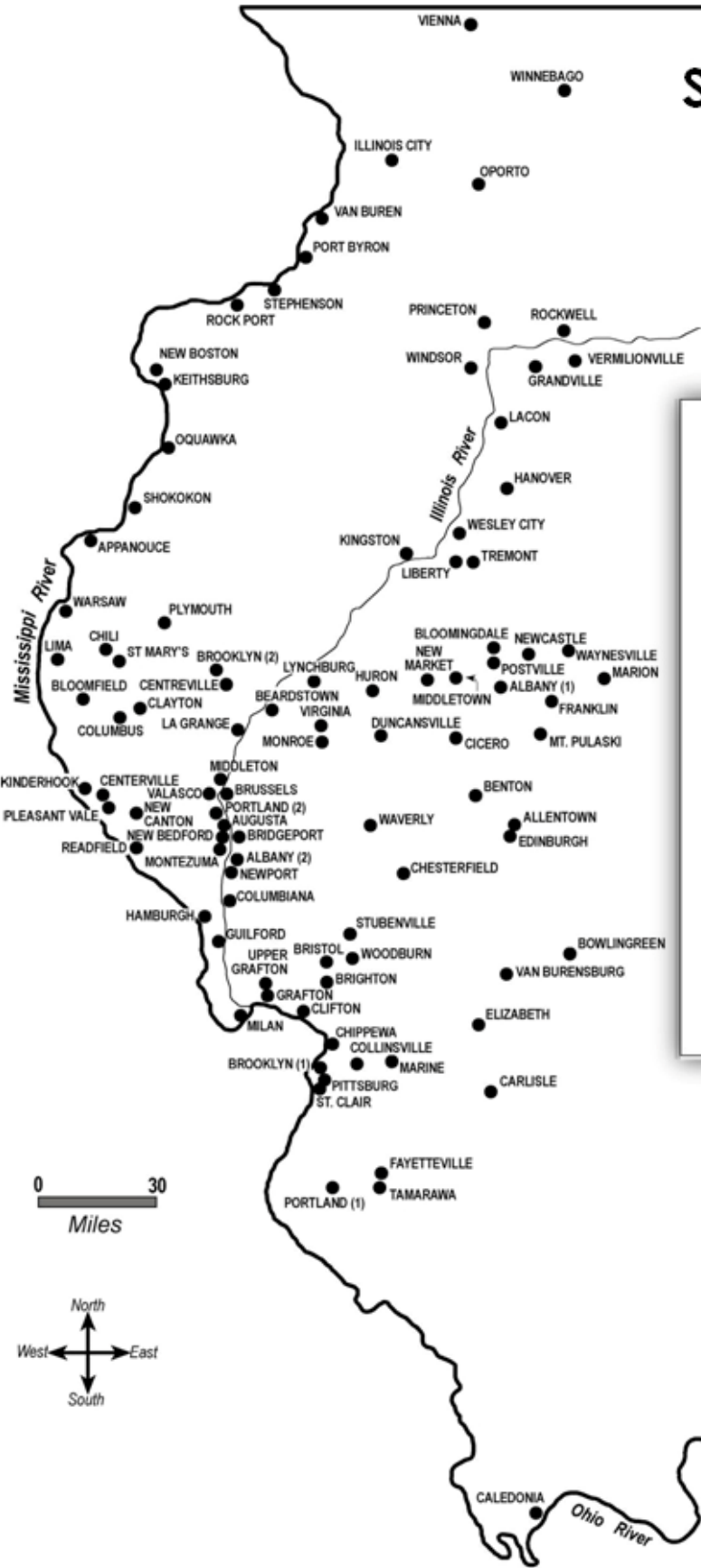
#### Recommended Citation

Walters, William D. Jr., "Selling Location: Illinois Town Advertisements 1835-1837" (2010). *Department Publications – Geography, Geology, and the Environment*. 2.

<https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/dpgge/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Geography, Geology, and the Environment at ISU ReD: Research and eData. It has been accepted for inclusion in Department Publications – Geography, Geology, and the Environment by an authorized administrator of ISU ReD: Research and eData. For more information, please contact [ISUReD@ilstu.edu](mailto:ISUReD@ilstu.edu).

# SELLING LOCATION ILLINOIS TOWN ADVERTISEMENTS 1835-1837



### Lexington

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
24	25	22	21	20	19	18	17
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32

Public Square

### Lytleville

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8

Public Square

William D. Walters, Jr.

## **SELLING LOCATION**

### **ILLINOIS TOWN ADVERTISEMENTS 1835-1837**

**William D. Walters, Jr.**  
Professor Emeritus

Department of Geography-Geology  
Illinois State University

Normal, Illinois  
2010

Copyright 2010 by William D. Walters, Jr.

Published 2010 by the Department of Geography-Geology  
Illinois State University  
Normal IL 61790-4400

309-438-7649

Copies of this publication are available from the publisher.

Price: \$10.00

## **SELLING LOCATION**

### **ILLINOIS TOWN ADVERTISEMENTS 1835-1937**

William D. Walters, Jr.

This document consists of two parts. Part I is an introduction to Illinois towns and town selling during the boom of 1835-1837 when as many as one thousand new towns were laid out. Part II is a summary, in standard format, of over one hundred advertisements for new towns created during these years. These are followed by Appendix A, which lists the names of all proprietors named in the advertisements, and Appendix B, which is a list of all towns platted during this period in central Illinois.

## **PART I**

### **INTRODUCTION TO TOWNS AND TOWN SELLING**

#### **THE BOOM**

The town-founding boom of 1836 profoundly altered the American landscape, yet it is a frequently misunderstood event. Between 1835 and 1837 the human geography of Illinois was more strikingly altered than in any comparable period in the history of the state. The same is true of the surrounding states and of much of the Old South. Settlers poured in. Public land was sold in unprecedented amounts and an astonishing number of new towns were laid out. In much of central Illinois one third of all towns ever founded were platted in the few months between the spring of 1835 and the fall of 1837. This is the story of these boom years, of the towns that were founded, and more particularly of the advertisements that were used to sell these towns.

Advertisements for new towns are unique locational documents. The creating and selling of new towns was a curious process. Usually the seller was offering nothing more than empty ground and the buyer was being asked to pay substantially more than he would for land of identical quality a few miles away. The simple truth is that the person offering the site was really offering little more than a set of arguments about future geography. These arguments were the seller's attempt to prove that this particular location was destined to be unlike its neighbors. In turn, the buyer was not just buying a place to erect a house or store, as these could be found in existing places; he or she was purchasing a chance to rapidly multiply money by altering future geography. Buying and selling were both forms of speculation. Both required great leaps of faith. Such leaps are

uncommon in normal times. They require a particular combination of human perceptions that have as much to do with mass psychology as they do with economic reality. Buyers have to be swept away by the notion that all of the economic truths that have so far guided their lives are no longer valid; they have to feel that, from this time forward, all rules are new rules. It is not enough that buyers heard a whisper that financial conditions might be improving; they have to be deafened by a shout that said, "Act quickly and tomorrow you will be rich!" It was manifestly impossible for town lot sellers to create this kind of frenzy, but they could certainly recognize when it was at hand and they could do their best to fan the flame that fueled it. This was a special time in Illinois history when a small number of people, acting quickly, would make a profound difference.

The forces behind the boom of 1836 were as much psychological as economic. Heady economic times create a quick rises in property values. This rapid increase in land values feeds the forces that created it and increasingly alters the way people view real estate. The wave of town founding that swept over Illinois was a direct result of a perception that the best way to make money was to invest in land, and quickest—if the riskiest—way to make money in land was to divide open land into city lots. By the spring of 1836 town lot fever was sweeping the nation. From New York, William H. Seward, the man who would one day buy Alaska, felt the force of this fever. On 30 October 1836 he wrote, "In these times I defy anyone to live in New York and keep cool and tranquil. Excitement seizes upon the blood the moment one sets foot on the pavement" (I: pp. 316-317). He goes on to remember "...farms were mapped out into imaginary city lots, and sold, at handsome prices, to purchasers who, a month later, sold them at an additional advance" (I: p. 315).

Illinois was at the vortex of rising land values. Money was available, land was available, and people were coming to the state in record numbers. From Springfield, Richard F. Bassett wrote to a friend in Greensburg, Kentucky, "Dear Harper, You have no idea how fast lands are entering in the land offices. A great deal of eastern capital is coming in and any man who has a few dollars is a land speculator" (Bassett, mss). Everywhere people were on the move. By trail and by river, settlers poured into the Illinois. The *Vincennes Gazette*, which had been in the practice of proudly publishing the name of every steamboat passing the town, was overwhelmed by Wabash River traffic. "Boats are daily passing, so many in number that it would take up to much room in our paper to register them" (2 April 1836, p. 2). Between 1830 and 1835 the population of Illinois doubled. During the next five years it would come close to doubling again. In 1831, public land sales in Illinois had totaled a respectable 133,372 acres. By 1834 the number of acres sold had tripled and the real rush was yet to come. In 1835 two million acres sold and in 1836 over three million acres passed into private hands (Pease, pp. 176-177).

Chicago seethed with activity. New arrivals flocked to the city, and many had come with the sole purpose of making a quick fortune in real estate. One of the

first figures many new arrivals noticed was a corpulent black man dressed in full military uniform. Everyone knew him as “Colonel George.” Mounted on an eye-catching white horse, the colonel rode through the streets of Chicago and shouted out the names of the items to be sold at Garrett and Brown’s auction houses. Among the most popular of their offerings were town lots (Conrad, pp. 671-672). The colorful colonel was in the employ of Nathaniel J. Brown, who was among the most famous of early Chicago’s town lot speculators. Brown himself had only recently arrived in Chicago with a small fortune that had been mostly made from earlier town lot speculation in Ionia, Michigan (Conrad, pp. 667-677).

Extravagant claims were made for town lots. David Carver and Company told readers they had 150 Chicago town lots, variously situated, for sale. They bluntly asserted that, “A good opportunity will then be afforded to speculators to double their money in a few months” (*Democratic Free Press* [Detroit] 8 April 1835, p. 3). In July 1836 the Chicago and New York Land Company offered visitors to the Windy City lots in the towns of Chicago, Joliet, Ottawa, Peru, Dorchester, and Pekin in Illinois, as well as Dearbornville, Constantine, Martinville Mills, and St. Joseph in Michigan and in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (*Chicago American* 9 July 1836, p. 3). In other parts of Illinois it was the same. Readers of Springfield’s *Sangamo Journal* in the spring of 1836 were offered as many as five new towns in a single issue. In northwest Illinois, advertisements reached their peak a little later, with nine new Illinois and Wisconsin towns being offered for sale in the *Northwestern Gazette* for 29 April 1837. James Davis’s fine book, *Frontier Illinois*, gives a good account of frontier towns and of the wild rush that went with the cry for massive expenditure on internal improvements (pp. 229-241).

## LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

How were new towns created? In Illinois the legal requirements were specific, but neither complicated nor locationally restrictive. Simply put, anyone could create a town anywhere he or she owned land. The law called the owner of the land a proprietor. It was the same term contemporaries used for anyone who owned a store, mill, or factory. Once a proprietor, or group of proprietors, had gained title to the land their first step in was to secure the services of a surveyor. Fortunately there was an abundance of such men. During the previous two decades, the federal government had divided most of southern and central Illinois into townships and ranges, and then had subdivided these into square mile sections. This process of land division had required training dozens of young men in the use of the compass, transit, level, and chain. When the work for national government was over, many tucked away their surveyor’s tools and held them ready for future employment. Any person with such tools and skills could be called on to lay out a town. However, the person most commonly employed was the county surveyor or his official deputy. The most famous of these as deputy surveyors was, of course, Abraham Lincoln of Sangamon County.

The surveyor began the process of town founding by placing a stone or a stake at a carefully measured location. If the new town was to have a public square, the stone would usually be placed at one corner of the square. If there was to be no square, then the stone would often be placed at the corner of the "in-lots" of the town or at some other prominent place. From this stone, lots, streets, alleys, and would be measured off and marked with stakes. Clusters of such stakes, with no visible buildings, were often the subject of frontier humor. The town plan would then be transferred onto a diagram of the new town, which was called a plat. By the mid 1830s the whole process had come to be called "town platting" and the verb "to plat," meaning to establish, was in common use. On the plat, numbers were assigned to each lot and block. These numbers are still in use today in the legal identification of land. Town plats had much in common, but were not identical. A few continued the old New England tradition of designing a town with small "in-lots" and larger "out-lots" was rapidly going out of style. Most of the new Illinois towns were subdivided only into a single size lot, usually a rectangle about fifty by two hundred feet. In addition to lots, which were usually intended for private sale, the surveyor would often create a public square, and perhaps other tracts of land to be held in common. Streets would be named and dedicated to public use. Figure 1 shows typical Illinois town plats of the 1830s.

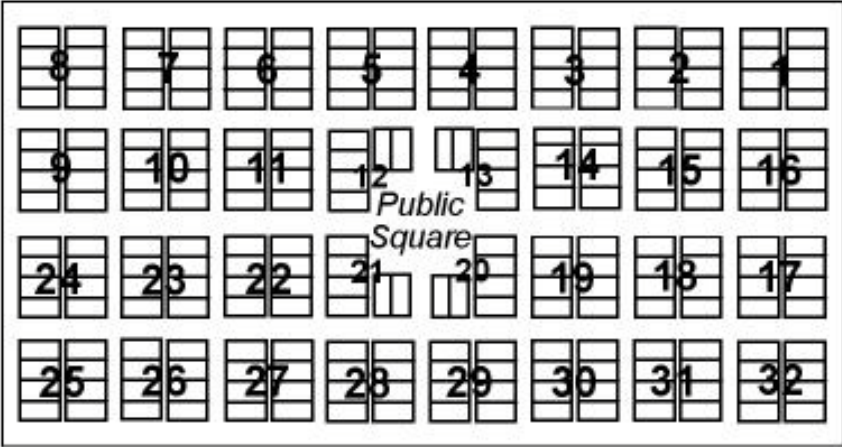
How much did it cost to lay out a town? State law permitted surveyors to charge twenty-five cents a lot and to add an additional four cents a lot for recording the plat. Therefore, a two hundred-lot town could be surveyed for about sixty dollars, roughly what a fit man with a good job could expect to earn for two months of labor. If lots sold, additions could be quickly added. Certainly the expense of surveying the town must have usually been less than the cost of attracting settlers to the town.

Each town had to be given a name. A great deal of silliness has been written about town naming. Sometimes proprietors did indeed select the names of former home towns and sometimes they used their own last names. Proprietors also created places with names borrowed from Native American tribes of people. Included in these were Chippewa, Huron, Montezuma, Pocahontas, Powhattan, Tecumseh, and Winnebago; more exotic were Oquawka and Shokokon. However, it was rare for a new town to be given the name transferred from local native people. Some have suggested that classical names were particularly important; there was indeed a Cicero and a Troy (Schlereth 1983, Bastian 1977), but a glance at the lists found later in this paper will show that such Greek and Roman names were never more than a small minority. Patriotic names such as Monticello, Monroe, Independence, and Liberty were sometimes used. However, so many towns were established in such a short period of time that names were clearly in short supply. The simple truth about town names is that by far the most common source for town names for Illinois towns was the global gazetteer of existing places. These names might be plucked from any part of the world. The only rule seems to have been that the place had to sound important. Thus, the Il-



# Typical 1836 Town Plats

## Lexington



## Lytleville

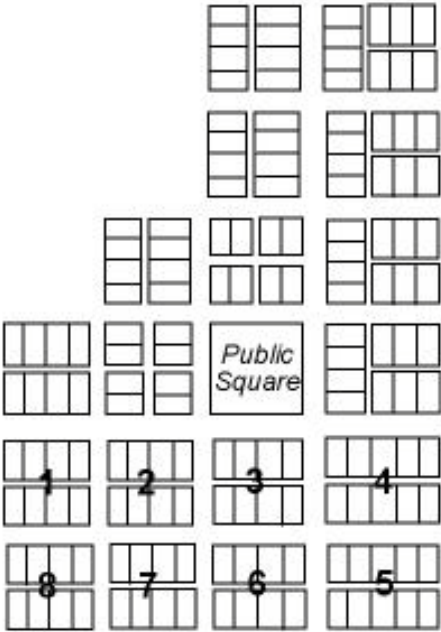


Figure 1

linois boom of the 1830s brought into existence Albany, Bristol, Brooklyn (twice), Brussels, Canton (and New Canton), Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Detroit, Dresden, Edinburgh, Florence, Hamburgh, Hanover, Lima, Marseilles, Milan, Moscow, Newcastle, Oporto, Philadelphia (and New Philadelphia), Plymouth, Rome, Vienna, Versailles, and Warsaw. Initially, there was no statewide control over names. Because of this, popular names were frequently repeated.

After having surveyed the site and selected a name, the next step was to take the plat to the county seat and have it copied into the official book, called Deed Record. At this time streets, alleys, and squares were officially dedicated to common use; and the plat was officially recorded. The fact that the platting date was usually different from the recording date and both of these were always very different from a much later date when the town might be been incorporated has sometimes led to confusion about the date a town was created. The surveyor also made additional copies of the plat, which were given to the proprietor. Plats are frequently mentioned in town advertisements. Copies were often nailed up in public places, especially courthouses and hotels. At least one plat would have to be available at the townsite on the day of the sale. It must be stressed that such plats were simple draftsman-like plans and did not include fanciful pictures of might-have-been buildings. More will be said on this later.

In theory, when a new county was created, a copy of the plat would follow the transfer of land. Such transfer was usually made, but there were exceptions. Anyone looking for an accurate record of town founding must go to the recorder's office of the county seat at the date in question. Nineteenth century county histories only occasionally include a complete record of 1836 towns, and errors abound. Many proprietors of new towns were also actively involved in the process of creating new counties.

Fines were imposed for platting a town in other than the prescribed manner, but there were no restrictions on the number, size, or shape of lots. Yet, there is a striking similarity in the general features of town design. Where they were not restricted by topography, the plats usually established an orthogonal grid of streets usually arranged around one or more central squares. These squares were sometimes given fanciful names, but most were simply labeled "Public Square." In a pre-railroad age, squares were important because they defined the town center and therefore identified the highest value lots, By the 1850s the railroad station replaced the square as town center, and fewer towns were designed around squares (Walters 1980, Walters 2001, Price 1968). Squares, like streets and alleys, were dedicated for common use. River towns had more varied street plans. Often the most important feature was some sort of a public landing. While similar, town lots of the 1830s were not stereotyped. Original town plats show a good deal of variation and they sometimes contain important information not found elsewhere. This is particularly true of details on the location and configuration of mills.

After the original platting, there was no limit to the number of additions that could be made to the towns. Proprietors frequently retained land beyond the town boundaries and this could be quickly subdivided. If a town appeared to be successful, additions were often made within months of the original survey. It is important to understand that, because there were no restrictions on town spacing, a rival town might at any time be platted within few hundred yards from any new place. There are a number of examples where this was done. Such paired towns seem most often to have been created by separate groups of speculators trying to take advantage of a common perceived advantage. Almost never did both places survive. To understand which towns survived, it is critical to keep in mind that it was not enough for a new town to have a good location; the town had to have a better location than its competitors and it had to be more successfully promoted.

### **TECHNIQUES FOR PROMOTING TOWNS**

If town platting was easy, selling lots was difficult. Printed advertisements were a key part of the process of promoting the new town. Much of what contemporaries called “booming” was done by word of mouth and has left almost no written record. The importance of printed town advertisements is that they allow later generations some idea of the kinds of oral arguments that were once used to promote new towns. As such they are critical keys to locational thinking. Good accounts of selling lots in new Illinois towns have survived. The promotion of Tamarawa in St. Clair County is an example. Illinois Congressman Adam Snyder and James Semple were the town’s promoters. Snyder took the lead. He was an important Illinois political figure who had been adjutant to a regiment in the Black Hawk War, and would later become a General in Militia, Charge d’ Affairs to New Grenada, and United States Senator.

For their new town they fixed on a location on the west bank of the Kaskaskia River in the southwestern corner of St. Clair County. The named it for one of the five tribes of the Illinois confederation, Tamarawa. The town’s site was praised because it occupied a beautiful location on Edgar’s Bluff. It contained 48 blocks, each bisected by a twenty-foot wide alley and subdivided into six lots. Streets were sixty feet wide. The plat was recorded 21 May 1836. Both proprietors were active politicians and they often combined town booming with electioneering. They purchased a small steamboat, which was carefully selected because it drew a scant 23 inches of water and could therefore, at least for part of the year, navigate the Kaskaskia. Semple and Snyder sent the boat up the winding little river and docked it at the foot of Water Street in what would become the new town. Aboard the boat was a barrel of whisky, to which the potential bidders had free access. At noon lunch was provided for everyone. Sales were brisk. Soon a tavern, dwellings, storerooms, a blacksmith shop, and a school were erected. A new addition to the town was quickly platted. Soon a ferry was established and a steam saw mill erected. Curiously, Snyder’s partners included some of the

developers of the rival town of Athens, located just upstream from Tamarawa (Snyder, pp. 205-207). In spite of these efforts, Tamarawa quickly vanished.

Like many new towns, Tamarawa had rivals. Disparaging competing towns was an accepted part of selling town lots. Rumor could be used to considerable effect. For example, it might be whispered that a rival's land title was suspect. Many new arrivals in Illinois had come out of Kentucky where settlers had been tormented by endless conflicts over land titles. Therefore one of the most dangerous accusations was the whispered hint that the proprietor's claim to the town was suspect. In October of 1836 the founders of Winnebago heard such a rumor. They quickly responded in print saying, "having been informed that reports have been in circulation calling into question the validity of their title to the said town, and being convinced that these reports are the offspring of interested individuals jealous of its success, would inform the public that these rumors are wholly without foundation." The Winnebago promoters go on to provide references including the Recorder of Winnebago County. These people, they assert, will support their case. Below the notice is a statement from the Recorder. However, a close reading of the Recorder's remarks shows that he was only confirming that a survey of the town had been made in conformity with the law, and that this survey has been properly recorded. While his statement made the whole business sound unchallengeable, wise business people knew that properly recording a plat was in no way a guarantee that others would not dispute the title (*Chicago Democrat*, 26 October 1836, p. 3).

Another technique was to disparage the land around a rival town. Potential settlers knew that the prospects of a new town would in large measure depend on the prosperity of the surrounding countryside. An attack on the fertility of the nearby land was one way to disparage a newly established town. Someone signing himself "C.S." published a letter in a Galena paper where he told of "a lady" in Buffalo, New York, who thought Chicago lots might possibly justify their present high prices but, "The adjoining country is however repulsive to agricultural interests" (*Northwest Gazette and Galena Advertiser*, 2 July 1836, p. 1). Accusations of dampness were another potent form of attack. Wet land was the bane of all early settlers. They knew that damp soil produced miasma and miasma was universally held to be a prime cause of illness. In particular, it was thought it produced ague, or malaria. *The Galena Advertiser* remarked on a new neighbor, "The splendid 'Marion City' can now be identified by an insulated spot of grass in the prairie, being altogether surrounded by the Mississippi, whose tide, if she continues her rage a week longer, will overrun the plain by six miles or more. Nothing is said of this little circumstance in the puffs [by the owners] going the rounds" (Copied in the *Democratic Free Press* [Detroit] 25 May 1836, p. 1). Because they knew that a wet town site would never sell, town ads repeatedly stressed the location of the new town was high, dry, and healthy.

## SELLING TOWN LOTS AT AUCTION

Considerable attention has been drawn to the selling of Illinois town lots at auction. This process is sometimes misunderstood. Illinois town lots were sold in places like St. Louis and Chicago. However, it was much more common for initial sales of new towns took place at the location of the new town. Some of these lots might eventually also find their way into the hands of big city jobbers. Auction rooms were a common venue for such sales. The following story of a town lot auction gives a good idea of the process and setting. The place is a Chicago auction house and the year 1836. While the author has clearly taken liberties for the sake of humor, the account accurately captures the spirit of the times. A visitor to Chicago has time on his hands. He has been invited by Burling, a friend of the proprietors, to attend the sale of a new town called "Phillicock." Lots in the town are being offered to the public. The sale takes place in a narrow long room; the room is divided into two parts by a high counter. The public has gathered on one side of the counter. On the other side of the counter were people the article calls, "the learned pundits" who were gathered, "intent on gain."

"I am about to offer you," begins the auctioneer, "some lots whose value it would be difficult to limit. In fact I should not like to give you my opinion of what they are worth; you would hardly believe me; but anyone who is really anxious to make a fortune, I give you my honor as a gentleman now here's a chance. John, hand me the map." John obligingly hands the auctioneer a plat. "Here, gentlemen are five hundred lots in the town of Phillicock. The advantages which this town will possess are immense." The auctioneer demonstrates to the crowd the route for a railroad, which will join the proposed canal, and notes water power, which, by itself he claims is worth a fortune. The auctioneer continues with the assurance that nothing but public spirit had induced the proprietors to sell.

Burling has been asked to help drive up values. Unfortunately, the sellers have chosen poorly. Burling quickly demonstrate that he lacks the gentle touch required to bring off their plan. When the bid for a lot is at six dollars, Burling promptly jumps the bid to forty dollars. The proprietors become angry; they would rather have a genuine sale at six dollars than a phony one at forty and by the auctioneer who knows he will get no commission on pretended sales to the shill. The next town offered is called "Shakespeare." There was, in fact, a notorious town by this name in Cass County, Michigan; and it was offered for sale in Chicago at this time. The story goes on to tell us, "The immortal poet made his appearance in the shape of a very respectable lithographic map, divided into innumerable small parallelograms marked with figures dotted with black squares, under which were written, 'Court House,' 'Hotel,' 'Theatre,' and 'Church.' Here gentlemen is the town of Shakespeare. I have never in my life offered anything to compare with it in point of location, & c. & c. How much for block number one in the town of Shakespeare." The auctioneer tells the buyers that he will personally guarantee a hundred percent profit on Shakespeare lots in six months.

Burling is now excited. The prospects of the new town seem infinite. He quickly forces the price up to sixty-five dollars. The bid is soon raised to seventy and the auctioneer whispers to Burling that this is, "a good bid." Burling ignores the hint. He raises the offer to ninety-five dollars. "H-ll, quoth my friend of the hammer, I had seventy good dollars bid for that. Where is the d---d fool. You've spoiled the best sale of the night. Why so, said Burling. I mean to buy it myself. 'Oh you do. Then I'll charge commission.' Why, I'll take it if you will let me pay in lands," The story concludes with the line, "And so they buy" (*Chicago Democrat*, 16 November 1836, p. 2, copied from the *New York Times*). Three years earlier such a tale would have puzzled readers. Three years later it might have aroused bitterness. Yet, in the enchanted year of 1836, all stories about town lots had magically become believable.

Rubes and smooth talkers made for good humor and comic authors had a good deal of fun with the town lot craze. The reality of auctions was usually different. There might have been a good deal to laugh at, but most town lot sales were the work of sober businessmen dealing with customers who had a reasonable chance to examine what they were buying. To begin with, most of the original Illinois town lot auctions did not take place in dingy auction rooms. By far the most common place for an auction of lots was at the location of the town. Advertisers again and again stress that the potential buyer must see the location for themselves. While some of the fever that infected Burling may have influenced buyers at these locations, the real world was always a glance away. Most buyers must have realized town lots were being offered in huge numbers, and were probably aware that a rapid rise in general land prices was certainly no guarantee that any individual lot would go up in value. The sale of town lots at the townsite has several important implications. Potential buyers would have traveled the roads that were advertised, viewed the mill sites that were touted, judged the amount of timber in the groves, seen the level of water in the rivers, observed the state of local fences, kicked at the soil, chatted with neighboring farmers, and discussed prospects with other bidders. Because travel was difficult, many of the buyers were either local people or those with a strong interest in settling in the area. Many townsite advertisers made exceptional efforts to attract genuine settlers and offered financial incentives to those who would, within a prescribed period, build houses or stores.

Tales of innocent rubes tricked by fast talking land sharks attracted later writers, who were interested in humor, religious moralizing, or political invective. Stories of informed buyers making considered decisions, while standing on the land they were bidding on, were never as funny as stories of innocents deceived. Moreover, one must keep in mind that the amounts paid for most town lots were relatively small. The final price a lot in a newly established town was often not much different from what the bidder would have paid for a horse or cow. Buyers were often farmers, shopkeepers, and not infrequently, local landowners. They had grown up in a world where judging price of products and the character of the men offering goods for sale was an essential business skill. They were used to

face to face haggling over prices and were accustomed to sale by auction. There is another consideration. Most town lots were sold on credit over a specified period of time. If it became evident that the town was not going to prosper, the buyer had lost only the first payment, often a quarter of the total cost. A great many people simply failed to complete payments on town lots.

It must also be remembered that land was abundant, and town lots comprised only a fraction of total real estate sales. In 1836 any buyer with cash in hand could take the conservative approach and ride to the nearest federal Land Office. By paying a dollar twenty-five cents per acre the buyer could purchase a section of Illinois farm land that was already acknowledged to be among the best in the world. Many writers advised this approach. Letters from the 1830s suggest to friends that they avoid the risk of town lots and invest in agricultural land. By opting to purchase town lots, customers knew they were taking the bigger risk. Many sellers were open about the risk of town lots. Several advertisements invite speculators to attend their auctions. Town lot buying was always a gamble, but it was not usually an uncalculated toss of the dice.

One interesting group of town lot buyers took a different approach. They became part of a plan to move from place to place as different towns were sold. Robert Dale Owen was the son of the famed philosopher and founder of New Harmony, Robert Owen. Young Owen and his companions conceived an expedition that would travel across southern Indiana and Illinois in the spring of 1837. The group would begin their tour on 25 April 1837. People were to gather and over the course of the next month visited seven townsites. All of the towns were close to each other. Interested parties were to assemble at one of two places, Mt Vernon, Indiana, or the falls of the Wabash River. From these places both buyers and sellers would visit three towns in Indiana and four in southeastern Illinois: The Illinois towns offered were Albion, Pocahontas, Powhattan, and Tecumseh. This traveling circus approach may not have been successful. Owen soon turned his attention from selling town lots to abolishing slavery and to helping found the Smithsonian.

Many town site advertisers requested that their notices be copied in eastern papers. This practice of reprinting advertisements bred a form of local humor, discussed later, in which the canny Sucker State native journeys to the East where he unloads large numbers of valueless Illinois lots on unsuspecting citizens of Philadelphia or New York. Like the stories of men armed with sticks being stationed at the limits of East Coast cities to beat back the hordes of settlers who were trying to leave for the Midwest, humor was more important than truth. However, substantial numbers of Illinois town lots were put up for sale in out-of-state cities. Lots in Illinois could be purchased in many cities in other states. For example, visitors to Gowdey Coffee House in Nashville, Tennessee, could see maps of lots for sale in Peoria, Rome, or Charleston, Illinois (*National Banner and Nashville Whig*, 27 January 1837, p. 3).

## WHAT WERE THE NEW TOWNS LIKE?

New Illinois towns had much in common. Visually they were simply clusters of small buildings with minimum foundations and little public infrastructure. Most structures were small, made of unpainted wood, and devoid of non-essentials. Houses were often indistinguishable from commercial buildings. Advertisers offered buildings that might serve as houses or “tavern stands.” The towns bore little resemblance to the Lincoln Log recreations, so beloved of grade school teachers and Depression-era re-creators. There were many log structures. Cleveland, on the Rock River in Henry County, was laid out in April of 1836 and the first buildings were erected in the following summer. One was described as a double log house, or “dog-trott,” with one half used for a dwelling and the other for a store (*History of Henry County 1877*, p. 531). However, sawmills were being built in large numbers and sawn-boards were quickly available. As soon as possible, shivering citizens nailed planks onto the sides of their log cabins. After a few years un-sided urban log structures were uncommon. One of the leading authorities on log construction once told me that he had rarely examined a log building that had not been covered with boards soon after it was built and that logs of many such structures generally showed few signs of long exposure. Log structures were mixed with other modes of hasty construction. The first house in Andover, Henry County, was built in 1837 and described as a “cottonwood board shanty” (*History of Henry County 1877*, p. 139). From the earliest dates, frame houses were very common. Such houses are specifically mentioned in the advertisements for Brussels and Valasco. The advertisement for the town of Monroe noted that the proprietors were also seeking buyers for both frame and log houses. Sometimes proprietors would try to attract residents by offering to construct houses at the new townsite. At Virginia, in what would later become Cass County, proprietors told buyers that some houses would be built and sold with the lots on which they stood. The first structure actually built in Virginia was a story and a half frame building (Perrin, p. 80). Although brickyards were occasionally mentioned in town advertisements, and stone was used in selected areas, these materials were too labor intensive to be common for anything other than important public buildings.

Often there was sometimes a pre-existing building, or cluster of buildings, around which the new town was later platted. Mills were frequent town cores. Taverns, and stores, generally indistinguishable from each other, were often present before the sale of lots. Steamboat landings were often mentioned and these would have needed rude unloading facilities and sheds to keep goods dry. Perhaps there might be buildings for meatpacking or distilling whisky. Sometimes the founder of a new town would persuade residents to move a cluster of existing buildings to a newly platted location. Asahel Gridley convinced several families to move about a mile to his town of Le Roy in McLean County. (For archaeological perspectives on 1836 generation towns, see Martin, Shackel and Fennell (2004-2005); Pinkowski 2005; and Mackenzie, 2005).



Published accounts provide good information on new towns. In June of 1836 the *Sangamo Journal* printed the thoughts of a traveler as he crossed Illinois. This description provides an indication of the newly altered Illinois landscape and of the impression made by the many towns that had just come into existence. The unknown author called his work "Pocket Memorandum." When journeying through central Illinois, he passed through four of the new towns. Traveling north from Decatur, he found himself impressed with the thriving new town of Clinton, which was located on the edge of the Salt Creek Timber. The line of the Central Railroad, he wrote, would pass through the town. "Its friends," he continued, "suppose it will become the seat of a new county comprising parts of Macon and McLean." The town was important enough that speculators had already entered all of the surrounding land. "[Clinton] is among the few new towns which have started up in this town speculating age that will grow into importance. The site of the town, the heavy settlements around it, the beautiful fertile and handsome country around it all seem to unite in demonstrating this fact" He was right. Clinton indeed did become the seat of a new county, DeWitt; and the much talked of Central Railroad eventually passed through the town.

The writer continued northward and recorded, "Some ten or twelve miles further, on the road to Bloomington is situated the town of Lytle's Ville [Lytleville] in the timber. It contains 6 or 8 houses. In reply to a question, it was answered by one of the citizens that 'the place was calculated for a town.' We thought the author of the remark might be mistaken." In the 1850s the railroad missed Lytleville and the site was abandoned.

Next came Bloomington, already five years old, and doing a brisk business. From there the traveler went northwest toward the long dark line of the Mackinaw Timber. Soon he came to the town of Concord, and was not impressed. There were something like half a dozen buildings and it looked very much like "a town gotten up for a speculation. There was another town, of one house of which we did not learn the cognomen. The town's stakes were plentifully sprinkled on the prairie—endangering the safety of the travelers." Contrary to his expectations Concord, renamed Danvers, survived and today prospers.

### **PROMOTIONAL TOWN ILLUSTRATIONS: MYTH OR REALITY?**

Something must be said about the use of illustrations to sell new towns. In the second half of the nineteenth century, stories began to circulate about town-founders promoting their projects with use of elaborate and often exaggerated drawings. Did this happen in the 1830s, and was it common? Unfortunately, all of references to such drawings come from accounts written long after the boom. These references are not to town plats. As noted above, Illinois law required such plats, and almost all such diagrams survive. There are many contemporary references to such plats being posted in prominent public places. However, these plats were legal documents, simple two-dimensional geometrical designs, and

not town illustrations. They do not contain townscapes or fanciful pictures of yet-to-be-built structures. Town plats are the work of surveyors, not artists.

Drawings of established places, done in later years, were fairly common in the 1850s and abundant by the 1870s. John Reps has written several illustrated books on nineteenth century depictions of American towns that include Illinois examples. The best collection of city drawings in Illinois is in his 1994 book. Several of the towns whose advertisements appear below are shown in this volume, including Port Byron and Warsaw. However, these views were done in the 1850s and they were not produced in association with promoting the initial sale of town lots in the 1830s. The closest thing to such a drawing is William Strickland's well-known 1838 plan for the future development of Cairo, which is shown on page 163 of Reps's book. This drawing is sometimes suspected as being the source for Charles Dickens's tale of Eden, discussed below. However, Cairo is not an 1836 generation town, and was a thriving place by the time Strickland's drawing was made.

There can be no doubt that later generations believed intentionally deceptive artwork had been features of early town sales. Here are several examples. John Snyder tells of the "City of High Bluffs," which was supposedly established during the boom. In Snyder's version of the story an unnamed speculator is described as "a sharp Cahokia Frenchman having no regular vocation, and of the class of speculators now known as 'promoters'." The speculator is said to be a man of some education, full of resources and sleepless energy, but short of conscientious scruples. He employed a skilled draughtsman in St. Louis to draw the plan of a large town located on the east bank of the Kaskaskia River, several miles above Tamarawa. The city was on open ground, gradually declining in grade toward the river. There were parks and a graceful church. There were "solid looking bank buildings of gothic architecture, school buildings, houses colleges, hotels and hospitals. Near the river were factories, warehouses and mills. A heavily laden steamboat is depicted approaching the wharf from below, while other boats were at the landing, and another loaded down is departing. All of this was lithographed on paper of the highest style of art." With these the promoter departed for the East, returning with a vast array of goods, which he promptly converted into cash. When the agents of the eastern merchants came to look at their lots, they realized they had been duped, but were unwilling to incur additional losses by prosecuting the proprietor (Snyder 1906, p. 209). It is a good story, but it is garbled. There was indeed a Kaskaskia River town platted with the name High Bluffs. Its founder does have a French name, Edward Penseneau. Unfortunately, High Bluffs was not platted until 1857, and was not, as Snyder claims, a contemporary rival to Tamarawa (Wilderman and Wilderman, II, p. 760).

From Henry County we have a slightly different version of the same story. It evidently first appears in a county history published in 1910. We are told that there was in this county a place called "Humbug City." The story says that two

artists from the East came west to paint “aboriginals.” Unfortunately, “They couldn’t find one who would hold still long enough to have his picture painted.” Therefore we are told that, “the two artists set to upon the canvas upon which they fain would transfer the outlines of the chiefs and they did paint a city. It was painted with great accuracy of detail. It was located upon the Green River. There were wharves, where steamboats were discharging cargo. Factories with black smoke rising from their tall chimneys emphasized the importance of the city as a manufacturing center... Away in the extreme verge of the southwest corner was a spot, a mere dot which was labeled Geneseo in crooked little italics.” The drawing was taken to the East where lots were sold. No less a figure than Dan Webster came west to see the Humbug City. It was said, purchasers of lots then paid to see the great Whig statesman. (*History of Henry County* 1910, p. 87).

Is there any truth to the above account? Geneseo, in Henry County, was a typical boom town laid out on 3 December 1837. Some settlers may have been on the site as early as the spring of that year. Daniel Webster was briefly in northern Illinois in the early summer of 1837 and he did have a well-deserved reputation as a land speculator. Webster did indeed invest heavily in Illinois town lots, most notably in Rock Island City and Peru. There are problems with the story. It does not seem to appear in earlier histories of Henry County. There was, of course, never a place in Henry County place called Humbug City. Although many towns were laid out in this county in 1836 and 1837, none of them was within visual distance of Geneseo, and none are more than simple unadorned maps, which do not remotely resemble the above description.

Sometimes later histories make it sound as if quite conventional plats were lavish drawings. In 1880 H. W. Beckwith wrote of the Iroquois County town of Plato. “It was advertised in glowing colors in the Chicago and La Fayette [*sic*] papers; immense maps and posters were distributed in eastern cities showing the whole landing at Harbor Creek lined with boats unloading receiving merchandise. Lots were sold at fabulous prices; many persons in New York City investing in them” (p. 338), and “the broad deep-blue river with snorting steamboats trying to find room to tie up at its wharves would remind one of the Danube instead of the Iroquois (p. 388). The plat of the town survives and, it is unusual because writing on the map lists the town’s advantages. Otherwise the plan is unexceptional, and is nothing like Beckwith’s description. Beckwith’s story has transferred, to Iroquois County, William Oliver’s well-known 1843 account of Downingsville in southern Illinois. In Oliver’s account, travelers found, hanging above a bar in Kaskaskia Landing, a plat of Downingsville (Oliver p. 54). That plat is also extant, and is a very ordinary plan showing 23 blocks and a public square, which had been laid out 20 March 1837.

A possible source for such stories is Charles Dickens. His popular novel *Martin Cluzzlewit* was published in 1844. It reflects the English author’s disgust with just about everything and everyone he had encountered in the United States. The author was particularly offended by what he saw in Ohio Valley frontier life a few years after the boom. Part of the novel concerns the foolish hero who is lured into

the shabby office of a dishonest land shark. One wall of the office is taken up with an immense plan of a city called Eden that shows fanciful streets and fine buildings. The unfortunate Martin plunks down the money; travels to Eden, Illinois; and finds a swamp with a few log houses, a cowshed, a rude stable, and nothing remotely resembling the drawing of Eden (Dickens 1844, pp. 317-338). The book is a work of satire, which depends on exaggeration for effect, and nothing in the book suggests that Dickens had anything more than a secondhand knowledge of American town lots sale. The book was widely read. Re-telling of Dickens's joke would, of course, have been funnier if local settings were used and if "Easterners" were substituted for the befuddled Englishman, Chuzzlewit. Until someone locates one of these drawings, tales of art being used to sell 1836 town lots must be examined with great care.

### TOWNSITE HUMOR

Townsite speculation produced a flood of humor. The *New York Evening Post* printed a story about a traveler crossing the wilds of Indiana. In the tale a newcomer had acquired a map of the state and found it showed a large number of towns, most of which sounded European and seemed to start with the letter "V." At last the traveler encountered a local woodsman. Where, he asked, might he find the town of Vienna. "Vienna!" exclaimed the man, "why you passed it five and twenty miles back; did you not notice the stake of hewn timber and the blazed tree beside the road? That was Vienna." The traveler then asked the Hoosier about another town and was informed that it was located exactly where they were standing. Where, the traveler asked, are the houses? "Oh no houses whatsoever," replied the woodsman, "they hewed and hauled the logs for a blacksmith's shop, but before they raised it the town lots were all disposed of in the eastern states and everything has been left just as you now see it ever since." Although not attributed in the newspaper, the story was originally the work of William Leggett (*New York Evening Post*, 24 September 1836, p. 2).

Maps are featured in a similar tale. In 1837 the Nashville, Tennessee, *Union* published an complaint about speculators, "those who have been to the west, where towns are made in the night (on paper) sold in an hour, and built up in a week have seen the arts of speculators who purchase a quarter section of land, lay it out in town lots, make a map of the surrounding country, laying down rail roads and canals, all centering in their towns, which is thus demonstrated to be the future 'Emporium of the west'." The paper then repeated a story that originally came from Rochester, New York. A farmer who had observed the land sharks in action brought his cow to the market. He placed the animal beside one of the land offices and notified all that the beast was for sale. "What is your price?" he was asked. "Sixty dollars replied the farmer. "Sixty thunders, why is she so much?" He took from his britches pocket a large sheet of paper on which was drawn a large picture of a cow. "Here is a map of her," said the farmer. "You see here the great Wildcat Turnpike runs immediately under her tail to the city of the

swamps. Loon Lake Canal will intersect her on the top horn side, and the Cataract rail road passes directly through her! Gentlemen, don't all speak at once" (*Nashville Union*, 17 January 1837, p. 2).

## THE BOOM BURSTS

Throughout the boom, serious real estate dealers had frequently warned of the dangers of townsite speculation. Chicago's William Butler Ogden, President of the American Land Company, a man who handled thousands of dollars of eastern money called his clients' attention to the problem of town site speculation. On 10 June 1836 he wrote to John W. Sullivan, "...the business of locating and getting up towns is often carried too far at this time and their [sic] are many worthless situations sold for a good deal of money." (Quoted in McLear, p. 286). By 1841 Ogden would write that of those who had been involved in the boom, "the stock of 36" he called them, had been "otherwise than deeply embarrassed" (p. 290).

Boom years like 1836 were dangerous for both those who bought and those who sold. The risk to buyers was obvious and many soon quickly realized that some auctions were little more than playgrounds for the morally challenged. Sellers were also badly hurt. Good sellers were quick to sense that the time to boom land had come. They could focus attention on the potential of a place. They often excelled at stoking speculative flame. Yet, only the most astute could properly predict the time when the bubble was going to burst. We know that they frequently worked with borrowed money. It took money to buy land, to lay out towns, to attract buyers, and to promote the new places. This money was at risk. When Illinois liberalized its bankruptcy law in 1841, many who had once been financial leaders were forced to take advantages of the provisions. As always, the problem with booms lies not so much in knowing when to follow the crowd, but in knowing when to make the lonely decision to abandon the frenzy.

Democrats blamed the boom and following crash on an excess of credit created by the National Bank. Whigs were certain that the catastrophe was the result of instability caused by president's failure to renew the bank's charter. The plain truth is that the severe financial panic that swept through the United States in late 1836 and 1837 was part of a downturn that was worldwide in scope, and there was nothing the puny financial tools available to either national party in the 1830s could have done to halt it. By late 1837 land prices in Illinois had begun to fall. Even in Chicago, lot prices continued downward until 1839 (McLear p. 289). The rush to create new towns quickly became a panic to sell remaining lots at any price. In Illinois, the founding of new towns in Illinois came to an almost complete halt and did not resume until the 1850s.

Adam Snyder saw the hard times coming and pulled the plug on Tamarawa. As soon as his steam saw mill in the new town was finished, the congressman sold

his interests in the city to George Stuntz and Abel Thompson. In March 1837 Snyder wrote to his partner, General Semple, saying, "Lots are rising in value in Tamarawa. I sold six last week at fifty dollars each. The ground in front of the town, if laid off and put up for sale will bring two thousand dollars. We had better dispose of it in this way. The truth is the sooner we sell it the better, for Athens is improving and getting along faster than us from the fact of it having the road. In my opinion now is the time to sell" (Snyder 1906, p. 230). The land was quickly sold and Tamarawa became farmland.

## **WHAT HAPPENED TO THE NEW TOWNS?**

The towns of 1836 had interesting post-boom histories. One of three things could happen to a new town: rapid abandonment, survival followed by later removal to a new location, or lasting success. A rough rule of thumb is that one third of platted towns were abandoned without ever having been occupied, one third were briefly occupied and later abandoned, and the remaining third have survived. The odds of survival were greater when only one town was established in a given area, especially when that town was an early and undisputed county seat. Towns with many near neighbors were more likely to fail. In many places proprietors quickly gave up and asked that the plat be vacated. In theory, vacating the plat legally ended the history of the town and was a valuable tool because it removed the administrative and financial confusion created by surveyed but unoccupied towns. In the simplest sense the verb "to vacate" means to abolish something that had been legally established. Most often vacation was done by an act of the state legislature. The usual procedure was for the town's owner to sign a statement certifying that he was still owner of all of the town's lots and that he wished the town to be vacated. If lots had been sold, the plat could be vacated provided any additional owners also signed the document. The act of vacation was then recorded in the appropriate county. In the years following 1837, legislative acts vacating large numbers of towns were common. Often, the rapid vacation of a town plat is evidence that it was what contemporaries called a "paper town," one with never had occupants, and often one where no lots had ever been sold. However, this is not always the case. Other town-founders and lot owners did not bother with vacation. They simply walked away from their property and left local authorities to deal with the consequences.

The legacy of thousands of lots left over from the boom took many years to resolve. Such problems were compounded by large numbers of bankruptcies during the late 1830s and early 1840s. The collective solution to these problems was the tax sale. A large number of town lots, even those in thriving places, were eventually sold for taxes.

These tax sales served several purposes. A preliminary list of lots and their owners was made; for a great many lots the owner was unknown. The value of

each lot was set, and auctions were held, usually at the county courthouse. This process established a new list of owners. For the county, the tax sales generated some revenue, but much more important was the fact that tax collectors now knew from whom future taxes were expected. We know that some original proprietors bought back their own lots at tax sales. Alternately, some other person of capital could take a chance on the lots. When town lots, or other real estate, were sold for taxes, there were several requirements. Commonly the buyer had to pay all back taxes. The original owner then had two years to redeem the lots. This was not as liberal as it might sound. The original owner paid all costs and also paid back what the new purchaser had spent for the lots plus interest on the purchase price at a very steep rate of 12 percent (*Laws of the State of Illinois* 1840, p. 228). In this way town lots were often cycled and recycled.

We can follow tax sales of town lots in McLean County. In 1848 hundreds of lots in 1836-generation towns were put up for auction. The owners of most of these town lots were unknown. Land sold included substantial parts of the towns of Concord, Wilksboro, Le Roy, and Mt. Hope. (*Western Whig*, 5 August 1848, p. 2). Sales continued in 1850 with lots in Concord, Hudson, Le Roy, Lytleville, Lexington, and Mt. Hope, (*Western Whig*, 4 May 1850, p. 2). In the summer of 1851 the county was still clearing out accumulated clutter of town lots. Most of these were remnants of the 1830s boom. Among the purchasers were successful Bloomington speculators James M. Scott and James Allin, Jr. Taxes for the years 1840 to 1849 were due on three failed towns from the boom. At auction they purchased 27 lots in Clarksville, 39 lots in Wilksborough, and 68 lots in Mt. Hope. Large parts of the more successful towns of Hudson, Lexington, and Le Roy were also sold. In Le Roy, the owners of most of the lots, a total of the 107 lots offered for sale, were unknown. One man, George Parke, purchased 64 of these lots (*Western Whig*, 15 January 1851, p. 3).

Such sales favored local people. Upcoming sales were published in the local paper, but only the most interested of buyers from outside the area would be likely to travel to a moribund county seat on the prairie frontier in order to bid a lot valued at a few dollars. More important, locals had sensitive fingers on the pulse of the local economy and were in the best position to judge when an economic renewal was starting. Perhaps most important of all, buying large blocks of town lots at auction made more economic sense if, in the future, you were going to be on hand to re-sell the land. Most successful towns had a complex history of tax sales.

Many 1836 towns flourished briefly, but were ultimately moved to new to new locations. Usually this happened in the between 1850 and 1890 and took place when it was clear that a nearby railroad would miss the new towns. Buildings were either dismantled and re-erected in the new location or they might be hauled cross country intact. Removal did not mean total failure. The distances

moved were rarely more than a few miles; social and financial links would continue with little interruption (Walters 1977; Walters 1991).

Tales of crooked land sharks and failed towns can leave the wrong impression. Town founding between 1835 and 1837 was remarkably successful. A great many 1830s towns survive. If advertisements sometimes exaggerated locational virtues, they also attracted many legitimate and determined settlers and they led directly to the founding of a great many enduring places. The most interesting thing about town lot speculation in the 1830s is not the gambling, deception, double-dealing, or flagrantly duping of the uninformed. All of these things happened, but successes abounded. Hundreds of these towns are today thriving places. The present seats of twelve Illinois counties are towns that were founded between 1835 and 1837.

### **MIS-REMEMBERING THE TOWN BOOM OF 1836**

Larger than life events breed exaggerated memories. The town lot boom is no exception. As details of real events faded, they were often replaced by exaggerated versions of events. Such tales made for fun reading and no doubt earned many a free drink, but these stories become dangerous when they pass folk humor into the canon of serious history. One of the most interesting examples comes from Governor Ford's 1854 history of Illinois. Writing of the speculative fever he jokes, "It spreads to all towns and villages of the state. New Towns were laid out in every direction. The number of towns multiplied so rapidly that it was waggishly remarked that the whole country would be laid out into towns; that no land would be left for farming purposes." This bit of frontier humor probably produced a few chuckles. However, by the twentieth century, at least one author has used Governor Ford's remarks to make it seem as if new towns extinguishing agriculture was a genuine 1830s fear. In 1932, A. M. Sakolski failed to understand the governor's humor and he wrote, "So great was the demand for 'lots' that almost all of northeastern Illinois was laid out in town lots." (p. 248) R. Carlisle Buley picked up this idea and asserted, "The turnover, if any, was relatively quick and profitable; sure a little capital was required but almost anyone could try his hand at it. Fortunately only a portion of the paper towns materialized. It was estimated that almost all of northeastern Illinois was platted and promoted as townsites at one time or another" (Buley, p. 147).

It is absurd to think that almost all of northeast Illinois was platted over. Even in Cook County, where town lot speculation was heaviest, vast tracts in the southern and western parts of the county remained for half a century unsubdivided. Land in northeastern Illinois, in what would become Lake and McHenry counties, were largely untouched by the 1830s town lot craze. Counties like Kane, DuPage, and Will had scattered towns along the rivers, but the distance between them was great. A little simple arithmetic helps to understand the situation. A typical new town plat of the 1830s covered between 20 and 40



acres. When compared with the amount of land available, this amount involved was tiny. For example, Will County in northeast Illinois contains just over 541,000 acres. A dozen forty-acre towns would still cover less than one percent of the county's area. Even if one adds some factor for additions to successful towns, the number of acres involved is extremely small. The town of Nauvoo, laid out just after the boom by the Latter Day Saints, included one square mile or 640 acres of land, and was justly viewed in the 1830s as a gigantic town founding effort. Yet, the area laid out into lots at Nauvoo was still less than one eighth of one percent of the land in Hancock County.

Some later histories make conventional town site advertisements seem like sinister outlines for criminal conspiracies. The advertisement for Elizabeth, in Bond County, is unexceptional and rather mildly worded paragraph. Yet the 1882 county history contains the following words, "A place was laid out, probably about 1840, three or four miles northwest of Greenville, on the Hillsboro road, called Elizabeth City. "This famous city," says Mr. White' [sic] "was to occupy ground little better than a frog pond, and yet five plats of it were made and sent back East on which appeared in high sounding names its streets, avenues and squares. Flaming notices of it were published in the newspapers in which it was represented as being eligibly situated on the 'Shoal River' and in the midst of a country which, with comparatively little labor, could be transformed into an 'Earthly paradise'. These flattering representations, or more properly speaking, misrepresentations, led many persons in the older settled States to invest in this 'city on paper,' all of whom, it is needless to say were 'taken in,' as Elizabeth City never had any existence other than fancy plats and flaming advertisements" (p. 71).

The Internet has compounded problems. Consider the town of Rollingstone. One of the few items on Illinois town speculation that quickly pop up in a Google search concerns this town. The internet information is from a 1932 book, *History of the Illinois River Valley*. The volume discusses the events of 1836 under the heading "Dead Towns of Illinois." Included is a good deal of interesting information, including the full text of the Brooklyn, in Schuyler County, Illinois, advertisement. Among the sad stories of the 1836 boom sent out into cyber space, and therefore almost impossible to correct, is the tale of a deceased Illinois town called Rollingstone. It seems that a group of New Yorkers were lured into coming to Rollingstone. When they reached the site, they found nothing but wilderness. The problem with the story is the fact that there was never a town in Illinois called Rollingstone. The town did exist did exist. Rollingstone was found exactly where one would expect it to be found, along the Rollingstone River, as it flows through Winona County, Minnesota. The events summarized in the online text do seem to have happened, but they took place in Minnesota and not in 1836 but in 1851.

There is some hope. Recently a great deal of very good work has been done on the 1836 Pike County town of New Philadelphia. Here a free African American,

Frank McWorter and often called "Free Frank," platted the town and used money from the sale of the sale of lots to buy the freedom of others (Walker 1983). A dedicated group has now made many documents related to New Philadelphia available on the Internet. Unfortunately, no one has yet found an advertisement for the town.

## **PART II**

### **THE ADVERTISEMENTS**

#### **HOW THE ADVERTISEMENTS ARE ARRANGED**

Just over one hundred town advertisements are summarized in the pages that follow (Figure 2). Included are all of the ads that I have so far located; no doubt many more such ads once existed and more surviving examples are yet to be found. Most are for newly established places; some are for towns founded a few years earlier that had seen little growth. Excluded from the list below are advertisements for places that are clearly only additions to established places. Also excluded have been a small number of advertisements that contain no information other than the name of the place being sold. Except where noted, readers will be able to find the advertisements in microfilm newspapers at various Illinois libraries. Usually spelling and capitalization have been kept as they were in the original ads; thus the word "river" or "county" following a proper name is not usually given a capital. Likewise, when material from the advertisements is quoted, original spelling has been retained. Each summary follows a common format: Name, County, Source, Form of Advertisement, Time and Date of Sale, Location, Features, Proprietors, Terms, and Notes. Except for the heading "Notes" and for the occasional extension of an abbreviated name, the information given is that contained in the advertisement. The headings Location and Features are the most complex and require the most explanation. A few remarks on each heading may be helpful.

#### **NAME**

Each summary begins with the town's name. The spelling of the name is as it was presented in the advertisement. This name will occasionally differ slightly from the name on the recorded plat. The most common variation is breaking up compound names, such as Canal Port for Canalport. If the name was later changed, this has been noted. Readers not familiar with Illinois history are cautioned that a great many places with the same name existed in Illinois. There

## Towns Advertised



Figure 2

are many Centervilles, Concorde, Franklins, and Middletowns; a check of the county will often be helpful in distinguishing between towns with similar names.

## COUNTY

This name identifies the present-day county in which the town or proposed town is now located. Because county boundaries were changed, this is not always the county that controlled the area when the town was laid out. Trying to alter county boundaries or to create new counties designed to favor a particular towns was common.

## SOURCE

Source is the place from which the information was taken. The same advertisement typically ran for several weeks, many were found in other newspapers, and a few have been copied into other kinds of publications. No attempt has been made to list every place where the advertisement appears. The advertisements follow a common, but far from identical, pattern. Usually the heading is something like "Public Sale of Town Lots at Augusta," or "The Town of Columbus" or just "Middleton." The length of the advertisement ranges from a few sentences to an entire column. I have never seen an illustrated town advertisement from the 1836 period, nor have I found a map included as part of a town ad. Most of the newspapers were four page weeklies. Advertisements can be found on any of the four pages, but page three is the most common. Occasionally advertisements are accompanied by a letter praising the town or the region. Most readers would have understood that the letter was related to the town promotion. Occasionally the entire advertisement is thinly disguised as a letter from an interested reader.

At the peak of the boom, there were often several advertisements in each issue. Town lot advertisers were keenly aware of the unprecedented number of towns being laid out and they worried that the public might grow skeptical. For example, "The many ridiculous efforts that have been made and are now being made to establish towns for the purpose of speculation in the sale of lots alone, where business does not require towns, and on situations entirely unsuitable, and the extravagant manner in which such places are recommended, incline the proprietors of Montezuma to say less than they might say in truth, of the merits of this place" (*Missouri Republican*, 24 November 1835, p. 3).

The advertisement for Marion is the only one not taken from a newspaper. It was reproduced in a late nineteenth century county history and was perhaps taken from an 1836 era broadside.

## **FORM OF ADVERTISEMENT**

This heading briefly summarizes the presentation of the new town. Advertisers had several ways of offering their new location. The most common was to cast the ad as an invitation to attend a sale of town lots with the time and place specified. Sometimes the advertisement was simply as a notice of the establishment of the town. Less common are advertisements presented in the form of letters. Often the number of lots to be sold is also featured in the heading. There are several ads for sales in more than one new town.

## **DATE OF SALE**

Usually the advertisement specifies where and when the sale is to take place, but sales were sometimes postponed. Occasionally the reader is simply told to ask about lots from a particular individual. A few advertisements featured multiple sale dates. As noted above, most sales were conducted at the site of the town being sold. Sales were usually scheduled for only a single day. Many advertisements stress the importance of readers seeing the town's location for themselves. The Bloomfield advertisement tells readers, "Industrious mechanics and other business men are respectfully invited to call and examine for themselves. Confident that a view of the Town will be the best recommendation, - the subscriber refrains from a fulsome description, content for others to see and judge for themselves." The Newcastle ad says, "a further description is deemed unnecessary that persons wishing to purchase will examine [it] for themselves." The advertisement for Le Roy in McLean County, assumes that anyone wishing to make an investment in town lots will, "doubtless visit it before purchasing."

Sales could take place on any of the six working days of the week. If one includes multiple day sales, repeat sales, and postponed sales, the frequency of sale by day is as follows: Monday 23, Tuesday 13, Wednesday 13, Thursday 15, Friday 7, and Saturday 27. It is possible that Saturday and Monday sales were somewhat more popular because they permitted mechanics and others bound by weekly schedules to miss fewer days of work by traveling to or from the sale on Sundays. The only Sunday sale was the first day of a two day sale at Guilford, in Calhoun County, on the second and third of October 1836.

Some advertisements include the starting time of the sale. Ten o'clock in the morning was the most favored time. Sometimes other morning hours were specified, and one sale was to begin at two in the afternoon. The 10:00 "P.M" starting time for Fayetteville sale is presumably a printer's error. Some of the sales were scheduled to last for more than one day. Others suggested that there was a possibility the sale might be extended to include an additional day. There are a few two-day and three-day sales. Sometimes two nearby towns would be sold at the same time. This was done at Brussels and Valasco, facing each other on opposite sides of the Illinois River, and at Bridgeport and New Bedford.

Some ads note that sales would be held in larger cities. Lots at Concord, Canal Portland, and Rockwell were initially sold at auction houses in Chicago. St. Clair and Dresden were first offered in St. Louis. St. Mary's was sold in Louisville, Kentucky, supposedly for the benefit of embattled Texas. An alternative location for the sale was at the local county seat. Albion, New Canton, Portland, and Selma were all sold at local seats of justice. Edinburgh, in what is today Christian County, was sold at the courthouse in the then county seat at Springfield. Mt. Pulaski was first sold at the town's location and eight days later lots were offered at the courthouse in Springfield. Lots in Florence, in White County, were auctioned in nearby Grayville.

Not all lots were auctioned. The proprietors of Vermilionville explain that they will not offer lots for sale at auction because lots are being sold for the benefit of "the people" rather than as a speculation. The proprietors wrote that lots at Port Byron were not being presented for public sale because of great demand and limited numbers available; readers were told they would be notified later if a public sale was made. The owners of Calumet first stated that the lots would not to be offered at auction, but they later changed their minds and held an auction.

In some cases the advertisements include special inducements that were offered to attend the auction. At Allentown, in Macon County, a barbecue was served. Anyone wishing to attend the sale of lots at Chippewa, in Madison County, was offered a free steamboat side to and from the sale. Such benefits were more probably more common than the published advertisements indicate. In later nineteenth century auctions, free food was common, free rail travel to the location expected, and free beer openly advertised.

It is not uncommon for advertisements to provide information about the number of lots to be sold. The number of lots to be sold was important and not knowing this number could put the buyer at a disadvantage. All of the lots in a town were not always available at auction. Moreover, the number of lots to be sold would mean little to the buyer until he knew in advance how many of the total lots had been platted, which lots were being offered, and if any lots were reserved by the owner or had already been promised to others. In several cases the advertisement makes it clear that the entire town was up for sale, and in others that this was only to be a partial sale; but often the reader was not told. Even if the entire platted area were sold in the first auction, proprietors often controlled adjacent land on which, if the town were successful, hundreds of new lots could quickly be laid out and sold. Informed buyers were also aware that sellers controlled the auction. If owners felt sales were slow, or if it looked like the assembled crowd was running short of money, the proprietor might simply end the incomplete auction and leave buyers without their expected bargain.

## LOCATION

Information on location formed the heart of the town lot advertisement. This category includes information about the position of the town relative to other places, natural features, and routes of transportation. It also includes those things that geographers associate with the term “situation.” Almost all advertisements stress some aspect of location. Many advertisements begin by giving the distances from known places to the new town. Discussion of distance then often leads to comments about locational advantages. Advertisers used a great deal of their space discussing town location. In part, this may have been done simply to help buyers get to the town site, but its main purpose was clearly to promote the town. Discussion of town location usually centered on roads, rivers, canals, railroads, and the all important juxtaposition of timber and prairie. More needs to be said about some of these locational advantages.

### **LOCATION: *Roads, Direct Lines and Maps***

Comments on roads took many forms. The advertisement might include a list of roads that already converged on the town, or it might discuss those yet-to-be-built roads that must in the near future pass through the new town. However, any town lot investor who based a decision to buy on the location of early Illinois road networks was making a risky choice. Like streams flowing over flat surfaces, early roads frequently changed location. “C.S”, in Galena, noted above, described this process. In northern Illinois, he wrote, “For many miles there is no appearance of a regular laid out road, each one taking the course which his judgment or experience suggests is most desirable” (*Northwestern Gazette and Galena Advertiser*, 22 June 1836, p. 1). Most of Illinois was still legally common land. Provided a traveler did not tear down a fence, people—like cattle and hogs—could roam where they wanted. Often travelers chose their own path and took any shortcut that promised a little less mud. In bad weather they avoided the rutted routes that were usually travelled. Outside of the southern third of the state almost nothing had yet been spent on improving roads. There were some ferries, an occasional bridge, and a few miles of improved private road. Neither the State of Illinois nor its individual counties had more than tiny amounts of money to spend on roads. Federal money on the National Road had yet to arrive. On a good state or county road, the lucky traveler in northern or central Illinois might find notched trees or stakes to mark the route, but could not expect much else. The first road linking Woodford County to points east was made by dragging a log across the prairie; this was no doubt useful for navigation, but cannot have otherwise made traveling easier.

Legally, of course, roads did exist. Creating paper roads was part of the great game of townsite speculation. To establish state roads the procedure was for the legislature to vote for the establishment of a road connecting two designated places and to appoint a group of commissioners who would identify the route of

the road. The town promoter had three tasks: naming the right commissioners, inserting a proper list of intermediate points into the legislation, and delaying bills that might establish rival roads. Road commissioners were usually residents of the area being traversed, and these men were solely responsible for deciding the details of road location. Money to pay the commissioners did not come from the state coffers. The \$1.50 a day each commissioner was paid for his share of laying out the road had to come from the counties crossed by the road. These easy rules are one of the reasons so many new state roads were established in the 1830s. For the state as a whole, such roads were essentially cost free. Virtually no state money was spent. Therefore, road founding became an inexpensive and popular form of political patronage. As wags liked to remark, in early Illinois there were no roads, only places for roads.

A well-known example concerns Abraham Lincoln. In 1835 Lincoln introduced to the legislature a bill to establish a state road from Springfield to Lewistown in Fulton County. Only one intermediate point was mentioned: the road was to cross the Illinois River at Miller's Ferry. At this location, called Peach Bottom, a group of men with powerful political connections were speculating on a new town called Huron. Among the men were Lincoln's future brother-in-law, Ninian Edwards, and many others high in the Who's Who of early Illinois politics. Other examples are legion (see Walters 1983-1984, pp. 337-338; and "Lincoln and the Town of Huron"). The fact that a road had yet to be surveyed did not prevent promoters from using that road in their claims. The new town of Dresden was said to be on "the direct route of the State Road, which is to be located the summer between St. Louis and Chicago." It was hard to argue against a town location when the location of the road that would benefit it had not yet been fixed.

Straight line and direct route arguments abound in early town advertisements and are closely linked to road arguments. The words used may be "line" or "direct line" or "straight line" or "direct route." The ad for Byron stresses that it is on the most direct route from the Bloomington to Danville, one that does not "meander." In Hancock County, Plymouth was said to be on a direct line from Rushville to Carthage and the Mississippi and the state road must pass through it. This route was already being used by many travelers. The same town was also said to be on the most eligible and direct route from Macomb to Quincy. "A road from Alton to Chicago, by way of Springfield and Bloomington, would run through Waynesville" or so the Waynesville advertisement claimed, not mentioning that it would have to be a slightly crooked line. The Clifton advertisement speculates elaborately on the possible route of the National Road, and remarks that the Cumberland Road as surveyed in 1829 missed the town by only half a mile.

To a serious student of location, the direct line arguments are particularly interesting. This sort of argument first presumes that a given straight line does indeed link the several points named. Modern measurement often shows the line does not go exactly where the advertiser claimed. The direct line argument usually works because few people ever measure things on maps. When told



several things are in a line, and this looks roughly correct, people will almost always accept the statement as true. Human nature tends to discount small deviations as unimportant. In fact, allowing variations of several miles on either side of a true line quickly multiplies the area crossed and often makes apparent advantages meaningless. Asserting that various features are located “in line,” or are “due north” of some mystical point, remains today a favorite technique of the purveyors of pseudo-science.

The seller of town lots might qualify the direct line argument by claiming that any road passing within a mile or so of the town would be certain to deviate a little, and so it would pass through the town. This argument seems to make sense, but ignores the fact that rival places were constantly trying to bend roads in other directions. Moreover, once money was spent on improving roads, a miss by as little a mile would almost certainly doom the bypassed town. This happened repeatedly in the railroad era. The seller was also expected to accept that the most direct route between places was somehow important. Maps show otherwise. In the early nineteenth century Colton published a series of large-scale maps of Illinois. Indeed, for some sessions, every member of the Illinois legislature was provided with these maps. The maps show that, while some roads did take direct routes, others did not. Advertisements for roads should not all be viewed cynically. For example, the advertisement for the town of Marshall made precise and accurate predictions about future road location and about the town becoming a county seat.

Glance-at-the-map arguments are also linked to roads. These are similar to straight-line arguments because they are common and frequently spurious. They can also be rather silly. The Lynchburg advertisement claimed that, “no town can be built between Beardstown and Havana. Any person who will take the trouble to examine a map of Sangamon county, will come to the conclusion that an important town must grow up in this section of the county.” The proprietors of Liberty, in Tazewell, go so far as to argue that because their town was within forty miles of the center of the state a great thoroughfare must pass through the town. The seller is confident that the potential buyer will not calculate how many thousands of square miles are contained in a circle with a radius of forty miles. Edinburgh was said to have an advantage because “a single glance at the map will suffice to show that it is not far from the geographic center of the state. It must necessarily become a great thoroughfare.” Why the geographic center of the state should attract a road is not explained. The Edinburgh advertisement lists roads that, because of its location, “must” pass through the town.” Nothing sold lots like creating a feeling of inevitability.

Distance from rival towns was important, but hard to argue. Towns were being built so rapidly that, by time a place was surveyed and the advertisement published, many new places might have altered the logic of local geography. Everyone was aware that some new towns would eventually be added to the network, but no one knew their exact number and location. Still, there are

arguments about town spacing. Marine, in Madison County, thought it was important to note that there was no town within 12 miles in any direction. The Montezuma advertisement reasons that, to channel the abundant products of this rich country, towns along the rivers ought to be spaced every 12 or 13 miles.

### **LOCATION: Rivers**

Rivers might seem to be better guides to favorable townsite location. Certainly, their routes were both more permanent and better known. Moreover, most 1830s town lot buyers would have known that the state was soon going to expend large amounts on improving its water transportation, As Robert Rantoul would later remark in an 1855 speech before the General Assembly, "God made the rivers as a means of transportation, until man should make them better" (Quoted in *National Flag* [Bloomington] 20 July 1855, p. 3). These words could well have been spoken in 1836. Yet, rivers were more locationally complex than they might at first seem.

To begin with, the flow of water in rivers was irregular. Advertisements have a great deal to say about "stages of water" in the rivers they discussed. Many rivers were unusable at low water and claims of navigation for smaller rivers were often exaggerated. At Carlisle the Kaskaskia was said to be navigable for steamboats of up to 100 tons for six months of the year and by keelboats for the entire year. The Tamarawa advertisement said this river was navigable for small boats to its mouth and says the ripple at the town was the first in the river. The shallow and rock-filled Kankakee was said to be navigable for steamboats "of the second class" for 100 miles for nine months of the year. Next year, so the Winnebago ad told readers, steamboats would come up the Rock River and reach the town. The proprietors of Oporto were anxious that potential buyers knew that the steamboat *Frontier* had made it to their town and they claimed that the Rock River could be navigated by boats of up to thirty tons for 300 miles, curves included, as far as the mouth of the Catfish River, which drained the Four Lakes area of Wisconsin. Perhaps readers might not realize that, even by the standards of the 1830s, thirty tons was a small steamboat and an occasional visit by a steamboat did not mean regular trade by water would ever be profitable.

Small rivers had special problems. A five-foot drop in the water level of the Mississippi would only mean a little more work for the men tasked with unloading boats. The same fall in the Rock River could make it useless for commerce. Changes in water level vexed every riverboat captain. They did not like to take their vessels into rivers where the depth was unpredictable. Time spent trapped upstream or stranded on an unknown bar meant income lost. Even more important was the fact that snagging, that is ripping the boat's bottom out on some unseen obstacle, was the leading cause of steamboat loss in the 1830s. Of the many Illinois rivers officially designated as navigable, few ever supported regular commercial traffic.

It was not enough that a new town simply be located on a river. The success of a river town depended heavily on selecting a site with a good landing. The approach by land to the edge of the river was all important. Today it is far easier to pass from dry land to river bank than it was in 1836. Tens of thousands of acres of riverside floodplain in Illinois have been drained and converted into agricultural or even urban land. Levees, pumps, ditches, trainloads of fill, and thousands of miles of underground pipe have reduced fluvial wetlands of Illinois to a tiny fraction of their former extent. Modern citizens expect to approach a river on dry land and to find crisp transition between land and water. This was not so in the past. Travelers in the 1830s knew that many rivers could only be reached only by crossing wide flat zone of marsh and muck and that the actual riverbank could be fiendishly hard to reach. Therefore, the advertisements rightfully placed considerable emphasis on the character of the land along river's edge.

A good riverbank site for a 1830s town required a sharp drop in elevation as one approached the river. This drop was important for three reasons: it provided dry land by which to reach the water's edge, it made for deep water close to the river bank, and it minimized the impact of seasonal fluctuations on depth of water available in the river. All of these points are stressed in advertisements. Albany, in Greene County, was said to have a good landing at all stages of water. At Hamburg, advertisers told readers, "it will be observed that this is the only high bank upon the east side of the Mississippi river, for one hundred miles below Quincy, and subsequently must be the landing place for the extensive country in Illinois and Missouri, as a glance at the map will show." Nelson Buck, the man who surveyed the town of Kingston on the Illinois River provided the following testimonial for the town. "I can safely say that there is not a good landing on the west side of the river from Peoria for a distance of ninety miles [above?] or seventy miles below this point."

It was a good landing rather than just riverfront property that attracted town founders. Keithsburg, in Mercer County, was promoted as having the safest landing for steamboats on the east bank of the Mississippi. Potential buyers of lots in Newport are invited to ask any river captain about the quality of landing. The landing at Russellville was, "surpassed by none on the Wabash." One could not find a better landing between New Orleans and Galena than that at Van Buren in Whiteside County. At Lacon on the Illinois River, "the landing has always been good in high water and improvements are now in progress which will make it one of the best in the lowest stages of water." At Selma on the Wabash, "The water is deep, up to the very shore and proprietors have left a number of ware house lots, extending to the water's edge by which is offered every possibility for landing and unloading steam and other boats." Given the importance of a good landing, it is not surprising that at many river towns reserved riverside areas as public landings. The whole river front at Kingston and at Montezuma, further south on the Illinois River, was set aside for such a landing.

Land approaches to river towns were also stressed. Columbiana advertised that, because bottomland here was narrower than at any other point, it was easier for land trade to reach the town. Flooding concerned all river towns. Florence was said to be on the only point below the Grand Rapids of the Wabash River “which is not subject to be overflown in high water.” St. Francisville, on the Wabash, at the Illinois landing of Lavallett’s Ferry, had a favorable location because it, “affords certain accommodation to travelers at all stages of the river as it can be approached without difficulty when other points are overflown.”

### **LOCATION: *Canals***

The boom of 1836 coincided with the start of the great Midwestern canal building era. Everyone with even a modest interest in the price of real estate would have been expected to have an opinion on the potential of the various canal projects, and they certainly would have had to listen to the opinions of others on the subject. The Illinois and Michigan Canal was the most important of these internal improvement projects and it attracted many new townsites, but advertisements have a surprising amount to say on other possible canals. Once again, predictions of canals were often based on little more than advice to “just glance at the map.”

Many places stress their location on the Illinois and Michigan Canal. These include Canal Port, Dresden, Lockport, Marseilles, and Rockwell. Governor Duncan had specifically given the canal commissioners the power to lay out townsites. Other parts of the state also based claims on canals. The advertisement for Brooklyn (Schuyler County) devotes considerable space to the potential of the future La Moine River Canal. Calumet was on the route of the projected, but never begun, Calumet and Des Plaines River Canal. Brooklyn, in St. Clair County will, so the advertisement says, be aided by the canal from the Mississippi to Cahokia Creek. If nature did not provide the needed lines of communication, a canal could always be hypothesized. The ad for Concord says of the shallow and meandering Iroquois River, a stream so treacherous that even keelboats had trouble using it, that it was going to become a major route of trade. “The river, as will be seen by reference to the map, has been formed by nature to be the great channel of communication between the Illinois, and the Wabash which could be united by a canal of a few miles in extent.”

To profit from a projected new waterway, a town did not have to actually be anywhere near the canal. “Chicago in the north and Grafton in the south are the terminating points of the river and the canal.” The advertisement continues, “That such locations are the great central points of business needs no proof but the bare inspection of a map of any commercial country on the globe.” The advertisement for Albany, in Greene County, makes the same point. With the completion of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, the Mississippi River was destined to have no other effect than channeling trade down this river, so “The importance

of creating a market town on the bank of the river, where there is a good landing at all stages of water will be duly appreciated" (*Sangamo Journal* 30 April 1836, p. 2).

### **LOCATION: *Railroads***

For a state that had only just begun building its first railroad, town advertisements devote a surprising amount of attention to their bright future. It is commonly suggested that early railroads were usually seen as short links designed to connect rivers, but a substantial number of Illinois advertisements discuss long city-to-city railroads. Town advertisers often had a fairly good knowledge of the general route such railroads would take. The problem was, of course, that a general knowledge of the route to be followed was never of much use to a town lot speculator. Good town site selection required precise rather than general knowledge. For the most part, exact railroad routes would not be known until the 1850s; even then, the exact route taken surprised many locals. None of this uncertainty prevented 1830s advertisers from using railroads to sell town lots.

Railroads are stressed in the advertisements for Brighton, Bristol, and Carlisle. The town of Chesterfield is praised for being only five miles from the Springfield to Alton railroad. With similar logic the town of Marion was at a point where the east-west railroad now locating "passes near enough for all purposes of commerce and the north and south railroad will pass directly through Marion." In fact, the east-west railroad, only finished some forty years later, missed the town by a mile and the north-south railroad passed through a rival place miles away. The Columbus advertisement said, "a road has been staked out from Quincy to Meredosia, running through said town, which will probably at no distant day, be a rail road connecting the Mississippi with that point on the Illinois river, to which a railroad is already directed, from the rich interior of our state, and will be one of the greatest thoroughfares, of our rich and growing country."

Stubenville was at the location where the railroad from Alton to Springfield will enter the broken ground and the wide bottom of Macoupin Creek and, "it must be the place of deposit for the rail road cars going and returning." Van Buren was, "generally and undeniably admitted" to be the point at which the recently chartered railroad from Chicago to the Mississippi River would terminate. Pittsburg bragged that a locomotive would be on the track in the next year. A number of these projects railways were eventually constructed, but towns along their route usually had a long wait.

### **LOCATION: *Timber and Prairie***

It will surprise no one who knows Illinois history that a position near the margin between timber and prairie is probably the most frequently named advantage. Much later in the century certain Illinois manufacturing interests promoted the absurd notion that prairies had once repelled early settlers. Nothing could be further from the truth. Federal land surveyors, usually the first to leave written impressions of Illinois, were almost universally favorably impressed with the farming potential of the prairies. Occasionally they found some tracts of prairie they thought might be too wet to farm, but no one can read their notes without feeling their high regard for most prairie as an agricultural environment. Settlers of the 1830s felt the same way. Prairies were the best places to farm. Where both timber and prairie were available, prairie was seen as the superior agricultural environment. Early farmers recognized the black prairie soil as more productive than the brownish timber soil. It remains so to this day. In northern Illinois, where we have a good record of initial field location, almost ninety percent of all initial fields were taken from land that the government surveyors had classified as prairie (Walters and Mansburger, pp. 289-296). Only when prairie was not available did early settlers begin their farming in wooded areas. 1836 advertisements are filled with praise for prairies.

Of course, the most valuable locations were those near the margin of timber and prairie: prairie for farming, timber for fencing. Early settlement often followed the line between woodland and tall grass. Roads often looped in order to follow the same boundary zone. A great many new towns were laid out in this narrow zone and it was extensively discussed in town advertisements.

Everyone knew that lack of trees was an important limiting factor in the settlement of central and northern Illinois. Agricultural expansion deep into the prairies was slowed primarily because of the lack of trees for fencing. An early Tazewell County settler, William Brown, who had spent his winter splitting rails for fence explained the situation in a letter to his cousin: "A large portion of the state can not be settled for want of timber" (Jesse Fell Papers, William Brown to J. Brown, 1 March 1829). Because livestock did not have to be confined, all cultivated land first had to be fenced. Therefore, the initially farmed tracts of prairie were usually those closest to woodland. Town advertisements heavily stressed the combination of rich prairie soil with nearby woodland. Some have argued that prairie soil closer to groves was somewhat lighter and more easily tilled. Such an environment, with scattered trees is often referred to as savanna. Unfortunately, savanna was not a classification commonly used by the government surveyors. There is one case where an advertisement uses the term. On the deed laying out the town of Savanna in Iroquois County is the phrase "in the heart of and (as the term Savanna imports) on a beautiful, gently rolling dry and rich prairie."

Time and again town advertisements tell readers that the area has a combination of farmable prairie and nearby timber. The advertisement of the failed town of Franklin is typical. "The town of Franklin is handsomely situated on a beautiful prairie, one mile north of John Walker's on salt creek, surrounded with a heavy grove of timber, also a large and wealthy settlement immediately in the surrounding neighborhood." Lexington, in McLean County, "Is located on the margin of a fine rolling prairie, near a large an inexhaustible body of the best timber the county affords, sufficient to justify the immense settlement already being made." In the 1830s, areas of good prairie and a nearby supply of timber were very attractive to settlers. The advertisers of Plymouth in Hancock County emphasized this point. "Three years ago this small rich and beautiful prairie, was an uninhabited waste. It now has forty-seven farms, and at an average of 7 to the family, boasts a population of more than 300, and from the commanding eminence of the town, the eye embraces almost the whole of this busy population and its thriving industry."

Some prairie was too flat and too poorly drained to farm. For this reason town advertisements usually add qualifying words. They often say rolling prairie, or elevated prairie, or prairie that is being rapidly settled. In central Illinois this often meant the crests of moraines and areas closer to well-developed stream networks. Town founders avoided land that was poorly drained or too far from woodland to be immediately farmed. The largest area of such land in Illinois was the heart of the Grand Prairie which extended over much of what would become Ford County, eastern McLean and Livingston counties, northern Champaign County, and substantial parts of Iroquois County. This was the last area of Illinois to be settled, the location of the last county in Illinois to be formed, and the largest part of the state to have no 1836 towns.

## **FEATURES**

The heading "Features" deals with advantages of the town itself. It lists those things which are located in or very close to the new town and those that will soon be established. Under Features will be found things like town design, squares, special attractions, and mineral wealth as well as other advantages related to site, that is, local features of the specific place where the town had been built. Examples of site features include slope, drainage, soil, springs, and groundwater. Site was of great importance in the early survival of new towns. Site was closely related to health and therefore it played an important role in town advertising. Disease was associated with dampness. Vapors rising from wet land, miasma, was held to be the cause of malaria. Buyers needed reassuring. Often personal testimony was called upon to answer potential concerns about damp air. The advertisement for Appanouce remarks, "the proprietors having lived nine years at this place can recommend it in point of health [as] equal to any on the Mississippi." The ad for Illinois City plays on the prevailing fear of damp places: "the fertile prairies and handsome groves combine to makes this place very

desirable for any person wishing to live in a populous place and to be secure from those contagious diseases which towns situated on large water courses are exposed to." Geneva was said to be free from the worst of all plagues, "fever and ague." In a similar manner the proprietors of Liberty write, "Without intending to detract anything from town sites and improved villages along out large river—and without denying to them the paramount advantages they possess in point of navigation and commerce, still it will not be denied that they are without exception more or less unhealthy, and that their inhabitants are more liable to periodic visitations of disease, than situations less exposed to the miasma exhaled from the rivers of the country."

For inland towns the key word was often, "elevated," which reflects concern with both personal health and practical drainage. For Illinois pioneers, small differences in elevation were very important. Half a century would pass before many Illinois towns would have anything recognizable as modern storm sewers. Almost without exception, any new place not intended as a river port was built on land that stood slightly higher than surrounding areas. Even in the 1850s, railroad engineers looked for higher land when they located stations. In the 1830s, keen-eyed speculators constantly sought out small increases in elevation with good drainage. The people who located early towns were not stay-at-homes. They often spent long hours crisscrossing the prairie looking for good land. On 5 August 1835 Bloomington speculator Jesse Fell wrote to his parents in Pennsylvania, explaining that he had been ill, but he was careful to add that his sickness was not because his new home in Bloomington was unhealthy. His medical problems, he assured them, were only because he had been riding 60 or 65 miles or even 80 to 85 miles a day, and that on such journeys his clothing very often wet with no place to dry it. But he told them that he was doing well and in the last six months had made not less than 5,000 dollars speculating in land (Fell papers). On one of these journeys, in 1834, Fell was riding in the company of Bloomington's founder and state legislator, James Allen. Traveling from Decatur to Bloomington, the two were attracted to a low mound just north of the Salt Creek bottom. Allen remarked to Fell that this would be a beautiful site for a town and a future county seat. Fell agreed, although there was later some difference of opinion about his exact words. Some recalled he said, "A good suggestion." Others remembered his words as, "A capital suggestion." The two land dealers quickly called on John D. Dwight, deputy surveyor of Macon County, where the site was then located. Wright laid out a town on the hill. The name Clinton was selected. All that was left was for Allin to arrange with his friends in the legislature for a new county to be created in such a way that its boundaries placed their town near its center. Clinton became the seat of De Witt County (*History of De Witt County*, 1882, p. 57, p. 151).

Minerals are featured in some advertisements. The most common of these is coal, often called "stone coal" to distinguish it from charcoal. Coal is included in ads for Bristol, Centerville (Pike County), Chili, Columbus, Dresden, Grafton, Kingston, Keithsburg, La Grange, Le Roy (Crawford County), New Market,



Pittsburg, Stephenson, Tamarawa, and Windsor. At Pittsburg rights to mine coal were specifically excluded from the lots sold. The other resource frequently mentioned is building stone, sometimes called "freestone." Bedrock outcrops in all but one of Illinois's counties. There is an impressive group of early stone houses along the valley of the Illinois River, but the number of stone houses in early Illinois was very small. Building stone was probably most important for use in foundations; stone barn foundations are still common today. Wood rotted quickly in the damp Illinois soil, making stone or brick essential at ground level. Lime was another common use for stone and is specifically mentioned in the Geneva advertisement. The most detailed notice of stone comes in the advertisement for Portland that praised building stone, "dove marble," and lithographic stone.

Many advertisements praise the design of the new town. Lot width, public squares, regular street plans, land to be donated for churches, seminaries, and other buildings are commonly mentioned attractions. At New Canton a street called "the 'Avenue' is 100 feet wide, the remaining streets are 60 feet wide and cross at right angles. Among the lots will be several of five acres." Right angles and straight streets were important to potential settlers. Pioneer settlers found nothing romantic or desirable in the narrow lanes or random clusters of buildings; too many of them had grown up in unplanned places. For the same reason wide streets were important. In Newport the proprietors proudly mention that the main streets were 100 feet wide. Flat ground could also be an advantage, especially if a rival suffered by comparison. The proprietors of Clifton wrote, "The surface of the ground upon which the town is located is much more regular and better suited for improvement than Alton."

Providing buildings helped sell town lots. A splendid college would be built at St. Mary's. At Virginia the proprietor asserted that when the county was divided he would build the new courthouse. Structures were critical to proving the permanence of the new towns. At Lacon lots would be sold only to those who intended to improve them. Prices on lots might be reduced for those who built substantial homes and free land might be offered for some kinds of structures. At Clifton lots were given to those who would make improvements.

Mills and mill sites were commonly advertised features of the new towns. Both water-driven and steam mills were common. Often the proprietors would take care to mention that both sawmills and gristmills were located nearby or would soon be built. In fact, the distinction is somewhat academic as the same mill would often grind grain or saw lumber according to the season. Steam mills could be built anywhere, but waterpower was more restrictive. Cutting a race across the neck of a stream meander could generate power for a small mill, and this was a common pioneer practice. Where more power was required, falls or rapids were needed. Powhattan advertised such a location at the foot of the Grand Rapids of the Wabash. The great waterpower available was stressed in the Stephenson advertisement and machines of every description were being placed

on the rapids. The Geneva advertisement praises the town's combination of water power "immediately in front of the town that may be improved at small expense" and inexhaustible supplies of timber make the town ideal for "processing building material."

Beauty was impossible to quantify. Yet, in town advertisements, the word is used again and again. A great many ads praised the beauty of their new town locations, extolled the beauty of the surrounding prairie, and often became nearly poetic in describing the views and vistas that would greet new settlers. Only dark hearts could believe these references to beauty to be no more than words of slick salesmanship. Many were clearly genuinely deeply moved by the beauty of the Illinois prairies.

## PROPRIETORS

Who was promoting these new towns? For each advertisement the heading Proprietors covers those who listed themselves as proprietors in the advertisements, or rarely those who said they were "agents" for proprietors. In general these were the same people who platted the towns, but there are exceptions. Usually several individuals are listed as proprietors of a given town, but single names are not uncommon. Appendix A lists all of the town advertisers. Generalizing about these proprietors is difficult because here are simply too many names, too many individual stories, and often too little biographical information. In addition, the wealthier and more prominent the founder, the more likely they are to have left written accounts of their lives. A great majority of proprietors were individuals or groups of individuals who seem to be acting for themselves, but towns were also founded and advertised by civic and corporate bodies. The Illinois and Michigan Canal commissioners laid out several towns, but the commissioners were not listed as a group in any of the advertisements. At Collinsville the proprietor was an estate. In some towns the proprietors were acting for the county commissioners; Stephenson, Tremont, and Winnebago and are examples. New Canton, in Pike County, was built on section 16 and its proprietors were the trustees of the school section.

The names for an overwhelming majority of proprietors appear in connection with only a single town. Who were these people? Where details are known, we can identify some clear types of individuals. Many were residents of the immediate area where the town was founded, often small merchants and landowners. A substantial number lived in larger nearby towns—St. Louis, Chicago, Springfield, Jacksonville and Bloomington are examples—these people often worked in concert with someone living at the new townsite. A few people can be documented as local agents working for moneyed interests outside the state.

In an effort to put flesh onto the people who founded the new towns it may be helpful to look at one group of proprietors: those individuals who published

advertisements for more than one town. These multiple proprietors provide a starting place for examining the men who turned empty space into town lots. If advertising is the criteria, then Joseph Duncan was clearly the town-founding champion of Illinois; Duncan is listed as proprietor of five advertised towns, more than any other individual. Duncan signed, or subscribed, in the language of the time, to advertisements for five places. Four of them were in western Illinois: Oquawka and Shokokon on the Mississippi River in Warren County, Warsaw in Hancock County, and Brooklyn in Schuyler County; his only eastern Illinois speculation was Marshall on the National Road in Clark County. Duncan lived in Jacksonville, Illinois. He was a popular Democratic politician, and governor of Illinois from 1834 to 1838. Although he never used the title governor in his advertisements, no effort was made to conceal his involvement. Many other well-known Illinois political figures openly took part in 1830s townsite speculation, and only the most partisan of foes seemed to regard such action as inconsistent with the exercise of public office.

A number of people were listed on two or more advertisements. Charles C. Perry led a group of investors that came to Illinois and bought out the interests of Andrew Phillips at what was known as Phillips Ferry, which crossed the Illinois River. Here, operating as Charles C. Perry and Company, twin towns on opposite sides of the river, Brussels and Valasco, were platted. Perry was an Ohio land speculator and it is not always clear when he was acting for himself and when he was working as head of a group. Town lot speculation must have been a sidelight for Phillips. Between July of 1836 and February of 1837 he also purchased a great deal of Illinois land from the government, at \$1.25 an acre. Perry opened a store and a tavern at the ferry and hired Otis Parsons to run his Illinois operations. Many lots in the towns were sold. In 1837 Perry sold a half interest in his Brussels and Valasco to group of other men, some from Illinois. Both towns failed, and lawsuits about the property dragged on for many years. There is no evidence that Perry ever lived or intended to live in Illinois. A similar pair of towns was laid out a little further upstream on the Illinois, Bridgeport and New Bedford. Here the proprietors were also involved in both places. Harvey M. Jarboe was another multiple town founder. He was a Pike County farmer, who had been born in France, came to Illinois in 1827, and remained until his death in 1854. A man named Philip Jarboe was also one of the proprietors of the two towns. He may have been Harvey's father; and, although he entered some land here, he does not seem ever to have an Illinois resident. Working with Jarboes on the two towns was David Hodges, who held large tracts of land on the east side of the river in what was then Morgan County.

Russell Post, who signed his advertisements "R. Post," was also responsible for two town ads. Post was a proprietor of both Postville and Waynesville. The towns were located on what was believed would become the main route between Alton and Chicago. Both places were involved in attempts to create new counties of which they would become the seats of justice, and both were unsuccessful. Postville soon lost out to Mt. Pulaski as the seat of Logan County, although in the

1850s the seat was moved back to Lincoln, which was in substantially the same location as Postville. Mr. Post's attempts to create a new county with Waynesville at its center also failed, largely due to the manipulations of the formidable Fell brothers of Bloomington, who arranged for the new county to be centered around their own speculation at Clinton. Waynesville survived, but was left distant from the center of the new county. Post was a colorful character with a fondness for betting on slow horses and a highly personal interpretation of the state's marriage laws. He shares the distinctions of having been issued the first liquor license in DeWitt County and having been granted the county's first divorce; it is unclear if these activities were related. Until the mid 1840s Post kept a store in Waynesville when public accusations of adultery forced him to seek refuge in Ohio.

Captain John B. F. Russell was well-known proprietor. He was responsible for both Rockwell and Concord. Russell was a professional soldier who had come west in 1832 to take part in the Black Hawk War and was the man who arranged to move the remaining Potawatomi out of Illinois. In 1835 Russell brought his family to Chicago and became a land agent and real estate dealer.

Other double proprietors include a pair of central Illinois lawyers. One was Stacy B. Opdycke, who advertised the towns of Edinburg and Wesley City. He was a New Jersey born business figure and land speculator, who, in 1850, was living in Springfield and was a friend and neighbor of Abraham and Mary Lincoln. His occupation at that time was listed as merchant. He was a wealthy man and in the 1830s had entered large tracts of federal land. Another of the men who subscribed to both of these towns was David Prickett. Opdycke and Prickett had married sisters, Charlotte and Hannah Griffith. Prickett was a publisher, lawyer, and Illinois legislative cohort of Lincoln. Several other well-known central Illinois figures were involved with these towns.

Jesse Fell, mentioned earlier, was a Bloomington financier and real estate speculator who developed several 1836 generation towns and in the 1850s he would again be deeply involved in townsite speculation. Asahel Gridley was a close friend and frequent business associate of Fell. He was a Bloomington lawyer, banker, and all-purpose troublemaker who would soon be known as the richest man in McLean County. In the 1830s Fell and Gridley were involved in many overlapping schemes. Both men spent the remainder of their long lives promoting the interests of central Illinois. To this group of multiple speculators must be added the firm known as "Stone Manning and Company," which is listed among the proprietors of several Illinois towns across the river in Illinois. The firm's men were well known St. Louis merchants who frequently advertised goods for sale in Illinois papers. Later they became involved in Missouri lead mining.

What do these multiple speculators have in common? With the notable exception of the Brussels and Valasco connection, they were people who lived close

enough to their new towns to keep an eye on the towns. It seems likely that they knew the potential townsites before the real estate boom of the 1830s and many remained active in Illinois development long after the boom had past. Except for the Jarboes, where we are not sure, the multiple proprietors were all professional, or at least experienced, real estate operators. There are many overlaps in their businesses and their travels. Had they all gathered together on a hot July day in 1836 to swat greenhead flies and talk about the new town, there would probably have been few introductions.

Were the people who signed the town advertisements those who pocketed the proceeds from sale of town lots? This question is important, but largely unanswerable. Lawyers of the 1830s, like those today, were skilled at hiding ownership. Land deals were often complex, and future researchers frustrated by phrases like “other valuable considerations.” We can be certain that in later periods of Illinois town lot speculation real ownership of new towns was sometimes hidden. Everyone in central Illinois knew that Asahel Gridley was responsible for creating the town of Gridley; it was after all named for him and he made certain that the railroad stopped at his new town, but it was just hard to prove. Without a great deal of digging in land records it is impossible to prove how extensive hidden beneficial ownership was. A personal guess is that those signing Illinois advertisements usually included those who, at least initially, stood to gain or lose from the sale of town lots. Certainly, many proprietors stood by their towns and worked hard for their success.

## **TERMS**

A great many sellers offered credit. Often the terms of this credit are given in the advertisements. Other advertisements did not state terms, but said credit would be available. Some advertisements simply said that terms would be “liberal” and made known at the time of sale. Cash-only sales were rare. Unfortunately very little has been written about individual buyer and seller credit in early Illinois. Indeed, town advertisements such as these may prove to be an important source of information on the subject. Perhaps the most important conclusion to draw about credit sales of town lots is that the terms offered varied greatly. Length of time required for repayment differed from a few months to four years. Interest rates on the unpaid balance could be anything from six to twelve percent. Down payments ranged widely. Special provisions used to attract certain kinds of buyers were common. Even the terminology for the always-required “security” for credit was far from standardized. Successful credit buying in the 1830s clearly required and good grasp of legal jargon and considerable agility with mental arithmetic.

A few examples demonstrate the thickness of the credit jungle. Keithsburg in Mercer County provides typical terms. One quarter of the payment was due at the sale; the remainder was to be paid at six, twelve, and eighteen months.

Interest on the unpaid balance is not stated. At Canal Port the terms were simply said to be "Liberal and made known at the sale." At Cicero terms would be made known at the sale, but could be learned in advance by asking the proprietor. At Clifton the down payment was ten percent. At Concord it was fifty percent. At the April 1836 sale lots in Grandville nothing at all was due at the sale; two equal payments were to be made on 1 September 1836 and on 1 March 1837; interest on the unpaid balance was seven percent. At Brussels the payments were spread out over four-month intervals. At the sale of New Canton, where town lots were being auctioned along with nearby school land, credit was available for the school land but not for the town lots. At Wesley City interest was not mentioned, but there was a twelve percent premium for cash.

For credit, sellers demanded security. However, the language they used differed. At Chippewa the seller was asked to give "a deed of trust" or "by approved endorsers." The latter phrase presumably meant co-signers, who were known to the seller and who become equally liable for the loan. Co-signing on failed loans was frequently and bitterly remembered by settlers, and ranked with ague and blizzards among of the great hardships of the Illinois frontier. By 1837 even a sound businessman like William Butler Ogden found himself in serious financial difficulty because of this practice (McLear, p. 289). The phrasing used at Collinsville was "six percent on a mortgage." At Postville the words used were "approved paper." All of these were forms of what lawyers called notes, and plain folks I.O.U. s.

Many sellers tried to attract desirable settlers with special incentives. At Chili and at Columbus a discount of twelve percent was offered to those who put up a building worth one hundred dollars. At Kinderhook the benefits were offered a one-quarter reduction in price for erecting, "a good and comfortable dwelling house." At Marshall payment would be "made easy" and liberal encouragement given those who would actually locate there. At Princeton no interest would be charged to those who built within one year. At Newport a share of the revenues would go toward improving the new town. Many sellers offered land for churches, academies, and seminaries. Some stated that they would pay for improved roads.

Then as now, actual deeds were not issued until full payment had been made. At New Canton this was made clear in the advertisement. Credit was offered for one, two, or three years; and, after all of the payments had been made, the proprietors would issue a warrantee deed. The language used at Readfield was, "executing to purchasers, bonds for a title, when the money is all payed [*sic*]." At Shokokan the phrasing was, "Deeds will be made on payment of the last installment." Once title was granted, the buyer could then have the deed recorded. This means that if the payments were not made in full, no deed would be recorded, and history might very well have no surviving record of the sale. Because so many towns failed and because so many people were forced into bankruptcy, default rates were probably substantial.

## NOTES

Under the heading of Notes will be found fragments of additional information about the towns advertised. This heading often includes information about the towns not contained in the advertisement itself and brief comments of the fate of the town or about distinctive features of the advertisement.

### ILLINOIS ADVERTISEMENTS 1835-1837

#### ALBANY (1)

**County:** Logan (Sangamon when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 4 June 1836, p. 4.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 25 June 1836, 11:00.

**Location:** At the crossing of Salt Creek at Rocky Ford. It is 30 miles to Springfield, Tremont, Decatur, and Havana.

**Features:** Beautiful high rolling prairie, dense population, heavy timber, limestone quarry, mills, will be county seat. There is a limestone quarry nearby.

**Proprietors:** John Donovan, John Wright.

**Terms of Sale:** Credit of six months with approved bond and security.

**Notes:** This Albany is well-known because it was surveyed by Abraham Lincoln, who was then deputy surveyor of Sangamon County. Donovan had eight lots and Wright six.

#### ALBANY (2)

**County:** Greene

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 9 March 1836, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of 200 town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 24 April 1836.

**Location:** “The Illinois river is acknowledged to be the best navigable stream in the state and is soon destined to be a great thoroughfare from the Mississippi to the lakes and from the lakes to the Mississippi. The prospect of a speedy completion and the Illinois and Michigan Canal can have no other effect than to draw trade through the channel. The importance of creating a market town on the bank of the river, where there is a good landing for steam boats at all stages of water will be duly appreciated, when it is considered that the county of Greene and the surrounding counties for fertility of soil are surpassed by no other in the state, and at no other point between Naples and the mouth of the river has public attention been directed to the site of a town which is in any respect the equal of Albany.” The town is 38 miles from the mouth of the Illinois River and located in Section 25 and 26 of Township 12 North, Range 14 West.

**Features:** The site is level, healthy with nearby timber and prairie. Stone is available and there is a ferry across the river. “The proprietors, with perfect confidence in its location, extravagantly recommending its situation, or crying down other towns on the river, as unsuitable or improper locations, have laid out the town of Albany, on Saturday the 24 [th] day of April 1836, 200 TOWN LOTS [will be sold].” The proprietors will ensure that purchasers that a fourth of the purchase price will be expended for public purposes for the benefit of the said town.

**Proprietors:** Rescarrick Ayres, Sherman Coss, Enos Ayres, Lafayette M’Crillis.

**Terms:** One-tenth in cash, the balance in 12 months, with a twelve percent discount for cash.

**Notes:** Enos Ayres was a storekeeper in the town of Whitehall, Greene County, Illinois. He later moved to Chicago where he became an important real estate developer. Rescarrick Ayers, was a relative of Enos, and later became his father-in-law.

**ALBION** (1836 advertisement)

**County:** Edwards

**Source:** *Louisville Daily Journal*, 18 July 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 24 September 1836 “in the vicinity of the courthouse.”

**Location:** “Albion stands of the high ground between the Great and Little Wabash Rivers, surrounded by a beautiful rolling and fertile prairie country; it is two miles from steamboat navigation, and the southern and eastern mails go



through it four times a week.” The town is located 60 miles north of Shawneetown, 40 miles south of Vincennes, 16 miles east of Fairfield, 20 miles west of New Harmony, 10 miles west of Grayville.

**Features:** “An additional number of mechanics is wanted in the place, particularly saddlers, carpenters and coopers.”

**Proprietors:** Not mentioned.

**Terms of Sale:** Not mentioned.

**Notes:** See also *Alton Telegraph*, 22 March 1837, p. 5. The settlement and post office here originally dated from 1818.

**ALBION** (1837 advertisement)

**County:** Edwards

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 15 March 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Part of an extended sale of three Indiana and four Illinois towns with the title “Towns for Sale in Indiana and Illinois.”

**Date of Sale:** The sale will begin on Saturday, 25 1837 April, or on the following Monday, and will continue for one month moving from place to place among the seven towns. People interested in the sale will gather in Indiana at Mt. Vernon or in Illinois at the falls of the Wabash.

**Location:** Sixteen miles from Mt. Carmel. It is on the railroad route from Alton and St. Louis, via Mt. Carmel and Louisville.

**Features:** Albion is the seat of Edwards County. One of the healthiest spots in western America in a beautiful prairie well calculated for a grass, grazing, and grain growing country in an area considerably improved by English farmers. “In the town a large number of lots will be offered for sale, and some in the vicinity.”

**Proprietors:** Robert Dale Owen, Alexander McClure, William Wilson, John M. Robinson, George Fowler (for self and others), Jacob Leshner, Thomas H. Hinde, Scoby Stewart, J. L. Wilson.

**Terms:** Liberal and will be made known at the first place that the group meets.

**Notes:** See Pocahontas, Powhattan, and Tecumseh.

## **ALLENTOWN**

**County:** Christian (Sangamon County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 2 July 1836, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 23 July 1836, with a barbecue at the sale.

**Location:** 28 miles from Springfield and Shelbyville and 27 1/2 miles from Decatur. It is on the route from Springfield to Shelbyville and Terre Haute.

**Features:** The town is on a mail route, in an area of large settlement, with timber on the east and prairie on the west. It is a beautiful and fertile location, on the main stage route. There is no place to trade nearer than Shelbyville. Soon a store and a tavern will be in operation.

**Terms:** Terms of six and twelve months with approved credit.

**Proprietor:** Robert Allen, P. C. Latham, M. Mobly, H. F. Barrett, W. Iles, D. C. Good.

**Notes:** The town was a contender to become the seat of newly created Christian County but was defeated by nearby Taylorville. It was probably largely gone by 1840. The town does not appear on the 1838 Weeks Jordan map, but the old route of the Springfield-Shelbyville road is shown. In 1838 P. C. Latham was a trustee of the town of Springfield, Illinois.

## **APPANOUCHE**

**County:** Hancock

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 9 June 1836, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 11 July 1836.

**Location:** On the east bank of the Mississippi river, nine miles above the head of the Des Moines rapids, sixteen miles from Carthage, the county seat. Located on fractional Section 2, township 7 north, range 8 west.

**Features:** Well suited to all commercial purposes, surrounded by one of the best counties in Illinois, possessing a good landing on the river. There is a ferry

crossing to “the New or Blackhawk Purchase [Iowa] fifteen miles below Burlington. The proprietors have lived at the site for nine years and can recommend it as a healthy location.

**Proprietor:** Edward White, Samuel S. White.

**Terms:** One third in three months, one third in nine months, and the balance in eighteen months, with good security.

**Notes:** Becomes Niota (?).

**AUGUSTA** (today Florence)

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 4 December 1835, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Friday, 25 December 1835, “on the premises.” At 10:00 A.M.

**Location:** “Augusta is located on the banks of the Illinois river at the residence of Mr. John Roberts,” in fractional section 14 and 15 in township 5 south range 2 west. Nearly equal distant from Philips and Mecham’s ferry. “The nearest point to Pittsfield the seat of justice for Pike county. It is seven miles from Jacksonville in Morgan county and presents the most direct route from Jacksonville through Pittsfield and Atlas to Louisiana in Missouri.”

**Features:** “Said town has every appearance of a healthy location having no stagnant water in the neighborhood and having never been inundated...”. Augusta is noted for the beauty of its situation with “a gentle acclivity from the river to the bluff, commanding an extensive and delightful view, both up and down the river, and for the excellence of its landing (having at all times, an abundance of water for the largest boats)...” An excellent road has been constructed from the town to the top of the bluff. The road continues to Pittsfield. A ferry license has been obtained. The surrounding country is in a high state of cultivation.

**Proprietors:** R. R. Greene, Austin Barber, T [homas] H Worthington, James Davis.

**Terms:** One fifth in advance, the remainder of credit of twelve months with security.

**Notes:** In 1840 the name was changed to Florence. R. R. Greene and another man were partners who kept a store in nearby Pittsfield. In 1841 they moved to Florence, but by 1847 had returned to Pittsfield. The other founders were also Pittsfield men.

## **BEARDSTOWN**

**County:** Cass (Morgan County when platted)

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 30 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of the sale at auction of 200 lots.

**Date of Sale:** Wednesday, 18 May 1836.

**Location:** On the state road from Alton to Galena, and on the road from Springfield to Rushville and Quincy.

**Features:** There is an immense business already taking place in this town. It is at the termination the canal intended to connect the Illinois river with the Wabash opposite the Indiana canal.

**Proprietor:** F. Arenz.

**Terms:** The purchaser will pay one-third on the day of sale, and execute notes payable in one and two years at ten per cent interest per anum.

**Notes:** This advertisement also appears in the *Chicago American* and the *Missouri Republican*. This was an 1831 speculation revived for the 1836 boom. There was already a substantial settlement here by the time the advertisement was published.

## **BENTON**

**County:** Christian (Sangamon County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 21 May 1836, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 11 June 1836.

**Location:** Near the geographical center of the state, on the state road from Springfield to Terre Haute. It is twenty-five miles from Springfield and thirty miles from Decatur, Shelbyville, and Hillsboro.

**Features:** Rolling ground, timber and prairie. Mail comes three days a week. Because of its distance from Springfield it must become a county seat. A plat of the town may be seen at the Springfield Hotel in Springfield.

**Proprietor:** David Robinson.

**Terms:** One third in three months and the balance in nine months with security.

**Notes:** Located near the southeastern corner of Sangamon County. This is one of several places in Illinois to claim the name Benton.

## **BLOOMFIELD**

**County:** Adams

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 19 February 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** the first Monday in April 1836.

**Location:** "On the NE 3 in 8W, about nine miles from Quincy in the direction of Macomb"

**Features:** A healthy neighborhood well supplied with water and building rock. The site affords a fine view of the surrounding neighborhood. Industrious mechanics and other businessmen are invited to view the site for themselves.

**Proprietor:** Thomas Thompson.

**Terms:** Credit of six, twelve and eighteen months, with good security.

**Notes:** A short advertisement. The legal description, quoted above, is incorrect, which cannot have been encouraging to buyers. It was located about ten miles from Quincy and remains today as a very small place.

## **BLOOMINGDALE**

**County:** Logan (Tazewell when platted)

**Source:** *Tazewell Telegraph*, 3 January 1837, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** Letter signed, "Observer" combined with a shorter note signed "One who knows."

**Date of Sale:** Not given.

**Location:** It is 25 miles from Tremont, the county seat, 35 miles from Springfield, and "...protected on the north and west by the timber of Sugar creek and surrounded by rolling and undulating prairie and offers, in point of beauty of location advantages that cannot be overlooked." The state road running from Springfield to Ottawa, and the road from Tremont to Decatur pass through it.

**Features:** "Among the most beautiful portions of the upper part of Illinois, no one who has traveled and who has used common means of observation would omit to class the site of Bloomingdale in the south eastern part of the county of Tazewell." It must be a place of large settlement and the place of business for a large surrounding country. New mechanics are rapidly settling there. There is a nearby sawmill. The letter signed by "One who knows adds that it would not be improper to observe that a colony from the state of Rhode Island has recently entered fifteen thousand acres pf land including a portion of the town site and are about to unite their capital and enterprise in improvement projects. It goes on to predict that Bloomingdale will become among the most important interior towns of the west.

**Proprietor:** Not given.

**Terms:** Not given.

**Notes:** The signature of the first letter is printed as "Observer" in the first letter but mentioned as being signed by "Observer" in the second letter which is directly below. This advertisement is also found in the *Sangamo Journal* and in the *Alton Telegraph*. The original advertisement is dated 17 November 1836.

## **BOWLINGREEN** (Bowling Green)

**County:** Fayette

**Source:** *Illinois State Register* 6 August 1835.

**Form of Advertisement:** The heading is "Bowlingreen!!!"

**Date of Sale:** 8 August 1835.

**Location:** On a high and beautiful eminence overlooking the road to Chicago via Shelbyville, twenty miles from Vandalia and twenty miles from Shelbyville, and at the point where the road from Vincennes to Jacksonville will cross. It is in one of the most thickly settled parts of the state.

**Features:** There is good coal three to four miles from the town and an abundance of rock one mile from the town. North of this eminence is a rich timbered country, well watered with good springs; and an excellent stream affording a sufficient quantity of water for mills and Machinery. North of the town is rich prairie and timbered country. There is a spring of excellent medicinal water recommended by several physicians.

**Proprietor:** Thomas C. Kirkman.

**Terms:** Credit twelve months.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with the abandoned Woodford county town of Bowling Green, which was originally platted when it was in McLean County.

## **BRIDGEPORT**

**County:** Scott (Morgan County when platted)

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 30 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Public sale of Land in New Bedford that also includes material on Bridgeport.

**Date of Sale:** Not stated.

**Location:** On the east bank of the Illinois River, developed by the same proprietors as New Bedford, opposite this town, on the west bank of the river.

**Proprietors:** David Hodges, Philip Jarboe, J. H. Coggeshill, H[arvey]. M. Jarboe, Stone Manning and Company.

**Features:** It is much higher than any other site on the east bank of the river from Meredosia to the mouth, excepting only the highest part of Naples. The rich bottoms of the Illinois river enables farmers to winter large numbers of cattle and hogs with but trifling expanse and large quantities of are stock raised in the neighborhood. Ports on the river are important in the packing of beef and pork. Area is rich with a dense population. The country in back of the river is thickly settled by an industrious and expanding population.

**Terms:** Not Stated.

**Notes:** See New Bedford. Stone Manning and Company, listed among the proprietors, were merchants dealing in dry goods, boots, shoes, hats, bonnets, groceries, and drugs who advertised heavily in the *Alton Telegraph*. The town plat was vacated. This town should not be confused with two other places of the same name in northern Illinois. In the 1840s Harvey M. Jarboe appears as a road viewer in Pike County.

## **BRIGHTON**

**County:** Macoupin

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 11 May 1836, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** Sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Wednesday 1 June 1836 at the public house of Mr. Starkweather. "Another town having been laid off in the vicinity and offered for sale it has been thought of the Proprietors of Brighton to sell at the same day with a view to accommodate the country people and especially to test the relative merits of Brighton." The other town was presumably Bristol.

**Location:** On the survey of the railroad to Springfield made by General Mitchell, twelve miles from Alton, at the first stopping point.

**Features:** Land for a school and church will be donated. It is on the highest ridge in the neighborhood with an extensive view. It has coal, timber, rock, and fine water. The proprietors have donated two lots for school purposes.

**Proprietors:** David R. Griggs, Herman Griggs, S. Griggs.

**Terms:** Not stated.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with Brighton Park in Cook County. David R. Griggs had earlier established the first store in Pike County; the town of Griggsville was named in his honor.

## **BRISTOL**

**County:** Macoupin

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 11 May 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of 100 lots.



**Date of Sale:** Wednesday, 1 June 1836 at the premises.

**Location:** Located on Brown's prairie twelve miles north of Alton, on the route surveyed by General Mitchell for the Springfield and Alton railroad and noted as the site for a future town. The distance from Alton is suitable for a depot.

**Features:** A beautiful location of the edge a prairie with a prosperous settlement surrounding it. The location has rock stone and coal.

**Proprietors:** John I. Ellet, John Van Antwerp, Nathan Scarlett, Robert Smith

**Terms:** One third in four months, one third in eight months, and one third in twelve months.

**Notes:** The land was later incorporated into the town of Brighton. The platting of two towns very close to each other was common in 1836 generation of towns as both places sought to take advantage of the same locational advantages. John Van Antwerp was an Alton hardware merchant who advertised heavily in the *Alton Telegraph*. See notes about the sale under Brighton. It is not to be confused with Bristol, in Marshall County, which was vacated in 1840.

## **BROOKLYN (1)**

**County:** St. Clair

**Source:** *Missouri Argus*, 21 April 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Thursday, 27 April 1837 10:00 A. M.

**Location:** On the Mississippi river opposite central St. Louis above Bloody Island and at the point where the National Road will strike the river. Ferryboats can be seen at all times. It is the termination point of the roads from Jacksonville, Springfield, Alton, Edwardsville, and Vandalia leading to St. Louis.

**Features:** The banks of the river here are high and beautiful and not subject to inundation nor subject to wash by spring freshes. The place offers cheap land, abundant timber, and an abundance of beef and pork are brought here to pack. A canal will be made to link the site with Cahokia Creek. There is a valuable steam saw mill here and another building. A valuable flouring mill and a dry dock will be built.

**Proprietor:** Not given.

**Terms:** One third in six months, the balance in two years at seven percent interest.

**Notes:** Plat vacated in 1845. Not to be confused with Brooklyn in Massac County, which became Brookport, or with Brooklyn in Schuyler County (See below).

## **BROOKLYN (2)**

**County:** Schuyler

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 20 August 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of 1000 town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 27, 28, and 29 October 1836.

**Location:** It is on the Lamine river, nearly in the center of the Military tract, on a direct line from Beardstown on the Illinois River to Commerce on the Mississippi, by way of Rushville and Carthage. It is also on a line from Quincy to Peoria, and from Mt. Sterling to Macomb. One of these lines is already a state road. The other two have been petitioned and will be established in the ensuing spring. The city of Brooklyn is in an ideal situation for business being 14 miles from Rushville, 40 miles from Quincy, 18 miles from Macomb, 25 miles from Beardstown and 70 miles from Peoria.

**Features:** "History has not yet given an account of a country, (in point of health, beauty and fertility,) equal to the one surrounding this city. The Lemine river is a most delightful stream, affording water at all seasons of the year for immense machinery – it has been examined by competent engineers, from its mouth to the to the city, the estimated cost to construct dams with locks to make it a perpetual navigable stream, does not exceed \$30,000, the water power gained by the construction of said dams must and will pay 10 per cent. Per anum on the stock, exclusively of tolls on the stock. The proprietors think the stock worth a premium of 10 per cent. They intend having a company chartered at the next session of the legislature of the state to accomplish this great and desirable object."

"The proprietors have no hesitancy in saying that there is no hazard in the purchase of lots in this city, as there is no city on any canal in the United States, which has advantages equal to Brooklyn in point of health, beauty and soil; the farmer producing from one half to double the quantity of wheat and corn over any other state in the union." The best mills in the state are now in successful operation in the immediate vicinity off the city where a large quantity will be reserved for use in the city. The number of 1000 lots will be laid off for a

beginning many of which will be sold at different cities throughout the United States.

**Proprietor:** W. C. Ralls, Joseph Duncan, Benjamin Clark, Dr. Green.

**Terms:** Ten percent on all sales will be required on hand and the balance in six and twelve months.

**Notes:** A complex and interesting advertisement. It is unusual in being the only one noting that specifically mentions lots will be sold in other parts of the country. The following newspapers were asked to publish the advertisement weekly for one month and send their bills to the proprietors: *Saturday Courier*, Philadelphia; *Courier and Enquirer*, New York; *Advertiser*, Louisville; *Eagle*, Maysville, Kentucky; *Republican* [St. Louis]; *Palmyra Courier*, Missouri; *Argus*, Quincy; *Patriot*, Jacksonville; *Journal*, Springfield. A post office was briefly in operation, but the town quickly failed. The name survives as a Schuyler County township. Not to be confused with Brooklyn in Massac County, which became Brookport, or with Brooklyn in St. Clair County.

## **BRUSSELS**

**County:** Morgan

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 15 July 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town in both Brussels and Valasco.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 17 July 1837.

**Location:** On the Illinois river, "at a place long and extensively known as Philips Ferry on the Indian Road leading from Quincy by Griggsville to Jacksonville Springfield & c."

**Features:** "The time for speculation is not past. SALE OF LOTS in Valasco and Brussels," in Pike and Morgan counties on opposite sides of the river. Charles G. Perry promises to have a horse ferry of the latest improved plan in operation. "As these are among the few townsites of the many which have been presented to the public as objects of speculation which the proprietors think will [at] least commend themselves by personal examination of all who desire to acquire an interest with a view to future [development] with every confidence that they will not go away disappointed." The proprietors have erected a large frame house in Brussels for a tavern and will erect a similar one in Valasco.

**Proprietor:** Charles G. Perry, principal proprietor.

**Terms:** One-fourth payable each quarter.

**Notes:** See also Valasco. The plat of Brussels was vacated in 1847.

## **BYRON**

**County:** Champaign

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 5 November 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of the sale of town lots. A handbill with similar contents was circulated at the time of the sale.

**Date of Sale:** Friday, 11 November 1836.

**Location:** The location is near the geographical center of the county and very near the center of Big Grove, which is about six miles square and contains as heavy a body of timber as any in the state.

**Features:** Big Grove is surrounded by rich prairie, much of which is now in cultivation. The proprietors believe the county seat will be fixed in this location. Urbana was fixed as the county seat without due regard to the wishes of a majority of the population; Urbana having only two families it. There is a dry goods store and two houses building. It is closer to most families in the county than Urbana. A mill will be built. The proprietors will open a road to Bloomington; this road will not meander but pass directly through the town to Danville. A railroad is being planned.

**Proprietors:** William Hill, William Corray, Francis Clements, G. W. Withers, James R. Coe, and Jesse Fell.

**Terms:** Credit on twelve months if approved bond is given.

**Notes:** Only about seven lots were sold and the town was a failure. Not to be confused with Byrons in Fulton, McHenry, and Ogle counties. For more on this failed town see W. D. Walters, "Urbana's Rival," *Illinois Magazine* 22:6 (December 1983), 6-8. Both Fell and Withers were well-known residents of Bloomington, Illinois. J. W. S. Mitchell was from Champaign County.

## **CALEDONIA**

**County:** Alexander

**Source:** *Illinois State Register and People's Advocate*, 23 June 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of Town Lots.

**Date of Sale:** 4 July 1837, sale of 200 lots.

**Location:** On the west bank of the Ohio river fourteen miles above the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and three and a half miles below the Grand Chain and the city of Napoleon. "It is the first ground above the junction where there is a good landing for steamboats at all seasons of the year and not subject to inundations."

**Features:** "Six thousand feet of white pine lumber from the Allegheny, and ten hundred thousand shingles, have lately been landed at the town. And the making of brick has commenced; so that persons desirous of building will find the material at hand." A number of sawmills are in the vicinity. The section of the country is rapidly settling. The landing is accessible to steamboats of the largest class at all seasons, "affording the merchant and shipper the advantage over all the valley of the Mississippi above them during the seasons of low water and ice." It is the most desirable location for a city west of the Mountains.

**Proprietors:** H. L. Web(?), for himself and other proprietors.

**Terms of Sale:** One quarter in hand and the balance in one and two years.

**Notes:** The advertisement includes the statement that lots will be offered immediately after the "sale made by order of the court by the administrators of John Riddle" deceased. It is unclear if Riddle's lots are included in the 200 lots offered for sale on 4 July or are in addition to those lots. The Illinois legislature incorporated this place and permitted it to extend the town square. Caledonia is the southernmost of the advertised towns.

## **CALUMET**

**County:** Cook

**Source:** *Chicago Democrat*, 8 June 1836, p. 3; 2 March 1836, p. 1; 8 June 1836, p.3; 25 May 1836, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of auction of town lots together with a letter "Calumic River" signed An Explorer of the West.

**Date of Sale:** 11 June 1836, auction in Chicago.

**Location:** At the mouth of the Calumet River, a long navigable river which penetrates fertile land. It is the most important point on Lake Michigan. Many towns of importance have grown up near the mouths of streams tributary to the

Calumet river, Thornton, Athens, and Manchester. Canals will be made to the Kankakee and Des Plains. The letter wonders why such an important site as this has so far been neglected.

**Features:** On a peninsula of land of unrivaled fertility with waterpower. Settlers as well as speculators should be interested. Roads to the interior are underway. There is an abundance of timber.

**Proprietors:** Lewis Benton of Calumet; E. K. Hubbard, Chicago; George W. Dole, Chicago.

**Terms:** Twenty-five percent down with the remainder in six and twelve months with interest.

**Notes:** Several brief advertisements for Calumet appear in the *Chicago Democrat* at various dates; their form differs. The date shown above is longer and more detailed. An interesting variation in October 1835 states that because the proprietors are fully aware of the value of these lots they will not be sold at auction. By March of 1836 the note about not selling at action was gone. The location is now part of Chicago.

## **CANAL PORT** (Canalport)

**County:** Cook

**Source:** *Chicago Democrat*, 3 February 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of 100 lots.

**Date of Sale:** Thursday evening at Garret's auction house, Chicago, in the evening.

**Location:** At the head of navigation on the south branch of the Chicago River at the point where, according to surveys, the canal strikes the river.

**Features:** "Its situation can not fail to make it a place of importance, possessing as it does facilities for communication by vessels with the lake and commanding the head of the canal." It is laid out on high and dry prairie and not liable to be inundated.

**Proprietors:** Hiram Pearsons, Richard I. Hamilton.

**Terms:** Liberal and made known at the sale.

**Notes:** The town was later incorporated into Chicago. In May of 1836 a delegation assembled here to celebrate the opening of construction on the Illinois and Michigan Canal. Its name survives in Chicago's Canalport Avenue. Hiram Pearsons was treasurer of the city of Chicago 1837-1838.

## **CARLISLE**

**County:** Clinton

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 26 July 1836, p. 2. There is a supporting letter, untitled, signed "A. Subscriber."

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of town lots with a supporting letter.

**Date of Sale:** 8 September 1836 in front of the City Hotel in St. Louis.

**Location:** At the head of navigation on the Kaskaskia river, a stream navigable for steamboats up to 100 tons for six months of the year and for keelboats throughout the year. The supporting letter says the river is navigable by steamboats for eight months of the year by boats of up to 150 tons. It is on the great road from Louisville to St. Louis. It is 50 miles by coach from St. Louis.

**Features:** Carlisle has been selected as the seat of justice in Clinton county. The situation is high and dry on a commanding ridge surrounded by one of the most beautiful prairies in the state with abundant timber, stone coal, and brick for building. A large water saw and grist mill is now in operation. New public buildings are being erected. Bridges have been chartered. Many of the lots being offered are within 100 yards of the public square and along the river. There are liberal reservations for a church and an academy. A large body of public land near the town is suitable for entry. Carlisle must become the depot not only for Clinton county but also for Bond, Fayette, Marion, Jefferson and Washington counties. There is daily mail. The Illinois Central Railroad will, no doubt, pass through the place. Another railroad from Alton, by Carlisle, to Mt. Carmel on the Wabash has been chartered.

**Proprietor:** Sidney Breese, Mound Farm, Clinton County. A number of St. Louis men are mentioned as people the buyer can make reference to about the town: James Clemens, Charles Muliken, Enoch C. Merch, George K. M'Gunnegle, Andrew Christy, and Lewis Morris.

**Terms:** Not mentioned.

**Notes:** The supporting letter expands on most of the advantages mentioned in the advertisement. Newspapers to copy are *Alton Telegraph*, *St. Clair Gazette*, and *Sangamon Journal* [sic]. Page 1 of the same paper includes a notice of a

petition to remove the Fulton County seat to Centerville. Four other towns with this name and spelling were platted in Illinois. Sidney Breese was a very important early Illinois real estate developer. He is closely associated with the Illinois Central Railroad and the city of Cairo. Breese served on the Illinois Supreme Court for many years.

## **CENTERVILLE**

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 18 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Sale of lots "in the town", form of sale not specified.

**Date of Sale:** 29 April 1836.

**Location:** Southwest part of Section 7, T3S, R5W at the junction of the roads leading from Quincy to Philips Ferry and Hannibal to Naples; 25 miles from Quincy, 6 miles from Philips Ferry, 25 miles from Hannibal, 23 miles from Naples, 25 miles from Pittsfield, 20 miles from Griggsville."

**Features:** "The site is elevated and beautiful and the surrounding country is not surpassed by any in fertility of its soil, abundant supplies of timber, water, stone and stone coal – all of excellent quality. There is one coal bank within a mile and a half."

**Terms:** "One fourth in hand and the balance in six months proprietors being given notes with personal security."

**Proprietor:** James A. King.

**Notes:** Many towns with this name existed in Illinois. The spellings of "Centerville" and "Centreville" were both in use.

## **CENTREVILLE**

**County:** Schuyler

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 17 September 1836, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of town lot auction.

**Date of Sale:** Auction, 15 October 1836.



**Location:** Geographical center of the “rich and fertile county of Schuyler” on Lamine River.

**Features:** “on the Lemoine [*sic*] River where the great western stage route from Terre Haute Indiana crosses via Springfield, Beardstown, Rushville and Quincy on the Mississippi. The Lemoine river is perhaps one of the most beautiful of the streams in the Western country affording an abundance of water power for an immense machinery and also affording a safe and sure navigation for flats and other boats at most seasons of the year.” Other advantages include \$ 50,000 for improvements in the river, mail stage three times a week and distance from neighboring towns.

**Proprietors:** John M. Ebey and F. T. Glen.

**Terms:** Credit of 6, 12 and 18 months.

**Notes:** Probably a paper town. Located in section 21 of what became Woodstock Township, on Crooked Creek.

## **CHESTERFIELD**

**County:** Macoupin

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph* 6 July 1836, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of lots.

**Date of Sale:** 9 July 1836.

**Location:** At the forks of the Macoupin. It is ten miles from Carlinville, 5 miles from Springfield, on the state road from Carlinville to Carrolton 21 miles away. The town is five miles from the Springfield to Alton railroad.

**Features:** The surrounding area is thickly settled with a wealthy and industrious population. “It must be a place of much importance.” A plat may be seen at the Recorder’s office in Carlinville or at residences of the proprietors.

**Proprietors:** Jesse Peebles and Aaron Tilly.

**Terms:** Twelve months with approved security.

**Notes:** Chesterfield survives as a small community and a township west of Carlinville.

## CHILI

**County:** Hancock

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 5 February 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Wednesday, 4 May 1836 at 10:00 A.M.

**Location:** "The subscriber with a view as well to public as to private interest will lay off a town of the above name, on the northwest quarter of section 30, and the west half of the south half of thirty, in township three north of the base line, and range six west of the fourth principal meridian, near the south line of Hancock county. The particular advantages of this place, so clearly to be seen by a slight glance at the chart of the military tract induces him confidently to invite the public attention to it." The town is 18 miles from Warsaw, on a direct route. 35(?) miles from Rushville, 13 miles from Carthage, 25 miles from Quincy, and on a direct line from Carthage to Columbus the seat of Adams county 16 miles away.

**Features:** Its location is unsurpassed for extent of prospect, richness, beauty and variety. Water is certain to be found at twenty feet. The neighborhood contains timber, building rock and stone coal. It is a judicious location for the establishment of an academy; the proprietor pledges himself to contribute one fourth of the neat [*sic*] proceeds of the sale of the twenty acres on which the town is located.

**Proprietor:** Elisha Worrell.

**Terms:** One third of the money in hand and the other two thirds in one and two years with a discount of 12 per cent on the amount of the sale to such as shall put up some house, shop or store of the value of one hundred dollars or more, within one year from the day of sale.

**Notes:** At foot of the advertisement is the notice, "The *Rushville Journal* will please insert the above till day of sale, and send their bills to this office." Elisha Worrell was a well-known early settler in Hancock County. The town was perhaps named after Chili in Monroe County, New York.

## CHIPPEWA

**County:** Madison

**Source:** *Missouri Argus*, 23 September 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Wednesday, 5 October 1836, 100 lots to be sold. "A steamboat will be prepared to take all who may desire to attend the sale from St. Louis, and to return them without charge. A handsome bill informing what boat and the time of departure, will be distributed a day or two previous to the sale."

**Location:** On a beautiful plain on the eastern bank of the Mississippi at the mouth of the Wood river and exactly opposite the mouth of the Missouri. It is the only good site for a town near the junction of those rivers. A survey was made here for a town plat in 1818, but, because of the general commercial depression and the death of the proprietor nothing has been done with the enterprise until now. It has a superior landing, "lying in the precise line from Vandalia to Jefferson City, between which places the National Road is to be made as direct as possible. The Mississippi river here deeply bending eastwardly in the state, rendering this point most commanding of the business and travel of a large section of Illinois."

**Features:** "An opportunity is now offered to the public presenting [*sic*] one of the best speculations of the year." It is in beautiful and productive country rapidly filling with enterprising and industrious people. Building materials are plentiful. Stone and coal are nearby and abundant. "Chippewa is laid out on a liberal plan having large streets and alleys intersecting at right angles, a large public square, and four lots of 120 foot square each, for religious societies, six lots for public schools, one for a mechanics hall, one for a city hall, and a site reserved for a ship yard. The title is indisputable." One tenth of the proceeds of the sales will go for improving the wharf and roads in the vicinity.

**Proprietors:** A[ndrew]. R. Skidmore, Andrew Christy, A. L. Mills, J. B. Conn, Jonas Newman, and [illegible] Morton.

**Terms:** One fourth in hand, or at ninety days with approved security, one fourth in eight months, and the remainder in eighteen months in notes secured by deeds of trust or by approved endorsers.

**Notes:** Skidmore was an Edwardsville, Illinois, merchant who died in California.

## **CICERO**

**County:** Sangamon

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 16 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of Town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 30 May 1836.

**Location:** The town is one mile south of Constant's grist and saw mill, ten miles northeast of Springfield, on the state road from Decatur to Ross's ferry on the Illinois river by which a great deal of traffic to the military district will pass.

**Features:** Advantages include high and beautiful prairie, nearby grist and saw mills, stone and coal. It will command trade north of the Lake fork of the Sangamon river, Buffalo Heart grove, Clear creek, Wolf and Fancy Creek, and the Sangamon river.

**Proprietors:** Archibald Constant and John Latham.

**Terms:** Will be made known at the sale or by calling on the proprietor.

**Notes:** Probably never occupied. The plat was vacated in 1845.

## **CLAYTON**

**County:** Adams

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 17 July 1835, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of town.

**Date of Sale:** 10 August 1835 at Parker's Store.

**Location:** Section 34, T1N, R [illegible] W. Half way between Quincy and Rushville.

**Features:** Lots are 59 feet in front 177 feet in rear.

**Proprietor:** C. K. McCoy.

**Terms:** One fifth in hand, the remainder at six, twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four months.

**Notes:** A very brief notice with few details. The town was sold along with 80 acres of "first rate" prairie land.

## **CLIFTON**

**County:** Madison

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 21 September 1836, p. 3 and a longer version *Alton Telegraph*, 4 March 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 10 October 1836 at premises.

**Location:** On the east bank of the Mississippi river four miles above Alton. The route of the Cumberland road as surveyed in 1829 passed about a half mile north of this place. But should the National road strike the river at Alton there is a strong possibility of it taking the northern bank of the Mississippi to a point opposite Portage de Sioux which it must make in preference to the Missouri Bottom which is a shorter distance.

**Features:** A beautiful site with a good landing. There are quarries, timber, coal, waterpower and a mill. One half of the proceeds of the sale will be applied to improving the grading of the streets adjoining the river. There is now a steam flouring mill. Twelve to fifteen laboring men will be wanted at liberal wages. By 1837 the population was 67.

**Proprietors:** Daniel Tolman, Hail Mason.

**Terms:** Ten percent at the time of purchase and the remainder in twelve months.

**Notes:** Tolman's Clifton Mills are advertised in the *Alton Telegraph* as a place for grinding grain and sawing lumber. Not to be confused with Cliftons in Clinton, Iroquois, or Whiteside counties.

## **COLLINSVILLE**

**County:** Madison

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 9 April 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Sale of mill and town lots in Collinsville from the estate of William H. Collins including lots in Collinsville.

**Date of Sale:** Wednesday, 17 May 1837, 10:00 A.M.

**Location:** Northeast quarter of section 33, town 3 north range 8 west. The town is halfway from Edwardsville to Belleville, on mail routes between those two towns and on the road from St. Louis to Vandalia. It is twelve miles from St. Louis, twelve miles from Belleville, and twelve miles from Edwardsville. It contains a meetinghouse and parsonage, flourishing school under the management of an accomplished teacher, two stores, a saw and flouring mill and several mechanics. Adjoining is an extensive tannery, several quarries of building stone, and within a few miles an inexhaustible body of coal.

**Features:** The situation is high and healthy and “surrounded by a large settlement of industrious, temperate and prosperous farmers, who have very generally expressed a desire to promote the growth of a village in this place.”

**Proprietor:** Elizabeth Collins guardian of the infant heirs of William Collins, deceased.

**Terms:** One fourth in hand, one fourth in six months, one-fourth in nine months, and one fourth in twelve months secured by notes bearing six percent interest and a mortgage on the property sold.

**Notes:** Technically an estate sale, but the contents are substantially like other town lot sales of the period. Details of the mill are also given. This an 1837 expansion of an existing place.

## **COLUMBIANA**

**County:** Greene

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 2 July 1836, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 14 July 1836.

**Location:** Site is known as Bushnell’s Ferry. “For several years past the business of Carrollton and a great part of the interior of Greene county south of Apple creek and north of Macoupin, has passed through this point. In the first on account of the road being decidedly superior at every stage of water to the Illinois river; and in the second place on account of the safe and convenient place for landing goods; also, The town of Columbiana is several miles nearer Carrollton in Greene county, and the bottom land much narrower than at any other point.”

**Features:** “There is a large and convenient lot of land situate[d] on the river, to be appropriated for a lot for a steam mill, and arrangements are now being made by which it will speedily be completed; also an extensive warehouse will soon be completed, which will afford every facility for receiving and forwarding goods or produce; also an extensive establishment for packing beef and pork will be in operation by the fall season, at which time a market well be open for the same.” One store is in successful operation. There is an abundance of stone of a superior quality within one mile. A large and extensive forest lies in the vicinity. One of the finest sections in the Western states, known as Bluffdale, lies immediately to the east. Liberal donations, amounting to \$1,500 have already been made for making a good road from Columbiana to Carrollton. A rail road

from Carrollton to the Illinois river will soon be constructed. It is a healthy settlement, higher and dryer than any other point within the limits of the county.

**Proprietors:** Solomon Bushnell, L. W. Link, and H. W. Merewether

**Terms:** Terms will be made known on the day of the sale.

**Notes:** Columbiana was the ferry terminal on the east bank of the Illinois River opposite Kampsville in Calhoun County. The ferry was sometimes known as the Columbiana Ferry and the site of the town was later called "Old Columbiana."

## **COLUMBUS**

**County:** Adams

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 6 January 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Tuesday, 1 March 1836, 9:00 A.M.

**Location:** The west half of the northwest quarter of section 18, town one south of the baseline, range six west of the fourth principal meridian. Located near the center of Adams county. It is 14 miles from Quincy and 45 miles from Rushville on a direct line. A road has been staked out from Quincy to Meredosia. At no distant day there will be a railroad connecting the Mississippi with the Illinois rivers. It is also on a direct line from Pittsfield in Pike county to Carthage in Hancock county, about equal distant from these places, and on the most eligible route for a road from one to the other.

**Features:** The place has been designated by the county commissioners and by the state legislature as the site to be voted for at our last August election as the seat of justice of Adams county. The location is known for salubrity, fertility of the surrounding country. It will make a judicious location for the building of an academy, for which the proprietor will donate one third of the proceeds arising from the sale of the 40 acres on which the town is located. At no distant day it may become the seat of learning for the Military Tract. There is an abundance of building rock and coal.

**Proprietor:** Willard Graves.

**Terms:** One fourth in hand at time of purchase, the other three-fourths to be paid in one and two years. A discount of 12 percent would be given to purchasers who put up a house of store of the value of one hundred dollars within one year from the date of sale.

**Notes:** The town was laid out for William Graves 12 December 1835. A later advertisement may be found in the *Illinois State Gazette*, 8 March 1837. Other places of the same name existed in Douglas, Pope, Randolph and Scott counties. Columbus was Quincy's rival in the local county seat wars, which led to the decision to divide Adams County and create a new county centered on Columbus. However, the new county was never organized (Sublett 1990, pp. 76-96).

## **CONCORD**

**County:** Iroquois

**Source:** *Chicago American*: 19 June 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of 50 village lots.

**Date of Sale:** 25 June 1836 in Chicago at Garrett Brown and Brother.

**Location:** The town is on the north side of the Iroquois river opposite the town of Montgomery, "at the crossing of the traveled road" leading from Chicago to the Wabash and Danville. The river is navigable for twenty-five miles above the town and below the town to the Kankakee. There is a strip of timbered land one to five miles wide bordered by a fertile prairie. "The river, as will be seen by reference to the map, has been formed by nature to be the great channel of communication between the Illinois, and Wabash which could be united by a canal of a few miles in extent.

**Features:** The site is beautiful, county courts are held here, there is a large hotel, and contracts have been let for a steam saw and grist mill.

**Proprietors:** Henry Moore, John B. Kenzie, J. B. F. Russell, Fr. Payton, and others.

**Terms:** Half in cash, the balance in six months at seven per cent.

**Notes:** The town was surveyed by Richard Reese on 20 and 28 May 1836. No town developed on the site; but as late as 1880, it had still not been vacated. Montgomery, mentioned in the advertisement, was platted 9 May 1835 and was the first county seat. Other towns of the same name existed in eight other Illinois counties, including the 1836 town of Concord in McLean County. The name may come from Henry Moore's native place in Massachusetts.



## DRESDEN

**County:** Grundy (La Salle County when platted).

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 2 May 1835, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Thursday, 4 June 1835 at the Missouri Hotel in St. Louis where a map of the town will be exhibited.

**Location:** On the west bank of the Illinois river three quarters of a mile from the junction of the Kankakee [Kankakee] and the AuPlain [Des Plaines] River "on a direct route off the state road which is to be located this summer between Bloomington and Chicago, which will be a continuation of the main road from St. Louis to Chicago, through Springfield, shortening the route one day's journey." The Illinois and Michigan canal route is surveyed through the town in the center of which there will no doubt be two locks. It is 50 miles southwest of Chicago, 30 Miles northeast from Ottawa 12 miles southwest of Julirtio [Joliet]. The Kankakee is navigable for steamboats of the second class 100 miles for nine months of the year, 40 miles. .

**Features:** The Kankakee, Au Plain, and DuPlain abound in water privileges. Many nearby places with coal. Lands surrounding the town have rich prairie soil, abundant timber and are decidedly healthy.

**Proprietors:** George E. Walker is listed as "agent."

**Terms:** Half cash and half in six months.

**Notes:** The town's name survives in Dresden Island, the Dresden locks, and the Dresden power plant.

## DUNCANSVILLE

**County:** Sangamon

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal* 29 June 1835, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** "Village on Richland"

**Date of Sale:** Not given.

**Location:** The subscriber has laid out on the Pleasant Plains at the head of Richland creek "a town in village form." Duncansville is on the road from

Springfield to Beardstown. It is surrounded by a number of the wealthiest settlements in Sangamon and Morgan counties.

**Features:** It will eventually become a place of some business. "It is also the central point for the erection of machinery of every description."

**Proprietor:** W. D. R. Trotter.

**Terms:** Not given.

**Notes:** A brief, modest, and not very specific advertisement. The only advertisement I have yet found where the name of the town is toward the bottom of the text rather than at the start or in the early sentences. Not to be confused with the town of the same name in Crawford County.

## **EDINBURGH** (Edinburg)

**County:** Christian

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal* 14 May 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 18 June 1836, at the court house in Springfield.

**Location:** A single glance at the map will suffice to show that it is not far from the geographic center of the state, "It must necessarily be on what will become a great thoroughfare from Alton to Chicago, from Vandalia to Peoria, from Springfield to Shelbyville and many others. The great Central rail road must by terms of its charter pass through this place. It is 60 miles from Alton, 75 miles from St. Louis, 45 miles from Vandalia, and 30 miles from Springfield, Carrolton, Shelbyville, Hillsborough, and Decatur."

**Features:** The nearby country is densely populated. It is on high rolling ground "combining the advantages of timber and prairie." It is a beautiful site. Buyers should inspect the location for themselves. A plat of the town may be seen at the Springfield house opposite the courthouse in Springfield.

**Proprietors:** Benjamin F. Edwards, Caleb Wall, Jesse R. Thomas, and Stacy B. Opdycke.

**Terms:** One quarter down and the remainder in nine months with bond and security.

**Notes:** Eight men shared the plat of the town. Most were prominent Springfield political and financial leaders.

## **ELIZABETH**

**County:** Bond

**Source:** *Northwestern Gazette and Galena Advertiser*, 28 May 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** "The Town of Elizabeth" but no details of sale are given.

**Date of Sale:** Not given.

**Location:** Where the National Road to Alton crosses the Carlisle to Springfield road. It is thirty-nine miles east of Alton in T6N, R3W (3) [Third Principal Meridian].

**Features:** It is located on gentle rolling prairie elevated and healthy, limestone available, in a well populated country. The proprietor will improve with a seminary.

**Proprietors:** A. P. Field, Silas Smith, and David L. Wood.

**Terms:** Not given.

**Notes:** It is interesting to see how this brief and unremarkable advertisement was viewed in later years.

## **FAYETTEVILLE**

**County:** St. Clair

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 4 April 1837, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of Town Lots.

**Date of Sale:** 1 June 1837, 10:00 o'clock P.M. [presumably P.M. is a misprint]

**Location:** The town is on the Kaskaskia river on an elevation fifteen or twenty feet above the high water. The elevation is about the same on both sides of the river. The location was known as Puliam ferry. It is about 30 miles from St. Louis on the nearest and best road to Shawneetown. It is 60 miles from Belleville and

20 miles from Nashville, and about 40 miles from Chester on the Mississippi river.

**Features:** There is abundant timber. "There can be no finer location for building boats of any description. The navigation is now good for keelboats and flatboats and if boats were built at this place there would be a ready sale for them at the highest prices." The legislature has appropriated \$50,000 for the improvement of the river. A steam boat is expected to run on it this spring. The proprietors are making arrangements to build a steam saw mill and will build a church and school house as soon as arrangements can be made. A blacksmith would find a good situation here.

**Proprietors:** Thomas Puliam and Abijah Whiting.

**Terms:** Credit twelve and eighteen months.

**Notes:** The town survives southeast of Belleville on the west bank of the Kaskaskia River.

## FLORENCE

**County:** White

**Source:** *Western Sun and General Advertiser*, 2 July 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots; 50 lots are offered.

**Date of Sale:** 20 August 1836 in Grayville.

**Location:** Delightfully situated on the Wabash river about 80 miles above its mouth, "...and is the only site in the whole intervening distance where a good landing for steamers can be found, either the Illinois or the Indiana side of the river." "From this place the river is navigable for steam boats to the point of its junction with the Ohio, at all times when they run on the last mentioned river: and it is the only place below the Grand Rapids which is not subject to be overflowed in high water, on which a town could be advantageously laid out. Bon pas creek which flat boats descend from forty miles above its mouth, unites its waters with the Wabash at this point." A few miles north and west of it is the wealthy and flourishing settlement of Albion.

**Features:** Its situation is believed to be as healthy as any on the river. The country around it abounds in timber. It has an enterprising population. It commands not only White, but several adjacent counties. By the nature of its position it is destined to be the dividing point of trade between the northern and southern portions of the rich valley of the Wabash. A plat may be seen at the

house of Thomas Bishop in Vincennes, and at the office of O. B. Fecklin in Mt. Carmel, Illinois.

**Proprietors:** "Thomas Bishop and others."

**Terms:** Terms will be made known on the day of the sale.

**Notes:** The *Mt Carmel Sentinel* 7, September 1836, p 2, strongly objects to the claim that Florence is the only point between the Grand Rapids and the mouth of the Wabash. "Surely the writer must have been deplorably ignorant of the Wabash country, to have ventured an observation diametrically opposed to the actual facts.—Where are Mt. Carmel and Selma, the first and most flourishing town[s] in the eastern section of the state of Illinois?". Interestingly, the Florence advertisement also ran in the *Sentinel*, 2 August 1836, 4. Not to be confused with Florence in Ogle County, which became Oregon in 1843.

## FRANKLIN

**County:** DeWitt (Macon County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 12 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of 190 town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 15 April 1836.

**Location:** Located 20 miles north of Decatur and 10 miles southeast of Waynesville, "the town of Franklin is handsomely situated on a beautiful prairie, one mile north of John Walker's on Salt Creek, surrounded with a heavy grove of timber, also a large and wealthy settlement immediately in the surrounding neighborhood."

**Features:** There is a grist mill and a saw mill now raised within 200 yards of the townsite.

**Proprietors:** Elisah Butler and Mason Pain.

**Terms:** Twelve months credit with approved bond and security.

**Notes:** The town was laid out in January 1836 by the proprietors. It was completely abandoned by late nineteenth century. This was an extremely popular name and to be confused with places of the same name in Effingham, Hancock, Jasper, Kane, Morgan, Pike, Vermilion, and Williamson counties.

## **GENEVA**

**County:** Kane

**Source:** *Peoria Register and Northwestern Gazette*, 2 December 1837, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** Under the title "Geneva."

**Date of Sale:** Sale of lots by auction is not mentioned. Lots can be had of the agents or of the proprietor residing at the town.

**Location:** It is the seat of Kane County, on the Fox River, 36 miles from Chicago, on a direct line from Chicago to Galena. "The location of the town seat is not surpassed by any in the state, and its advantages, both natural and adventitious, give it the strongest assurances of its growth, and prosperity".

**Features:** "It has a water power immediately in front of the town that may be improved at small expense, and will be competent to propel as much machinery as may be attached to it. A saw mill is now under contract, to be in operation in six months as also are public buildings of the county. The facilities for processing building material are among its prominent advantages." Its situation immediately at the head of the 'Big Woods' and within two and within two and a half miles of the foot of the little woods, "both extensive forests abounding with the best timber for building purposes and inexhaustible in quantity", together with its extensive stone quarries of the purist lime both for building and making of lime are important advantages. Three streams of the purist quality are found within the town limits. The surrounding country is fertile both for farming and grazing. It is "free from the worst of plagues, the fever and ague."

**Proprietors:** Not given by name.

**Terms:** "on easy terms."

**Notes:** The above source copied the advertisement from the *Chicago Democrat*. The *Peoria Register* also includes a letter praising the area.

## **GRAFTON**

**County:** Jersey (Greene County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 30 April 1836, p. 2. A shorter notice appears in the *Missouri Republican*, 27 May 1835, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 26, 27, and 28 May 1836.

**Location:** At the mouth of the Illinois river. It is the natural depot for the whole of our country. With the Illinois and Michigan canal, "Chicago on the north and Grafton on the south are the termination points of the river and canal." Each will be an emporium of great commerce. "That such locations are the great central points of business needs no proof but the ...inspection of the map of any commercial country on the globe." Men of business from every section of the country express their unwavering conviction, "that Grafton must unavoidably become at no distant date a great commercial and manufacturing town. Located at the mouth of the Illinois, the termination on the South of the great chain of communication with lake Michigan this point is the natural depot of a wide region of the country".

"Such points are the natural depots of a country and in vain are wealth and influence and enterprise employed to divert the current of trade to other places. Obstacles may indeed be interposed, but they are temporary, the tide commerce soon sweeps away every opposing barrier and flows on with accelerated force to the point that nature has marked out."

"The Illinois and Michigan Canal, already commenced will open the markets of Albany and New York to the farmers of Illinois. The amount of agricultural products which the prairies of this state are capable of supplying is simply boundless. Extending through five degrees of latitude with more than sixty thousand square miles of soil hardly [a] spot of which can be found that is not susceptible of productive cultivation with a soil and gentle climate, who can calculate the amount of produce that will find a market through this chain of communication."

"The west bank of the river opposite to Grafton is distant only ten miles from St. Charles over a smooth and level prairie of the richest sort; while from St. Charles to the mouth of the Missouri only a distance of more than twenty miles along a river whose channel is constantly changing and whose current is almost irresistible."

**Features:** A rail road will be built to link St. Charles, Missouri, with Grafton. The Carrolton to Springfield rail road has been chartered. The area contains coal, iron, and timber—much of which is good for steamboat construction. There is a good safe landing and building stone. Seventy buildings are to be erected in the in this season. There are 150 blocks, each 200 x 300 feet, with twenty-foot alleys. Each lot is 50 x 90 feet. Streets are liberal and meet at right angles. Laborers, especially those connected with building can get immediate work at high wages and "great numbers" are wanted.

**Proprietor:** Paris Mason

**Terms:** Liberal and made known at the sale.

**Notes:** This is one of the longest of the 1836-era town advertisements and contains some of the most interesting arguments on location.

## **GRANDVILLE**

**County:** Putnam

**Source:** *Chicago Democrat*, 6 April 1836, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of the greater part of the town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 9 April 1836.

**Location:** It is located on northeast quarter of section 9, township 22 north, range 1 west. On the Hennepin to Ottawa state road in Putnam county.

**Features:** There will be a liberal donation for a seminary of learning.

**Proprietor:** Felix Margrave.

**Terms:** Half due on 1 September, remainder due on March 1 1837.

**Notes:** A very brief advertisement. Not to be confused with Grandville (Granville) in Jasper County that became Tennerytown.

## **GUILFORD**

**County:** Calhoun

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 21 September 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of Town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 2 and 3 October 1836.

**Location:** West bank of the Illinois River. "The Illinois and Mississippi river are about three miles apart and a good level road may be made at small expense from one river to the other." At high water this is the only point of access to the river.

**Features:** It is located on a beautiful elevated prairie, with springs, large lots, and is surrounded by good farming country some of which may easily be laid off into



towns. "The proprietors assert without fear of contradiction that Guilford is free from inundation and is held to be by old settlers as healthy a point as any on the river."

**Proprietors:** Jacob Fry, Isaac Darneil, and Thomas Cummings.

**Terms:** Liberal and made known at the sale.

**Notes:** There are several other towns with this name in Illinois.

**HAMBURGH** (Hamburg, see notes)

**County:** Calhoun

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 26 July 1836, p. 2. The sale will be continued from day to day until all lots are offered.

**Form of Advertisement:** Note of sale of 100 lots

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 15 August 1836.

**Location:** On the east bank of the Mississippi river 40 miles above its junction with the Illinois river, half way between St. Louis and Quincy, "it will be observed that this is the only high bank upon the east side of the Mississippi river, for one hundred miles below Quincy and consequently must be the landing place for an extensive country in Illinois and Missouri, as a reference to the map will show." A state road leads through the town which is a main landing for Boonelick and Salt River Settlement. It is 20 miles from Carrollton, 20 miles from Atlas, 30 miles from Pittsfield in Illinois, and 15 miles from Clarksville, 9 miles from Painsville, 12 miles from Auburn and 18 from Troy in Missouri.

**Features:** "As it is not intended to puff the town in handbills and newspapers it is only necessary to inform the public of the time and place when and where the lots will be offered for sale." Gentlemen wishing to select a situation for a business will examine the place for themselves. A healthy location with the best of timber of all kinds. There is an immense trade on both sides of the river, both wholesale and retail. It is a One acre of ground will be given to an individual who will agree to erect a steam saw mill within an agreed amount of time. "The situation for the mill is selected with a view to the landing of steamboats and the convenience of saw logs being brought to the mill by land or water, so as to be rolled directly on the carriage without the expense of the 'ways' generally used at sawmills; also the grain will be received by land on one side, and from the Boats on the other. The flour and lumber to be shipped without drayage at all stages of the water." In the immediate vicinity of Hamburg is a larger body of timber than at any other town on the upper Mississippi or Illinois river. Also available are

building stone and limestone. There is one spring convenient to all parts of the town and, "one very large spring might, at a trifling expense be, conveyed into the forth story of any house that might be erected." There is a spacious market space and a landing which is intended to be free to all steam and other boats. A liberal donation will be made for a public hotel. Gentlemen seeking a place of business are particularly referred to apply to captains and clerks for a description of Hamburg.

Good boats with careful hands are always ready to help people and stock across the river. A steam ferry boat will be build for the ferry next year and all persons who come to buy goods in HAMBURG will be free to cross both ways in the boats at their regular trips gratis.

**Proprietors:** John Shaw.

**Terms:** Terms made known on the day of the sale.

**Notes:** The advertisement uses both the spelling "Hamburgh" and "Hamburg." Inland from the town are the north and south prongs of Irish Hollow that provide scenic routes across the rugged limestone "Dividing Ridge" separating the Illinois from the Mississippi River.

**HANOVER** (today Metamora)

**County:** Woodford (Tazewell County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 24 June 1836, p. 4.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Friday, 1 July 1836 on the public square in Hanover.

**Location:** It is on the great thoroughfare from St. Louis via Jacksonville, Tremont and Chicago. The location has been known as Partridge Point. It is 25 miles from Tremont, 35-40 miles to Bloomington, 25 miles from the contemplated town of Lyons and on the direct line from Tremont to the Lyons colony.

**Features:** "Commanding a most splendid view of almost the whole northern part of Tazewell county and a large part of McLean county." There are large groves nearby and others in view. In the area are water power and mills. It is located on a beautiful and picturesque prairie. There is a steamboat landing within seven miles. There is mail three times a week. Eighty-acre tracts of timber will be sold at the same time. Crowmeadow and Partridge creeks are near. Mail is provided three days a week. Eighty timber lots will be sold at the same time.

**Proprietor:** William Davenport. A long list of people to refer to is included.

**Terms:** Will be made known at the sale.

**Notes:** An exceptionally long and detailed advertisement. This town was briefly the seat of Woodford County and retains its early courthouse.

## **HURON**

**County:** Menard (Sangamon County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 26 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 23 April 1836.

**Location:** On the Sangamon river. It is considered the most favorable location for a town in any region of the county in which it is located. It is located at the head of Peach Bottom, one of the most valuable tracts of land in the state. It is located at a favorite point for crossing the river called Miller's ferry. By conditions of its charter the Sangamon canal must pass this point. It is 30 miles northwest of Springfield, 30 miles north of Jacksonville, 30 miles east of Beardstown, and 30 miles south of Tremont. A great part of the travel from Jacksonville to the Military tract via Havana passes through Heron.

**Features:** At the point where the bluff strikes the river, Huron has high healthy and commanding location.

**Proprietors:** James Adams, William Carpenter, and David Pickford have been approved to sell lots in the town. Proprietors: Stephan T. Logan, James Adams, Gresham Jayne, John T. Stewart, David Prickett, Simon Francis, Ninian Edwards, Samuel Morris, William Carpenter, George Miller, S. W. Trent.

**Terms of Sale:** Credit of six and twelve months with approved security and bonds.

**Notes:** One of the longest running town advertisements. Abraham Lincoln's role in the development of this town is discussed in "Lincoln and the Town of Huron," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 49:4 (Winter 1956) 419-421.

**ILLINOIS CITY** (part of the former plat was later incorporated as Uniontown)

**County:** Whiteside

**Source:** *Tazewell Telegraph*, 3 January 1837 p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Not given.

**Location:** It is on the bank of the little Rock river and, "Bounded on three sides by Union Grove (which admits a dense population) and is 10 miles north of the Prophet's village: 11 miles east of the narrows, one of the best crossing places on the Mississippi: 48 miles south of Galena, and 120 miles west of Chicago." It is on the direct route from St. Louis, Alton and all of the counties south of McLean and Putnam in this state, to Galena and all the adjoining country. It is also on the direct route from Chicago to the great farming country west of the Mississippi in Iowa and western Illinois.

**Features:** A saw mill and a grist mill in a corner of the town and many nearby limestone quarries. It has springs, elevated and healthy location, fertile prairies and beautiful groves. There is a probability of the town becoming the seat of Justice of Whiteside County. It is free from those contagious diseases which towns situated on large water courses are exposed to. "It is laid out east and west, north and south. The lots are 66 feet front and 155 feet deep. The streets are all 66 feet wide, except court and main streets, which are 99 feet, running at right angles through the public square which is placed in the center of the town and contains about four and a half acres."

**Proprietors:** Haines and Boxer, proprietors.

**Terms:** Not given.

**Notes:** The date of the sale is not specified, but the original advertisement was submitted in 1833. This item also appears in Galena papers. This advertisement is unusual in the emphasis it places on lot size and on the public square. About two-thirds of all 1836-generation new town plats contained some sort of square, which helped the proprietors define higher value lots at the town center; but by the 1850s this percentage had declined to about half, and by the 1870s to about one third as railroad stations came to define town centers. Not to be confused with Illinois City in Rock Island County, a town that was vacated in 1845.

## **KEITHSBURG**

**County:** Mercer

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 17 July 1837, p. 3; also *Alton Telegraph*, 19 July 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 31 July 1837, at the townsite.

**Location:** Located on dry prairie immediately on the bank of the Mississippi, and at the mouth of Pope's River.

**Features:** "Pope's River is a beautiful stream and affords more privileges for Machinery, than any other in the Country its banks also abound in extensive beds of Coal, Lime, and Freestone. There is adjoining the Town, a large body of good building Timber, from which vast quantities of timber may be produced..." Adjoining country adapted for cultivation and is rapidly settling. It must necessarily become a place of considerable importance and the emporium of an extensive back country. It has the best and safest landing for steamboats on the East bank of the Mississippi."

**Proprietor:** Robert Keith.

**Terms:** One fourth at the day of the sale, and the rest in equal installments at six, twelve and eighteen months.

**Notes:** Robert Keith was a native of Scotland who had recently arrived in Illinois. The early growth of the town was extremely slow and by 1846 there were only a dozen families living there (*History of Mercer and Henderson*, pp. 119-120).

## KINDERHOOK

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 1 April 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of Lots.

**Date of Sale:** 19 April 1836.

**Location:** The north half of the southeast quarter of section 24, town 4 south range 7 west. It is on the direct road from Quincy to Atlas. There is also a road from this place to Pittsfield, the county seat.

**Features:** A healthy and pleasurable situation. A lot will be donated for a school house.

**Proprietors:** Chester Churchill and Bridge Whitten.

**Terms:** One fourth down, one fourth in twelve months, and the remainder in eighteen months. Any person building a good comfortable dwelling house upon any lot he may purchase within one year of the sale shall have one fourth of the last payment remitted.

**Notes:** The town is located where the valley of Hadley Creek meets the wide floodplain of the Mississippi River.

## **KINGSTON**

**County:** Peoria

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 19 July 1836, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of the sale of 100 town lots in Kingston and 20 lots in Pekin.

**Date of Sale:** Wednesday, 20 July 1836 at 11:00 A.M., at Savage and Austin.

**Location:** 20 miles below Peoria on the Illinois river. It is situated on section 26 of township 7 north range 5 east occupying a commanding position on the west bank of the Illinois river. There is not so good a landing on the west side of the river from Peoria for a distance of 90 miles or 70 miles below this point. No point on the river has so many of the qualities required for a flourishing town as this one. The nearby country is fertile, adapted to agriculture and as well timbered as any in the state. It is located at the principal crossing point of the river once known as Egman's ferry. It is fifteen miles southwest of Peoria and about ten miles east of Canton.

**Features:** There is an excellent steam saw mill which will be in operation near this place in the course of two to three weeks. Nelson Buck, deputy surveyor of the County of Peoria in the State of Illinois, certifies that he has laid the place off into blocks, lots, streets and alleys. From its location it must of necessity be the depot of Knoxville, and the Merchants and Harkness settlement. There is a space about 120 feet wide on the river reserved for a landing. The lots and streets are on a liberal scale being 50 feet by 129 feet and streets 66 feet and 98 feet wide. A reservation twelve acres of the town plot contains an abundance of stone coal and building stone, as do the bluffs behind the town. The purity of its water supply cannot be surpassed.

**Proprietor:** William Mitchell

**Terms:** One fourth cash, one fourth in six months, one fourth in eighteen months with the purchaser giving notes at six percent per anum.

**Notes:** Two different distances are given for the distance from this place to Peoria.

## **LA GRANGE**

**County:** Brown

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 23 June 1837, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 11 July 1837.

**Location:** On the west bank of the Illinois River at a place where the bluff makes so near an approach to the river that for a considerable distance to the north and south is one of the best landings on the river. It is the shipping point for an extensive area of the county including Mt. Sterling and a considerable portion of Morgan County. From the top of the bluff you can see Beardstown, ten miles above on the opposite side of the river.

**Features:** Limestone rock, stone coal, never failing springs. Title is indisputable.

**Proprietor:** P. W. Simpson (Rushville, Illinois).

**Terms:** One fourth in hand, and the remainder in three equal payments at six, twelve, and eighteen months.

**Notes:** Plat vacated in 1845. Places with the same name existed in Bond, Cook, Henry, and Peoria counties.

## **LACON**

**County:** Marshall (Putnam County when platted)

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 21 June 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots, 100 lots to be offered.

**Date of Sale:** 4 July 1837, 10:00 A.M.

**Location:** On the Illinois river 30 miles from Peoria, 20 miles below Hennepin. There is no prospect on the same side of the river for twenty miles below and thirty miles above the site.

**Features:** The proprietors know of no place on the Illinois river that investments can be made with as sure a prospect of advantage. The region on both sides of the river to which this town is market surpasses in excellence any in the state. It is thickly settled and rapidly improving. It is located on the second bank above the river. There are two large flour mills and a saw mill. It has four stores, a post office receiving mail by steamboat, a building used as a school house, an academy has been chartered, and three state roads. There is rich farming land, an abundance of stone and coal. The landing is always good at high water and improvements are also making it one of the best at low water. Lots will be sold only to those who plan to improve them.

**Proprietors:** Jonathan Babb, William Fenn, William Fisher, Samuel Howe, Robert Boal, Joseph Woodruff, William M. Halsted, Richard T. Haines, and Ira L. Fenn.

**Terms:** Credit of six and twelve months, note with security for payment. Purchasers are required to give notes for half the purchase price in six months from the time of sale and the other half within twelve months at twelve percent interest. Deeds will be given within ten days of the sale.

**Notes:** Advertisement is for an addition. The original settlement was called Columbia. The following papers are instructed to copy the advertisement: *Chicago Commercial Advertiser*, *Cincinnati Gazette*, *St. Louis Republican*, *Peoria Register*, and *Alton Telegraph*.

## **LE ROY (1)**

**County:** Crawford

**Source:** *Vincennes Gazette*, 1 October 1836, p. 4.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of Town Lots.

**Date of Sale:** 3 October 1836.

**Location:** On the Wabash River 24 miles north of Vincennes, two miles east of Palestine, seven miles south of Merom, just below the mouth of Lamotte Creek. The town is 70 miles east of Vandalia and "is the natural depot for trade of all of the country west of it to that place [Vandalia] and north west to the border of Sangamon county." It is the natural shipping point for pork, cattle, and corn. Located at Beautiful Lamotte Prairie.

**Features:** The town rises gradually from Front Street near the river. There is stone, coal, and a spring of the best quality. A steam sawmill is located here and



there are enough buildings for a grist mill. Some of the lots to be sold are along the river.

**Terms:** Ten percent cash and the remainder in equal payments at six, twelve, and eighteen months.

**Proprietors:** Samuel Brunner, John C. Clark, G. W. Fulton, Alexis Le Roy, R. D. Moffatt, and S. P. Striker

**Notes:** Not to be confused with Le Roy in McLean County (see below). LaMotte Creek and LaMotte Prairie, mentioned in the advertisement, have given their name to a Crawford County township.

## LE ROY (2)

**County:** McLean

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 21 November 1835, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** "Town of Le Roy."

**Date of Sale:** No auction notice in advertisement. See notes.

**Location:** About 16 miles from Bloomington at the intersection of the Bloomington and Danville state road with that leading from Shelbyville to Chicago.

**Features:** "This town has been recently laid off; and is pleasantly situated on the north side of Buckle's Grove on Salt Greek [*sic*]. The site of the town is as beautiful as can well be conceived – situated on the margin of a rolling undulating prairie on an eminence gently descending in every direction and commanding an extensive view of the surrounding country, with an open expanse of prairie scenery upon the north and west relieved by occasional groves of timber; no situation can well surpass it for beauty; nor is it in beauty of situation alone that it commends itself to our favorable regard." It is located in the heart of a rich and flourishing settlement with a large amount of timber of quality inferior to none in the state in its vicinity. There are several excellent mill sites. "A further description is deemed unnecessary, as all who wish to make investments will doubtless visit it before purchasing."

**Proprietors:** M. L. Covell and A[sahel]. Gridley.

**Terms:** No terms are mentioned in the advertisement.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with the town of the same name in Crawford County. Le Roy is an example where an existing cluster of small buildings were given inducements to a nearby location when an 1836 generation town was founded. In this case the move was about a mile from Buckles Grove to a slightly higher location. Although the advertisement does not mention an auction, other sources explain the sale of lots was held in December 1835 and that “bidding was spirited” (*Heritage of the Prairie*, p. 11). The first buildings were a mixture of log and frame structures. A second advertisement with different wording appears in the *Illinois State Register*, 28 January 1837, with the heading “To Merchants Wishing to find a Good Location.”

## **LEXINGTON**

**County:** McLean

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 23 April 1836, p. 4.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 30 April 1836, 10:00 A.M.

**Location:** The town is on the state road from Springfield via Bloomington to Chicago. It is one mile north of the Mackinaw River and sixteen miles from Bloomington. It is located one mile from the Mackinaw timber.

**Features:** The town is ” located on the margin of a fine rolling prairie near a large and inexhaustible body of the best timber the country affords, sufficient to justify the immense settlement already being made. Two saw mills and one fulling mill are already built with other building begun.”

**Proprietors:** James Brown and Asahel Gridley.

**Terms:** Twelve months with security.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with Lexington in Edwards County. Gridley was a wealthy Bloomington lawyer, banker, promoter who was closely connected with Jesse Fell.

## **LIBERTY**

**County:** Tazewell

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 2 January 1835, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Thursday, 12 February 1835.

**Location:** The great mail route from St. Louis via Peoria to Galena and Chicago passes through part of the town. It is within 40 miles of the geographical center of the state so a great thoroughfare must pass through this place. Ten miles east of Pekin the nearest point of the Illinois river and two miles from the Mackinaw river.

**Features:** There are good wells, it is healthy, and it is surrounded by the best farmland in the state. It is bounded by both timber and fine prairie. Lot size is five rods by eight rods [82 ½ feet by 134 feet], "Without intending to detract any thing from town sites and improved villages on out large rivers – and without denying to them the paramount advantages they possess in point of navigation and commerce, still it will not be denied that they are without exception, more or less unhealthy, and that their inhabitants are more liable to periodical visits of disease, than those settlements less exposed to the influence of the miasma exhaled from the rivers of this country."

**Proprietors:** Elias Bayless and John Studyvint. Originally platted by Walter Dillon.

**Terms:** One third in six months, one third in twelve months, and one third in eighteen months.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with Liberty in Morgan County or with Liberty in Randolph County, which became Rockwood.

## **LIMA**

**County:** Adams

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 4 September 1835 p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of Town Lots

**Date of Sale:** 26 September 1835, p. 3, sale of 50 lots.

**Location:** The town is located in Section 12, township 2 north range 9 west. It is on the state road leading from Quincy, two and a half miles from the bluff, occupying a high and commanding view of the countryside.

**Features:** High, dry, healthy and well watered. "Purchasers are invited to come and examine the location for themselves, as it is impossible to give a full description on short notice."

**Proprietors:** William Orr and Joseph Orr.

**Terms:** Credit of twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four months, one third due each period.

**Notes:** The name survives as the northwestern township of Adams County.

## **LOCKPORT**

**County:** Will

**Source:** *Chicago Democrat*, 27 July 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Wednesday, 3 August 1836, 10:00 A.M.

**Location:** Handsomely situated on the Des Plaines river, on the Illinois and Michigan Canal, one half mile above the first lock at the head of the basin. Plainfield is eight miles due west, Napersville [*sic*] 10 miles north. It is six miles north of Joliet and 31 miles from Chicago. The road to Chicago down the line of the canal passes through the town to the Yankee Settlement one mile to the east.

**Features:** Part bluff and part flatland. It is well watered with many available springs of never failing cold water. There are stone quarries on the bluff and nearby timber. A public house will be opened before the day of the sale. It will soon be a place of great importance. "The proprietor thinks the best recommendation this town can have is to sell on the grounds."

**Proprietor:** A. Runyon.

**Terms:** Liberal terms will be given at the sale.

**Notes:** Also in *Peoria Register and Northwestern Gazette*, 14 October 1837, p. 3.

## **LYNCHBURG**

**County:** Mason (Sangamon County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal* 12 August 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Sale of 256 town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 25 September 1837 at the townsite.

**Location:** Located on the neck of Sangamon county on the north side of the river. It is 13 miles from Beardstown, 20 miles from Havana. In a beautiful healthy, fertile and well watered district that is well timbered. It is close to the Illinois river and no town can be built on the Illinois between Beardstown and Havana. The country is fast settling with farmers. "Any person who will take the trouble to examine a map of Sangamon county, will come to the conclusion that an important town must grow up in this section of the county."

**Features:** On a beautiful lake.

**Proprietor:** George May.

**Terms:** Six months and twelve months with proper credit.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with Lynchburg in Jefferson County.

## **MARINE**

**County:** Madison

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 11 May 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 23 May 1836

**Location:** "The town of Marine is situated near the center of the settlement of the same name, 25 miles from Alton, the same distance from St. Louis and 12 miles from Edwardsville. It is at the point where the road from St. Louis to Greenville and Vandalia crosses the road from Alton to Edwardsville to Vandalia and Carlisle, also the point where the direct road from Carlisle to Collinsville, Carlton and Grafton will leave the Alton and Edwardsville road. It is on the direct line of the contemplated railroad from Alton to Shawneetown."

**Features:** It is in the midst of one of the strongest settlements in the state. There is no other town within twelve miles in any direction. Farmers in the vicinity who suffer the inconvenience of having to get supplies from so great a distance are anxious for improvements. A new large store is doing an excellent business. A gristmill, a tavern, and other improvements are contemplated immediately. "The site is a gentle ascent overlooking a prairie which for beauty and fertility of soil is unsurpassed."

**Proprietors:** J. W. Jeferies (Marine), G. W. Welsh (Marine), A. Breath (Marine), B. F. Edwards (Edwardsville), Cock and Fifield (Alton), Meech and Daniels (St. Louis), and E. P. Blow (St. Louis).

**Terms:** Liberal and made known at the sale.

**Notes:** This notice of the sale of town lots includes mention that it is desired to make a contract for 200,000 brick to be delivered to the town of Marine. The same paper on 1 June 1836 offers 30 lots in Marine for sale at auction on 3 June.

## **MARION**

**County:** DeWitt

**Source:** *History of DeWitt County Illinois* (Philadelphia: W.R. Brink, 1882), p. 45. This advertisement was in the form of a poster dated 2 July 1836 with the caption "To the People."

**Form of Advertisement:** A statement of the advantages of the town

**Date of Sale:** Not stated.

**Location:** "At the head branches of the Sangamon river. The first glance at the geographical situation of the town is sufficient to discover its great importance. There will and must be one great central town in Illinois where the internal improvements of the state will cross and intersect, and this point appears to have been destined by nature for that purpose. A number of important roads already cross at this point, and the east and west railroad, now locating, passes near enough for all the purposes of commerce. The north and south railroad will pass directly through Marion."

**Features:** High healthy undulating prairie about four miles across, which is surrounded by mill streams and an inexhaustible supply of timber. The first house was put up last winter. There is one grocery, a number of dwellings with other dwellings now building. "Within the last six weeks our lands have been nearly all taken, and such is the present prosperity of this country, that there must be a speedy and great advance on property in a short time." A map of Marion and its additions, showing its streams and its prairie, can be seen at the room of Garrett, Brown, and Brothers.

**Proprietor:** D. Robins.

**Terms:** Not given.

**Notes:** The town was a rival with Clinton for the county seat of DeWitt County, which was established in 1839. The advertisement is reproduced in full in the 1882 county history. Not to be confused with towns of the same name in Edwards, Lee, Ogle, Vermilion and Williamson counties. It was very close to the later plat of the town of DeWitt.

**MARSEILLES** (1835 Advertisement)

**County:** La Salle

**Source:** *Chicago Democrat*, 10 June 1835.

**Form of Advertisement:** Sale of town lots "Important Public Sale."

**Date of Sale:** On 12 and 13 June 50 lots will be sold; between 15 and 20 June 50 other lots will be sold. The sale will be at Bates' auction rooms, Chicago.

**Location:** Sixty-five miles from Chicago, on the, "bank of the Grand Rapids of the Illinois River" in the 'centre" of La Salle county.

**Features:** The finest water power in Illinois. It is a handsome site smooth prairie gently descending to the river, skirted by a strip of timber land at the back of it. With a fine view. There is an abundance of stone and iron ore. Clay and limestone available. It is a good manufacturing site. The surrounding country is rapidly settling.

**Proprietor:** R. P. Woodworth.

**Terms:** Not stated.

**Notes:** The first of two advertisements for this town. (See below.)

**MARSEILLES** (1837 advertisement)

**County:** La Salle

**Source:** *Missouri Republican* 12 May 1837, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots (See notes.).

**Date of Sale:** Not stated, probably a continuing sale rather than an auction.

**Location:** At the Grand Rapids of the Illinois River on the north side of the river above the junction of the Fox river. The canal from Lake Michigan at Chicago to Peru.

**Features:** “There is an abundance of water power, two saw mills, a grist mill and a flour mill, and a machine shop. The surrounding country is the equal o any in the world. There is but little water power south of Marseilles and the proprietors believe that the place offers greater advantages for manufacturing than any other in the country particularly for cotton woolen, paper, scythes, plows wagons, saddlery and leather. A twenty-five year charter has been granted to a manufacturing company here. “Mr. Kendall is now selling the lots at a low price; and all mechanics and laborers passing through the western country are particularly invited to examine the advantages of this place.”

**Proprietor:** Kendall.

**Terms:** Not stated.

**Notes:** There are two quite different advertisements for this place. The title of this advertisement is “The Grand Rapids.”

## **MARSHALL**

**County:** Clark

**Source:** *Vandalia Free Press*, 14 October 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 19 October 1837.

**Location:** “This is a new town laid off on the National Road at the point where the state road from Vincennes crosses it.” It is located on section 13, township 11 north, range 11 west. It is 55 miles north of Vincennes, 16 miles from York, 10 miles from Darwin, Paris is 15 miles to the south, Danville is 50 miles, and it is 16 miles west of Terre-Haute, “The road north and south has been opened by the proprietors from Big creek to the west side of Walnut prairie, and can be traveled with convenience, and when a permanent road shall be made, it will not very from the present line.’

**Features:** “It is decidedly the handsomest site for a town between Terre-Haute and Vandalia.” It is “surrounded by good second rate land. There is nearby grazing, timber and the best of stone for building.” The question of removal of the Seat of Justice from Darwin has been agitated & when acted upon it is not improbable that the people of the county may find it convenient and to their



interest, to place the permanent seat of justice for the County at this cross roads. It is the seat of justice, the permanency of which is not doubted. It is on stage routes, in an area of dense settlement, with mills. None can doubt its success.

**Proprietors:** "The land is owned by Joseph Duncan and the subscriber [W. B. Archer], and [it has] a clear title."

**Terms:** "Terms of payment will be easy" and most liberal encouragement will be given to mechanics and others who will improve.

**Notes:** William Archer had Marshall laid out in 1835 and it has remained the seat of Clark County.

## **MIDDLETOWN**

**County:** Logan (Sangamon County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 2 July 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of Town Lots.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 30 July 1836, 12:00.

**Location:** South of Springfield near Irish Grove and the Salt Creek settlements. It is located at Herrick's bridge over Salt creek on the Fort Clark road.

**Features:** Messers King, Casey, and Allen are making improvements. It is a location of beauty and health.

**Proprietors:** William Glen, (Middletown), H. L. Knapp (Springfield).

**Terms:** Six months credit.

**Notes:** Places of the same name existed in Champaign, Coles, Fulton, Hamilton, McDonough, Marion, Logan, Pike, Wayne, and Will counties.

## **MIDDLETON**

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 14 June 1836, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of town lots.

**Location:** On the west bank of the Illinois river, in the northeast quarter of section 13, township 6, range 2 west of the fourth principal meridian, about 20 miles from Jacksonville, 20 miles from Carrollton, and 12 miles from Pittsfield. It is located between Bedford and Montezuma.

**Features:** For beauty of situation it is not surpassed by any town below Peoria on this side of the river. "It is hardly necessary at this time to call the attention of the public to the importance of towns on the Illinois river. There is little doubt that when the Illinois and Michigan Canal shall have been constructed, that town property along the whole line of the river will be very valuable; and particularly so when it is ascertained that the sites have been selected on account of good landings healthy situations and rich farming constituents to back them." Middleton possesses these qualifications. Pike county is filling up with moral and industrious inhabitants.

**Proprietor:** John Daniels and James Daniels.

**Terms:** Twelve months credit with approved security with a twelve percent discount for those who pay at the time of the sale.

**Notes:** Towns of the same name existed in many other counties. See above.

## **MILAN**

**County:** Calhoun

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 27 April 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 10 May 1836.

**Location:** The town is located on the bank of the Mississippi River six and a half miles up river from the mouth of the Illinois river on the first high land with good back country. It is on the straight road from St. Louis by St. Charles, Gilead, Pittsfield, Alton, Quincy and the upper country. It is nine miles from St. Charles, 27 miles from St. Louis, 23 miles from Alton on the southeast in sections 28, 29, and 33 of township 13 south, range 1 west of the fourth principal meridian.

**Features:** There is good soil on both banks of the river. The proprietor believes it to be one of the most pleasant and healthy places on the river for 200 miles.

**Proprietor:** John Bolter.

**Terms:** Ten percent cash with the balance in eight and twelve months with security and a twelve percent discount given for cash.

**Notes:** Places of this name also existed in DeKalb, McDonough, and Rock Island counties.

## **MONROE**

**County:** Cass

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 3 June 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** "Particular Attention" printed in bold letters.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 13 May 1837, 10:00.

**Location:** It is on the main road from Beardstown, 9 miles away, to Jacksonville, 15 miles away.

**Features:** Dense rural settlement, healthy location, grist and saw mills, surrounded by timber, a number of houses are being built. At the same sale, Benjamin Beesley offers for sale, two of his houses, one of them a two story frame forty feet long with a storehouse adjoining it, well calculated for a public house, the other on the same lot a hewn log house, very well calculated for a mechanic. A number of grist and sawmills are found nearby.

**Proprietors:** Perhaps Benjamin Beesley and John Schaffer.

**Terms:** Terms will be given at the sale and will be liberal.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with "Munroeville" in Henry County or with any of the eight other towns with this name that existed in Illinois.

## **MONTEZUMA**

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 24 November 1835, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Thursday, 3 December 1835.

**Location:** Montezuma is on the western bank of the Illinois river. The town is 88 miles above St. Louis at the site of Mercham's [Meacham's] Ferry. There would have long since have been a flourishing village in this spot had the land been in a situation to be obtained. It is in a fertile region already settled and certain to improve. The town is equal distant from Jacksonville, Carrollton, and Atlas, those towns being 25 miles away and there being no other place to divide the business of the intermediate country.

**Features:** The lots are 60 by 180 feet. The bluffs are high and commanding and well supplied with water and springs." Already the proprietor received several propositions from knowing ones for an interest in this property on speculation but he desires to offer the Lots to mechanics or men of business, who will improve, on advantageous terms." "The proprietor deems a puff entirely unnecessary."

**Proprietors:** B. F. Turpin.

**Terms:** One fourth down and the remainder in one and two years with the purchaser giving bond and security.

**Notes:** A somewhat longer version of this advertisement appeared in the *Missouri Republican* on 8 March 1836, p. 3, with a public sale by auction on 7 April 1836. This second advertisement comments on the many speculative attempts to establish towns for purposes of speculation, "where business does not require towns, and on situations entirely unsuitable."

## **MT. PULASKI**

**County:** Logan (Tazewell County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 23 August 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Friday, 2 September 1836, 10:00, at the townsite and at Springfield Saturday, 10 September 1836, at noon. Lots may also be purchased at any time by private sale.

**Location:** Twenty-five miles northeast of Springfield and 30 miles from Bloomington.

**Features:** A rise in the prairie between two areas of timber. A store is now standing. There is a carding factory. A bridge will soon be built across Lake Fork. There is a grist and saw mill. The town is on a newly established post route. Its claim to be county seat cannot be disregarded. There is a grocery present and a tavern is under construction.

**Proprietors:** Barton Robinson, G. W. Turley, Ju ?? Scott, J. F. Davies, Alexander Lindley, James T. Robinson.

**Terms:** No terms given.

**Notes:** Mt. Pulaski was the seat of Logan County between 1847 and 1853.

## **NEW BEDFORD**

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 30 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of 200 lots.

**Date of Sale:** 16 April 1836.

**Location:** New Bedford is located twelve miles from Pittsfield, the seat of Pike county and is four miles from Milton, and 50 miles from the mouth of the river. It is in the most flourishing part of Pike county, and within a half mile of rich and well-cultivated upland prairie. "It is located on the southeast side of the bluff, which is elevated two hundred feet above the level of the river and the descent of the bluff is gradual from one hundred feet to the lowest water mark so that there is [a] a most excellent landing for several hundred yards in all stages of water. An island near the middle of the river at this point affords a superior natural advantage which will be particularly attended to as soon as suitable boats can be constructed for the purpose."

**Features:** The location contains timber, rock, a fine spring, and a mill site. Titles are indisputable. "The proprietors have long been aware of the advantages of this townsite but could not obtain indisputable title until recently." "We are aware that there are several towns laid out on the Illinois river, and the proprietors of each think theirs decidedly the best. – We do know both New Bedford and Bridgeport possess some local advantages and we are willing to state facts only without exaggeration, and invite attention to the public to examine for themselves."

**Proprietors:** David Hodges, Philip Jarboe, J. H. Coggeshill, H. M. Jarboe, Stone Manning and Company.

**Terms:** Twelve months credit.

**Notes:** Combined with an advertisement for Bridgeport. Stone Manning and Company were Alton hardware merchants who advertised heavily in the *Alton Telegraph*. Not to be confused with a town of the same name in Bureau County.

## **NEW BOSTON**

**County:** Mercer

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 11 June 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 11 July 1836 at the townsite.

**Location:** Opposite the Iowa river. It is known to passengers bound from St. Louis to Galena as Upper Yellow Banks." Its location is remote from other towns. "As there are no points near this mouth, nor up the river for some distance suitable New Boston must be the place of deposit for that county, but as the sale will take place on the lots, the advantages can be seen and taken into consideration by the purchaser."

**Features:** It is the temporary county seat. The neighborhood has fertile black soil. The Edwards river with mills in only two miles away. There is a good harbor with an island.

**Proprietors:** Charles Jack, William Denison, Elija Hiles.

**Terms:** Will be made known on the day of the sale.

**Notes:** This town and the township of the same name survive a little north of Keithsburg. (See above.)

## **NEW CANTON**

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 1 April 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots along with sale of school lands.

**Date of Sale:** At the courthouse in Pittsfield, Pike County, Illinois, Tuesday, 3 May 1836, 10:00.

**Location:** The trustees of the township have laid off a town on the north half of section 16. "The road from Atlas to Quincy passes through it, and the roads from Pittsfield, Griggsville, Philips Ferry & c., concentrate at this point". It is five miles east of a good steamboat landing on the Mississippi River, 12 miles from Atlas, 28 miles from Quincy, and 17 miles from Pittsfield.

**Features:** “The width of the ‘Avenue’ is 100 feet. – the streets are 60 feet, crossing at right angles.” Among the out lots will be several five acres. It is located on a level fertile plain in rich farming country. An appropriation of \$8,500 has been made by the County Court for a bridge across “Sni Carti” [Sny Cart] on the road from this place to the landing. A ferry will soon be in operation on the Mississippi linking this place with New London, Palmyra, Hannibal, and Saverton.

**Proprietor:** Township Trustees, township 5 south, range 6 west. Signed Dan Brown Bush, school commissioner.

**Terms:** Terms are given for the sale of the school section but not for the sale of town lots.

**Notes:** The whole of section 16, township 5 south, range 6 west will also be sold. This, of course, was the famous school section set aside from each survey township by Congress for the support of education. A myth has grown up that these sections were used for the continuing support of schools. A few, like West Township, in McLean County, were retained and their rent used to support education. In fact, most in Illinois—like this one—were very quickly sold. This is the only example I have found of township trustees platting a town on their school section, or for that matter, of township officials laying off any town. Selma was also located on a school section, but was not platted by school trustees.

## **NEW MARKET**

**County:** Menard (Sangamon County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 31 May 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 18 June 1836.

**Location:** The town is one half mile from the Sangamon river. It is on the main road between Springfield and Havana and twenty-two miles from either place. It is about ten miles west of Athens and three miles above the junction of the Sangamon river and Salt creek.

**Features:** Healthy, fertile, canal, stone, coal, dense population. It is a short distance from the head of the contemplated canal.

**Proprietor:** F. Ballard and Company.

**Terms:** Credit with approved security, terms not specified.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with a place of the same name in Gallatin County.

## **NEWCASTLE**

**County:** Logan (McLean County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 6 February 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Not given.

**Location:** "The town is beautifully situated on the margin of a fine prairie, on the north side of the Kickapoo Timber, directly on the state road leading from Bloomington to Chicago." Liberal encouragement will be given to mechanics of all kinds by the proprietor.

**Features:** "...further description is deemed unnecessary; as it is presumed that persons wishing to purchase will examine for themselves."

**Proprietor:** T. B. Hoblett.

**Terms:** Not given.

**Notes:** Newcastle was abandoned for Atlanta in the 1850 with the arrival of the railroad. A small cemetery is located near the site of the town. Sometimes the name is written as New Castle.

## **NEWPORT**

**County:** Greene

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 29 June 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 16 July 1836.

**Location:** At the mouth of Apple creek long noticed as an important waterway. The state road from Vandalia crosses the river at this point.

**Features:** It is a high point with a good landing, ask any river captain. The creek is navigable for steamboats. Newport creek is navigable for several miles and the



largest class of steamboats may use the Illinois river. "Immediately in the rear of Newport commences the prairie upon which the settlement of Bluffdale is situated, and extends from three to four miles in width. The prairie and the region around it, for a great distance, is one of the finest and most valuable agricultural districts in the west. The trade of that section of the county, of Whitehall and Carrollton and other inland towns, must inevitably pass through Newport, this trade is already great and every year increasing." Several houses carrying on the pork trade will be erected in the present season. A flour mill and a steam saw mill will be put into operation as soon as possible. The main streets are 100 feet wide. Mail comes twice a week. The proprietors will make the roads near the town the equal of any in the state.

**Proprietors:** John Beman, John W. Scott, Charles Gregory, Jesse H. Rogers, W. B. Pegram, G. Pegram.

**Terms:** Liberal and will be given at the sale with a share of revenues going for the improvement of the town.

**Notes:** One of several Illinois towns with this name.

## **OPORTO**

**County:** Lee

**Source:** *Chicago American*, 10 October 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 18 October 1836, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, resuming on the following day if all the lots are not sold.

**Location:** On the northwest side of the Rock River opposite Dixon's ferry. The state road from St. Louis to Springfield will pass this place and bring tri-weekly mail. In addition there is weekly mail on the road from Chicago to Galena. It has the advantage of being located on a navigable river. Steamboats can proceed up the Rock River as far as the Catfish River that is the outlet of the four lakes. The steamboat *Frontier* has already come this far up the Rock River and it is navigable for boats of up to thirty tons burden.

**Features:** The site is beautiful, with salubrity of air, pure water, building materials including good timber. The timber extends eight miles downstream and is one to three miles wide. Moreover, Sugar Grove, Buffalo Grove and Elkhorn Grove are within twelve miles. Opposite the town there is a slough, which separates the island from the mainland, and skilled millwrights have said that this can provide

water power for all manufacturing purposes. The proprietors will guarantee good title to the land.

**Proprietors:** G. A. Martin and E. William Covell.

**Terms:** One third cash in hand on the day of the sale and the remainder in 12 months to be secured with bond and approved security.

**Notes:** The plat of this town was vacated in 1853 and the site was later incorporated into Dixon.

## **OQUAWKA**

**County:** Warren (today Henderson)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 16 July 1836, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 20 July 1836.

**Location:** On the Mississippi river.

**Features:** “Oquawka is the Indian name for lower Yellow Banks on the Mississippi in Warren county, Illinois – the beauty and commercial advantages of this place are hardly to be surpassed and well known to citizens of that part of the state, and to every person who has traveled through the western country – it having long been occupied by the firm of S. Philips and Co. as a place of business and who have at length concluded to lay out a town for the convenience of the interior country and the accommodation of the public.”

**Proprietors:** S. Philips and Co., Joseph Duncan, R. Dyson, D. S. Dyson.

**Terms:** One quarter in hand and the balance in three payments over three years at six percent interest.

**Notes:** In the 1850s Oquawka became the western terminus of an early cross-Illinois railroad.

## **OTTAWA**

**County:** La Salle

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 3 October 1835.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of the sale of 500 town lots.

**Date of Sale:** First sale Monday, 19 October 1835, at 10:00 A. M.

**Location:** The town is located on the west half of section 12, township 33 north, range 3 east of the third principal meridian adjoining the old town of Ottawa. It is located between the Fox and the Illinois rivers, at the junction of these rivers, at the head of steam boat navigation. "It requires but a glance at the map to discover that this must, forever be the all important thoroughfare of the great lakes[?] of the north, and the east, and the majestic tracts of the west and south, and that commerce must flow through it with a rapidly increasing and restless tide."

**Features:** "Steamboats ascend the Illinois river to this place except when the river is very low and it has been estimated by engineers lately from the east that the river can be made navigable to Ottawa for one twentieth the sum required to extend the canal to this place. Permission has been obtained to extend dams across the Illinois and across the Fox. The dams will be built next season and mills erected. Water will be brought from these dams to the center of the town to be used for hydraulic purposes. It is in the rich and fertile county of La Salle, which is destined to become the manufacturing district for a vast extent of country."

A beautiful and fertile land. "A more enchanting landscape scenery than Ottawa and its environs can scarcely be imagined, whither viewed in its rich, varied and minute parts or as a whole in its grand and gorgeous outlines."

**Proprietor:** Henry Green, Proprietor's agent.

**Terms:** Terms will be made known on the day of the sale.

**Notes:** An advertisement for the sale of remaining lots, along with lots in Chicago, is found in the same paper 18 July 1836, p 2. The original town was laid out by the Commissioners of the Illinois and Michigan Canal. Ottawa was first laid out a few years before the boom.

## **PITTSBURG**

**County:** St. Clair

**Source:** *Missouri Argus*, 21 October 1837 p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 26 August 1837.

**Location:** "Pittsburg is beautifully situated on a high and commanding eminence in St. Clair county, Illinois, at the termination of the railroad which connects this Town with the Mississippi, opposite the city of St. Louis, in Missouri. There is no town in the state that presents so many advantages to the commercial and manufacturing Public at [as] Pittsburg does."

**Features:** The lands nearby are fertile healthy and wealthy. The citizens of the county and of the vicinity of the town have their farms paid for and improved. In the area of the town are excellent rock and timber for building and earth suitable for the manufacture of brick. The railroad, which is in rapid progress to its completion will, in effect, place this town on the bank of the river. There is an abundance of stone coal which will ensure the establishment in the town of furnaces, factories, stream mills and manufactures (?). It will be cheaper to convey wheat and materials to the site than move the coal by the river to them. It is named for the wealthy and respected city of the same name in Pennsylvania. The railroad will enable the proprietors to convey to the river one and a half million bushels of coal a year.

**Proprietors:** George E. Walker, Samuel B. Chandler, John Reynolds, Daniel Pearce, Thomas Toner.

**Terms:** Liberal credit will be given with security "reserving in all cases the stone coal that may be on the lot conveyed."

**Notes:** This is the only advertisement in Illinois I have yet found with mention of the reservation of mineral rights. Not to be confused with Pittsburgs in Fayette, Jersey (vacated 1853), or Williamson counties.

## **PLEASANT VALE**

**County:** Pike:

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 18 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** "Town of Pleasant Vale"

**Date of Sale:** 21 April 1836 at the townsite.

**Location:** The town is located on the southwest quarter of section 9, town 5 south range 6 west. The main road from Atlas to Quincy passes through it. A road from Griggsville to Readfield is planned. There is a road from Marchems Ferry and Pittsfield which "intersects near it." It is 12 miles from Atlas, 17 miles from Pittsfield, 28 miles from Quincy and only five miles from a good steamboat landing on the Mississippi river which already has a warehouse, and two wood

yards. The county commissioners have already appropriated money for a bridge of "snigharty"[Sny Carte].

**Features:** "A description of the site would be entirely needless to those who have ever seen the place. But to gentlemen at a distance, we would say, that a more advantageous mercantile situation can scarcely be found on the military tract." On the north, south and west are beautiful rich prairies. In back of the town are hills and vales covered with a heavy growth of timber. The town site rises 40 to fifty feet above the prairie and has a good spring of water. A plat will be exhibited on the day of the sale.

**Proprietors:** Joseph Jackson and Pearly Jackson.

**Terms:** One third in three months and the remainder in one year with the purchaser giving bond with security.

**Notes:** The *Jacksonville Patriot* and the *Alton Speculator* are asked to copy the advertisement.

## PLYMOUTH

**County:** Hancock

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 1 January 1836, p. 7.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of lots.

**Date of Sale:** Thursday, 21 January 1836, and continued if necessary from day to day.

**Location:** In the southeast corner of Hancock county. It is on a direct line from Rushville to Carthage and the Mississippi River. The state road must pass through it and is already a common highway for travelers and a direct route from Macomb to Quincy. One and a half miles from Panther Creek and two miles from Crooked Creek on which there are already several mills. It is at the center of a rich and flourishing prairie.

**Features:** "Three years ago this small, rich, prairie was an uninhabited waste. Now it has forty-seven farms and an average of seven to the family, boasts a population of more than 300, and from the commanding eminence of the town, the eye embraces almost the whole of this busy population and its thriving industry. Its location for extent of prospect, richness, beauty and variety is unsurpassed by any town site in this or any other state..." Good water; the well on the public square is only twenty feet deep.

**Proprietors:** John W. Crocket, James Clark, Benjamin Terrell, Eamaius A. Cook.

**Terms:** Credit of twelve months with approved security.

**Notes:** Plymouth survives as a small town in the extreme southeast corner of the county.

## **POCAHONTAS**

**County:** Wabash

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 15 March 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Part of an extended sale of town lots in three Indiana and four Illinois towns with the title "Towns For Sale In Indiana and Illinois."

**Date of Sale:** The sale will begin on Saturday, 25 April 1837, or on the following Monday, and will continue for one month moving from place to place among the seven towns. People interested will gather in Indiana at Mt. Vernon and in Illinois at the falls of the Wabash.

**Location:** At Coffee Island on the west side of the Wabash, 30 miles above Chainville, and seven miles from Mt. Carmel.

**Features:** The town is located on a high and healthy bluff overlooking the Wabash river, "At this place there are great water privileges, and extensive steam and water mills are nearly prepared for operation; and in the vicinity [are] extensive miles of bituminous coal."

**Proprietors:** Robert Dale Owen, Alexander McClure, William Wilson, John M. Robinson, George Fowler (for self and others), Jacob Leshner, Thomas H. Hinde, Scoby, Stewart, J. L. Wilson.

**Terms:** Liberal and will be made known at the first place the group meets.

**Notes:** See Albion, Powhattan, and Tecumseh.

## **PORT BYRON**

**County:** Rock Island

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 25 August 1836, p 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** A notice that the proprietors are offering lots for sale, see below.

**Date of Sale:** No public sale, See comments under Proprietors.

**Location:** Under the words Town of Port Byron in parentheses appears “At the Head of the Upper Rapids.” The proprietors of Port Byron deem it unnecessary to dwell much upon its particular advantages. It has long been known by the traveler on the Mississippi and to the steamboat Captains [sic] as Allen’s Landing, and considered an important point.”

**Features:** Owing to the great demand for lots and the limited number for sale, it is not probable that there will be a public sale – if otherwise due notice will be given.” Secure title. As good an opening for a store or tavern as any on the Mississippi.

**Proprietors:** “Persons wishing lots may apply to Samuel Adams or Dr. Grigg at Port Byron, Messers. G. Davenport, Philips and Belcher at Stevenson”. None of these people are specifically called proprietors.

**Terms:** Not listed.

**Notes:** This is one of the few advertisements to explain why there will be no public sale of lots.

## **PORTLAND (1)**

**County:** Monroe

**Source:** *Missouri Argus*, 19 May 1837.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of lots.

**Date of Sale:** Tuesday, 10 May 1836, at the townsite.

**Location:** “Portland is situated on the lands of the ‘Monroe, Mining, and Exporting Company’ which is now making contracts for excellent building stone, dove marble, and lithographic stone. Measures have been taken in hand to supply New Orleans and a number of towns on the lower Mississippi. An act has been obtained for the construction of the railroad from the town of Tamarawa on the Kaskaskia river with a view to facilitate the operation of the said company. A high dry location surrounded by springs of fine water The state road from Chester, via Waterloo, will pass through this town. Healthy high, dry, location.

**Features:** Excellent supply of building material. It will vie in importance with the towns of New England. Excellent supply of stone, white sand well adapted to the manufacture of glass, porcelain clay. A plat may be seen at the office of Snyder and [illegible] at Belleville, A. J. Davis, St. Louis and E. P. Rogers, Waterloo, and Skidmore's store in Edwardsville. Examples of stone will be exhibited at the site.

**Proprietor:** William Kenny.

**Terms:** Credit of six, twelve, and eighteen months.

**Notes:** Quarries remain important in the local economy of this area.

## **PORTLAND (2)**

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Missouri Argus*, 23 April 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots; sale to take place at the townsite.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 10 May 1836; in Belleville at 1 o'clock P.M. (see notes).

**Location:** Two miles from Waterloo, 11 miles from the Mississippi, 30(?) miles from St. Louis. Located near the mouth of the Big Blue River, one of the highest banks of the river, excellent steamboat landing, Section 3, Township 8 (?) south, range 2 west of the 4<sup>th</sup> principal meridian. The town plat extends back ascending gradually until it reaches the bluff on the south bank of the Big Blue in the direction of Griggsville, the most desirable part of the state. It is on the great chain of lakes and the Erie Canal. It is on the best and shortest route from Pittsfield to Jacksonville which intersects the Philips Ferry road and passes Lynnville. Located 10 miles from Pittsfield, 6 miles from Griggsville, 6 miles above Monte[illegible], 20 miles from Jacksonville, about 90 miles above St. Louis.

**Features:** The town is surrounded by fertile farming country interspersed with timber and prairie, well-watered, healthy reputation. Mr. Farley has a sawmill and gristmill on the Big Blue 3-4 miles from Portland.

**Terms:** Ten percent down in cash, remainder in six and twelve months in equal payments.

**Notes:** This Portland should not to be confused with several other Illinois places sharing this name. "P.M." in the advertisement is presumably a printer's error.



## POSTVILLE

**County:** Logan (Sangamon County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 5 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of Town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Thursday, March 22, 1836.

**Location:** An elevated spot on the state road from Bloomington to Springfield. North of Salt Creek on an elevated spot. Springfield is 29 miles, Bloomington "by way of Waynesville" 33 miles.

**Features:** Rarely surpassed in Beauty and natural advantages.

**Proprietors:** R. Post (see also Waynesville).

**Terms:** Six and twelve months with "approved paper."

**Notes:** Postville was the seat of Logan County from 1839 to 1847. It was briefly renamed Camden. The site is now incorporated in Lincoln and there is a reproduction of the courthouse. The original courthouse was removed to Greenfield Village in Michigan.

## POWHATTAN

**County:** Wabash

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 15 March 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Part of an extended sale for three Indiana and four Illinois towns under the title "Towns For Sale In Indiana and Illinois."

**Date of Sale:** The sale will begin on Saturday, 25 April 1837, or on the following Monday, and will continue for one month moving from place to place among the several towns. People interested will gather in Indiana at Mt. Vernon and in Illinois at the falls of the Wabash.

**Location:** Powhattan is at the foot of the Grand Rapids on the Wabash river, a high site two miles above Mt. Carmel and adjoining the town of Selma, on the opposite side. "At this place the two states, Indiana and Illinois, have entered into a compact, to improve the mills by erecting dams, which will afford immense water power – the greatest in the western country, and indeed supposed to exceed any in the United States. A canal will here be cut around the falls and connected with the State improvements, there is a charter obtained embracing

great privileges, and the stock will be taken by a company; and if not otherwise arranged with the two states, stock to the amount of \$ 500,000, as embraced in the charter, or a lesser amount, will be offered for sale.

**Features:** Illinois and Indiana have entered into a compact to improve the river. A canal will be built around the falls. "The beautiful and romantic residence of the late Wm. M'Intosh, so celebrated by traveling journalists, and admirably situated for a private residence, or may be converted into a boarding house, and tavern, will be sold with two lots allotted to the premises. It will be in the central part of the town."

**Proprietors:** Robert Dale Owen, Alexander McClure, William Wilson, John M. Robinson, George Fowler (for self and others), Jacob Leshner, Thomas H. Hinde, Scoby Stewart, J. L. Wilson.

**Terms:** Liberal and will be made known at the first place the group meets.

**Notes:** See Albion, Pocahontas, and Tecumseh.

## **PRINCETON**

**County:** Bureau (Putnam County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 26 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of 100 town lots.

**Date if Sale:** 23 April 1836, 9:00, at the townsite.

**Location:** Located on Bureau Creek.

**Features:** The town has particular advantages in mails, schools, "religious purposes," health, etc.

**Proprietors:** Thomas S. Elston, Elijah Wiswall, and John H. Bryant.

**Terms:** Liberal credit of one year at ten percent with no interest if the buyer will build within one year.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with places of the same name in Cass and Morgan counties. This is an extension of an existing place.

## **READFIELD**

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 21 January 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 22 February 1836, 10:00 A.M., at the townsite.

**Location:** Located on Section 30, township 4 south, range 8 west, 18 miles from Griggsville, 15 miles from Atlas, 10 miles from Dutton's warehouse on the Sny Island, at the Mississippi, 30 miles below Quincy.

**Features:** On high rolling prairie, healthy, "bids fair to be useful to the community."

**Proprietor:** James Dutton.

**Terms of Sale:** Credit of twelve months with security, the proprietor executing to purchasers, bonds for title, when money is all paid.

**Notes:** The plat of this town was vacated in 1843.

## **RICHMOND**

**County:** Coles

**Source:** *Illinois State Register and Peoples Advocate*, 16 September 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** "The Town of Richmond."

**Date of Sale:** Not given.

**Location:** The town is located at Wabash Point on the state road from Shelbyville to Terre Haute that passes through Charleston. It is 14 miles from Charleston and 12 miles from Shelbyville (The distance to Shelbyville is an error).

**Features:** "The advantages of Richmond over most other inland towns, need but to be seen, to be duly appreciated by everyone who may wish to make profitable investments in town property, situated adjoining an inexhaustible body of the finest timber, and prairie as rich and as beautiful as can be found in the state, its comparative location with other neighboring towns, are but a few of the advantages of Richmond."

**Proprietor:** Thomas Houchin.

**Terms of Sale:** Credit with payments due at six, twelve and eighteen months with approved security.

**Notes:** Richmond was surveyed on 16, 17, and 18 August 1836. It was one of eight Coles County towns laid out between 1835 and 1837.

## **ROCK PORT (Rockport)**

**County:** Rock Island

**Source:** *Northwestern Gazette and Galena Advertiser*, 7 October 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice that the proprietors are prepared to sell lots, but no details of the sale are given.

**Date of Sale:** Not stated.

**Location:** Landing below the mouth of the Rock River on the east bank of the Mississippi River.

**Features:** Beautiful site, elevated land, rich farms the site. "The only place for a ferry above or below the rapids."

**Proprietors:** William C. Bostwick, of Galena, Illinois, is the "trustee" designated to act for unnamed proprietors.

**Terms:** "Very liberal" to those who will bid on lots and improve them.

**Notes:** Sometimes rendered "Rockport." Not to be confused with a place of the same name in Pike County.

## **ROCKWELL**

**County:** La Salle

**Source:** *Chicago Democrat*, 19 June 1836 p. 3.

**Form:** Notice of Sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 10 October 1836 at the auction rooms of Garrett, Brown, and Brother

**Location:** It is at the mouth of the Little Vermilion and the termination of the Illinois and Michigan Canal on the navigable Illinois river. The planned railroad from Maumee on Lake Erie will pass this place. The canal will pass directly through the town at the foot of the bluffs. There is a deep creek parallel to the canal. The federal government has granted land to sell of sufficient value to pay for the canal. It is half on the bluff and half between the bluff and the river and therefore the canal must pass through this site. The great Central Rail road is required by its charter to pass through the termination point of the canal.

**Features:** Although this is a joint stock company, the trustees will reside in the town. One hundred acres of the town are on the bottoms and 200 acres of the town are on the bluff, about forty-five feet higher. A large stone hotel will be erected here. There is an abundance of building material including stone, lime, and clay for brick. There is an abundance of waterpower. A liberal provision will be made for a church and a school. No making or selling of whisky will be allowed in the town. Prospective buyers are invited to examine the town plat.

**Proprietors:** William R. Brown, James B. Campbell, Lewis T. Janiso, J. B. F. Russell, Henry Moore, Charles W. Rockwell, John A. R. Rockwell, Simeon Hyde, Dixwell Lathrop.

**Terms:** One quarter in cash and the remainder in three parts at seven percent interest.

**Notes:** This is an exceptionally long and detailed advertisement.

## **RUSSELVILLE**

**County:** Lawrence

**Source:** *Vincennes Gazette*, 2 October 1835, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 29 October 1835, 10 A.M.

**Location:** "At the head of Allison Prairie on the west branch of the Wabash River." Ten miles north of Vincennes, eleven miles east of Lawrenceville, and fourteen miles south of Palestine, and fourteen miles southwest of Carlisle, Indiana. "Judge for yourself by seeing the location."

**Features:** Thickly settled with an enterprising people. A steam saw and grist mill already erected and in full and successful operation. Post office established. "The landing is surpassed by none on the Wabash."

**Proprietor:** David Price.

**Terms:** Twelve months credit, bonds or notes with approved.

**Notes:** An additional advertisement appears in the same paper 17 June 1837.  
**ST. CLAIR**

**County:** St. Clair

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 29 April 1837, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Tuesday, 2 May 1837, 2:00 P.M. at the auction rooms of Allen and Dougharty in St. Louis.

**Location:** Directly opposite the city of St. Louis near Wiggins Ferry, directly opposite the termination of the Rail Road now building, and a few rods from a steam saw mill. It is bounded on one side by the Rail Road, on another by Cahokia creek and on another "by the great traveled stage road called the levee."

**Features:** The public is reminded of the concentration of many stage and rail routes and of the appropriation by the state of \$115,000 to make the Vincennes road of which \$30,000 is to be expended this summer on the bottom [American Bottoms – the lowland opposite St. Louis]. A plat of the town may be seen at the counting rooms of Allen and Dougharty.

**Proprietors:** None given.

**Terms:** One third cash, one third in six months and the remainder in twelve months, buyers to give interest bearing notes at six percent for the last two payments.

**Notes:** Today the site incorporated into East St. Louis.

## **ST. FRANCISVILLE**

**County:** Lawrence

**Source:** *Western Sun and General Advertiser* (Vincennes), 15 April 1837.

**Form of Advertisement:** Additional sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 5 June 1837. "The first sale of lots took place on March last" So many applications have been made since then that lots not offered then

are now being put up for sale. Fifty lots are to be offered to the highest bidder including a fair portion of water lots fronting the river.”

**Location:** Nine miles south of Vincennes, town 2 north, range 11 west, on the west bank of the Wabash in Lawrence county, Illinois. The distance from Lawrenceville, the county seat, is about the same as that to Vincennes. The long established ferry at the town is known as Lavallett’s Ferry. It can be approached at all stages of the river when other points are overflowed. “It affords as near a road to St. Louis to Vincennes, as that traveled by the stage. About twenty miles from the St. Louis road and 16 miles from Mt. Carmel. At this point houses can be erected on the bluff to receive freight free of cartage.” It is a healthy location. Much fine land available in the adjoining country.

**Features:** Country around the town rapidly increasing in population. “The proprietor pledges himself to give every proper encouragement and facility to improve the town, and every reasonable indulgence to the meritorious settler.”

**Proprietor:** Francis Tugar.

**Terms:** Credit of six, twelve and eighteen months, in equal installments for notes with good and approved security.

**Notes:** The term “houses,” which the advertisement says can be erected on the bluff above the river, presumably means what are often at the time called “store houses,” a general 1830s term for stores or warehouse.

## **ST. MARY’S**

**County:** Hancock

**Source:** *Illinois Bounty Lands Register*, 20 November 1835, p. 3, and a slightly different version in *Louisville Daily Journal*, 8 September 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of a Town Sale with the addition in the 1836 version the phrase. “Real Estate for the Benefit of Texas.”

**Date of Sale:** First advertisement sale on 23 November 1835 and the second Monday 10 September 1836, 10:00 o’clock, at the Louisville Hotel, Louisville, Kentucky.

**Location:** Within half a mile of the La Mine[La Moine] River 14 miles south of Carthage, 32 miles west of Rushville, 40 miles northeast of Quincy, 27 miles from Warsaw on the Mississippi River, and 30 miles from Peoria. On the mail route from Peoria to Warsaw at the foot of the Des Moines[sic] Rapids of the Mississippi River.

**Features:** High healthy prairie with a commanding view. The town was laid out in July 1835. It has an excellent and never failing water, fertile soil, timber. The La Moine is a first rate stream for water power. The first advertisement says the mill is 160 rods from the city and the second says the mill is within view of the said town. The second advertisement says the town is the site of the only bridge on the river from its source to its mouth. The first advertisement says a “seminary of learning” and the second “a splendid college” to be erected here. At the sale a donation is to be made for the benefit of Texas. A plan of the town can be seen at different hotels of the city. E. B. Ely is auctioneer.

**Proprietors:** Walter R. Hurst and Archibald Williams for the first sale; for the second sale the name of A. R. Raines is substituted for that of Williams.

**Terms:** The first sale says credit for one year while the second lists no terms.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with places of the same name in Iroquois, Madison and Ogle counties. Sometimes written “St. Mary.” The name survives as St. Mary Township in Hancock County.

**SELMA** (today Mt. Carmel)

**County:** Wabash

**Source:** *Mt. Carmel Sentinel*, 2 August 1836, p. 4.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 13 August 1836, and Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday 13, 14, and 15 of September 1836—circuit court week in Wabash County. Lots sold at the door of the courthouse in Mt Carmel.

**Location:** On the great Wabash river, extending one half mile on the bank of the river. “Immediately at the foot of the Grand Rapids (so celebrated with all persons who have navigated the stream).” There is a first rate landing for steam boats and other vessels for the whole extent of the town. The landing has deep water near the shore with the proprietors providing a number of warehouse lots on the river. The White river empties into the Wabash within a half-mile of the place and the Patoka within a mile. “It is known that these two streams, wash several hundred miles of the fairest portion of the state of Indiana.” Located directly between Mt. Carmel and the Grand rapids it must always command the business of the later point. “Many persons have objected to the location of Mt. Carmel, because it was situated on the bluff, with commons intervening between the town and the river.” This town affords such people lots at the very edge of the river. “All experience teaches, that the rapids or falls, of a navigable stream must



become important, and exert a controlling influence as well as on the upper towns, and the adjacent back country. To prove this Louisville, and many other cities and towns, in the United States, might be referred to.”

The town is on a school section which could not be purchased until 26 June 1836. When this section was sold at public auction, a portion of it went as high as one hundred and sixteen dollars per acre. A Canal commencing at the Little Rock Rapids and passing through Selma and Mt. Carmel into the Wabash opposite the confluence of the Patoka would place it at the level with the best places in the west; such a company has been chartered. Vincennes is 22 miles south. The town is almost half way between Louisville and St. Louis.

**Features:** The population and businesses of Mt. Carmel are noted. Stock is being taken for a railroad from Alton to Mt. Carmel.

**Proprietors:** William Wilson (Mt. Carmel), John Law (Vincennes, Indiana), John H. Murphey (Danville), John R. Richardson, (York), Ezra Baker (St. Carmel). Orlando B. Ficklin (Mt. Carmel), and Hiral Bell (Mt. Carmel).

**Terms:** Payable with credit of one, two or three years in equal amounts with approved security. Deed to be given after all payments have been made.

**Notes:** The locational argument for this town is unusually detailed. It is also unusual in that the auction takes place at two different times. Not to be confused with a place of the same name in McLean County.

## **SHOKOKON**

**County:** Henderson (Warren County when platted).

**Source:** *Missouri Argus*, 6 August 1836, p. 3.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 15 August 1836.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Location:** “Beautiful small prairie on the bank of the Mississippi river, formerly known as Smith’s Ferry and the only good Landing in the Warren County between Peru and Oquawka.” “This is the point of the crossing of the Mississippi river into the Flint Hill country and the only one when the river is high.” Good steam boat landing “and the nearest point from Macomb in McDonough county; and also on the route from Peoria via St. Augustine, in Fulton county, Greenfield, New Lancaster, Olena, and c. to the New Purchase.”

**Features:** See location above.

**Proprietors:** Joseph Duncan, Robert McQueen, Charles A. Smith.

**Terms:** One fourth of money in hand, equal payments of remainder in one, two, and three years at six percent interest. Deeds will be made on payment of last installment.

**Notes:** Shokokon survives as an extremely small place just west of Carman in Carman Township.

## **STEPHENSON**

**County:** Rock Island

**Source:** *Missouri Republican*, 18 June 1835, p. 3, and *Northwest Gazette and Galena Advertiser*, 20 July 1835, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 11 June 1835.

**Location:** On the Mississippi River at the foot of the Upper Rapids, about a half mile below Rock Island and two miles above the mouth of the Rock River. "The rapids on the Rock River are three miles from the town and the water power they provide is inferior to none in the United States. Several gentlemen from Zanesville, Ohio, are about to build mills here."

**Features:** The sale includes one third of all of the lots in the town that are owned by the county. It is the permanent seat of justice for Rock Island County. Fine healthy conditions, rich soil, good springs, coal, fine building stone, many nearby mill seats.

**Proprietors:** By order of the County Commissioners, Joseph Conway County Clerk, Rock Island County, Illinois. Proprietors for the second sale noted below are Jonah H. Case and John R. Spencer.

**Terms:** One-third cash, remainder at twelve and eighteen months with the purchaser giving mortgage on lots for security.

**Notes:** A second sale of town lots is advertised in the *Missouri Republican*, 7 May 1836, p. 3. Repeats much of the above and notes that at the first sale over \$12,000 worth of lots was sold. The name was changed to Rock Island in 1841.

## **STUBENVILLE**

**County:** Macoupin

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 6 April 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 16 April 1836 at the town of Stubenville.

**Location:** Located 18 miles from Carlinville, 2 ½ miles from Alton, 30 miles from Carrolton, 28 miles from Edwardsville. The Springfield to Alton railroad will pass this town. "This place is situated on the first high ground and exactly where the road from Alton to Springfield will enter into the broken ground and the wide bottom of the Macoupin creek. It must be the place of deposit for the rail road cars going and returning."

**Features:** High rolling prairie, fertile land, and first-rate water, adjoining first-rate timber, rock. The very best building material is available at the site.

**Proprietors:** Ross Hauck, J. Wetherford and J. C. Gontermann

**Terms:** Half in twelve and half in eighteen months with suitable security.

**Notes:** Gonterman was Hauck's father-in-law. Fifteen lots were sold in the town and a store briefly operated here. A railroad was not built on the predicted route and the site quickly reverted to farmland.

## **TAMARAWA**

**County:** St. Clair

**Source:** *Missouri Argus*, 18 March 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of Sale of lots.

**Date of Sale:** 27 May 1836, at the town site.

**Location:** On the Kaskaskia River, "at the south end of Twelve Mile Prairie, at a place known as Edgar's Bluff, about 16 miles south of Belleville, 15 miles east of Waterloo, in Monroe county, 30 miles north of Kaskaskia, in Randolph county, 40 miles northwest of Pinkneyville in Randolph county, and 35 miles west of Nashville in Washington." The Kaskaskia is navigable for small boats to its mouth "the ripple at the town of Tamarawa being the first in the river." At a small

expense the state will render the river navigable at all times for steam boats from the National Road at Vandalia to its mouth.

**Features:** On a high rolling bluff with an abundance of good timber. Inexhaustible “beds of first rate stone coal.” Fertile country already settled with enterprising and independent farmers. Good sawmill and gristmill in the neighborhood. A liberal donation of land will be set aside for purposes of education. A plat may be seen at the Clerk’s office of St. Clair County. Title indisputable.

**Proprietors:** Adam W. Snyder and James Semple.

**Terms:** One third each in six, twelve, and eighteen months, warranty deeds with appropriate security.

**Notes:** Four hundred acres of first-rate land to be sold at the same time. Both proprietors were prominent Illinois politicians. The establishment and the abandonment of this town are well documented in John Francis Snyder’s *Adam W. Snyder, and his Period in Illinois History, 1817-1842*, (1906). See also discussion of the town under town promoter techniques above.

## **TECUMSEH**

**County:** White

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 15 March 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Part of an extended sale for three Indiana and four Illinois towns under the title “Towns For Sale In Indiana and Illinois.”

**Date of Sale:** The sale will begin on Saturday, 25 April 1837, or on the following Monday, and will continue for one month moving from place to place among the seven towns. People interested will gather in Indiana at Mt. Vernon and in Illinois at the falls of the Wabash.

**Location:** The town is on the first bluff the Wabash River below the Grand Chain “and from its location may undoubtedly be the principal commercial point on the western side of the Wabash river in White county.”

**Features:** See above.

**Proprietors:** Robert Dale Owen, Alexander McClure, William Wilson, John M. Robinson, George Fowler (for self and others), Jacob Leshar, Thomas H. Hinde, Scoby Stewart, J. L. Wilson.

**Terms:** Liberal and will be made known at the first place the group meets.

**Notes:** See Albion, Pocahontas, and Powhattan.

## **TREMONT**

**County:** Tazewell

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 13 February 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 9 May 1836.

**Features:** Some lots face the square on which the courthouse will be built.

**Location:** It is the permanent seat of Tazewell county.

**Proprietor:** The advertisement is signed by Joshua C. Morgan, clerk, for the Tazewell County Commissioners Court.

**Terms:** One quarter cash in hand and the remainder in three equal payments at six months, 12 months, and eighteen months, secured by a mortgage.

**Notes:** The county seat was established in Tremont in 1835 but moved to Pekin in 1849.

## **UPPER GRAFTON**

**County:** Jersey (Greene County when platted)

**Source:** First sale, *Missouri Republican*, 10 May 1836, p. 2; second sale *Missouri Republican*, 26 May 1836, p. 2.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of lots.

**Date of Sale:** First sale, Monday, 26 March 1836, at 2:00 o'clock and second sale 10 May 1836 at the town site.

**Location:** "Upper Grafton is situated one mile back of Grafton, near the junction of the Illinois and Mississippi rivers; having a gentle slope from the elevated bluff of the Mississippi towards the interior." Main street, which is one hundred feet wide is on the most direct route to Carrolton, Whitehall and Jacksonville.

**Features:** It is amid rich and populated land. The town has one of the most convenient sites for warehouses. The elevated grounds in the rear “where every advantage relative to airiness of situation and of retirement may be enjoyed that cannot be expected on the banks of a river.” Being located but one mile from Grafton it will afford for any merchant or mechanic whose business lies on the river, who desires fresher air and a more retired situation for a family residence. Reservations are being made for a seminary of learning and a house of public worship and a public hotel.

**Proprietors:** Stone Manning and Co. and David Pierson.

**Terms:** Ten percent in hand, the balance in twelve months from the date of sale.

**Notes:** Poor weather made the sale of lots at the first sale less extensive than the proprietors had hoped. The second advertisement supplements the first. In the second advertisement the proprietors add they will give three hundred dollars toward the completion of the public road to Carrollton; they state that they have given twelve lots for the seminary worship and will give one thousand dollars for when three thousand dollars are raised by other means. The lots offered at the second sale are said to be as good as those offered at the first.

## **VALASCO**

**County:** Pike

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 15 July 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots in both Brussels and Valasco.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 17 July 1837.

**Location:** On the west bank of the Illinois river opposite the town of Brussels at the location long known as Philips Ferry at the place where the Indian Road leading from Quincy by Griggsville to Jacksonville and Springfield crosses the river. Valasco is laid out on the west bank of the river in the county of Pike and depends for its future improvement and prosperity on its commercial advantages and on the rich beautiful country that is already well cultivated and on the growth of Griggsville. The proprietors have erected a large frame house for a tavern in Brussels and will build a similar one in Valasco.

**Features:** Valasco has a tavern. Charles G. Perry the principal proprietor promises to have a horse ferry boat of the latest improved plan in operation.

**Proprietor:** Charles G. Perry, principal proprietor.

**Terms:** One fourth due each quarter.

**Notes:** See Brussels for further details.

## **VAN BUREN**

**County:** Whiteside

**Source:** *Galena Gazette and Northwestern Advertiser*, 15 April 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of town lot sale.

**Date of Sale:** Monday, 5 June 1837, 200-300 lots.

**Location:** The town is on the banks of the Mississippi river forty-two miles above Rock Island and fifty miles below Galena. The most handsome townsite and the best steam boat landing between New Orleans and Galena. The legislature has granted a charter for a railroad from Chicago to the Mississippi and "it is generally admitted, that Van Buren will be the point at which it will terminate."

**Features:** Rich fertile country, beautiful prairie, handsome timber plus the timber growing on Beaver Island, two saw mills. There is now a post office; ten houses are now building, and many others have already been built even though the town was only surveyed last October.

**Proprietors:** James W. Willis, Daniel Bliss, William Nevit, and W. S. Osbourne.

**Terms:** One quarter down, one quarter in six months, one quarter in twelve months, and one quarter in eighteen months.

**Notes:** In the advertisement the name is written both Van Buren and Vanburen. Today it is part of Albany. Not to be confused with places of the same name in DeKalb, Lawrence, and Montgomery counties.

## **Van Burensburg**

**County:** Montgomery

**Source:** *Illinois State Register*, 3 June 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** Saturday, 23 July 1836.

**Location:** It is on the road connecting Vandalia to Hillsboro, Springfield, and Jacksonville where it crosses the state road leading from Greenville to Shelbyville. The location is 12 miles from Vandalia and 15 miles from Hillsboro. It is located on a small prairie surrounded by good timber.

**Features:** It is a healthy location with never failing springs. Already present are two stores, a blacksmith shop, a grist mill and a saw mill. The town is surrounded by industrious and hard working people. Mechanics of every sort are invited to call and to examine the site for themselves. Lots are 50 feet by 170 feet.

**Proprietors:** Benjamin Roberts and Henry W. Short.

**Terms:** Credit of twelve months with approved security. Twelve percent will be deducted from the price if full payment is made in advance.

**Notes:** The place name Vanburensburg is shown on some modern maps in the southeastern corner of the county.

## **VERMILIONVILLE**

**County:** La Salle

**Source:** *Chicago Democrat*, 8 June 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date Of Sale:** No public auction.

**Location:** On the north side of the Big Vermilion River, seven miles from the termination of the Illinois and Michigan Canal.

**Features:** "This place occupies that eligible and commanding site for a town on the bluffs in front of some of the most important Mill Privileges on the same river; and directly on the great Mail Route from Peoria via Ottawa to Chicago. " Another road leads from Danville via Dixon's Ferry to Galena, and a road leading from Utica to Bloomington passes directly through the town. The plan of the town is liberal with streets "crossing at cardinal points." Town lots are 76 by 305 feet, over one and a half acres. Suitable lots will be appointed for public use. Mill privileges are being improved. A large flouring mill has just been erected and will be ready in about two months. A company from the east is erecting a sawmill. Nearby are lime, and freestone, and the surrounding country is rich rolling prairie and a dense population. "The proprietors do not intend to throw into the market by public auction, their object is not so much for speculation as for public benefits, therefore, on most liberal terms only to actual and wholesome settlers."



**Proprietors:** Isaac Dimmick and Betsey T. Hatch.

**Terms:** Liberal to actual settlers, see quote under features.

**Notes:** Most of the plat was vacated in 1840. Not to be confused with a place of the same name in Livingston County that became part of Streator.

## **VIENNA**

**County:** Stevenson

**Source:** *Galena Gazette and Northwestern Advertiser*, 20 May 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** "The Town of Vienna," with no details about the sale.

**Date of Sale:** Not stated.

**Location:** One half mile south of the state line, 30 miles east of Galena East bank of the Pecatonica River.

**Features:** "It is surrounded by country which would afford ample materials for those who have a talent for poetry or painting –Eden soil, Lebanon trees and Jordan streams, to those who wish to appreciate an earthly paradise, we would say come to Vienna."

**Proprietors:** Not stated.

**Terms:** Not stated.

**Notes:** A very brief advertisement with few details. Not to be confused with places of the same name in Fulton, Johnson, or Grundy counties.

## **VIRGINIA**

**County:** Cass (Morgan County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 28 May 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 26 June 1836, 9:00.

**Location:** Twelve miles from Beardstown on the Beardstown to Springfield road.

**Features:** High rolling prairie, healthy and beautiful. "There is no stagnant water within several miles of the town." Upon the division of Morgan County the owner will build a courthouse. Houses will be built and sold with the lots on which they stand. Nearby farms and woodland will also be sold. After the impending division of the county the proprietor will build at his own expense a court house.

**Proprietor:** H. H. Hall.

**Terms:** Credit divided into two parts, one part due 1 January 1836, and the other 1 January 1837. Twelve percent interest with security.

**Notes:** Virginia thrives as the seat of Cass County.

## **WARSAW**

**County:** Hancock

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 12 October 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 31 October 1836 at 11:00.

**Location:** Opposite the mouth of the Demoin river. The rapids of the river are an obstacle to navigation.

**Features:** A healthy beautiful spot. There are 200 inhabitants and the place is well known to traders. The nearby country is rapidly filling up.

**Proprietors:** Richard F. Barrett (Springfield), Joseph Duncan (Morgan), Mark Aldrich (Warsaw), Calvin A. Warren (Warren), John Montague (Warsaw), E. A. Key (Philadelphia).

**Terms:** Will be made known at sale.

**Notes:** A very short advertisement.

## **WAVERLY**

**County:** Morgan

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 16 March 1836, p. 1.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** No date given.

**Location:** Twenty miles from Springfield, Jacksonville, and Carlinville. It is on a state road. The location is known as Cook and Eastman's; on the state road from Vandalia to Jacksonville.

**Features:** Near well-cultivated farms, a public house will be built in the spring. There is a large stream nearby with a flouring mill. The town can be seen by applying to the subscribers.

**Proprietors:** David Tanner and James R. D. Salter.

**Terms:** Not given.

**Notes:** Also in the *Sangamo Journal* 2 April 1836, p. 1, and in the *Jacksonville Patriot*, 29 January 1837. Waverly was the center of several failed attempts to establish a new county (Sublett 1990, pp. 99-105).

## WAYNESVILLE

**County:** DeWitt (McLean County when platted)

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 23 January 1836, p. 3, 200 lots and slightly different in *Alton Telegraph*, 30 March 1836.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of town lot sale.

**Date of Sale:** In the *Sangamo Journal* Tuesday, 9 February 1836 (original sale on 6 January 1836 put off because of rains), and in the *Alton Telegraph*, 3 May 1836.

**Location:** "Waynesville is situated in McLean county, Illinois on fine elevated land within two miles of the corner of Sangamon and Macon counties, forty-three miles from Springfield, thirty miles from Mackinaw, twenty from Bloomington and ....a line from Alton to Chicago by way of Springfield and Bloomington would run through Waynesville." "It will be observed by referring to the map of Illinois that this place is near the geographical center of the state and its natural advantages will surely make it a place of importance."

**Features:** Waynesville is bounded on the north and west by a heavy grove, through which runs the Kickapoo Creek with a number of mill seats upon it. On south and west bounded by richest prairies. It has been laid out for about four years.

**Proprietors:** R. Post, Waynesville, and George Isham (author of advertisement, not specifically listed as proprietor).

**Terms of Sale:** Not stated

**Notes:** A prime example of several town lot sale techniques, on a line between two places, and near the center of the state. The town was co-founded by the colorful Russell Post who kept a store here. Efforts to create a county centered on this town failed. As in many towns, legends of extensive sale of lots to interests in “the East” were current in the late nineteenth century.

## **WESLEY CITY**

**County:** Tazewell

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 11 March 1837, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** “Extensive sale of lots”

**Date of Sale:** Thursday, 27 April 1837, 10:00 at the townsite.

**Location:** The town is on the east bank of the Illinois River and on the site of the beautiful old trading house. It is the best steam-boat landing on the river – the only good one between Pekin and Hennepin on the east side of the River. It is the only place with high banks on both sides of the river making for safety and ease of navigation. Healthy location – fifty families living there disease free, springs, steam saw mills, grist mills building, near timber, coal, stone.

**Features:** It would have long since have been occupied as a townsite but for the fact it was impossible to secure title to the soil until the last act of Congress regulated pre-emption rights. The best saw mill in the state operating by steam two frames of saws.

**Proprietors:** Squire W. D. Chase, Charles.S. Dorsey, Alfred Philips, Gideon Hawley, James R. Crandell, Abner Chapman, David Prickett, Stacy B. Opdycke, John Taylor, J. Shackelford, George Forquer.

**Terms:** One quarter in hand and the balance in six and twelve months with a premium of twelve percent for cash sale.

**Notes:** Philips and Prickett were brothers-in-law. Today it is part of Creve Coeur.

**WINDSOR** (today part of Tiskilwa)

**County:** Putnam

**Source:** *Sangamo Journal*, 6 February 1836, p. 3, and *Chicago Tribune*, 3 February 1836.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 23 February 1836 at the townsite.

**Location:** It is at the meeting place of several roads including: the northern stage route from Peoria to Galena, the road from Hennepin to Rock Island, the road from Ottawa to Spoon River and Knoxville; the county road from Henry to Windsor and on to the rapids of the Rock River, the county road from Rome to Peoria. The town is near the center of Putnam county.

**Features:** Town squares are mentioned including a large central square 495 feet by 495 feet, a "market seat," a "seminary square", and a "liberty square" 187 feet by 187 feet. Streets are laid off at right angles. There will be lots for "school" and "gospel." There are immense quantities of stone and coal, springs, waterpower, a populous country, high prairie, none healthier

**Proprietors:** Augustus Langworthy.

**Terms:** Liberal terms to be made known at the time of the sale.

**Notes:** On 30 March 1836 Dr. A. Langworthy gave notice of a railroad meeting held in Windsor to discuss a railroad from Yellow Banks to the Illinois and Michigan Canal. The town was eventually merged with Indiantown to form Tiskilwa.

## **WINNEBAGO**

**County:** Winnebago

**Source:** *Chicago Democrat*, 21 September 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 22 September 1836, 10:00 a.m.

**Location:** On the west side of the Rock river 12 or 14 miles below its junction with the Pecatonica. Winnebago is 80 miles from Chicago and 70 miles from Galena on the route between the two cities.

**Features:** The site is elevated. Steam boats will come next spring it is the county seat, the surrounding country is fertile. It is one mile from a good mill, "now erected," and has good waterpower. The river is navigable for steamboats and boats will begin to run this spring. "Being on an Indian reserve, good and warranted title will be given and as the surrounding country is not yet in the market, it has thereby an advantage of no small moment by the priority of its settlement as well as the security of its title."

**Proprietors:** N[icholas]. Boilvin (Chicago), J. B. Campbell (Chicago), Charles Reed (Joliet), and others not named. The proprietors were acting for the county.

**Terms:** No terms given.

**Notes:** Not to be confused with a place of the same name in Bureau County.

## **WOODBURN**

**County:** Macoupin

**Source:** *Alton Telegraph*, 7 September 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of 100 to 150 town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 22 September 1836, 10:00 A.M.

**Location:** On the Alton to Carlinville road.

**Features:** There is an oil mill, tavern, store, blacksmith shop, shoe shop, a brickyard and twenty other buildings in the town. Nearby are a saw mill, lime, free stone, and coal. The site is elevated and has nearby stone, lime, coal and timber. "The local situation for the town is surpassed for beauty and health by none in the state."

**Proprietors:** S. K. Kellam (Upper Alton), Issac Harburt (Lower Alton), B. J. Tompkins (Woodburn), O. M. Adams (Woodburn).

**Terms:** Liberal and made known at the sale.

**Notes:** See also the *Sangamo Journal*, 11 April 1835, for a discussion of this town and the Alton to Springfield Railroad.

## **WOODBURY**

**County:** Cumberland

**Source:** *Illinois State Register and People's Advocate*, 23 January 1836, p. 3.

**Form of Advertisement:** Notice of sale of town lots.

**Date of Sale:** 6 May 1837.

**Location:** Located at mile 44 of the National Road half way between Terre Haute and Vandalia. "In point of site and beauty fir a town [it] is surpassed by few in the state; situated on the west bank of Muddy creek of the Embarrass river and as will be seen from the map, stands a fair chance to be the location of the county seat, at some day not far distant."

**Features:** A map of said town can be seen at the place of residence of either of its proprietors.

**Proprietors:** William C. Greenup and C. M. Hanson.

**Terms of Sale:** Six and twelve months credit will be given.

**Notes:** The name survives as a very small place about 12 miles southwest of Greenup and as the name of a township in Cumberland County.

## APPENDIX A

### INDEX OF PROPRIETORS AND OTHER PERSONS SIGNING 1835-1837 TOWN ADVERTISEMENTS

This appendix contains a list of proprietors, agents, and other similar people named in the town advertisements. It is followed by the name of the town as found in the advertisement, and the present-day county.

Adams, James: Huron, Sangamon	Bruner, Samuel: Le Roy, Crawford
Adams, O. M.: Woodburn, Macoupin	Bryant, John H.: Princeton, Putnam
Adams, Samuel: Port Byron, Rock Island	Busch, Daniel Brown: New Canton, Pike
Aldrich, Mark: Warsaw, Hancock	Bush, Daniel B.: Portland, Pike
Archer, W. B.: Marshall, Clark	Bushnell, Solomon: Columbiana, Greene
Arenz, F.: Beardstown, Cass	Butler, Elisah: Franklin, DeWitt
Aytes, Enos: Albany, Greene	Campbell, J. B.: Winnebago, Winnebago
Ayres, Riscarrick: Albany, Greene	Campbell, James B.: Rockwell, La Salle
Baker, Ezra: Selma, Wabash	Case, Johan H.: Stephenson, Rock Island
Ballard, F. and Company: New Market, Sangamon	Carpenter, William: Huron, Sangamon
Barber, Austin: Augusta, Pike	Chandler, Samuel B.: Pittsburg, St. Clair
Barrett, Richard F.: Warsaw, Hancock	Chapman, Abner: Wesley City, Tazewell
Bayless, Elias: Liberty, Tazewell	Chase, Squire W. D.: Wesley, City Tazewell
Beaman, John: Newport, Greene	Churchill, Chester: Kinderhook, Pike
Babb, Jonathan: Lacon, Putnam	Christy, Andrew: Chippewa, Madison
Belcher and Stevenson: Port Byron	Clark, Benjamin: Brooklyn, Schuyler
Bell, Hiral: Selma, Wabash	Clark, James: Plymouth, Hancock
Benton, Lewis: Calumet, Cook	Clark, John C.: Le Roy, Crawford
Beesley, Benjamin: Monroe, Cass	Clements, Francis: Byron, Champaign
Bishop, Thomas: Florence, White	Cock and Fifild: Marine, Madison
Bliss, Daniel: Van Buren, Whiteside	Coe, James R.: Byron, Champaign
Blow, E. P.: Marine, Madison	Coggshill, J. H.: Bridgeport, Morgan
Boal, Robert: Lacon, Putnam	Coggshill, J. H.: New Bedford, Pike
Boilvin, N.: Winnebago, Winnebago	Collins, Elizabeth: Collinsville, Madison
Bolter, John: Milan, Calhoun	
Bostwick, William C.: Rock Port, Rock Island	
Breath, A.: Marine, Madison	
Breese, Sydney: Carlisle, Clinton	
Brown, James: Lexington, McLean	
Brown, William R.: Rockwell, La Salle	



Collins, William: Collinsville,  
Madison

Conn, J. B.: Chippewa, Madison

Constant, Archibald: Cicero,  
Sangamon

Conway, Joseph: Stephenson, Rock  
Island

Cook, Eamais A.: Plymouth,  
Hancock

Corray, William: Byron, Champaign

Coss, Sherman: Albany, Greene

Covell, E. William: Oporto, Lee

Covell, M. E.: Le Roy, McLean

Crandall, John. F.: Wesley  
City, Tazewell

Crockett, John W.: Plymouth,  
Hancock

Cummings, Thomas: Guilford,  
Calhoun

Daniels, James: Middleton, Pike

Daniels, John: Middleton, Pike

Darniel, Jacob: Guilford, Calhoun

Davenport, G.: Port Byron, Rock  
Island

Davenport, William: Hanover,  
Tazewell

Davies, J. F.: Mt. Pulaski, Logan

Davis, James: Augusta, Pike

Dennison, William: New Boston,  
Mercer

Dillon, Walter: Liberty, Tazewell

Dimmick, Isaac: Vermillionville, La  
Salle

Dole, George W.: Calumet, Cook.

Donavan, John: Albany, Sangamon.

Dorsey, Charles S: Wesley City,  
Tazewell

Duncan, Joseph: Brooklyn,  
Schuyler

Duncan, Joseph: Marshall, Clark

Duncan, Joseph: Oquawka, Warren

Duncan, Joseph: Shokokon, Warren

Duncan, Joseph: Warsaw, Hancock

Dutton, James: Readfield, Pike

Dyson, D. S.: Oquawka, Warren

Dyson, R.: Oquawka, Warren

Ebey, John M.: Centreville, Schuyler

Edwards, Benjamin F.: Edinburgh,  
Christian

Edwards, Benjamin F.: Marine,  
Madison

Edwards, Ninian: Huron, Sangamon

Ellet, John I.: Bristol, Macoupin

Elston, Thomas S.: Princeton,  
Putnam

Fell, Jesse: Byron, Champaign

Fenn, Ira L.: Lacon, Putnam

Fenn, William: Lacon, Putnam

Ficklin, Orlando B.: Selma, Wabash

Field, A. P.: Elizabeth, Bond

Fisher, William: Lacon, Putnam

Fowler, George: Albion, Edwards

Fowler, George: Pocahontas,  
Wabash

Fowler, George: Powhattan, Wabash

Fowler, George: Tecumseh, White

Forquer, George: Wesley City,  
Tazewell

Francis, Simon: Huron, Sangamon

Fry, Jacob: Guilford Calhoun:

Fulton, G. W.: Le Roy, Crawford

Glen, F. T.: Centreville, Schuyler

Glen, William: Middletown, Logan

Gontermann, J. C.: Stubenville,  
Macoupin

Graves, Willard: Columbus, Adams

Green, Dr.: Brooklyn, Schuyler

Green, Henry: Ottawa, La Salle

Greene, R. R.: Augusta, Pike

Greenup, William C.: Woodbury,  
Cumberland

Gridley, Asahel: Lexington, McLean

Gridley, Asahel: Le Roy, McLean

Grigg, Dr.: Port Byron, Rock Island

Griggs, David R.: Brighton,  
Macoupin

Griggs, Herman: Brighton,  
Macoupin

Griggs, S.: Brighton, Macoupin

Gregory, Charles: Newport, Greene

Haines and Boxer: Illinois City,  
Whiteside

Haines, Richard T.: Lacon, Putnam  
 Halsted, William M.: Lacon, Putnam  
 Hall, H. H.: Virginia, Morgan  
 Hamilton, Richard I.: Canal Port,  
     Cook  
 Hanson, C. M.: Woodbury,  
     Cumberland  
 Hauck, Ross: Stubenville, Macoupin  
 Harburt, Issac: Woodburn,  
     Macoupin  
 Hatch, Betsey: Vermilionville, La  
     Salle  
 Hawley, Gideon: Wesley City,  
     Tazewell  
 Hill, William: Byron, Champaign  
 Hiles, Elija: New Boston, Mercer  
 Hinde, Thomas H.: Albion, Edwards  
 Hinde, Thomas H.: Pocahontas,  
     Wabash  
 Hinde, Thomas H.: Powhattan,  
     Wabash  
 Hinde, Thomas H.: Tecumseh,  
     White  
 Hoblett, T. B.: Newcastle, Logan  
 Hodges, David: Bridgeport, Morgan  
 Hodges, David: New Bedford, Pike  
 Houchin, Thomas: Richmond, Coles  
 Howe, Samuel: Lacon, Putnam  
 Hubbard, E. K.: Calumet, Cook  
 Hurst, Walter R.: St. Mary's,  
     Hancock  
 Hyde, Simeon: Rockwell, La Salle  
 Isham, George: Waynesville,  
     McLean  
 Jack, Charles: New Boston, Mercer  
 Jackson, Joseph: Pleasant Vale,  
     Pike  
 Jackson, Pearly: Pleasant Vale,  
     Pike  
 Janiso, Lewis T.: Rockwell, La Salle  
 Jarboe, H. M.: Bridgeport, Morgan  
 Jarboe, H. M.: New Bedford, Pike  
 Jarboe, Philip: Bridgeport, Morgan  
 Jorboe, Philip: New Bedford, Pike  
 Jayne, Gresham: Huron, Sangamon  
 Jeferies, J. W.: Marine, Madison  
 Keith, Robert: Keithsburg, Mercer  
 Kellam, S. K.: Woodburn, Macoupin  
 Kendall: Marseilles, La Salle (1837  
     Advertisement)  
 Kenny, William: Portland, Monroe  
 Kensie, John B.: Concord, Iroquois  
 Key, E. A.: Warsaw, Hancock  
 King, James A.: Centerville, Pike  
 Kirkman, Thomas C.: Bowlinggreen,  
     Fayette  
 Knapp, H. L.: Middletown, Logan  
 Langworthy, Augustus: Windsor,  
     Putnam  
 Latham, John: Cicero, Sangamon  
 Lathrop, Dixwell: Rockwell, La Salle  
 Law, John: Selma, Wabash  
 Le Roy, Alexis: Le Roy, Crawford  
 Leshner, Jacob: Albion, Edwards  
 Leshner, Jacob: Pocahontas, Wabash  
 Leshner, Jacob: Powhattan, Wabash  
 Leshner, Jacob: Tecumseh, White  
 Lindley, Alexander: Mt. Pulaski,  
     Logan  
 Link, W. K.: Columbiana, Greene  
 Logan, Stephan B.: Huron,  
     Sangamon  
 Margrave, Felix: Grandville, Putnam  
 Martin, G. A.: Oporto, Lee  
 Mason, Hail: Clifton, Madison  
 May, George: Lynchburg,  
     Sangamon  
 M'Crillis, Lafayette: Albany, Greene  
 McCoy, C. K.: Clayton, Adams  
 McClure, Alexander: Albion,  
     Edwards  
 McClure, Alexander, Pocahontas,  
     Wabash  
 McClure, Alexander, Powhattan,  
     Wabash  
 McClure, Alexander: Tecumseh,  
     White  
 McQueen, Robert: Shokokon,  
     Warren  
 Mason, Paris: Grafton, Jersey  
 Meech and Daniels: Marine,  
     Madison

Mereweather, H. W.: Columbiana,  
Greene

Miller, George: Huron, Sangamon

Mills, A. L.: Chippewa, Madison

Mitchell, William: Kingston, Peoria

Mitchell, J. W. S.: Byron,  
Champaign

Moffatt, R.D.: Le Roy, Crawford

Montague, John: Warsaw, Hancock

Moore, Henry: Concord, Iroquois

Moore, Henry: Rockwell, La Salle

Morris, Samuel: Huron, Sangamon

Morgan, Joshua C.: Tremont,  
Tazewell

Morton, ?: Chippewa, Madison

Murphy, John H.: Selma, Wabash

Newman, Jonas: Chippewa,  
Madison

Nevit, William: Van Buren, Whiteside

Opdyke, Stacy B.: Edinburgh,  
Christian

Opdyce, Stacy B.: Wesley City,  
Tazewell.

Orr, Joseph: Lima, Adams

Orr, William: Lima, Adams

Osbourne, W. S.: Van Buren,  
Whiteside

Owen, Robert Dale: Albion,  
Edwards

Owen, Robert Dale: Pocahontas,  
Wabash

Owen, Robert Dale: Powhattan,  
Wabash

Owen, Robert Dale: Tecumseh,  
White

Pearsons, Hiram: Canal Port, Cook

Pain, Mason: Franklin, DeWitt

Payton, Fr.: Concord, Iroquois

Pearce, Daniel: Pittsburg, St. Clair

Peebles, Jesse: Chesterfield,  
Macoupin

Pegram, G.: Newport, Greene

Pegram, W. B. Newport, Greene

Perry, Charles G.: Brussels, Morgan

Perry, Charles G.: Valasco, Pike

Philips, Alfred: Wesley City, Tazewell

Philips and Belcher: Port Byron,  
Rock Island

Philips, S. and Company: Oquawka,  
Warren

Pierson, David: Upper Grafton,  
Jersey

Post, R.: Postville, Logan

Post, R.: Waynesville, McLean

Price, David: Russelville, Lawrence

Prickett, David: Huron, Sangamon

Prickett, David: Wesley City,  
Tazewell

Puliam, Thomas: Fayetteville, St.  
Clair

Rains, A. R.: St. Mary's, Hancock

Ralls, W. C.: Brooklyn, Schuyler

Reed, Charles: Winnebago,  
Winnebago

Reynolds, John: Pittsburg, St. Clair.

Richardson, John R.: Selma,  
Wabash

Roberts, Benjamin: Van Burensburg,  
Montgomery

Robinson, Barton: Mt. Pulaski  
Logan

Robinson, David: Benton, Christian

Robinson, James T.: Mt. Pulaski,  
Logan

Robinson, John M. Albion, Edwards

Robinson, John M.: Pocahontas,  
Wabash

Robinson, John M.: Powhattan,  
Wabash

Robinson, John M.: Tecumseh,  
White

Rockwell, Charles W.: Rockwell,  
La Salle

Rockwell, John A. R.: Rockwell,  
La Salle

Robins, D.: Marion, DeWitt

Rogers, Jesse H.: Newport, Greene

Runyon, A.: Lockport, Will

Russell, J. B. F.: Concord, Iroquois

Russell, J.B. F.: Rockwell, La Salle

Salter, James R. D.: Waverly,  
Morgan

Schaffer, John: Monroe, Cass  
 Scarlett, Nathan: Bristol, Macoupin  
 Scott, J.: Mt. Pulaski, Logan  
 Scott, John W.: Newport, Greene  
 Semple, James: Tamarawa, St. Clair  
 Shakelford, J.: Wesley City,  
     Tazewell  
 Shaw, John: Hamburg, Calhoun  
 Short, Henry W.: Van Burensburg,  
     Montgomery  
 Simpson, P. W.: LaGrange, Brown  
 Skidmore, A. R.: Chippewa, Madison  
 Smith, Charles A.: Shokokon,  
     Warren  
 Smith, Roger: Bristol, Macoupin  
 Smith, Silas: Elizabeth, Bond  
 Spencer, John R.: Stephenson, Rock  
     Island  
 Snyder, Adam W.: Tamarawa, St.  
     Clair  
 Stewart, John T.: Huron, Sangamon  
 Stewart, Scoby: Albion, Edwards  
 Stewart, Scoby: Pocahontas,  
     Wabash  
 Stewart, Scoby: Powhattan, Wabash  
 Stewart, Scoby: Tecumseh, White  
 Stone Manning and Company:  
     Bridgeport, Morgan  
 Stone Manning and Company: New  
     Bedford, Pike  
 Stone Manning and Company:  
     Upper Grafton, Jersey  
 Striker, S. P.: Le Roy, Crawford  
 Studyvint, John: Liberty, Tazewell  
 Tanner, David: Waverly, Morgan  
 Taylor, John: Wesley City, Tazewell  
 Terrell, Benjamin: Plymouth,  
     Hancock  
 Thomas, Jesse R.: Edinburgh,  
     Christian  
 Tompkins, B. J.: Woodburn,  
     Macoupin  
 Thompson, Thomas: Bloomfield,  
     Adams  
 Tilly, Aaron: Chesterfield, Macoupin  
 Tolman, Daniel: Clifton, Madison  
 Toner, Thomas: Pittsburg, St. Clair  
 Turger, Francis: St. Francisville,  
     Lawrence  
 Trent, S. W.: Huron, Sangamon  
 Trotter, W. D. R.: Duncansville,  
     Sangamon  
 Turley, G. W.: Mt. Pulaski, Logan  
 Turpin, B. F.: Montezuma, Pike  
 Van Antwerp, John: Bristol,  
     Macoupin  
 Walker, John E.: Dresden, La Salle  
 Walker, George: Pittsburg, St. Clair  
 Wall, Caleb: Edinburgh, Christian  
 Warren, Calvin: A.: Warsaw,  
     Hancock  
 Web, John: Caledonia, Alexander  
 Welsh, G. W.: Marine, Madison  
 Wetherford, J.: Stubenville,  
     Macoupin  
 Williams, Archibald: St. Mary's,  
     Hancock  
 Willis, James W.: Van Buren,  
     Whiteside  
 Wilson, J. L.: Albion, Edwards  
 Wilson, J. L.: Powhattan, Wabash  
 Wilson, J. L.: Pocahontas, Wabash  
 Wilson, J. L.: Tecumseh, White.  
 Wilson, William: Albion, Edwards  
 Wilson, William: Pocahontas,  
     Wabash  
 Wilson, William: Powhattan, Wabash  
 Wilson, William: Tecumseh, White  
 Wilson, William: Selma, Wabash  
 Withers, G. W.: Byron, Champaign  
 Withers, G. W.: Le Roy, McLean  
 White, Edward: Appanouce,  
     Hancock  
 White, Samuel S.: Appanouce,  
     Hancock  
 Whiting, Abijah: Fayetteville, St.  
     Clair  
 Whitten, Bridge: Kinderhook, Pike  
 Wiswall, Elijah: Princeton, Putnam  
 Wood, David L.: Elizabeth, Bond  
 Woodruff, Joseph: Lacon, Putnam  
 Woodworth, R. P.: Marseilles, La

Salle (1835 Advertisement)  
Worrell, Elisha: Chili, Hancock

Worthington, T. H.: Augusta, Pike  
Wright, John: Albany, Sangamon

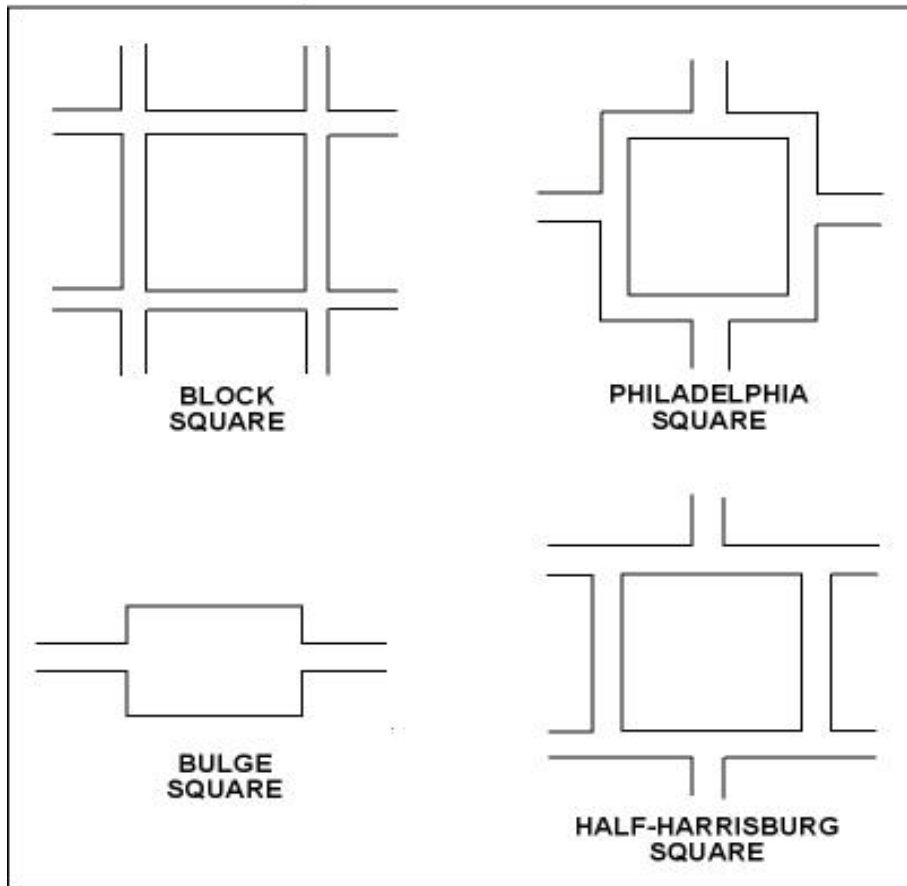
## **APPENDIX B**

### **A LIST OF ALL TOWNS PLATTED IN TWENTY-NINE CENTRAL ILLINOIS COUNTIES: 1835-1837**

During various research projects concerning the boom of 1836, I have had occasions to try to put together complete lists of all of the towns platted in certain Illinois counties between 1835 and 1837. The area covered includes a large part of central Illinois. For all but two of the counties named it is based on an examination of all recorded plats found in the records of the counties mentioned. The two exceptions are Fulton and Coles counties where it is taken from published sources, which I believe to be complete. The towns are listed by present county. Unfortunately, most Illinois county histories do not have complete information on town founding. The list does not include plats that were additions to existing places. Where available, the list below provides the date, town founder, and the surveyor's location. For those places no longer extant or difficult to locate on modern maps, township name has been included, although these names were not in use in the 1830s. Sometimes there are brief additional notes. Unless otherwise stated, townships are measured from the Third Principal Meridian.

For most towns, information on square design has been included. Figure 3 shows some of the most common types of Illinois town squares. A block square is one where the streets pass along the sides; this is by far the most common form in the Midwest. A Philadelphia square is one where the streets reach the square midway along its sides. A bulge square is an elongated rectangle, in effect a widened street. There are other square forms. In spite of much speculation to the contrary, square form in Illinois does not seem to reflect any particular ethnic or regional identity. Occasionally in county seats the courthouse will be placed facing the square rather than in its center. Metamora is an example. This may be a New England custom. About a third of the towns were platted without a central square, but in such places squares were occasionally added at a later date.

**Common Illinois Town Square Types  
adapted from Price 1968**



**Figure 3**

**BUREAU COUNTY**

(9)

**Concord** 26 March 1836. Platted by Joseph Brigham. In the NE ¼ of Section 27, T 17N, R9E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Dover Township). Philadelphia Square labeled "Public Square." Abandoned by 1875. Located five miles southeast of Dover.

**Fairmount** 18 June 1836. Platted by Eli Nichols. In the SW ¼ of Section 17 & NW ¼ of Section 20, T17N, R10E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Berlin Township). The plat was vacated by the General Assembly in the session on 3 February 1840. It was located two miles northeast of Dover.

**Greenfield** The name was changed to Lamoille. 3 February 1840. April 1836. Platted by Tracy Reeve and John Kendall. In Section 24, T18N, R10E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) Block Square labeled "Public Square."

**Kin-Nor-Wood** 17 March 1836. Platted by Charles Kaywood, Robert Woodworth, and George Norris. In the E ½ of the SW ¼ & W ½ of SE ¼ of Section 31, T16N, R11E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Hall Township). Located three miles west of Trenton on the north shore of the Illinois River.

**Livingston** The name was changed to Dover. 1 July 1836. Platted by John B. Lapsey. In the SE ¼ of Section 24, T17N, R9E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Berlin Township). Half Philadelphia square. A few functions remain in 1877. Located two miles northwest of Malden.

**Providence** 14 July 1836. Platted by Samuel Scott, Simon Wilson, Edward Bailey, Caleb Cushing, and Asea Barney. In the south part of Section 17 and north part of Section 20, T15N, R8E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Indiantown Township). Block square labeled "Public Square." It was a Rhode Island colony. Occupied with a few functions remaining in 1877. Located four miles west of Tiskilwa.

**West Hennepin** 19 February 1836. Platted by Lewis Durley, A. S. Needham and Gardner G. Gorham. In the NW ¼ of Section T15N, R10E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Indiantown Township). A small river plat with no square. Occupied and then abandoned. Located on the west side of the Illinois River.

**West Windsor** Consolidated with Windsor to form part of Tiskilwa 3 February 1840. 15 March 1836. Platted by Joseph Kenny. In the E ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 12, T 15N, R8E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). Block square labeled "Pleasant Square."

**Windsor** Consolidated with West Windsor to form part of Tiskilwa 3 February 1840. January 1836. Platted by Augustus Langworthy. In the SW ¼ of Section 7 and the NW ¼ of Section 18, T15N, R9E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) Several squares labeled "Great or Country Square," "Liberty Square," and "Church or Seminary Square."

## CASS COUNTY

(4)

**Lancaster** 28 April 1837. Platted by John Dutch. In the NE ¼ of NW ¼ of Section 25, T17N, R9W (Lancaster Township). Bulge square. Briefly occupied and then vacated 6 June 1843. Located two miles west of Ashland.

**Monroe** (Munroe) 27 June 1836. Platted by Benjamin Beasley and John Shaffer. In the W ½ of SW ¼, of Section 11, T 17N, R11W. A small four-block plat with no square. Occupied, abandoned and vacated. Spelled with a "u" on the deed, but with an "o" in the town advertisement. Located nine miles south of Beardstown.

**Philadelphia** 11 June 1836. Platted by Archibald Job, School Trustee. In Section 16, T17N, R9W. (Lancaster Township). Bulge square. Briefly occupied and then abandoned. Located five miles east southeast of Virginia.

**Virginia** 17 May 1836. Platted by Dr. H. H. Hall. In T17N, R10E. Block square labeled "Washington Fountain Square." Beardstown and Virginia contested the role of county seat until it was finally established as Virginia in 1867.

## CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

(5)

**Byron** 1 October 1836. Platted by Jesse Fell, Allen Withers, and James Mitchell. In Sections 33 & 34 of Township 20 & Section 4 of Township 19 (Urbana Township). Many streets named for poets, briefly occupied. Located northeast of Urbana near the old Urbana airport.

**Homer** 24 January 1836. Platted by Michael D. Coffeen, James Groenendyke, Elias Thomas and Moses Thomas. At the joint corner of Sections 4 & 5 in Section 18 and Sections 32 & 33 in Section 19 (Homer Township). Surveyed by Garrett More, a small plat with no square. Buildings were moved on skids to the modern town of Homer early in 1855. Located a mile and a quarter north of the present location of Homer on Salt Fork.

**Middletown** 10 March 1836. Platted by John Brownfield, William Non (?), Daniel T. Potter. In the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 15, T20N, R7E. (Mahomet Township). A narrow plat along the Sangamon River on the Bloomington Road. Located one mile south of Mahomet.

**Sydney** 9 November 1836. Platted by Dr. James H. Lyon and Joseph Davice. In parts of Section 16, T 18 N. R10E. Block Square. Survives in Sydney Township.

**Upper Sangamon** 15 October 1836. Platted by James Farmer. In the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 9, T 20N, R7E. (Mahomet Township). Surveyed by Garrett Moore. Located on the northwest edge of present day Mahomet.

## CLARK COUNTY

(3)

**Auburn** (becomes Clark Center). September 1835. Platted by Orlando B. B. Ficklin, Demas K. Ward and Johnathan A. Rathbone, On the National Road. A rival for the county seat. The town survives.

**Cumberland:** 4 November 1836. Platted by Ewing Chancellor and John Doughty. In the NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 20, T10N, R14W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.). On the National



Road. Occupied but most businesses eventually moved to the neighboring town of Casey.

**Marshall** October 1835. Platted by William Archer. On the National Road, it survives as seat of Clark County.

## COLES COUNTY

(8)

The information for Coles County is from *The Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Coles County*.

**Hitesville** Surveyed 14 April 1835 for James Hite. N  $\frac{1}{2}$  of NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 9 T12N, R 14E (Ashmore Township). Eleven miles east of Charleston near the eastern boundary of the county. Occupied and abandoned.

**Independence** Surveyed on 12 May 1835 for Gideon N. Ashmore. SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of of Section 13, T10N, R14E (Sargent Township). Near the Embarrass River ten miles southeast of Tuscola.

**Liberty** Surveyed 8, 9, and 10 August 1836 for James Clark, Arthur Johnson and Simon Boyer. SW corner of Section 18 and the NW corner of Section 19, T13N, R11E. (Ashmore Township) 10 Miles northeast of Charleston.

**Middleton** Surveyed 11 August 1836 for Christian Sousely and Christopher Groves. The middle of Section 35 T13N, R10W (Ashmore Township). Two miles southeast of Ashmore.

**Paradise** (1) Surveyed August 1836 for Charles Sawyer. NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 33 T10N, R7E, (Neoga Township). Three and a half miles southwest of Mattoon.

**Paradise** (2) Surveyed 1 through 4 February 1837 for Miles W. Hart and Thomas Beringer. NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 8 T11N, R7E (Mattoon Township). Six miles southwest of Mattoon.

**Richmond** Plat filed 27 August 1836 for John Houchin. Section 27, T12N, R7E (Mattoon Township). One and a half miles southwest of Mattoon.

**Salesbury** Surveyed 28 and 29 December 1837 for Joseph Hulen and George K. Harris. NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 9, T13N, R10W. (Union Township). Seven miles southeast of Charleston.

## CRAWFORD COUNTY

(1)

**Le Roy** 3 October 1836. Platted by Abner L. Elias. Section 7, T6N, R10W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.).

## DEWITT COUNTY

(4)

**Clinton** 3 October 1836. Platted by James Allen and Jesse Fell. Philadelphia Square labeled "Public Square." It survives as the seat of DeWitt County.

**Franklin** 30 March 1836. Platted by Elisha Buttler and Mason Pain. In the W ½ of SW ¼ of Section 12, T19N, R1E. (Tunbridge Township). Block Square "Public Square." A post office existed about 1860, but the site was farmland by 1882. Located two and a half miles south of Kenney.

**Marion** 18 June 1835. Platted by Benjamin Day. In Section 19, T20N, R5E. (DeWitt Township) Philadelphia Square labeled "Commercial Square." Located four miles northwest of Weldon on Salt Creek.

**Mt. Pleasant** Today Farmer City. 23 January 1837. Platted by Robert M. Patterson and John W. Bradley. Name Changed 1868. Survives in Santa Anna Township.

## FORD COUNTY

No plats recorded within the present county limits before 1857.

## FULTON COUNTY

(16)

**Astoria** 9 June 1837. Platted by Zechariah Gilbert, Benjamin Clark, Mr. Bacon. In Section 23, T3N, R1E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). John Jacob Astor is said to have owned the quarter section of land on which the town was founded. Astoria survives in Astoria Township.

**Babylon** 11 March 1837. Platted by Philip Alysworth, Franklin Offeld, and Jake Wittier. In Section 24 of T7N, R1E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.).(Lee Township). Located six miles southeast of Avon.

**Bernadotte** 27 November 1835. Platted by Joseph Coleman. In the W ½ of NE ¼ of Section 19, T5N, R2E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). (Bernadotte Township). Located three miles north of Ipava.

**Centreville** Later combined with Middletown to form Cuba. 18 November 1836. Platted by Daniel Vittum, Joel Solomon, Samuel Brooks, and T. B. Cogswell. In the NW ¼ of Section 30, T6N, R3W (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). (Pitman Township).

**Delavan** Platted by James W. Willis Section 24, T6N, R5W (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). (Banner Township). Three squares. Located six miles southeast of Canton.

**Fairview** 16 August 1837. Platted by Mosses Hall, Benjamin Foster, and others. SW ¼ of Section 23, (Banner Township). Located near Delavan on the Illinois River. Located six miles southeast of Canton.

**Farmington** 9 October 1835. Platted by Joseph Cone, George W. Little, and Hiram Palmer. It survives in Farmington Township.

**Liverpool** 13 August 1836. Platted by R. E. Little, William Elliott, Joseph Sharpe, Theo. Tarleton, E. D. Rice and Roger Veits. On the Illinois River. It survives in Liverpool Township.

**Marietta** 6 May 1836. Platted by Lorenzo Bevins, Benjamin Hoyt, and Others. In the E. ½ of Section 16, T6N, R1E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.).(Harris Township). Located ten miles north of Table Grove.

**Milton** 1837. Platted by Jonathan Cozad. In the SW ¼ of Section 8 T5n, R3E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Lewistown Township). Located two miles northwest of Lewistown.

**St. Augustine** 6 May 1835. Platted by August Mattingly. In Section 5 of T5n, R3E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). (Union Township). Occupied and then abandoned for a town of the same name platted in 1856 across the border in Knox County. Located one and a half miles east of the northwest corner of Fulton County.

**Smithfield** 25 April 1836. Platted by Joseph C. Smith. In the NW ¼ of Section 11, T8N, R1E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). (Union Township). Later town of the same name was platted in 1858 on Section 29 of Cass Township. Square of unspecified design. Located four miles northeast of Avon.

**Troy** 29 April 1836. Platted by Nathaniel Childs. In Section 12, T8N, R1E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). (Union Township). Located on Cedar Creek. Occupied and then abandoned. Located two miles north of Table Grove.

**Tuscumbria** 1837. Exact date uncertain. Platted by Wade Hampton Davis. In the SE ¼ of Section 17, T5N, R2E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.)(Bernadotte Township). The plat was vacated in 1855. Located on high land above the Spoon River, eight miles northwest of Lewistown.

**Table Grove** 22 May 1837. Platted by James Spicer, Benjamin Windham, and Caleb Dilworth. It survives in Farmers Township.

**Vermont** 4 May 1836. Platted by James Crail and Joseph Crail. It survives in Vermont Township.

## GRUNDY COUNTY

(8)

**Clarkston** 26 June 1837. Platted by: Peter Bolles, Robert P. Wentworth, Lovell Kimball. In Section 12, T33N, R6E (Eriena Township). Philadelphia square. Located on the north side of Illinois River, three miles west of Morris at the location later occupied by Stockdale.

**Dresden** 9 March 1835. Platted by: Sydney Breeze, G. W. P. Maxwell, Hart Fellows and Solomon Rutherford. In Section 26, T34N, R8E, (Auxable Township). Surveyed by Samuel Bullock. The plat was vacated. Located on the north side of the Illinois River, seven miles upstream from Morris.

**Franklin** 13 June 1836. Platted by Samuel S. Bullock. on the north fraction of the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 8, T33N, R7E, on the Illinois River (Wauponsee Township). An irregular plat.

**Hidalgo** 10 October 1836. Platted by Jacob Claypool. On part of the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 18, T33N, R7E, on "wepecan river," Wauponsee township. A saw mill was in existence at the time of the plat. Plat vacated.

**Illinois City** 25 June 1836. Original plat not found, no details available.

**Kankakee** 17 June 1836. Platted by William Lewis. In the E  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 36, T3N, R8E (Auxable township). On the Kankakee River.

**Mazon** 15 April 1837. Platted by [Illegible] Robbins. In the W  $\frac{1}{2}$  of SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 6, T32N, R8E, in a loop of the Mazon River, closer to Sulpher Springs than the present site of Mazon.

**New Philadelphia** 13 March 1837. Platted by Henry G. Wells. In the W  $\frac{1}{2}$  of SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 34, T33N, R7E. (Wauponsee Township). Not to be confused with a town of the same name in Pike County and mentioned above.

## HENRY COUNTY

(9)

**Andover** 8 April 1837. Platted by the New York Association, Eben Townsend, E. A. Mix, Ithamar Pillsbury, trustees. In the S  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Section 8, and the N  $\frac{1}{2}$  of section 7, T15N, R2E (4) (Andover Township).

**Cleveland** 26 April 1836. Platted by Charles Atkinson, James D. Taber. On the south bank of the Rock River, in Section 31, T 18 N, R1 (?)E (4) (Coloma Township). A small plat. It was the site of the first ferry over the Rock River, almost deserted by 1910.

**Dayton** 31 October 1836. Platted by Mark M. Aiken. In the NE ½ of SE ¼ of Section 1, T17 N, R1E (Coloma Township). Philadelphia Square. Five or six families remained in 1877, but it had reverted to farmland by 1910.

**Geneseo** 3 December 1837. Platted by John C. Ward, Cromwell K. Bartlett, and R. R. Stewart. Block square. It survives in Geneseo Township.

**Henryville** 18 November 1835. Platted by Hiram Wentworth and Stephan Dewey. In the NW¼ of the W ½ of the NE ¼ of Section 13, T17 N, R3E (4), on the Green River.

**Lancaster** 9 May 1837. Platted by Thomas R. Saunders. In the N ½ of the NE ¼ of Section 6, T17N, R2E (4) (Hanna Township).Platted when area was part of Knox County. The plat evidently not transferred to Henry County records. The plat was vacated on 16 December 1840.

**Morristown** 28 June 1837. Platted by Charles Oakley and Charles Wilcox. In sections 24 & 25, T17N, R1E (4) (Osco Township). Block square labeled "Public Square." The second county seat, said to have been heavily advertised in New York papers. It was occupied and abandoned.

**Richmond** October 1837. Platted by Major James M. Allen, Thomas Pillsbury, Joshua Brooming, and Philip Hammal, for County Commissioners Court. In the SE ¼ of Section 17, T 16N, R3E (4) (Munson Township). Block square. Said to have been laid out on a knoll on uninhabited prairie. Advertised in 1838 papers. Occupied, but vanished by 1910.

**Wethersfield** April 1837. Platted by the Connecticut Association. In Sections 3 & 4 of Wethersfield Township. Square labeled "Public Square." Most functions eventually removed to Kewanee.

## KNOX COUNTY

(7)

**Abingdon** 26 May 1836. Platted by Abram. D. Schwartz. In the SE ¼ of the SW ¼, of Section 33, T10N, R1E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M). No square. It survives in Indian Point and Cedar townships.

**Florida** 4 & 5 April 1837. Platted by John Terry. In the S ½ of the W ½ of Section 20 , T9N, R2E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). No Square. Located south of Knoxville.

**Henderson** 21 July 1835. Platted by Calvin Glass. In the SW ¼ of Section 14, T12N, R1E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Henderson Township).

**Louisville** 29 October 1836. Platted by John S. Garrett. In the SW ¼ of Section 16, T10N, R1E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Cedar Township).

**Maquon** 24 October 1836. Platted by Parnach Owen, John G. Sanburn, William McGowen, R. L. Hannaman and "Richmond and Beers." In the W ½ of the NE ¼ of Section 4, T9N, R3E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Maquon Township). It survives in Maquon Township.

**Victoria** 10 August 1837. Platted by Milton Shurtliff. In Section 17, T12N, R4E. (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) Half Philadelphia Square. The name was changed in 1840. It was located half a mile northwest of a new town of the same name platted 11 May 1849.

## LA SALLE COUNTY

(18)

**Dayton** 13 July 1837. Platted by John Green. On Section 29, T34N, R4E. In the Fox River north of Ottawa at a pre-existing mill site.

**Enterprise** 11 August 1835. Platted by Roger Skinner and Charles Boyd. In the NE ¼ of Section 19, T33N, R1E. (Peru Township). No square.

**Germantown** 27 February 1836. Platted by Thomas Dye (?). In the E ½ of NE ¼ of Section 3, and a fraction of Section 29, T35N, R5E (Serena Township). On the Fox River.

**Gibraltar** 14 April 1836. Platted by Benjamin Thurton. In the SE ¼ of Section 18, T33N, R3E. (Ottawa Township). On the north side of the Illinois River.

**Glasgow** 9 May 1837. Platted by Issah Leybold. In the NE ¼ of Section 6, T32N, R2E. (Vermillion Township).

**Homer** 28 September 1836. Platted by George Carlton. In the NW ¼ of Section 35, T35N, R1E (Troy Grove Township). Homer Station is a later town.

**Lafayette** 9 February 1836. Platted by Stephan R. Beggs. In the NW ¼ of Section 20, T35N, R2E. On the banks of the Little Vermilion River.

**Lowell** 2 July 1836. Platted by William Leelays and Jethro Hatch. In fractions of Sections 8, 9, 16 and 17 in T32N, R3E. On the west bank of the Vermilion at the rapids of the river, which are shown on the plat. A square labeled "Hancock Square."

**Marseilles** 1 June 1835. Platted by Lovel Kimbal. Survives in Manilus Township.

**Maryville** 2 September 1836. Platted by Benjamin Latham (?). In the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 21, T35N, R3E.

**Mechanicville** 12 April 1836. Platted by Benjamin Williams. In the NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 13, T33N, R3E (South Ottawa Township). South side of the Illinois River. No square.

**Ninawa** 12 August 1837. Platted by Henry L. Kenney. In the North part of Section 20 and the south part of section 17, T33N, R1E. On the Illinois River.

**Rockwell** 1 June 1836. Platted by John A. Rockwell. In the E  $\frac{1}{2}$  of SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 14, T33N, R1E. Two squares named "Washington Square" and "Franklin Square."

**South Peru** 26 July 1836. Platted by Joshua Sabine. In the E  $\frac{1}{2}$  of NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 29, T33N, R1E. On the south side of the Illinois River across from Peru.

**Troy** 12 July 1837. Platted by Richard K. Swift. In the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 24 and part of Section 23, T35N, R1E. Half Philadelphia square.

**Utica** 16 November 1836. Platted by George Norris. In the Section 17, T33N, R2E. Evidently removed from an older town of the same name to take advantage of the route of the Illinois and Michigan Canal.

**Van Buren** 2 November 1836. Platted by John Morgan, Norton McKey, and Samuel McKay. Half Philadelphia Square. In the north part of the E  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 11, T31N, R3E.

**Vermilionville** 17 May 1836. Issac Dimmick. In Section 9, Deer Park Township on the north bank of the Big Vermillion River. The parts of the town lying west of Center Street vacated by 14 September 1840 when Jabaz Whiting was proprietor. It survives as a small place in Deer Park Township.

## LAWRENCE COUNTY

(4)

**Charlottsville** 5 June 1837. Asahel Heath. In the SW  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Section 28, T5N, R12W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.). Occupied and abandoned.

**Russelville** 28 October 1835. Platted by David Price. On Section 33 of Township 5N, R10W and Section 4 T4N, R10W(2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.). On the Wabash River. Occupied and survives as a very small place.

**St. Francisville** 1 February 1837. Platted by Francis Sugaw. In the Section 21, T21N, R11W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.). Location is substantially that of Van Buren, but the Van Buren plat is slightly earlier. It survives in Denison Township.

**Van Buren** 3 May 1837. Platted by William R. Jackson. In the NW fraction of Section 21, T2N, R11W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.). The town was occupied. The location is substantially that of St. Francisville and the town takes on that name.

## LIVINGSTON COUNTY

(1)

**Pontiac** 26 July 1837. Platted by Henry Weed, Lucus W. Young, and Seth M. Young. In Section 22 (Pontiac Township). Tradition, well established in the nineteenth century, credits Bloomington's Jesse Fell, see introduction, with being responsible for the establishment of this town, but his name is not on the deed, and he never claimed credit for the platting. A rival town of Richmond was platted 13 July 1851. Pontiac survives as the county seat of Livingston County.

## LOGAN COUNTY

(8)

**Albany** 21 June 1836. Platted by John Wright and John Donovan. In the W ½ of the NE ¼ of Section 7, T19N, R3W (Broadwell Township). On Salt Creek. Block Square. Occupied and abandoned. Surveyed by Abraham Lincoln.

**Bloomington** 5 August 1836. Platted by Richard Ackman, William Rankin, Thomas F. Fletcher, and George Cottingham. In Sections 29 and 32, T21N R2W. Occupied and abandoned.

**Eminence** 5 September 1836. Platted by John Morgan and Philip Miles. In SW ¼ of NE ¼ of Section 9, T21N, R2W. Plat vacated 1842. Probably never occupied.

**Madison (1)** 11 April 1836. Platted by William Carpenter. In the E ½ of the NE ¼ of Section 27, T19N, R2W. Harrisonburg square labeled "Public Square." Lots were sold but occupation is uncertain.

**Madison (2)** 5 August 1836. Platted by Horace P. Johnson, Benjamin M. Robinson, John R. Sloane, Ralph Kilburn, and Norman H. Purple. In the SE ¼ of Section 17, T21N, R4W. Philadelphia Square. Probably never occupied.

**Mt. Pulaski** 20 June 1836. Platted by Jabez Capps, J. F. Davis, James Scott, George McDaniel, James Thomas Robinson, George R. Rice, Dr. Barton Robinson, and G. W. Turley. Former county seat. It survives in Mt. Pulaski Township.



**Newcastle** 2 October 1836. Platted by Timothy B. Hoblett and James Allen. In the E ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 28, T21N, R1W. Occupied and abandoned, with many of the functions moved to Atlanta in 1852.

**Postville** 11 March 1836. Platted by Russell Post. In the W ½ of the NW ¼ of Section 36, T20N, R3W. For a time it was the seat of Logan County. Site today incorporated into Lincoln. The square was vacated in 1883.

## **MACON COUNTY**

(2)

**Madison** 26 September 1836. Platted by John B. Moffett. In the SE ¼ of Section 33 T16N, R1E and the N ½ of the NE ¼ of Section 4, T15N, R1E. Block Square labeled "Public Square."

**Murfreesboro** 2 September 1836. William Dickey. In the SE ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 7, T17N, R4E. (Whitmore Township). Block Square labeled "Public Square." Occupied and abandoned.

## **MARSHALL COUNTY**

(6)

**Auburn** 12 September 1836. Platted by William Maxwell. In Section 25, T29N, R6W. (Richland Township). Block square. Probably only a paper town. The entire plat was vacated by the Illinois legislature on 27 February 1841.

**Bristol** 6 May 1836. Platted by James Orr. In the NW ¼ of Section 24, T30N, R3W (Lacon Township). On the Illinois River. No square. Plat vacated 1839-1840.

**Chambersburg** 15 August 1836. Platted by John G. Shepard and Jesse Cox. In the SW ¼ of Section 1 and NW ¼ of Section 12, T12N, R8E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). Half Philadelphia square labeled "Public Square."

**Dorchester** 26 July 1836. Stephan F. Gale. Location not specified in plat. In Henry Township on the Illinois River north of Lacon. Bulge Square. Never occupied.

**Troy City** 30 September 1836. Platted by Sanford Klock. In the NE ¼ of Section 22, T12N, R8W (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Lawn Ridge Township). Block square.

**Webster** 20 June 1837. Platted by Robert Latta, Alvin Dascomb, Walter Plato, and Major J. P. McAllister. In Section 10, T13N, R10E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) Two miles north of the town of Henry on the Illinois River. Philadelphia square labeled "Public Square." Occupied and soon abandoned.

## MASON COUNTY

(4)

**Bath** 30 November 1836. Platted by John Kerton. In Section 22, T20N, R5W. Philadelphia square labeled "Public Square." Another town surveyed by Abraham Lincoln.

**Lynchburg** 8 August 1837. Platted by George May. In the SE ¼ of Section 22 and the SW ¼ of Section 27, T19N, R9W. Philadelphia square labeled "Public Square."

**Moscow** 7 July 1836. Name of the founder is illegible. In the SE ¼ of Section 24, T20N, R10 W. On the east bank of the Illinois River. Half Philadelphia square. A house, a mill, and one other building are present at time of platting. A second platting was recorded on 6 June 1857 and this plat has no square.

**Troy** 24 September 1836. Platted by Spencer Field and others (no other names are found on the original plat). In the NE ¼ of Section 26, T23N, R7W. Block Square labeled "Public Square." Located on the northern edge of the county.

## McLEAN COUNTY

(10)

**Clarksville** 15 July 1836. Platted by Joseph Bartholomew and Marston C. Bartholomew. In the E ½ of SE ¼ of Section 3, T25N, R3E. Occupied and then largely abandoned. A cemetery and some recent buildings survive at the site.

**Concord** (today Danvers). 20 February 1836. Platted by Israel Hall and Matthew Robb. Philadelphia Square. It survives in Danvers Township.

**Hudson** 13 August 1836. Platted by Horatio N. Pettit. No square. A colonial settlement with distinctive in and out-lots. It survives in Hudson Township.

**Le Roy** 28 November 1835. Platted by Asahel Gridley and Merritt Covell. Philadelphia Square. It survives in Empire Township.

**Lexington** 14 January 1835. Platted by James Brown and Asahel Gridley. Philadelphia Square. It survives in Lexington Township.

**Lytleville** 27 February 1836. Platted by John Baldwin. In Section 23, T22N, R3E. Block Square. Occupied and then abandoned.

**Monroe** 1836. Platted by John W. Badderly. In Section 29, T22N, R3E. Probably never occupied.

**Mount Hope** 16 June 1837. William Peck, agent for the Farmers and Mechanics Emigrating Society. A colonial settlement. Philadelphia Square. Occupied and abandoned.

**Peru** 25 February 1836. Platted by Campbell Wakefield and Hiram Buck. In SE ¼ and SW ¼ Section 24, T22N, R2E. Probably never occupied.

**Wilksborough** 26 June 1836. Platted by James O. Bernard. In Section 24, T24N, R1W. Bulge Square. Occupied and abandoned.

## **MENARD COUNTY**

(2)

**New Market** 10 June 1836. Platted by Faldon Ballard, R. H. Ballard, Philip Barnett and Cheney Spear. In part of the NE ¼ of Section 29, T19N, R6W (Indian Creek) Half-Philadelphia square labeled "Public Square." Briefly occupied and then abandoned.

**Petersburg** 23 February 1836. Plated by John Taylor and Hezekiah King. In Section 14, T18N, R7W. Philadelphia square. Said to be a resurvey of an earlier plat.

## **PEORIA COUNTY**

(20)

**Aurora** 14 August 1836. Platted by Robert McKay. In the NW ¼ & SW ¼ Section 27, T8N, R5E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Trivoli Township). Block Square labeled as "Public Square." Location appears identical with later town of Brunswick. Abandoned or never occupied.

**Caledonia** 28 April 1836. Platted by Issac Underhill. In the SE ¼ of Section 8 & SW 1/4 of Section 9, T8N, R5E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Trivoli Township). Half Philadelphia Square called "Public Square."

**Cambridge** 24 April 1836. No proprietor is listed on the plat. In the E ½ of Section 25, T10N, R5E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Brimfield Township). Three block squares: labeled "College Square," "Jackson Square," and "Washington Square."

**Charlestown** Exact date uncertain. Platted by Jacob Schowalter & Almon Clark. It survives as Brimfield. In the NW ¼ of Section 4 (24?) T10N, R5E.(4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) No square.

**Chillicothe** 4 July 1836. Platted by Harrison H. Jamison & Joseph L. Hart. In the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 21 & SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 20, T11N, R9E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). No square listed but two blocks are not subdivided. It survives in Chillicothe Township.

**Detroit** 12 August 1836. Platted by Robert E. Little & Augustus Langworthy. In Sections 14 and 23, T9N, R8E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Richwoods Township). Block square labeled "Public Square." Plat vacated.

**Harkness** 24 & 25 March 1836. Platted by Eli Wilson, Edson Harkness, and Benjamin Dowell. In the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 5 & NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 8, T8N, R5E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Trivoli Township). Bulge square labeled "Public Square".

**Hudson** 28 July 1836. Platted by Norman Purple & Andreuh Hunt. In the E  $\frac{1}{2}$  of NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 35, T9N, R7E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Kickapoo Township). On the Kickapoo Creek. Square called "Washington Square."

**Kickapoo** 13 July 1836. Platted by John Coyle. In the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 6, T9N, R4E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.), (Kickapoo Township). No square identified but one block left undivided. It survives in Kickapoo Township.

**Kingston** 6 June 1836. Platted by James Conger as agent and attorney for Zenas Chandler. On the Illinois River on the north line between T7N, R6E (4) and T7N, R7E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.). No square. It survives as Kingston Mines in Timber Township.

**Lancaster** 11 March 1837. Platted by Samuel Bollinger. In the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 17, T7N, R6E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Timber Township). Philadelphia Square. Plat vacated.

**Lower Peoria** 29 July 1836. Platted by Aquilla Moffatt. In the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 20 & NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 19, of T8N, R8E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) A small plat with no square.

**Macedon** 7 January 1837. Platted by Andrew Gray agent for John Forsyth. In the N  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Section 5, T8N, R6E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.)(Logan Township). Half Philadelphia Square labeled "Public Square."

**Northampton** July 1836. Platted by Reuben Hamilton and Mr. Freeman. In the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 13, T11N, R8E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.)). No square.

**Peoria Mills** 6 April 1836. No proprietor listed. In the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 12 & NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 13, T8N, R7E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Limestone Township). No Square.

**Princeville** 20 June 1837. Platted by William C. Stevens, Benjamin Clark and Jesse McCutchen. In the NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 24 & SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 13, T11N,

R6E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Princeville Township) Block Square with no name. It survives in Princeville Township.

**Rochester** 2 July 1836. Platted by John R. Smith, Jr. and Clark Stanton. In the Section 7, T11N, R5E (4) (Millbrook Township). Block Square labeled "Washington Square." A dam and a mill on Spoon River. Location is that of Elmore.

**Rome** 2 December 1835. In Section 5, T10N, R9E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Chillicothe Township) Platted by Isaac Underhill. Block square labeled "Public Square." It survives in Chillicothe Township.

**Summerville** 10 April 1837. Platted by Henry Jones. In the SW ¼ of Section 3 & SE ¼ of Section 4, T8N, R7E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Limestone Township). No square.

**Wheeling** 11 April 1836. Platted by Henry F. Coulter. In the E ½ of the NE ¼ of Section 9, T8N, R5E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Trivoli Township). Philadelphia Square labeled "Public Square."

## PIATT COUNTY

(1)

**Monticello** 1 July 1837. James H. Piatt, Major James McReynolds, G. W. Reddick, William Reddick, W. Prather, and A. Marguarie. Philadelphia square labeled "Courthouse Square." It survives as the seat of Piatt County.

## PUTNAM COUNTY

(5)

**Caledonia** 12 July 1836. Platted by Asahel Hausen, Pervis Gaylor, and Obed Graves. In the W ½ of the SE ¼ and the E ½ of SE ¼ of Section 29, T31N, R1W. (Magnolia Township). Nine miles southwest of Hennepin. No square. Four blocks were vacated on 7 January 1841.

**Florid** 1836. Platted by Thomas W. Stewart and Aaron Thompson. In the NE ¼ of Section 34 T32N, R2W. Occupied and abandoned. Philadelphia square labeled "Publik Square." In the 1875 atlas it is shown as Florida. Three miles southwest of Hennepin.

**Granville** 7 April 1836. Platted by Felix Mangrove. In the NW ¼ of the NE ¼ of Section T32N, R1W No square. It survives in Granville Township.

**Magnolia** 23 May 1836. Platted by Thomas Patterson. In the NE ¼ of Section 35, T31N, R1E. (Magnolia Township). No square. Occupied and abandoned. In the extreme southwestern corner of Magnolia township.

**Putnam** 3 September 1835. Person platting town unclear. In the NE ¼ of Section 27, T31N, R1W (Magnolia Township). Nine miles southwest of Hennepin.

## SANGAMON COUNTY

(8)

**Auburn** 1 April 1836. Platted by George Eastman. In the NE and SE quarters of Section 3, T13N, R6W (Auburn Township). Square of unidentified type. The buildings were moved about one mile south to a new town on the railroad 24 February 1853, which was platted as Wineman. The name of the new town was changed to Auburn in the 1864/1865.

**Berlin** 24 March 1837. Platted by Abner Yates, Harrison Yats, and Harrison Ellis. In the E ½ of the NW ¼ of Section 17 & E ½ of the NW ¼ of Section 8, T15N, R7W (Island Grove Township). Block square. New Berlin platted in 1838 two miles south of the original Berlin location on 26 October 1838.

**Bridgeport** 16 September 1837. Platted by James Adams. In Section 2, T16N, R5W (Springfield Township), on the south bank of the Sangamon River. .Block Square. The location is identical with the later town of Chirkipin Hill.

**Chatham** 22 December 1836. Platted by Luther R. Ransom. In the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 7, T14N, R5W (Chatham Township). Block Square. A new town of Chatham was platted on the railroad six miles to the east of the original Chatham.

**Cicero** Platted by Archibald Constant. In the NW part of SW ¼ of Section 26, T17N, R4W (Williams Township). Block Square. Probably never occupied. The location is on Wolf Creek four miles east of Sherman. Plat vacated in 1841.

**Cotton Hill** On 17 June 1837 (re-recorded as Rienzi). 2 June 1837. Platted by John Whaley. In the SE ¼ of Section 14, T 14N, R4W (Cotton Hill Township). Block Square. The plat was vacated. Perhaps never occupied. The location is one mile west of Rochester.

**James Town** Sometimes the name was written as one word. For many years the post office was Reed. 10 December 1837. Platted by John Taylor and Eli Blankenship. In the W ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 10, T16N, R4W (Clear Lake Township). No square. The location is identical with the later town of Howlett, six miles northeast of the center of Springfield.

**Mazeppa** 18 April 1837. Platted by George R. Spottswood. In the E ½ of SE ¼ of Section 11, T14N, R5W (Ball Township). No square. Briefly occupied and then abandoned. The location is five miles east of Chatham.

**Rienzi** (see Cotton Hill).

## **STARK COUNTY**

(5)

**Lafayette** 7 July 1836. Platted by William Dunbar. In the W ½ of Section 18, T13N, R4E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Goshen Township). No square in the original town, but one was included in a later addition. A mill existed here at one time. The 1875 atlas shows the town to be in Stark County but the recorded location would be in Knox County. The location is six miles west of Toulon.

**Massilon** 13 April 1837. Platted by Stephen Trickle. In the E ½ of the NW ¼, Section 32, T12N, R6E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Essex Township). Block square with no name. The location is seven miles southwest of Wyoming.

**Moulton** 29 August 1836. Platted by Robert Schuyler, Russel J. Nevins, William Couch, Abijah Fischer, and David Lee. In the SE ¼ of Section 4, T12N, R6E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Essex Township), on Indian Creek. Block Square labeled "Public Block." Briefly occupied and then abandoned. The location is three miles west of Wyoming.

**Osceola** 7 July 1836. Platted by Major Robert Moore of Vermont Colony, Edward Dickinson, James C. Armstrong, Thomas J. Hurd, and Don Carlos Enos. In the SW ¼ of Section 12, T14N, R6W.( 4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Elmera Township). Block square labeled "Washington Square." Probably never occupied. Vacated in February 1855. The location is ten miles north of Wyoming.

**Wyoming** 3 May 1836. Platted by General Samuel Thomas. In Section 2, T12N, R6E (4<sup>th</sup> P.M.) (Essex Township). Square labeled "Public Square." It survives in Essex Township.

## **TAZEWELL COUNTY**

(12)

**Circleville** 8 September 1836. Platted by Harlan Hatch, E.M. Perkins, Spencer Field, & Edward Jones. In NE ¼ of Section 1, T23N, R5W (Sand Prairie Township). Block Square labeled "Public Square." Briefly occupied and then abandoned. The location is seven miles south of Pekin.

**Cleveland** 18 July 1836. Platted by Henry W. Cleveland, Francis Voris, Aquilla Wren, and Rudolphus Rouse. In the SW ¼ of Section 28 & SE ¼ of Section 29, T26N, R4W (Fondulac Township). An angular plat with no square. Location is identical with later town of Fon Du Lac, three miles northeast of Wesley City, across the Illinois River from Peoria.

**Delavan** 1 July 1837. Platted by Henry Green. In Section 10, T22N, R4W (Delevan Township). Block Square labeled "Public Square." It survives in Delevan Township.

**Dillon** 18 June 1836. Elias Dillon. In Section 3, T23N, R1W (Dillon Township). The town was surveyed over the plat of Liberty, see below. No square. It survives in Dillon Township.

**Groveland** 16 April 1836. Platted by Isaac Roberts and Asa Lee Davidson. In the E ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 27, T25N, R4W (Groveland Township). No square is identified, but a block near the center of the town is designated as reserved. Squares are included in later additions. It survives in Groveland Township.

**Hamilton** 3 September 1836. Platted by William Powell, Daniel H. Judy and Clark Burton. In the W ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 20 & NE ¼ of NE ¼ of Section 29, T22N, R2W (Hittle Township). No square. The location is two miles southwest of Armington.

**Hancock** 28 October 1836. Platted by John Hancock and John Shannon. In the NE ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 22, T25N, R4W (Groveland Township). Block Square labeled "Public Square." The location is just north of Groveland.

**La Fayette** 24 October 1837. Platted by Henry Floyd. In the E ½ of the NW ¼ of Section 13, T23N, R5W (Sand Prairie Township) on Lafayette Lake south of the Mackinaw River. No square. The location is six miles northeast of Delavan.

**Liberty** (survives as Dillon) 1 January 1835. Platted by Elias Bayless and John Studyvin. In Section 3, T23N, R4W. No Square. On 19 April 1836 Dillon was surveyed over the plat of Liberty.

**Montpelier** 15 October 1836. Platted by Josiah L. James and Thomas C. Wilson. In SW ¼ of Section 27, T23N, R4W (Dillon Township). Block square labeled "Public Square." The location is three miles north of Delavan.

**Tremont** 1835. Platted by John H. Harris, Josiah L. James, and William Sampson. A complex square of uncommon design. Founded by a New York based colony. It survives in Tremont Township.

**Wesley City** 24 October 1836. Platted by Charles S. Dorsey, Alfred Philips, and John F. Crandall. In Section 6 of T25N, Squire W. D. Chase, Gideon Hawley, John Anderson and Mary Anderson. In R5W. Block square labeled "Public Square." Incorporated into Creve Coeur.



## VERMILION COUNTY

(8)

**Chillicothe** The site was originally known as Dallas. 6 September 1836. Platted by William Swank and David Baird, In the W  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 17, T17 N, R12W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.) (Carroll Township). Philadelphia Square. It survives as Indianola in Carroll Township.

**Franklin** 13 March 1837. Platted by I. Swischer (or Fischer) and Hezekiah Rogers In the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ , T20N, R11W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.). Plat vacated. Philadelphia Square. Just north of the North Fork, near Seaton Hill.

**Greenville** 17 August 1836. Platted by Joseph Osborn. In the W  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 31, T19N, R13W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.) (Vance Township). Philadelphia square. The location was two miles northwest of Fairmont.

**Marion** Later known as Denmark. 25 May 1835. Platted by Alexander Bailey. Between the SE & SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 20 (21?), R11 W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.) (Newell Township). Occupied and then abandoned. No square. The site, about two miles north of Danville, was flooded by the creation of Lake Vermilion.

**Monroe** 4 May 1837. Platted by Stephan Mayfield and James C. Haworth. On the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 36, T 17N, R11W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.) (Elwood Township). Block Square. Briefly occupied and then abandoned. The town was seven miles southwest of Georgetown, in the southwestern corner of the county.

**Salem** 12 April 1836. Platted by B. D. C. Herring. In part of the N  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 30 T12N, R12W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.) and on fractions of neighboring sections. Philadelphia Square. Briefly occupied and then abandoned.

**Shepardstown** 28 July 1836. Platted by John Villers. Township and range are not given on the deed, on the Illinois/Indiana state line, perhaps never occupied, plat vacated 8 January 1840.

**Vermilion Rapids** Later known as Higginsville. 4 January 1837. Platted by Armando Higgins and Marcus S. Sterns. In the E  $\frac{1}{2}$  of NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 26, and 16 acres on the south end of the E  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 25, T21N, R13W (2<sup>nd</sup> P.M.) (Blount Township). Said to be at the head of navigation on the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River. Philadelphia square. Perhaps no lots sold, but the location appears as Higginsville on later maps although no plat is recorded under that name. Site briefly occupied and then abandoned.

## WOODFORD COUNTY

(8)

**Bowling Green** On the plat the name is two words; on the deed one word. 7 March 1836. Platted by Francis M. Willis. In the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 36, T26N, R1W, (Palestine Township), south of Panther creek. Philadelphia Square is shown on the plat but not labeled. In the written deed it is called "Public Square." The town was occupied and then abandoned. The site is marked by a stone six miles southeast of Eureka.

**Hanover** (now Metamora). 1836. Platted by William Davenport. In Sections SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 17 & NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 20, T27N, R6W. Philadelphia Square called "Public Square." The site was re-surveyed in 1865. The renamed town survives in Metamora Township.

**Hudson** 28 September 1836. Platted by Spencer Field and Squire W. D. Chase. In the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  & W  $\frac{1}{2}$  of NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 35 & E  $\frac{1}{2}$  of SW  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Section 26, T27 N, R4W (Spring Bay Township). The site is on the Illinois River four miles south of Spring Bay.

**Louisville** 19 September 1836. Platted by George H. Quigg and William S. Hoshaw. In the S  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Section 23, T27N, R4W (Spring Bay). Philadelphia Square labeled "Market Square." The site is on the east side of Upper Peoria Lake (Illinois River) two miles south of Spring Bay

**Meridiansville** 15 October 1836. Platted by William McCord. In NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 19, T27N, R1E (Greene Township), Bulge square labeled "Market Square." Occupied and abandoned. Some sources incorrectly place this town in present-day McLean County. The site is two miles south of Roanoke.

**Tazewell** 7 July 1836. Platted by James Day and Henry Matson. On the line between Sections 1 & 2, T27N, R4W (Spring Bay Township), on Spring Bay of Upper Peoria Lake (Illinois River). Block Square labeled "Public Square" 300 feet, by 215 feet. It survives as Spring Bay.

**Versailles** 7 March 1836. Platted by M. R. Bullock and John S. Beatty. SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 20 and SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 27 of T21N, R1W (Olio Township). The center of the town is labeled "Public Square." The plan is of a Philadelphia Square, but streets are shown crossing the square. Occupied and then abandoned. The site is marked by a stone two miles southeast of Eureka.

## PUBLISHED SOURCES

- Adams, James M. *A List of Illinois Place Names*. Springfield: Illinois State Library, 1968.
- Barge, W. D. "Old Towns of Illinois" *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society* 17 (1911) 193-197.
- Bastian, Robert W. "Generic Place Names and the Northern-Midland Dialect Boundary of the Midwest." *Names* 25:4 (1977), 228-236.
- Beckwith, H. W. *History of Iroquois County*. Chicago: H.H. Hall, 1880.
- Buley, R. Carlisle *The Old Northwest Pioneer Period, 1815-1840*. 2 Vols; Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1950.
- Conrad, Howard Lewis. "Western Real Estate Speculations of Fifty Years Ago: Chicago's Famous Auction House," *The National Magazine* 15:6 (April 1892), 667-677.
- Davis, James E. *Frontier Illinois*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998.
- Dickens, Charles *The Life and Adventures of Chuzzlewit*. New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 1947; original London, 1844.
- Heritage of the Prairie*. Le Roy: Bicentennial Commission, 1976.
- Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Coles County, Illinois*: Chicago: Munsell, 1906.
- History of Bond and Montgomery Counties, Illinois*. Chicago: O. L. Baskin, 1882.
- History of De Witt County, Illinois*. Philadelphia: W.R. Brink, 1882.
- The History of Henry County, Illinois*. Chicago: H. F. Kett, 1877.
- The History of Mercer and Henderson Counties*. Chicago: H. H. Hill, 1882.
- Kiner, Henry. *History of Henry County, Illinois*. Chicago: Pioneer Publishing Company, 1910.
- "Lincoln and the Town of Huron," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 49 (Winter 1956), 419-421.

- Lockhart, D. C. "The Advertising of Towns and Villages in the *Belfast News Letter* 1738-1825 *Ulster Folklife* 22 (1976), 91-93.
- Lockhart, D. C. "The Planned Villages" in M. L. Perry and T. R. Slater, Eds. *The Making of the Scottish Countryside*. London: Croom Helm and Montreal: McGill: Queens University Press, 1980, 249-267.
- Lunch, W. O. "A Town Lot Advertisement of 1836," *Indiana Magazine of History* IX (1913), 269-271.
- Mackenzie, Dana. "Ahead of its Time." *Smithsonian* (January 2005), 26-28.
- McLear, Patrick E. "William Butler Ogden: A Chicago Promoter in the Speculative Era and Panic of 1837," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* LXX (1877), 283-294.
- Oliver, William. *Eight Months in Illinois, Newcastle on Tyne* W. A. Mitchall, 1844.
- Perrin, William Henry. *History of Cass County, Illinois*. Chicago: Baskin, 1882.
- Pinkowski, Jennifer. "Integrating the Frontier," *Archaeology* 58 (September-October 2005), 42-47.
- Price, Edward T. "The Central Courthouse Square in the American County Seat," *Geographical Review* 58 (January 1968), 124-145.
- Reps, John W. *Cities of the Mississippi: Nineteenth Century Images of Urban Development*. Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1994.
- Sakolski, A. M. *The Great American Land Bubble*. New York and London: Harper, 1932.
- Schlereth, Thomas J. "The New England Presence on the Midwestern Landscape," *The Old Northwest* 9:2 (1983), 125-142.
- Seward, William H. *Autobiography of William H. Seward 1801-1831 with a Memoir of his Life and selections from his Letters from 1831-1846*. ed. Frederick Seward; New York: Appleton, 1877.
- Shackel, Paul A. "Local Identity, National Memory, and Heritage Tourism: Creating a Sense of Place with Archaeology," *Illinois Antiquity* 40:3 (September 2005), 24-26.
- Snyder, John Francis W. *Adam W. Snyder, and His period in Illinois History, 1817-1824*. Virginia, Illinois: E. Needham, 1906.

- Sublett, Michael D. *Paper Counties: The Illinois Experience, 1825-1867*. American University Studies; Series XXV, Geography, Vol. 4. New York: Peter Lang, 1990.
- Walker, Juliet E. K. *Free Frank: A Black Pioneer on the Antebellum Frontier*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1983.
- Walters, William D., Jr. "Early Western Illinois Town Advertisements," *Western Illinois Regional Studies* 8:1 (Spring 1985), 5-15.
- Walters, William D, Jr. "The Fanciful Geography of 1836," *The Old Northwest* 9:4, (1983-1984), 331-343.
- Walters, William D., Jr. "The Making of the Urban Pattern in Central Illinois" *Bulletin of the Illinois Geographical Society* IXX: 1 (June 1977) 3-15.
- Walters, William D., Jr. "Time and Town Squares," *Bulletin of the Illinois Geographical Society*, XXII (Fall 1980), 25-30.
- Walters, William D., Jr. "Townsite Evolution in Southwestern Michigan," *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 19:1 (2001) 23-52.
- Walters, William D., Jr. "Transferred Structures and Town Origins," *Pioneer America Society Transactions*, 14 (1991) 11-17.
- Walters, William D., Jr. and Floyd Mansburger. "Initial Field Location in Illinois," *Agricultural History* 57 (1982), 289-296.
- Wilderman, A. S. and A. A. Wilderman, Eds. *Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of St. Clair County*. 2 Vols; Chicago: Munsell, 1907.

#### **UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL**

Bassett Manuscripts, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

Jesse Fell Papers. Library of Congress. Microfilm copies available at several Illinois libraries.

Recorder of Deeds, in the various counties. Often there is a separate plat index.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Many people and organizations have aided in the development of this project. Particular thanks must be extended to the Geography-Geology Department at Illinois State University. Michael D. Sublett was especially helpful with comments and suggestions based on his extensive knowledge of early Illinois. Jill Freund Thomas cheerfully did the maps and helped with the printing. Greg Koos at the McLean County Historical Society made many useful suggestions and the staff at the History Center was always willing to extend their knowledge and services. Thanks also to my wife Karen who read the manuscript, offered improvements, and helped me when the computer failed to respond to my threats and insults.