

Four Mile Church – 200th Anniversary

Presentation on the First 100 Years



The Four Mile Church

is the first Church of the Brethren or German Baptists in Indiana. It was founded in 1809 by Elders Jacob Miller (of the Great Miami) and John Hart (Twin Creek) with the minister Samuel Boltin (assisting Elder Jacob Miller) with them.

The Upper Four Mile Church (ours now) was originally in Wayne Co IN, and the Lower Four Mile Church (north of College Corner) was in Franklin Co IN. In 1821, when Union Co IN was formed, both churches were in the new county.



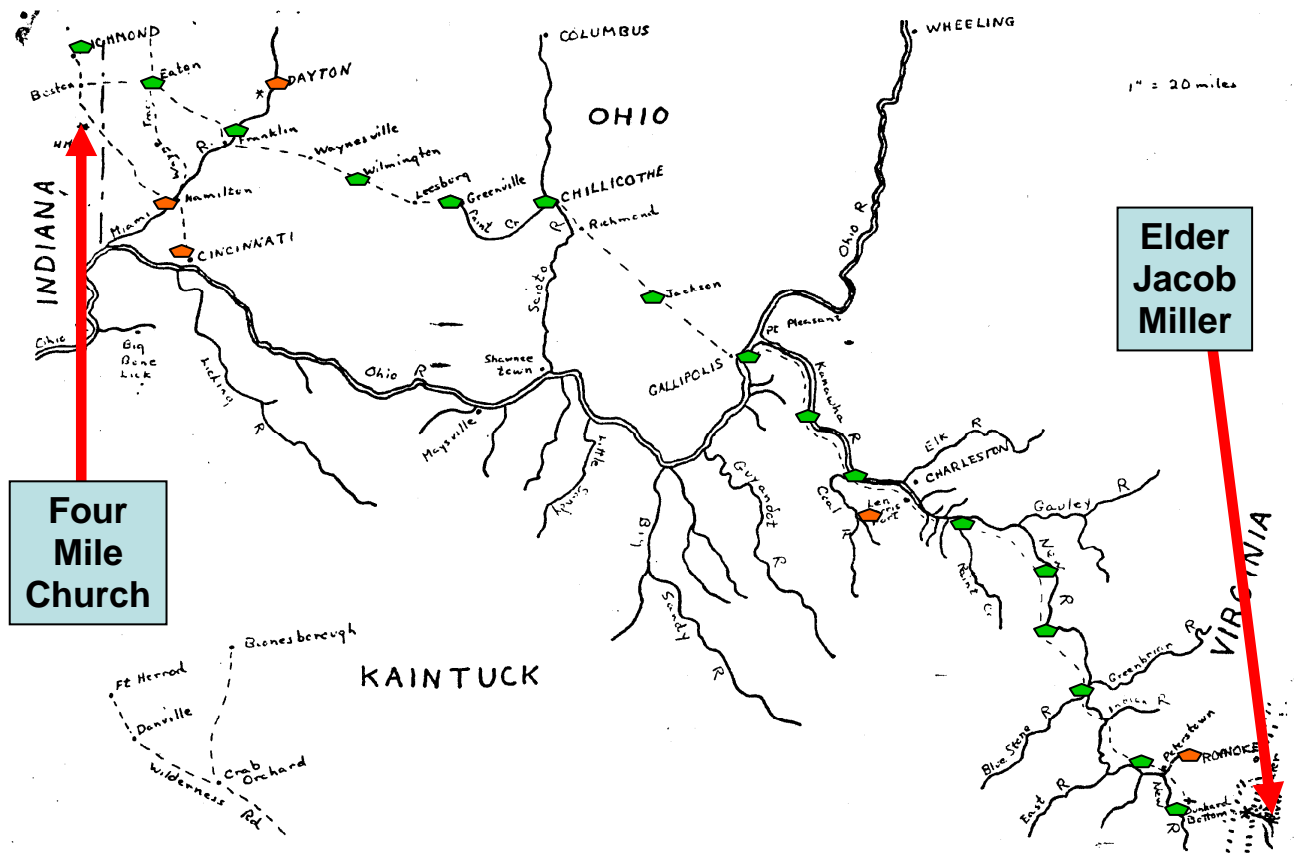
Adney Gap

in the Blue Ridge Mountains, about 10 miles south of Roanoke VA, was the location of the cabin of Elder Jacob Miller. It has been located as 100 yards west of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Elder Jacob Miller purchased this land in 1773, when he first came from Maryland (tradition says that he came in 1765, this has been proven incorrect, as he is recorded as in Brothers Valley, Somerset Co PA in 1765, and his son, Tobias, was born in Maryland [or possibly in nearby Pennsylvania] in 1773). He sold this land to Mr Adney in 1801. This is the headwaters of Black Water River, and in the distance can be seen Cahas Mountain.



This is the **Black Water River Valley** at **Cahas Mountain**.

This is in Franklin Co, Virginia, on the east edge of Blue Ridge Mountains. It was just off the “Carolina Road”, a settlement route of about 1750 going to the Yadkin River in North Carolina. The Blackwater River area became a major Brethren Settlement just before the American Revolution, about 1770. Here lived the married children of Elder Jacob Miller and other families that joined the migration to the Four Mile. The Toney family actually owned considerable of the slope of Cahas Mountain here.



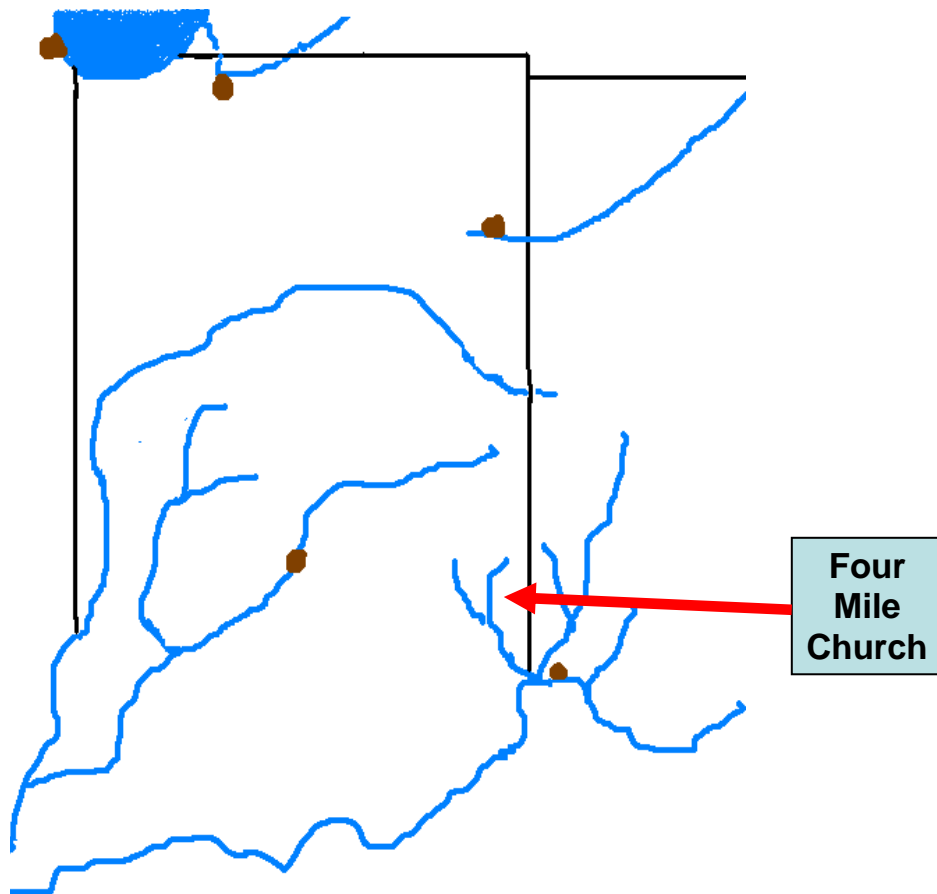
the Kanawha Way Map

is based on a Quaker Waybill found here in Wayne Co IN. It was used for Quaker migration from New Garden NC, on the Yadkin River, to Richmond IN, in 1809. It followed the Shawnee Indian Warpath, which went from the Ohio River, through Appalachia, through the mountains, basically following the Kanawha or New River as it flowed west from the Valley of Virginia to the Ohio River. An alternate path in West Virginia was along the parallel Coal River, where the Toney's of Franklin Co had moved, and certainly was the route used in the migration of our families.

This area in the Valley of Virginia, at the end of the Shawnee Warpath, was a dangerous place to live in 1755. That was the year of the beginning of the French and Indian War. Here occurred the Massacre of Draper's Meadows. Connected to us here, Philip Leibrock, a frontier scout living just beyond Draper's Meadows on Sinking Creek, was a target of the Indian Raid. He escaped being captured and killed. Following the massacre, as they went in search of Philip Leibrock, the Indians delivered a skin sack to Mrs Leibrock. It contained the head of their neighbor. This Philip Leibrock seems to be the father of the Philip Lybrook, who married Anna Miller, daughter of Elder Jacob Miller, and whose family came to the Upper Four Mile.



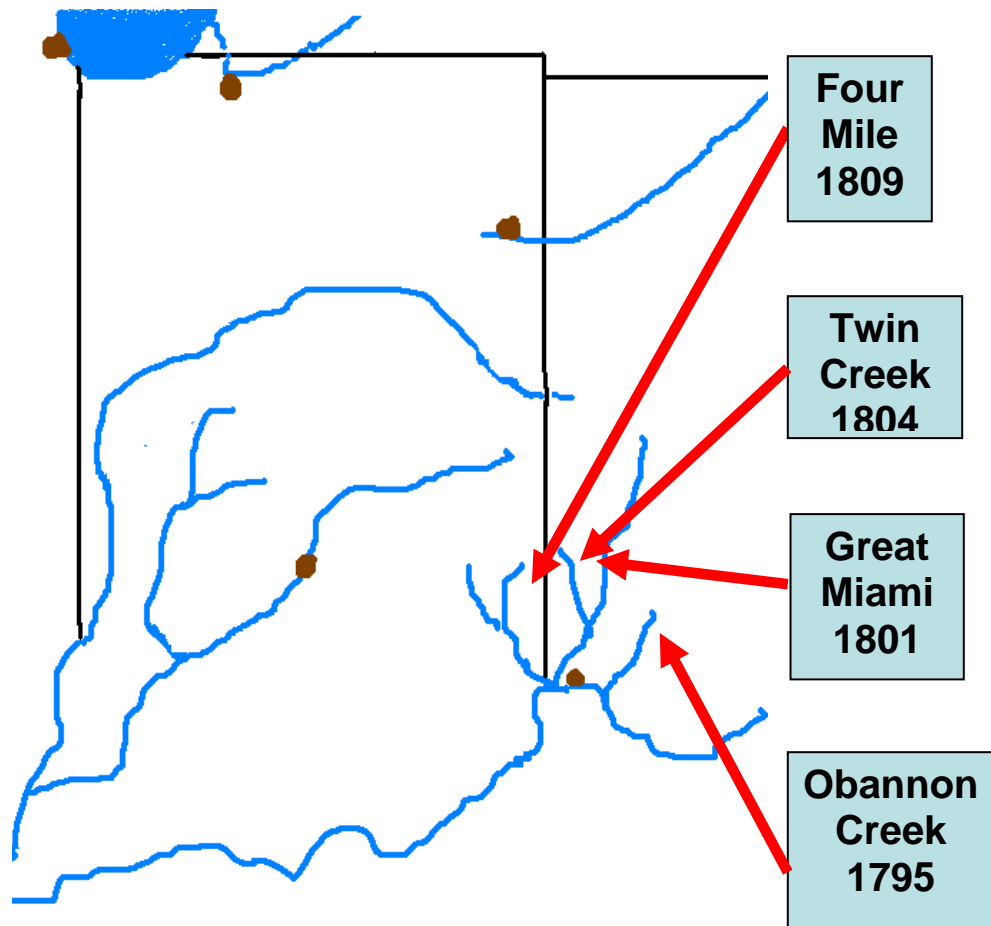
This is a picture of the “**old trace**” near Beckley WV. This is about the highest point between Virginia and Indiana. This would have been the **Kanawha Trace**. It could be the path down Coal River and Mossy Creek from Beckley WV. It would be on this trace that the Toneys lived. In 1784, on this route, there was a massacre at the ginseng camp of the Toneys, while the men were away in the mountains digging “sang”. We know that several of the wives were killed, because the men remarried after this, and several of these families are missing children of this period.



The **Four Mile Church**

was established in 1809, primarily in Indiana Territory. The settlement was along the Little Four Mile Creek, directly along the new Ohio State Line.

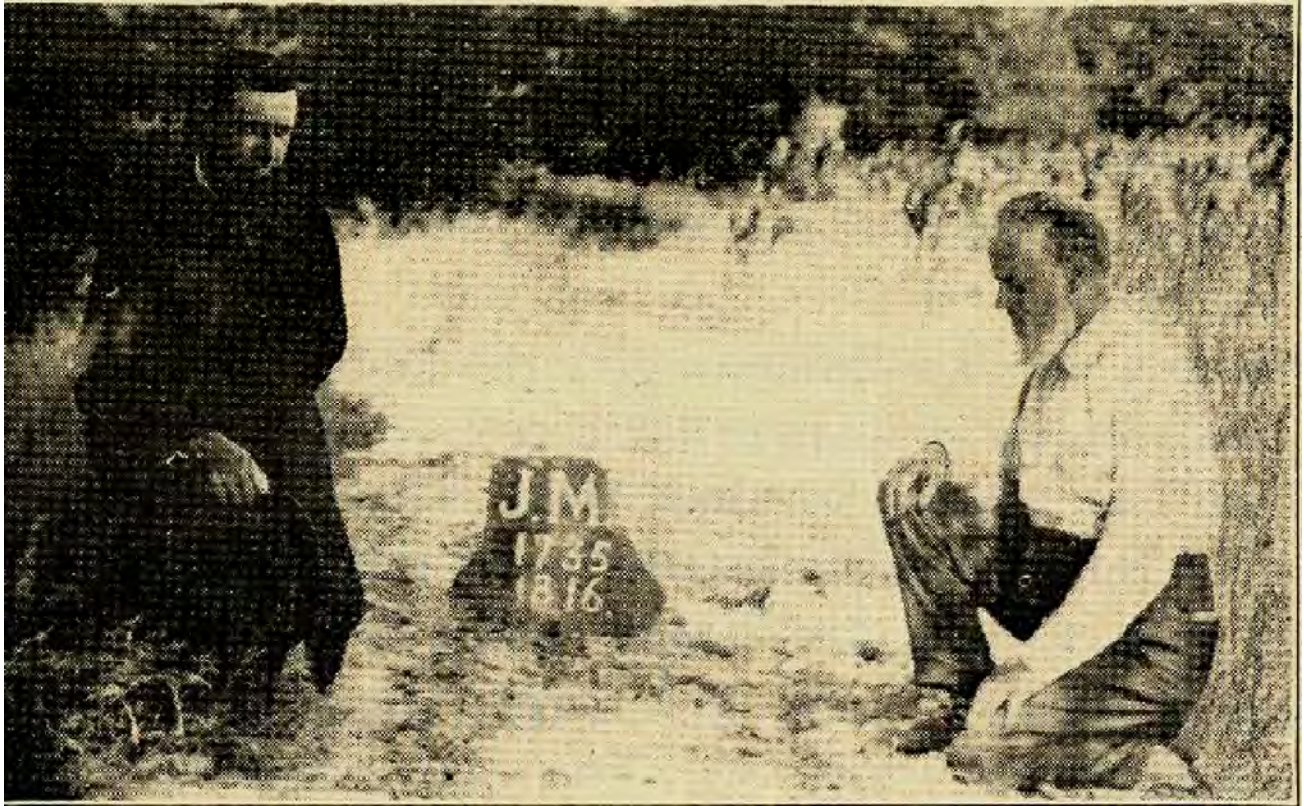
The Indiana Territory extended west to the Whitewater River and after Ohio was made a state in 1803, this area was called “the Gore”. This designation was given at the Treaty of Greenville, 1797, as that line from Fort Recovery, in Ohio, north of Fort Greenville, to the Ohio River, to the mouth of the Kentucky River. Indiana Territory here was opened for settlement in 1805.



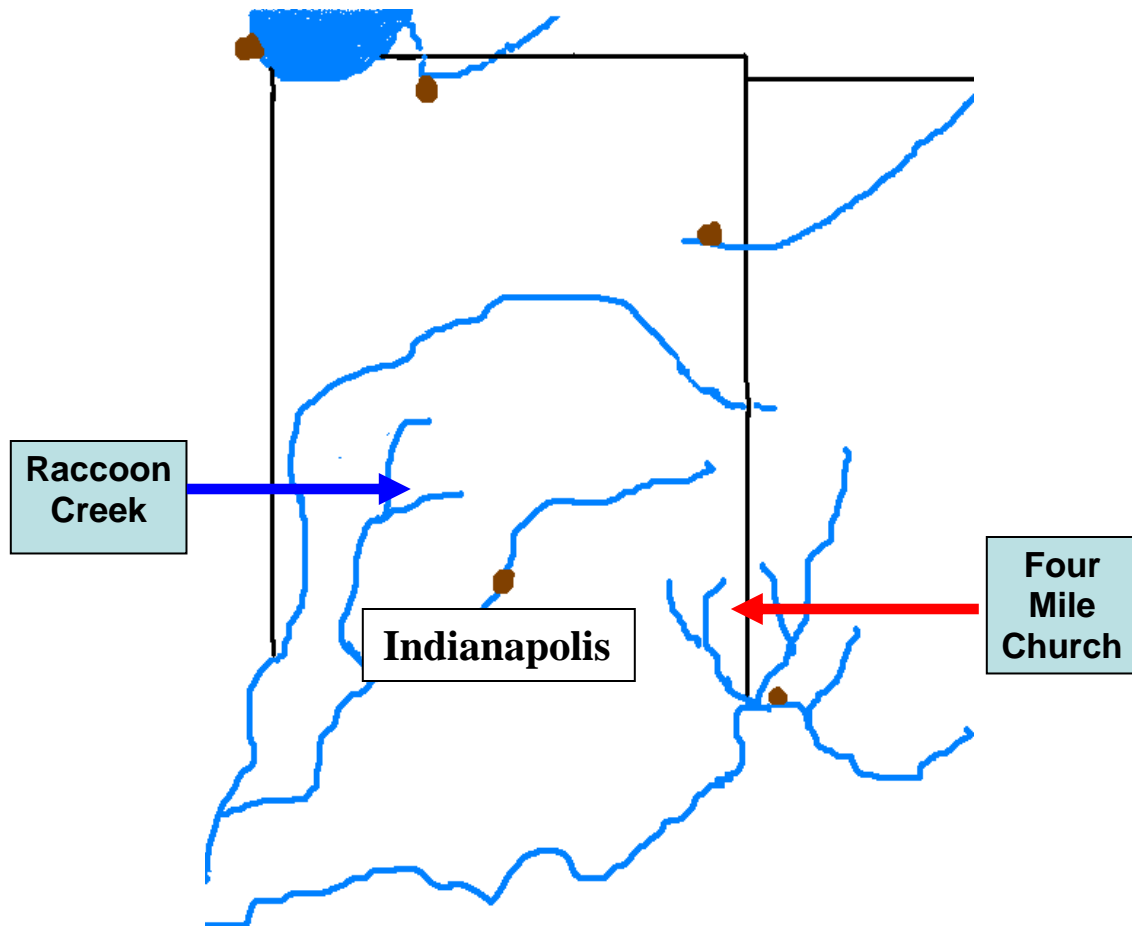
The Four Mile Church

was essentially an extension of settlement as the Brethren moved west from the Great Miami River (Dayton in Montgomery Co OH is recorded as only a couple houses when Elder Jacob Miller moved there in 1801). There was settlement on the Twin Creek (east edge of Preble Co OH, Elder John Hart) in 1804 and Brethren kin were on the Four Mile Creek in 1803.

The Four Mile Church was founded in 1809, only 14 years after first Brethren church established north of the Ohio River (the Obannon Church in Clermont Co OH, just east of Cincinnati - 1795).



The **Grave of Elder Jacob Miller**, who died in 1816, was located in 1916. It was on his farm, just west of the Great Miami River, west of Dayton (there is some disagreement about this discovery).



One of the first settlements by Brethren moving west from the Four Mile was on **Raccoon Creek**, in Parke and Putnam Counties.

Elder Jacob Miller preached in German. The minister, **Samuel Boltin**, who came here with him as a companion, preached in English.

In Franklin Co VA the **Elder William Smith**, accompanied Elder Jacob and preached in English. William Smith was a British Army surgeon, who escaped the surrender at Yorktown and came to Franklin Co VA, possibly with the Toney's who were in the Bedford Militia at the battle there. There is no indication in Virginia histories as to what happened to him. Records now indicate that he came to Union Co IN, possibly as early as 1815. He moved on with others to the Raccoon Creek Church, Putnam Co, about 1822, as founding Elder. He was deposed in 1826. The deacon, Jacob Ronk, recently arrived from Pennsylvania, called in Virginia Elders, complaining that Elder Smith held "open meetings" for attendance by all in the community. This was not according to the recent Brethren Annual Meeting "traditions". This was a denominational church action that was taking place about that time. He was replaced by Elder Daniel Miller, son of Elder Jacob Miller, who also was in the migration from Four Mile to Raccoon Creek.

About 1820 occurred early Indian treaties, which opened southern Indian to settlement.




The **Joseph Kingery farm** was in Ohio on the Little Four Mile Creek, just west of Hueston Woods State Park (north of Oxford OH). It is just northeast of College Corner OH. This is not the original house that I saw some years ago.

The family came here in 1803, the year Ohio became a State. Joseph Kingery's wife was **Eve Miller Ritter**, daughter of Elder Jacob Miller, widow of Samuel Ritter. Eva and Samuel Ritter had four sons, before he died. All four moved from the Four Mile to Michigan Territory on maturity. Eva and Joseph had four more children before they arrived on the Four Mile, and 3 children after they arrived here, all these children remained local. Joseph Kingery was probably the "Gingrich" recorded with John Miller on the Great Miami River in 1798. They are the earliest of our families on the Four Mile.

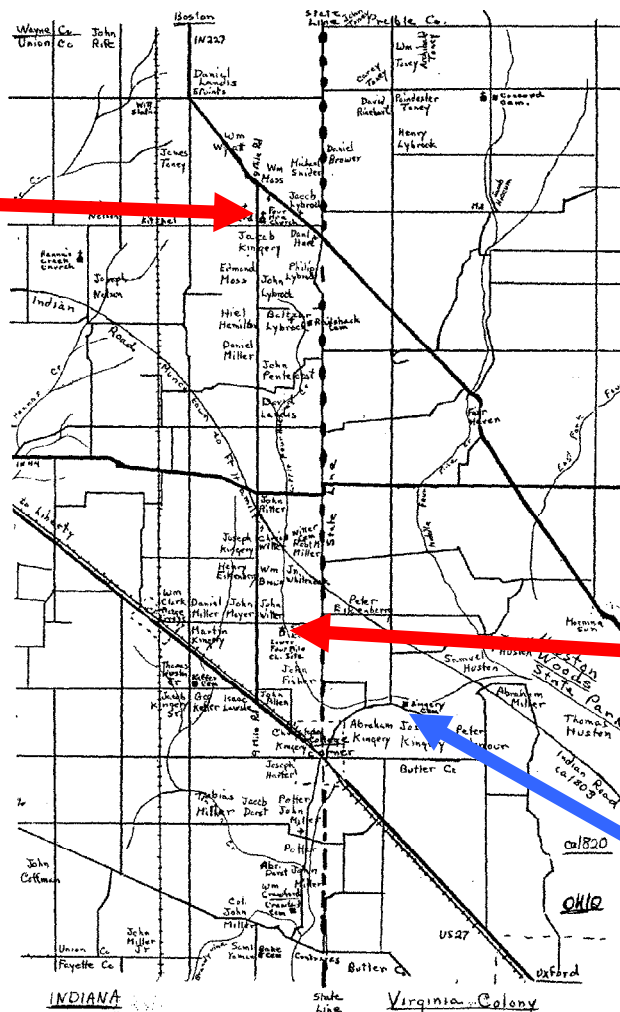


Many of the early Brethren burials are in the **Kingery Cemetery**, located on a corner of the Joseph Kingrey farm. This was on an old road through to the Ridenour and Huston families (or the Hueston Woods State Park). It is northeast of College Corner OH.



Samuel Huston
Huston

Ca
Indian Road
ca/803
ca/820





The oldest house in Union County was the **Potter John Miller house**, which burnt last year. It was a mile south of College Corner OH. His house was built by his nephew, Samuel Miller. A half mile south, on Indian Creek, were the pottery and brickworks for which he is named. A good clay for pottery was found on his land on Indian Creek. The pit that is seen back into the bank just east of the bridge over the creek, shows its location.

John Miller, his best friend: William Crawford (who lived south of him), and his brother, Tobias Miller (who lived west of him), married sisters (half-sisters): Phoebe McClure, Isabella McClure and Sarah Henderson.

A later addition here was the enclosed room above the front porch. It was for a daughter of the resident Wilson family, who had Tuberculosis.

Potter John was the eldest son of Elder Jacob Miller. He was born in Maryland (1769), raised in Virginia and in 1805 came to Indiana. He followed his children to Raccoon Creek (1822), in Parke Co IN, but returned to the home of his son, Elder Daniel Miller, here on the Four Mile before he died. He is buried in the Kingery Cemetery.



Home site of Elder Daniel Miller, a mile west of the Lower Four Mile Church. Elder Daniel Miller, with his uncle, Elder Daniel Miller, of the Raccoon Creek Church in Putnam Co IN, led a migration to Monroe Co IA in 1854.

Elder Philip Moss, son of Elder William Moss, living in Carroll Co IN, minister at the Bachelor Run Church, led a migration to Butler Co IA in 1855. Both migrations included young married families from the Four Mile, as well as kin living in Wabash Country.



Philip Lybrook Sr/Jr house

In 1805, Philip Lybrook, with his sons, John and Jacob, came to the Four Mile, built a log cabin and planted a corn field. The boys tended the property over winter while Philip went back to Virginia. He returned the next year with his wife, **Anna**, daughter of Elder Jacob Miller, and the rest of his family. He brought his property in 2 wagons. Several of his daughters had married and their husbands' families seem to have come with them. We do not know who may have come in this migration, but it was by land, and would have to have been on the Kanawha Trace.

The 1820 Census for here lists 2 elderly women, we have determined that the second was likely Barbara Lybrook Miller, widow of Elder Jacob Miller, Philip's older sister, who died in 1821 Cholera Epidemic.

Elsie Creek, Philip's grandmother, told me that she had collected much of the Lybrook furniture in her house. Bob Stevens showed me a pie cabinet of Lybrooks, solid cherry.



The farm of his son, **John Lybrook**, was next north on the State Line. John's wife was **Fanny Toney**, who he went back to Virginia to marry. John returned with Fanny, and her mother, **Susannah Toney**, the first of the Toney's to come here.



The farm of **Jacob Lybrook** was second north on the State Line. He built a brick house, behind where the John Hart House is now. Later, the Boston Pike came past his place. He was a Justice of the Peace for the community.



This is a remaining segment of the **Delaware Indian Road**, it is in the Hueston Woods State Park, between the beach and the Maple Syrup Camp road.

One attraction for the settlement here on the Four Mile seems to have been that it was on the Delaware Indian Road, which went from Fort Hamilton, on the Great Miami River just north of Cincinnati OH, to Muncy town (Muncie IN) Al Brown showed me the path as it crossed Union county, going from Hueston Woods Park to the Whitewater River at Yankeetown and Clifton.

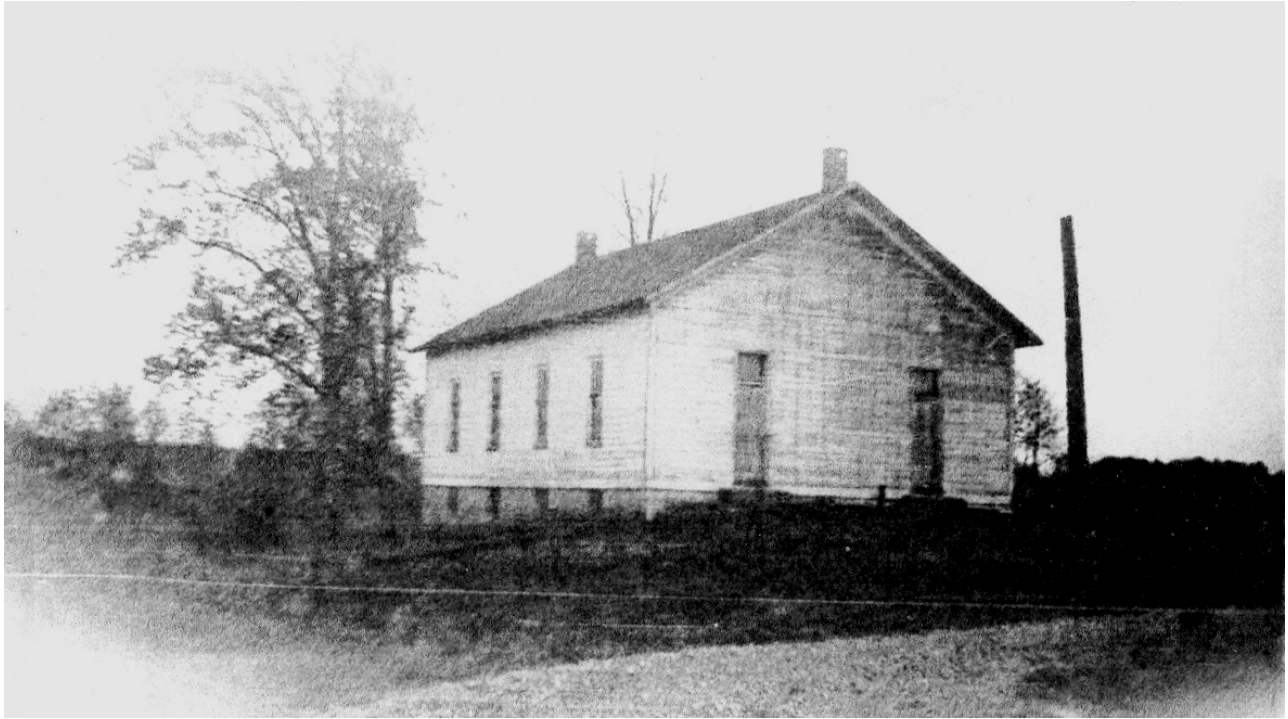


Fiant's Ford

was the original name given to the crossing of the **Delaware Indian Road** over the Whitewater River. It is at Yankeetown, just west of Clifton, northwest of Liberty IN.

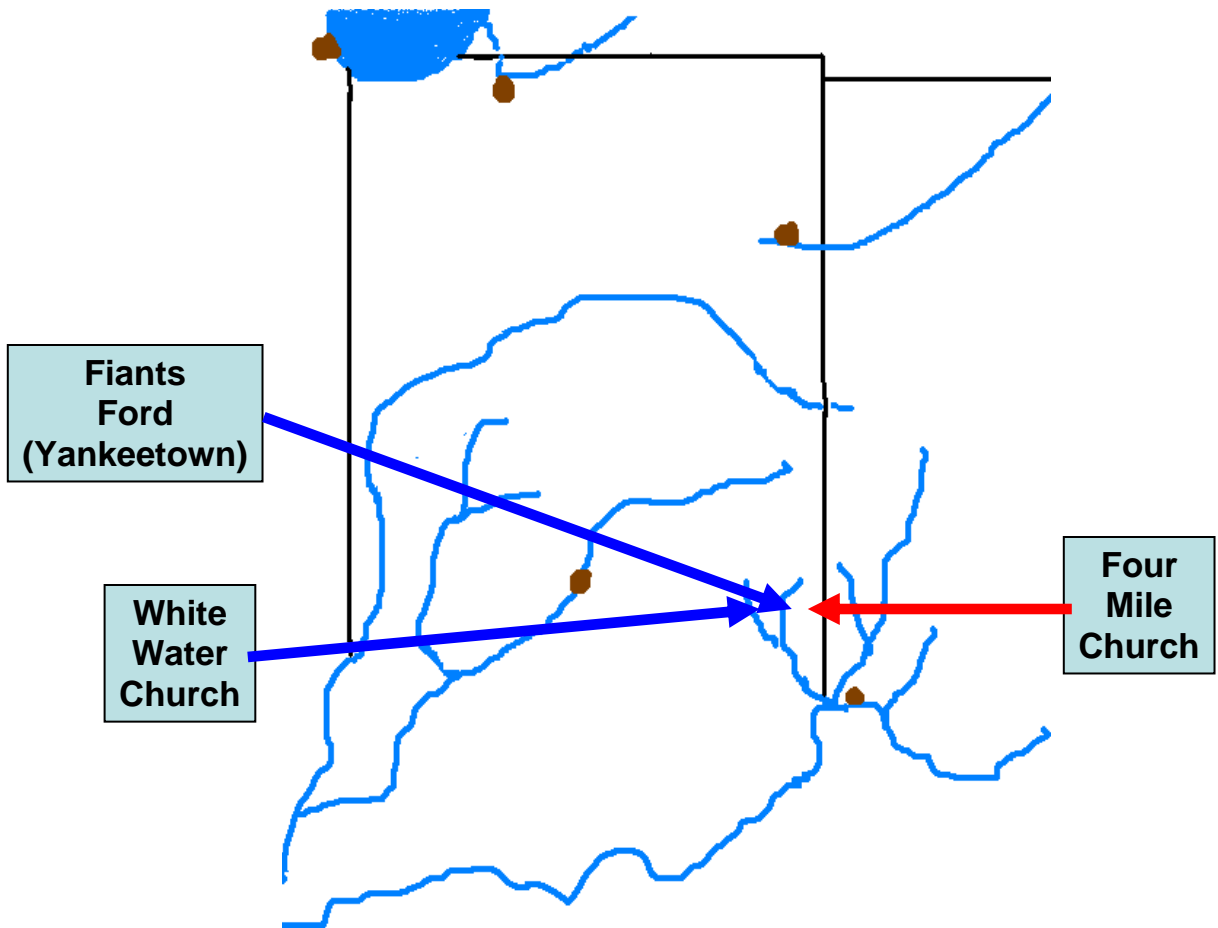
Here, in 1802, came **Daniel Fiant**, his wife, **Salome Gaby** (youngest daughter of Elder Martin Gaby, of the Oley Church, Berks Co PA, the 4th Brethren church in America), their family, and Salome's nephew, John and Hannah Gaby. Coming this early, outside of the Treaty Line, meant that the Fiant family were "squatters".

The ford was an original buffalo (bison) ford, used by the Indians, and later by settlers. It is just upstream of the present bridge there. It is identified as a pounded solid floor, with knee-deep mucky soil above and below.



Whitewater Church

The **Fiant's** moved west into Fayette County IN. They lived just north of Springerville. This church was on the corner of their farm. It was pastored from Four Mile, by Elder Carey Toney (his 2nd wife, Hannah Petro, was from there), and following him, by his son-in-law, Elder Cornelius Petry. Meetings were held there once a month. The building has recently burned, but was seen by me, being used as a hog barn at the time.

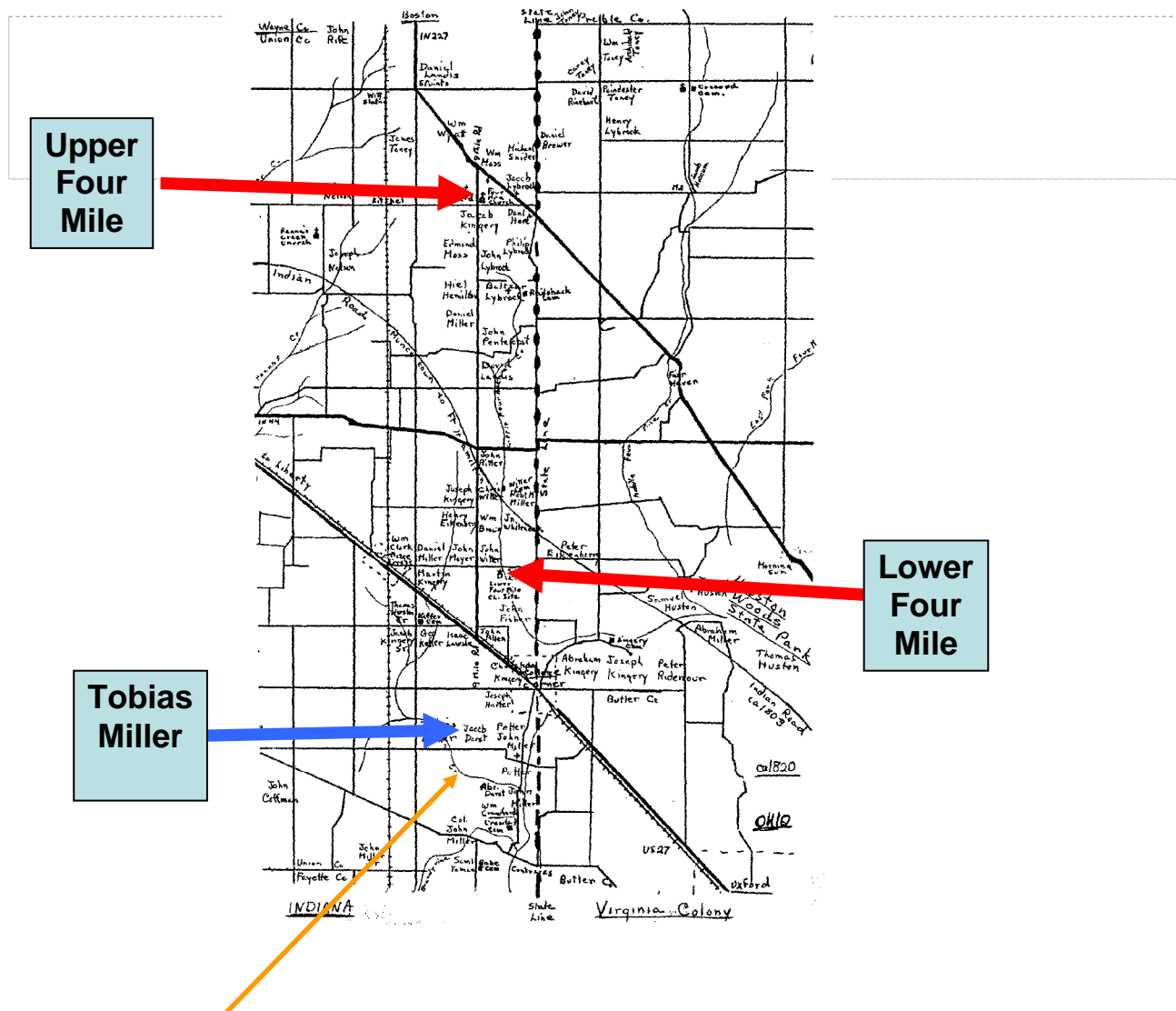




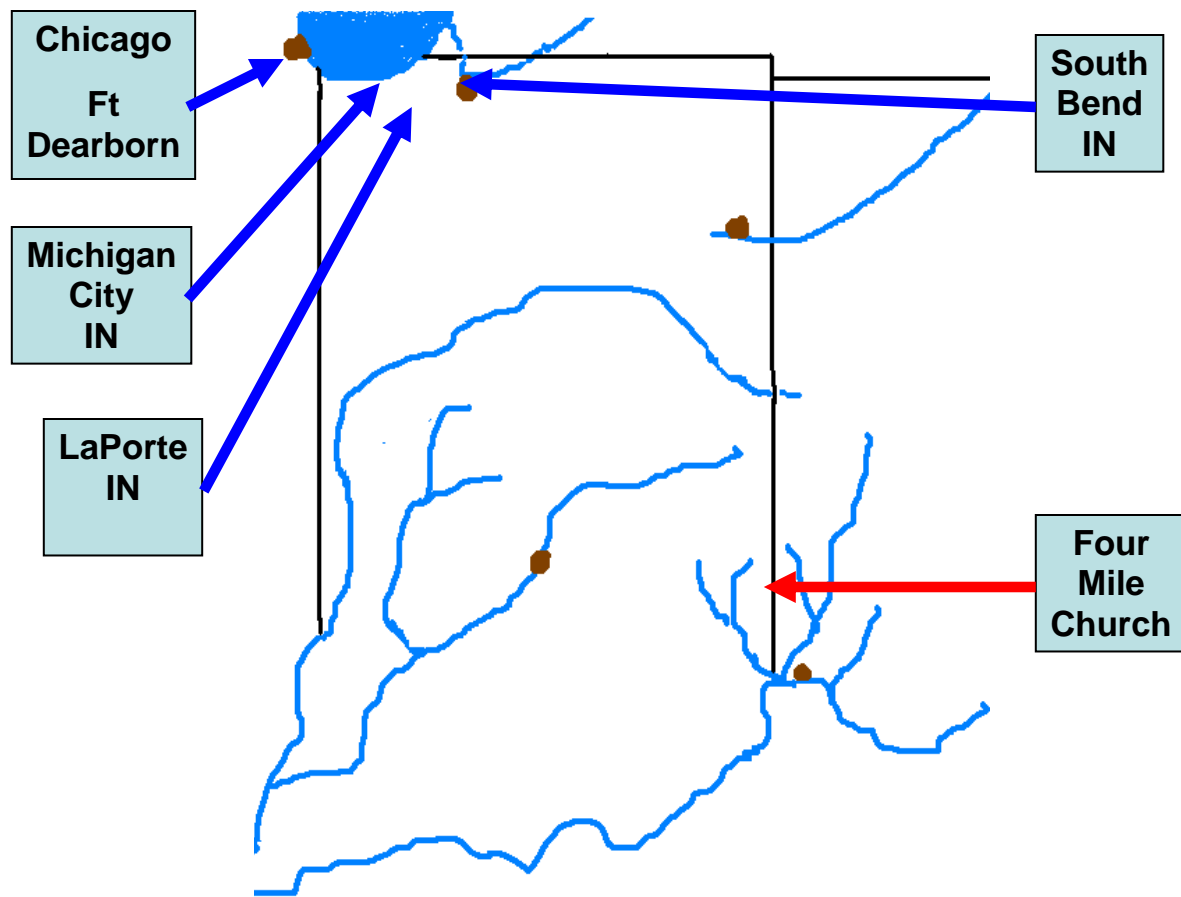
Tobias Miller House

Tobias Miller moved in from Ft Hamilton and lived on Indian Creek, about half a mile west of his brother, Potter John. He built a mill on the creek, just west of his house. While they were living in Virginia, his wife inherited slaves on the death of her father. Being Brethren, they freed the slaves, but Virginia laws placed a severe penalty on the act, and thus bankrupt Tobias.

Tobias was Brethren, holding our pietist belief in “Eternal Restoration” (that God loves his Creation so much, that He will not make them stay in Hell forever). He moved to LaPorte IN as an Universalist preacher in 1833, following the 1832 Cholera Epidemic. His log cabin there was recently discovered as siding was removed from a small building.



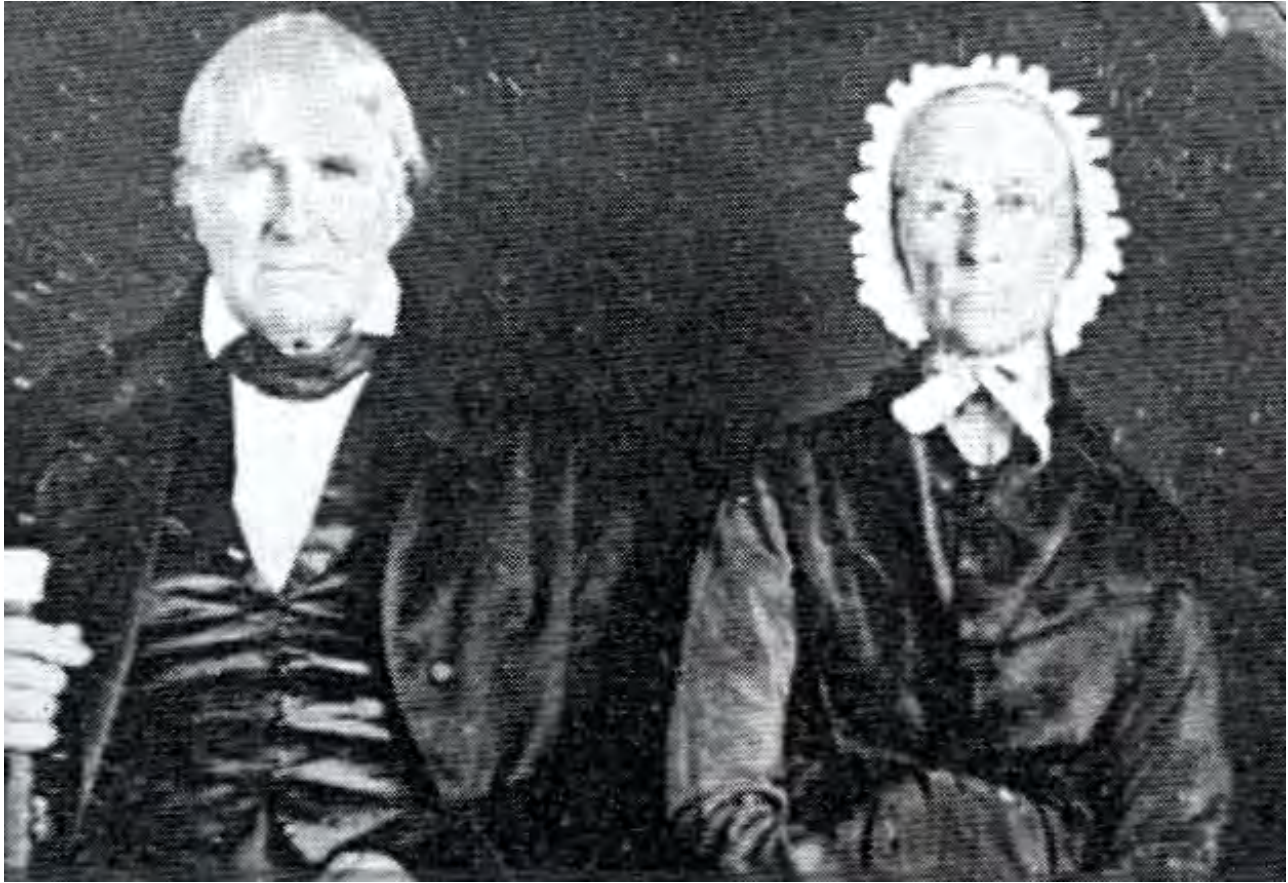
There is a Flint Outcropping, on Indian Creek, south of the Tobias Miller farm. This is the only known flint in this area. There were continuous Indian camps here, with many broken Indian tools found, results of the fracturing of this poor quality flint. This is very close to the property that nephew, Abraham Darst, held here on the Four Mile.



This far northern portion of the State of Indiana was originally part of Michigan Territory.

Tobias' son, **Samuel Miller** was a genius. His achievements include the building of Potter John's house, building the first building of Miami University at Oxford OH. With his brother, James, they were founding trustees of the "*Village of Chicago*". (Son: Clement, first white child born outside of Fort Dearborn.) On the death of his wife, Samuel moved to Michigan City IN, and developed a grain shipping business on the Great Lakes. He built the historic **Lighthouse of Michigan City** at his shipping depot.

His son, **William Miller**, lived in South Bend IN. He was an Indiana State Legislator. His house was recently remodeled, as a city museum. When a corner cupboard was removed for renovation, a collection of letters was discovered behind it. They were from the Col John Miller family, his wife's family, covering the dates: 1833 when they moved north, to during the Civil War. They give interesting information about the family and our community during this time.



Colonel John Miller wife: **Nancy Capper**

is named that for his rank during the War of 1812. He was probably the nephew of Elder Jacob Miller. He was an orphan, born near Hagarstown MD. He came from Franklin Co VA, to the Four Mile, with Tobias Miller in 1816. His family primarily went Universalist, and are buried in the Bake Cemetery, also called "the Universalist Cemetery". Son, Benjamin, writes about this in a couple letters to his brother-in-law, William Miller, of South Bend IN.

Another son of Col John was **Thomas Miller**. He became a Brethren minister at the Raccoon Creek Church, and moved on to Cedar County MO. He was shot during Civil War troubles of the Missouri/Kansas border ("Bleeding Kansas"), but recovered and died near Ft Scott Kansas in 1863.



Col John Miller House

He settled in the far south of the Four Mile Church area, on Brandywine Creek, next to the Franklin County line, in Indiana west of Oxford OH. He built a mill just below his house. (The millstones are still there, an attempt to recover them was futile as they sank deep in mud of Brandywine Creek as digging proceeded.)



Double Covered Bridge (in the park at Eaton OH)

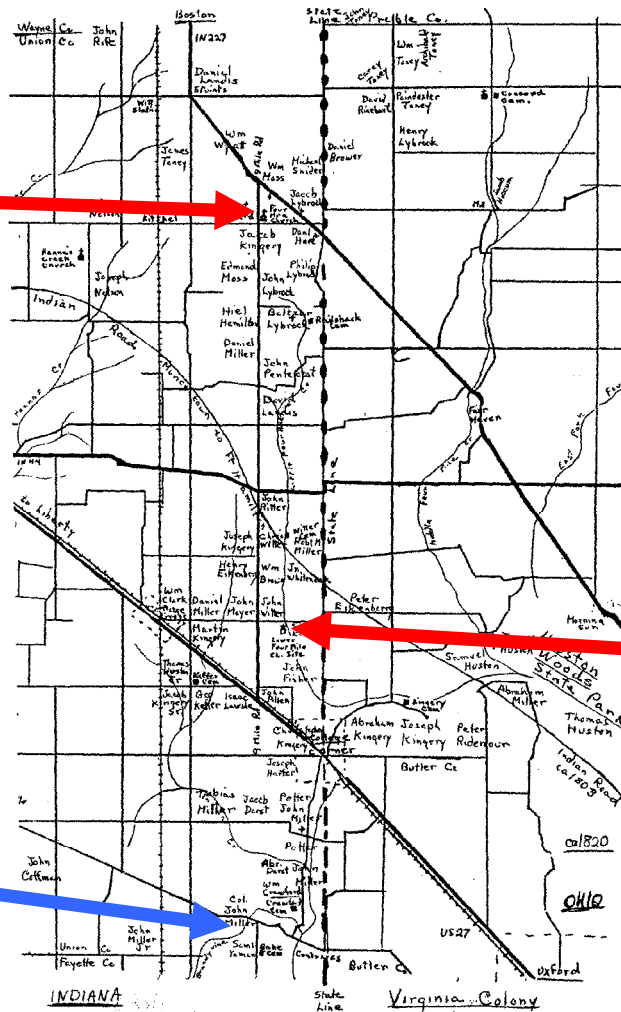
son, **Benjamin Miller** was an avowed Universalist. One of the William Miller letters, from him, gives an extensive explanation of his faith. He says that "he is not yet a Universalist Preacher". He drove many herds of hogs to Cincinnati where they were butchered, packed in wood barrels and taken by him by flatboat to New Orleans.

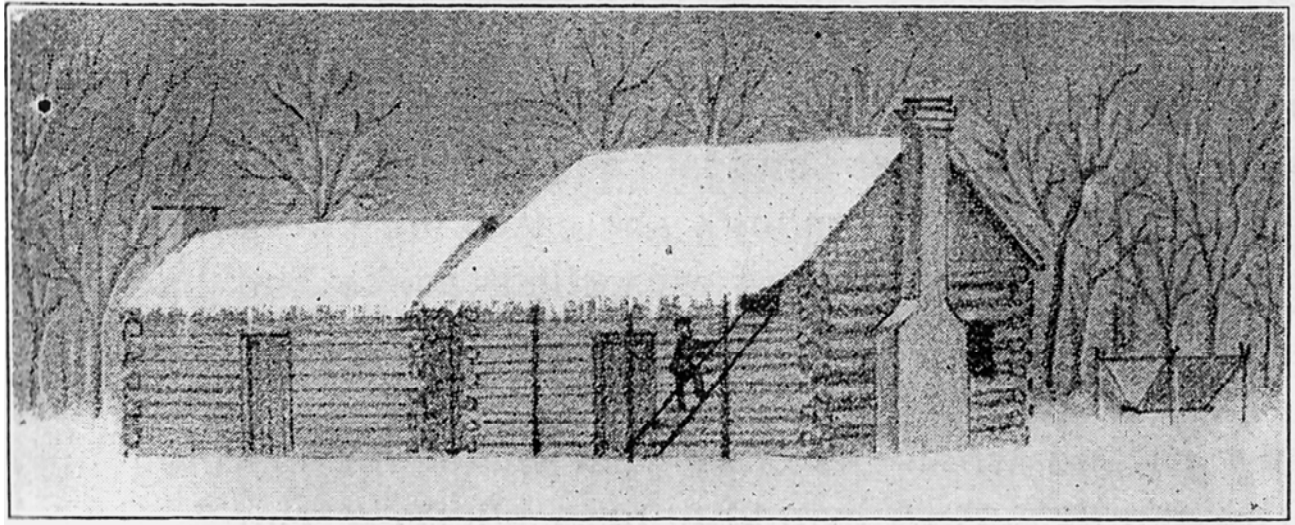
In a similar bridge at Fairhaven OH, driving the hogs, at night they blocked one side of bridge, as a pen for driven hogs and turkeys, while the drivers went on to the Inn, to sleep Benjamin concludes: "do not try to drive chickens, they are too stupid!"

Upper
Four
Mile

Lower
Four
Mile

Col
John
Miller





Elder William Moss Cabin

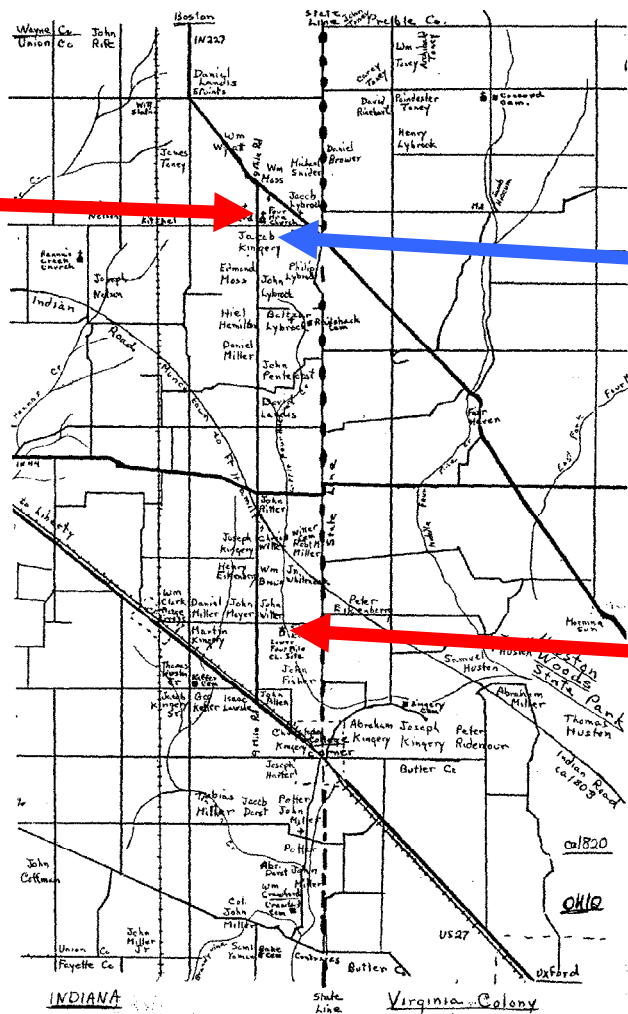
This picture is found in the 1880 Union Co History (and later Histories of the Brethren in Indiana). It likely is a real picture of his home here at the Upper Four Mile Church. His house site is a few hundred yards east of the church, across the road south. He was one of the first Elders of this church, and was a Circuit Preacher, going to Wabash Country, to the Wildcat Creek, to preach for Brethren who settled there. He bought farms there for his children.

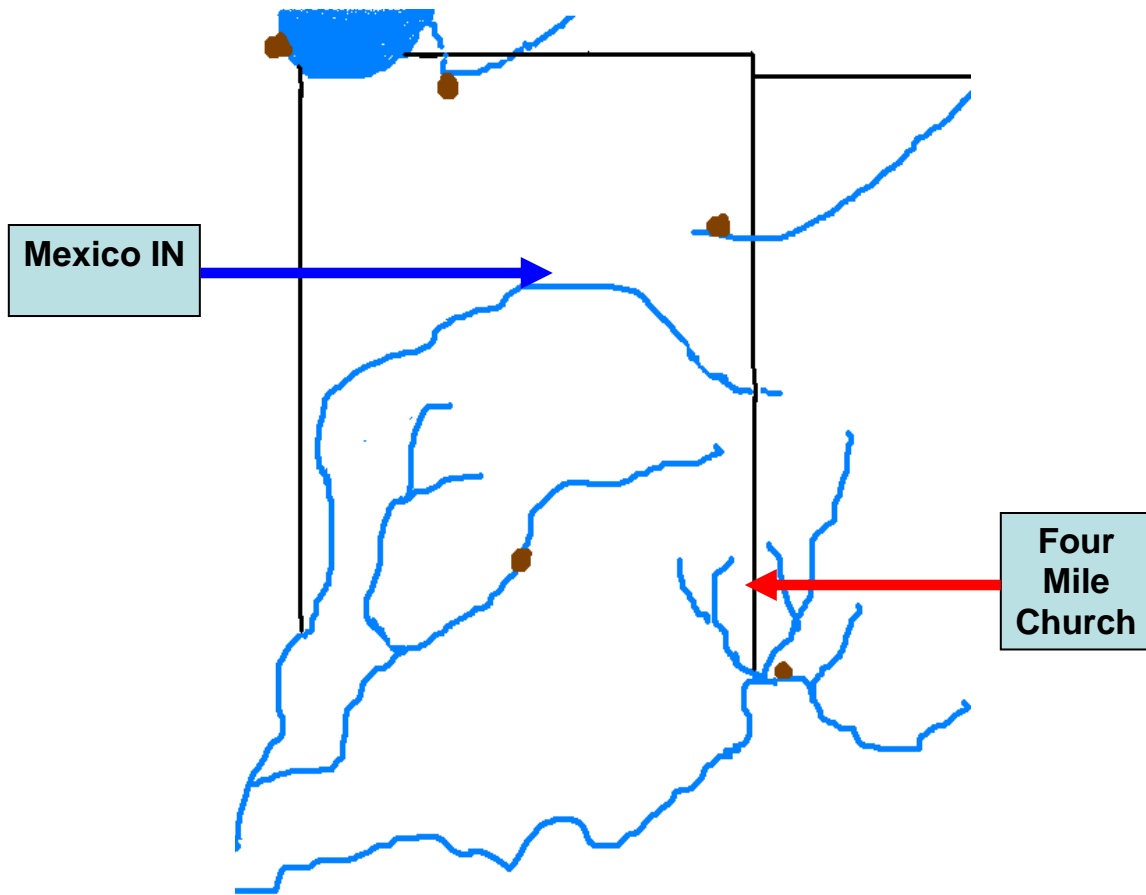
William Moss' first wife was **Elizabeth Lybrook**, daughter of Philip Lybrook. She died in the 1832 Cholera Epidemic. William soon married **Mary Eikenberry Lybrook**, widow of Elder Baltzar Lybrook, brother of Elizabeth, who had also died of Cholera. He and William had been ordained to the eldership at the same time. Since William had obtained farms for all of his children, his will names only the daughters of Baltzer and Mary.

Upper
Four
Mile

William
Moss

Lower
Four
Mile





William and Mary Moss soon moved to Mexico IN.
(Here was located the long time, Mexico Brethren Home)



Elder Baltzer Lybrook house

located on the banks of the Four Mile Creek, about a mile south of the Upper Four Mile Church. An original log cabin was to the right where the present frame building offsets the old stone house, it was certainly built before the stone house was constructed. This was Al Brown's house (deacon at Four Mile Church, and Union County Surveyor). Al showed me a pistol that was found in attic. He regaled a story of it being carried by the family, going to church, during the days of Tecumseh's Indian war.

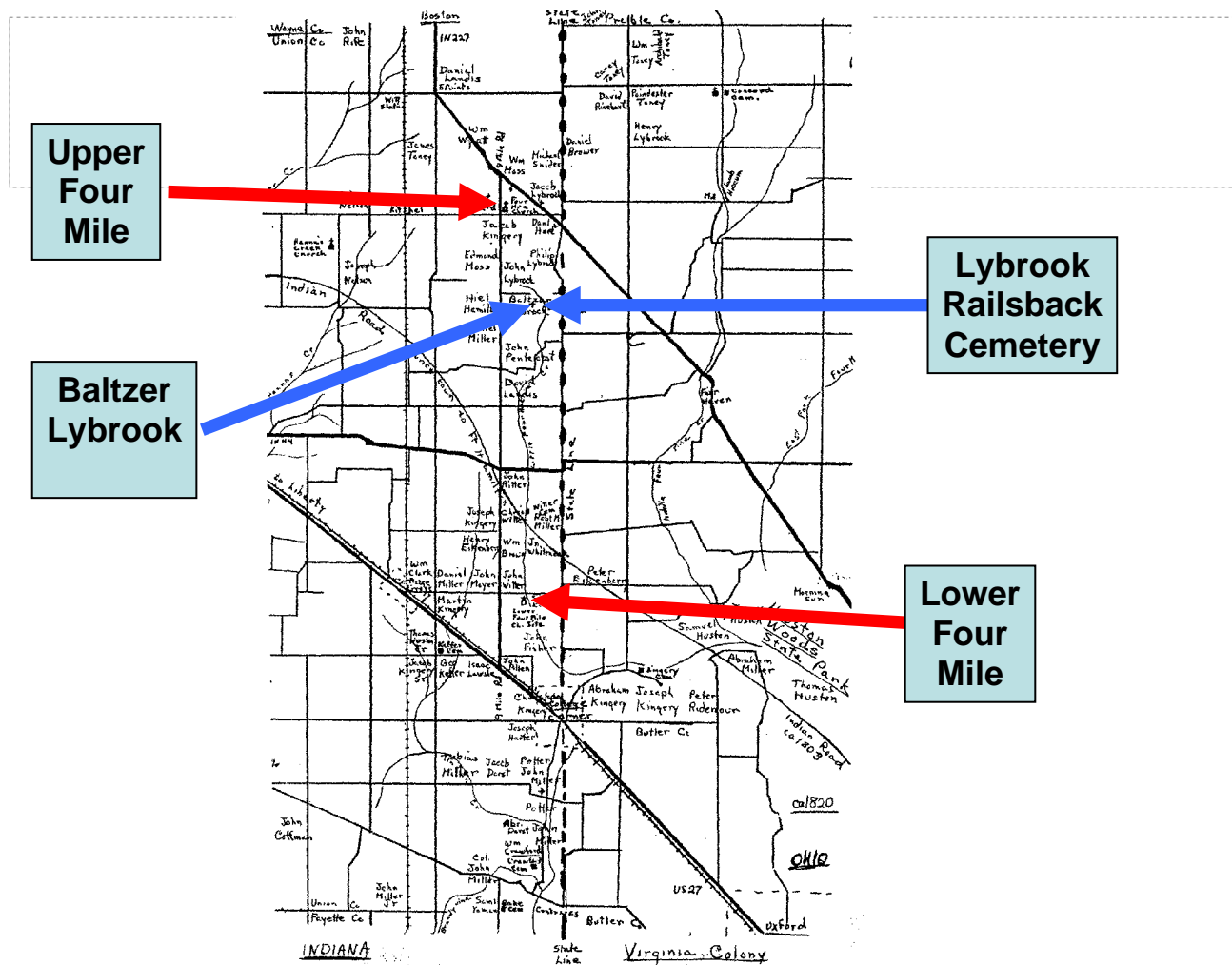
Baltzer had 7 daughters and no sons. On the frontier a man needed sons to help with the farming. Since he was the only man in the family, he was tied to his farm, thus he was the primary local Elder for the Four Mile Church, while William Moss could leave (5 sons) and visit the Brethren who lived across the state. Baltzer died in the 1832 Cholera Epidemic. His widow was Mary Eikenberry, who then married her brother-in-law, Wm Moss

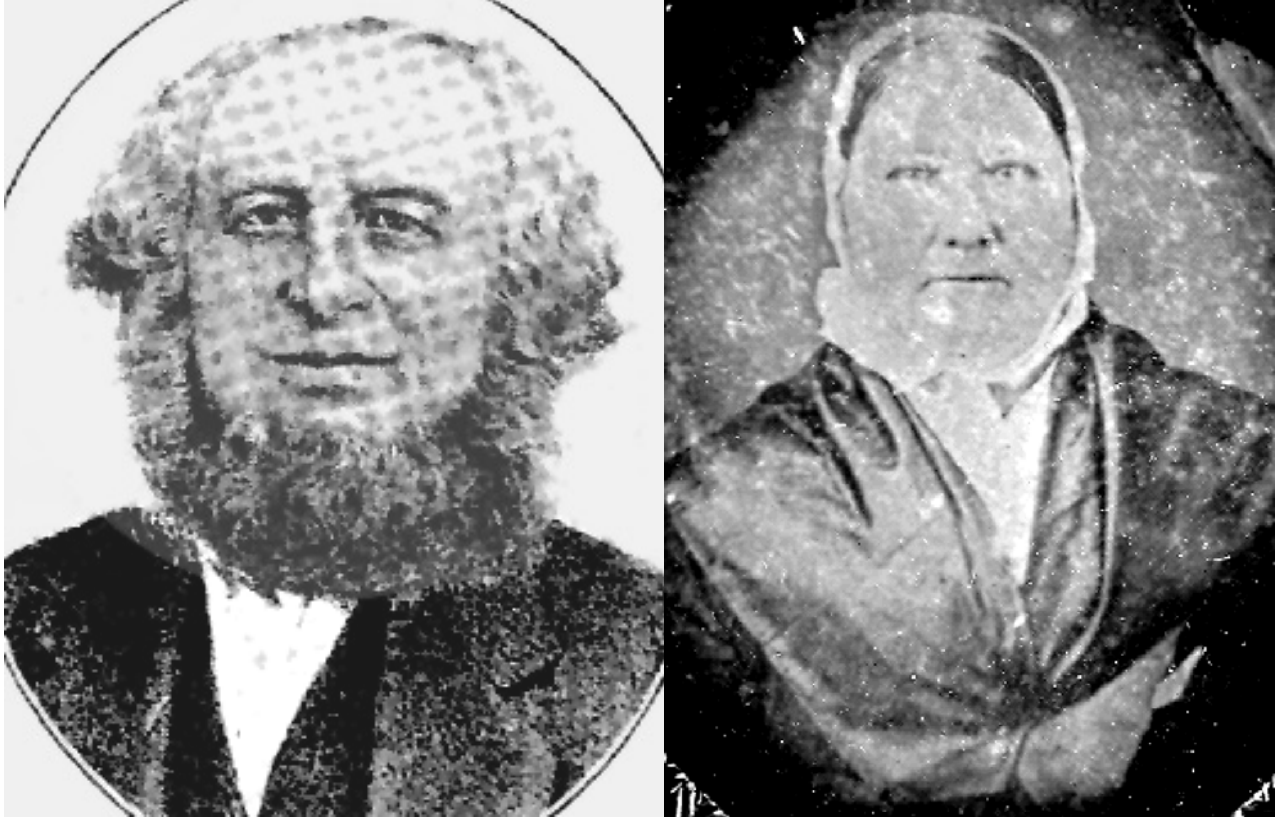


Lybrook Railsback Cemetery

East across Four Mile Creek from Baltzer's house is the Lybrook Railsback Cemetery. The earliest stone is dated 1820. In the will of David Landis, who died in 1814, he asks to be buried "with other Good Christians, at Lybrooks". So there were previous, unknown burials here.

Four Mile Creek here is not easily fordable. The old road past the house is closed and no longer crosses Four Mile Creek. For Entrance you must go west from the State Line road, crossing the field.





Elder Abraham Moss and wife, Nancy Rife

Abraham Moss was the successor to his father, William Moss, as Elder of the Four Mile Church. He was the only son who remained here. He died in the 1860 Typhoid Epidemic.

Nancy Rife, the wife of Abraham Moss, was the daughter of John Rife and Frances Crist, who lived just west of Boston IN. Her youngest brother became the Elder Jacob Rife.



Abraham Moss house

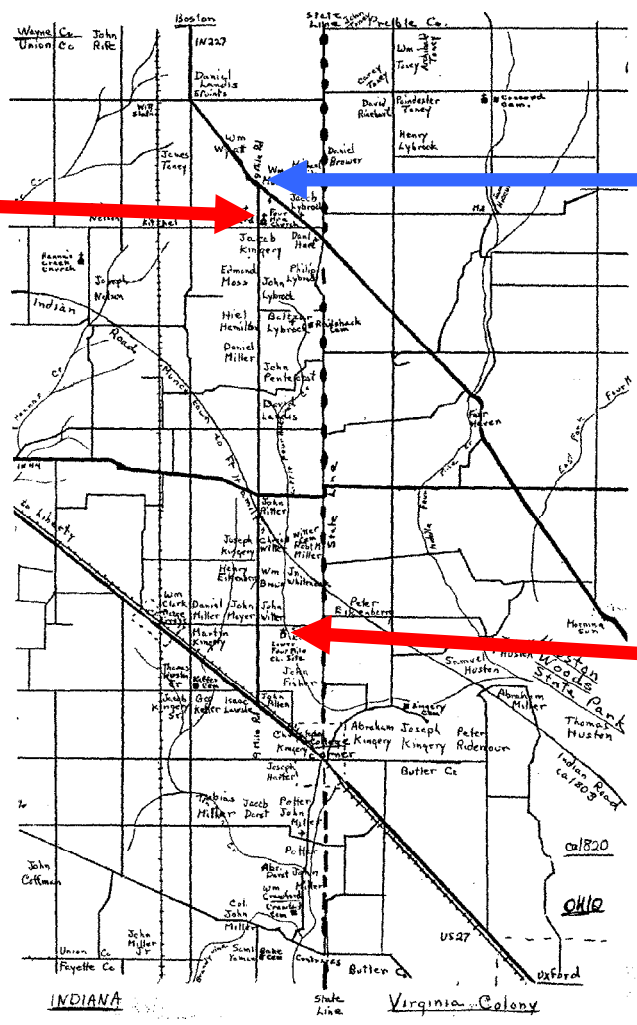
Abraham built this house on the Boston Pike in 1841. His son, Daniel, was 9 years old. The house stood on the north side of the pike, near the end of the Nine Mile Road. His son, John, built the brick house across the pike. Both properties are pictured in the 1880s History of Union County.

This house has been torn down, the barn still stands.

Upper Four Mile

Abraham Moss

**Lower
Four
Mile**



Three anti-bellum houses on the Boston Pike (IN227) are built on the same architecture. This also was the architecture of the Abraham Moss house (probably the original pattern) and is repeated in early Brethren houses in Cass and Carroll counties. In visiting these houses, I admired the wide Walnut boards of the woodwork in the rooms I saw.



John Hart and Maria Lybrook house

-on the Ohio State Line, south of the Pike. Maria was the daughter of Jacob Lybrook, whose property this was. Jacob's earlier brick house was behind the present building.

Across the Pike was Beechy Mire. This was the location for a long existing wagon construction business. Ansel Toney ("the Kite Man") told how he was a grown man, before he knew that wagons could be any color but blue.

John was the son of Daniel Hart, who had come from the Blue Ridge Mountains in Wilkes Co NC and lived just east of this property, on the Ohio side of the state line.



location shown as site of Daniel Hart residence – on the north side of OH177 at the Indiana State Line. The immediate foreground is the culvert for the Four Mile Creek.



Baltzer Lybrook Jr house

North of the Pike, and west and north of Beechy Mire. Baltzer Lybrook Jr was the son of Jacob Lybrook. In this house the blueprint was flipped compared to the other houses.

There are two rooms down (one a Parlor, the other the parental bedroom) and two bedroom rooms above, with an entrance and stairway between them going up. The kitchen is on the “L” extending back from the entrance. A porch is attached to the side of the kitchen (in the Baltzer Jr house, there were two porches, one on either side). A stairway goes up from the kitchen to the room above. There are fireplaces in each room, with a large cooking fireplace in the kitchen. An option was that the downstairs bedroom was given to the elderly grandparents, and the parents took one of the upstairs bedrooms.



John Moss house

John was the son of Elder Abraham Moss, whose frame house was north across the Pike. Both used the same floor plan as that of Maria Lybrook.

John had a property line conflict with Baltzer Lybrook Jr (“spite fence” – two [snake] fences were built - a couple feet apart, overlapping claimed land), then to add to the charge, John attended a Singing School [OH-NO!] – that meant he sang secular songs as well as religious!) John was banned by the Upper Four Mile church. He attended the Methodist Church in Boston IN, and is buried there.

John Moss

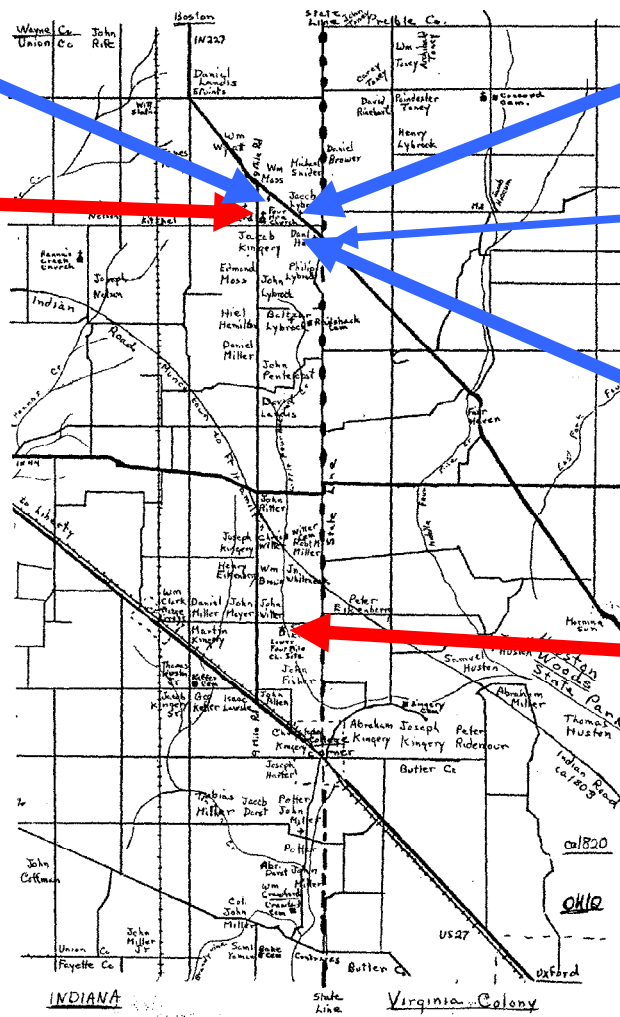
Upper Four Mile

Baltzer Lybrook Jr

Daniel Hart

John Hart

Lower Four Mile





Jacob Kingery house

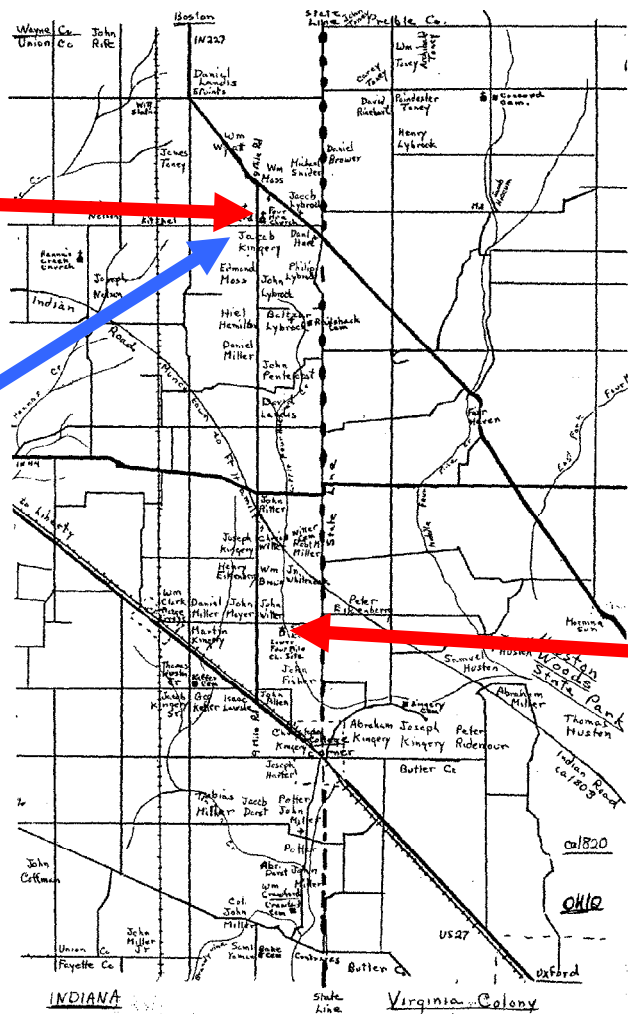
This was the Bob Stevens property. The center section of garage is an old, original house. It is built of sawmill lumber, moved up from the old road back west at the woods. It has a winding stairs in the back corner, to the overhead loft or sleeping room.

The Brethren of Upper Four Mile met in a schoolhouse on this property (not across the road in the more modern old brick schoolhouse). The schoolhouse foundations can be seen in faded marks in the grass in front of the Bob Stevens house, when there is extended dry weather.

Jacob Kingery was married to **Barbara Lybrook**. They were married in Virginia 1802, just before the move to here. I saw their Bible, at Mildred Cain's home in Boston. Barbara died in the home of her daughter, the Harmon Toney house, in the late 1850s. There is an interesting sequence of 2 marriage certificates of Franklin County VA involved. Both name Barbara Lybrook as spouse, both name Jacob Kingery and Jacob Miller. They were both issued on the same day. One has Barbara married to Jacob Kingery, with Jacob Miller as witness. The other has Barbara married to Jacob Miller, with Jacob Kingery as witness. We finally determined who is who: the Barbara Lybrook, married to Jacob Kingery, was the daughter of our Philip Lybrook; the Barbara Lybrook, married to Elder Jacob Miller (second marriage), was the elder sister of Philip Lybrook, she was a spinster. (admitted, there is controversy over this conclusion!)

Jacob Kingery

**Lower
Four
Mile**





Carey Toney Sr Homestead

Carey Toney Sr is named as a charter member of the Concord Church of Christ, founded about 1840. He came to the Four Mile in 1818 from BloomingRose on the Coal River (in Virginia, now West Virginia). The log cabin which was the back section of the house (now rebuilt) seems to have been the original homestead.

His youngest son, **Harmon Toney**, built the big house. This is where Carey Sr's grandson, Elder Carey Toney, was born. This is where Barbara Lybrook Kingery died, and both Carey Toney and his wife, Betsy, were also living, and were cared for by a granddaughter, Chloe Niccum. (Chloe wrote a history note about the Toney family, which was found in the Jacob Kingery Bible. When she wrote the note, she did not realize that sometimes the "Virginia" spoken of, was now, after the Civil War, West Virginia. This resulted in a lot of unrewarding research.)



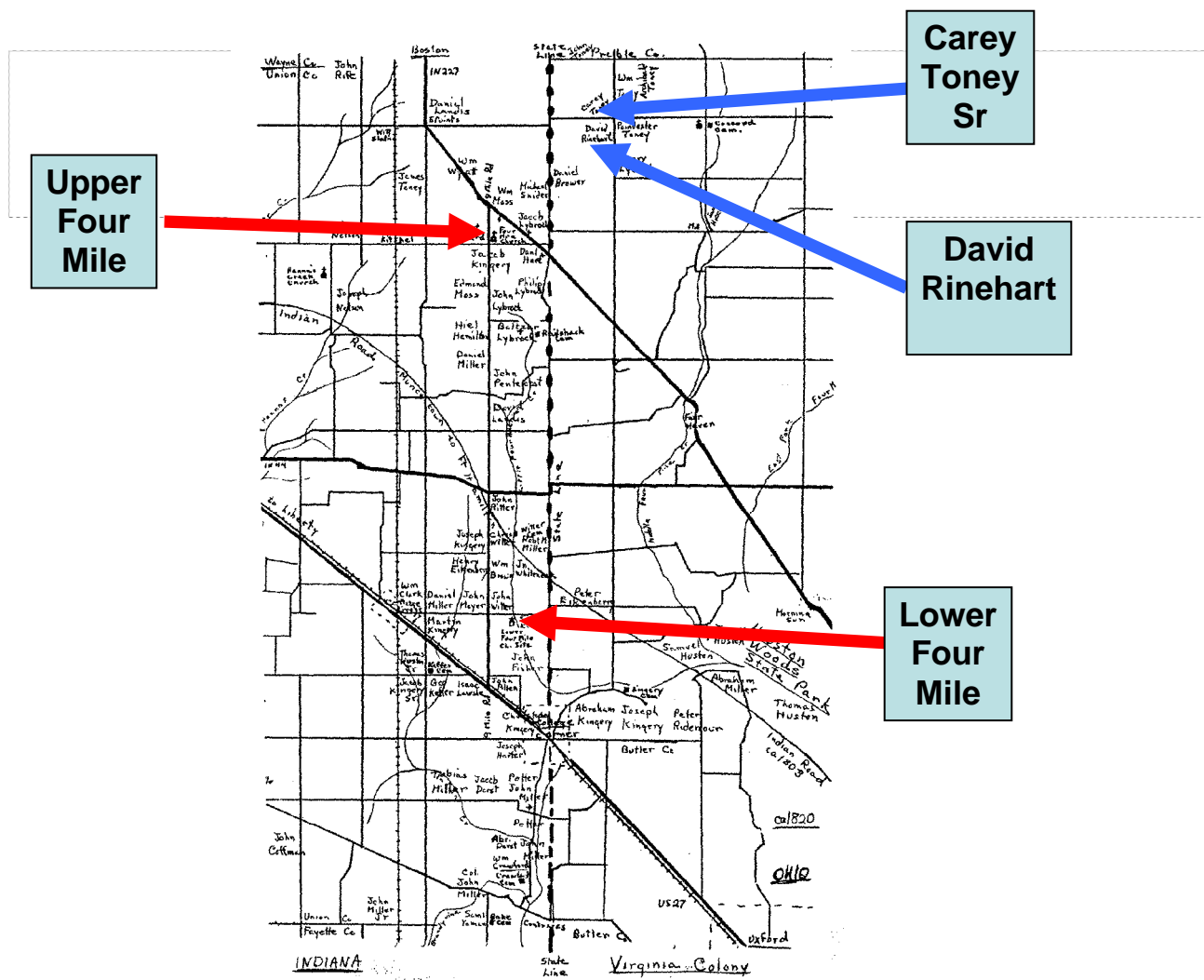
David Rinehart Homestead

In the homestead across the road from the Toney house, lived the deacon, David Rinehart. He raised his granddaughters – **Mary** and **Sarah Moss**.

They had been brought back here after death of their mother, Susannah, wife of Edmund Moss, in Carroll Co IN. The Bachelor Run Church was founded in the home of Edmund Moss there. Mary married Elder William Smith Toney, Sarah married Elder Carey Toney.

Elder Carey Toney married the pretty girl across the road.

Abraham Rinehart, son, married Elizabeth, daughter of James and Sarah Lybrook Toney (sister of Elder William Smith Toney) – 1847, Elder Upper Deer Creek Church, Cass Co IN





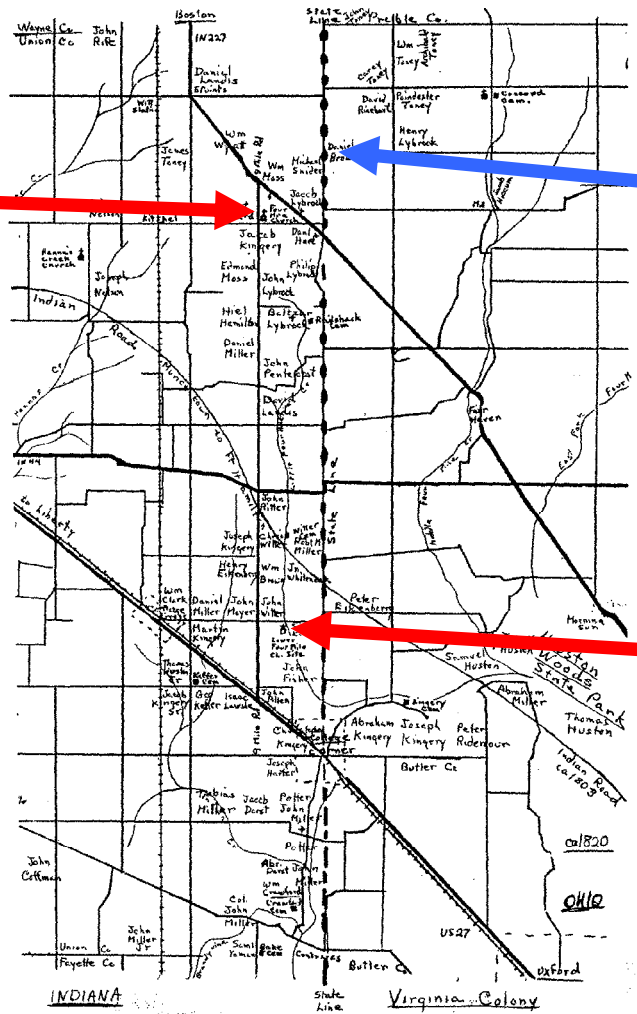
Daniel Brower Homestead

Daniel Brower became Elder following the death of Elder Abraham Moss. Daniel is from one of the Brower families from Franklin Co VA, that lived on Twin Creek. This house stands on the State Line road, on the Ohio side. A more modern house sits back the lane from this original house. I've noted this style of house construction in several early buildings in the community, including one that stood across from Philip Creek's home.

Upper
Four
Mile

Daniel
Brower

Lower
Four
Mile





Lower Four Mile Church site

There were two main churches on the Four Mile. Typical of the Brethren, they began by meeting in the homes of various members. The first church building was located about one mile north of College Corner OH, east of the Nine Mile Road, on the banks of the Four Mile Creek, where the original road from Philip Lybrook's house passed. At present there are grain elevators at this site. It was built about 1845 on the Samuel Kingery property. This church had an unusual floor pattern, the congregation sat on a sloping floor that raised toward the back, this gave a better view of the ministers. Its foundations are pushed over the bank into the creek.

The 1854 migration to Monroe Co IA, of **Elder Daniel Miller** with his uncle, Elder Daniel Miller, son of Elder Jacob, who lived at Raccoon Creek, took so many people from this church that it caused the doors of the church to close. Lower Four Mile rejoined Upper Four Mile as the present Four Mile Church.

The question was raised, why two Four Mile Churches, only 7 miles apart? When you consider the speed of travel of a horse and buggy, about 2-3 miles per hour, these two churches are more than 2 hours apart. Meetings alternated the Sundays between the two churches. Ministers attended every Sunday, but sometimes, instead, visited more remote churches – such as the Whitewater Church in Fayette County IN, or meetings held at West Florence, in Ohio.



Upper Four Mile Church

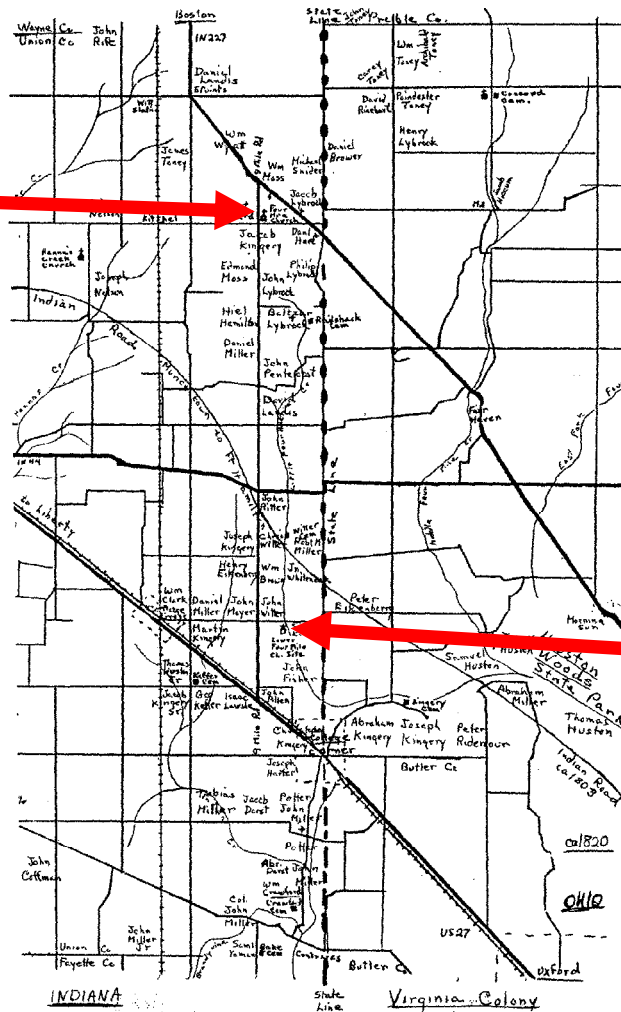
My drawing is a probable view, based on the present church. It would likely have been built on corner stones. It was on the corner of the roads, after the Nine Mile Road was built about 1855.

It would have been typical of other early Brethren Churches. There were the normal two front entrances, with the ministers' bench between the doors. The ministers sat facing the congregation, the deacons sat at the bench, facing the ministers. The songs were led by a deacon. The men entered to the right, with Elders' seats in the right front corner facing the ministers' bench. The women entered to the left, with Elders' wives seats in the left front, facing the ministers' bench.

Some churches (but probably not Four Mile) had a board fence down the center of the church, between the women and men. It was high enough to just see over when standing. There was a door for women with babies, to exit back when necessary. Spooning teens knew where any knotholes were in the board fence, and a boy and a girl would sit so that each could stick a finger into the knothole during church.

In 1895 the church building was raised and a basement placed under it. The front entrance was made as a single door, with a flight of steps up to it, and a covered entrance over the stairway.

Upper
Four
Mile




Lower
Four
Mile



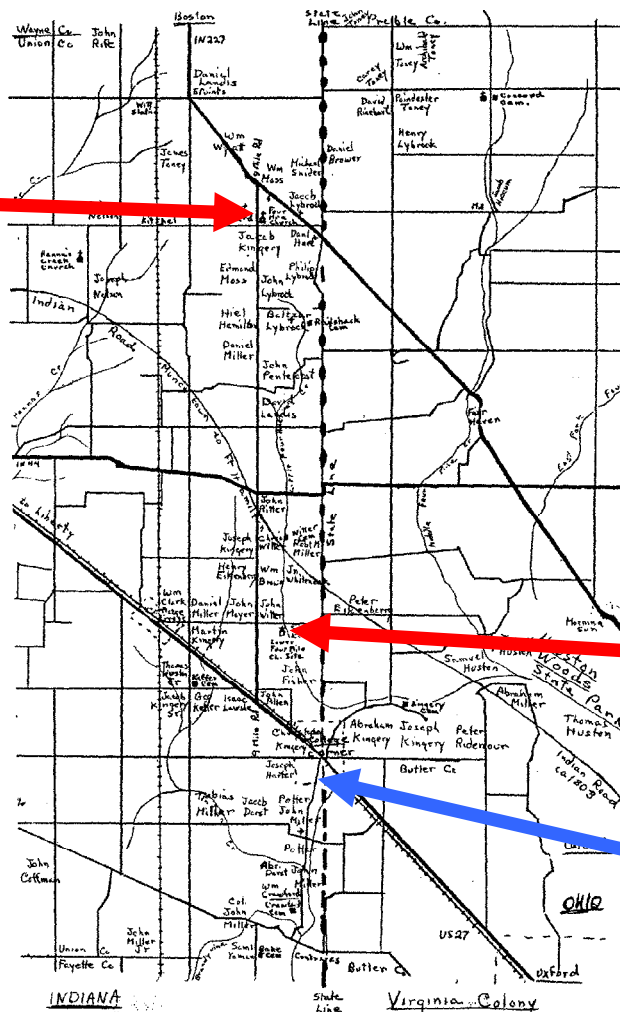
Samuel Ridenour house

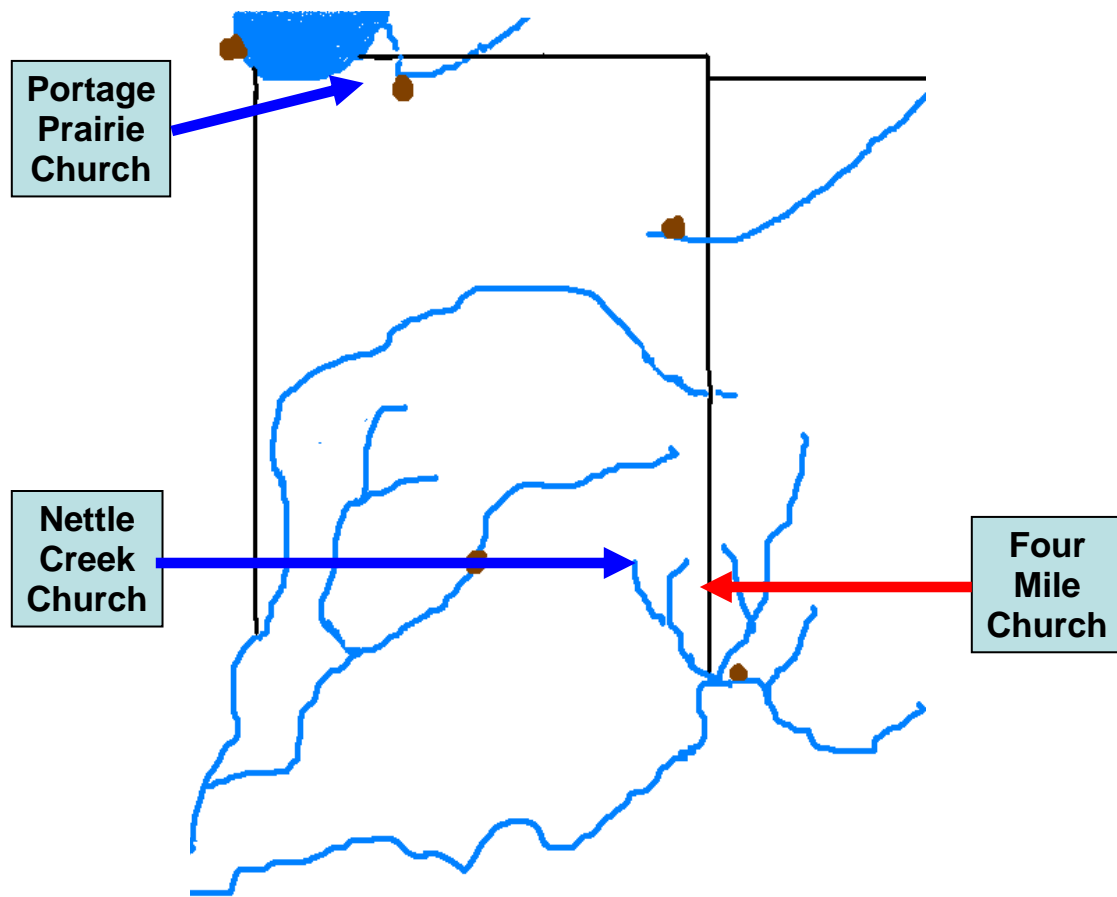
Samuel was a son of Peter Ridenour, his wife was Barbara, daughter of Tobias Miller. Their house is located at the Cemetery on the south side of College Corner OH/IN.

Their sons became Railroad Entrepreneurs. They built the Railroad through College Corner and Liberty in 1851. It was the Cincinnati and Indianapolis and went on to St Louis and Chicago. Their son, **Peter Ridenour**, who lived in Kansas City KS in 1900, wrote a family history of Elder Jacob Miller.



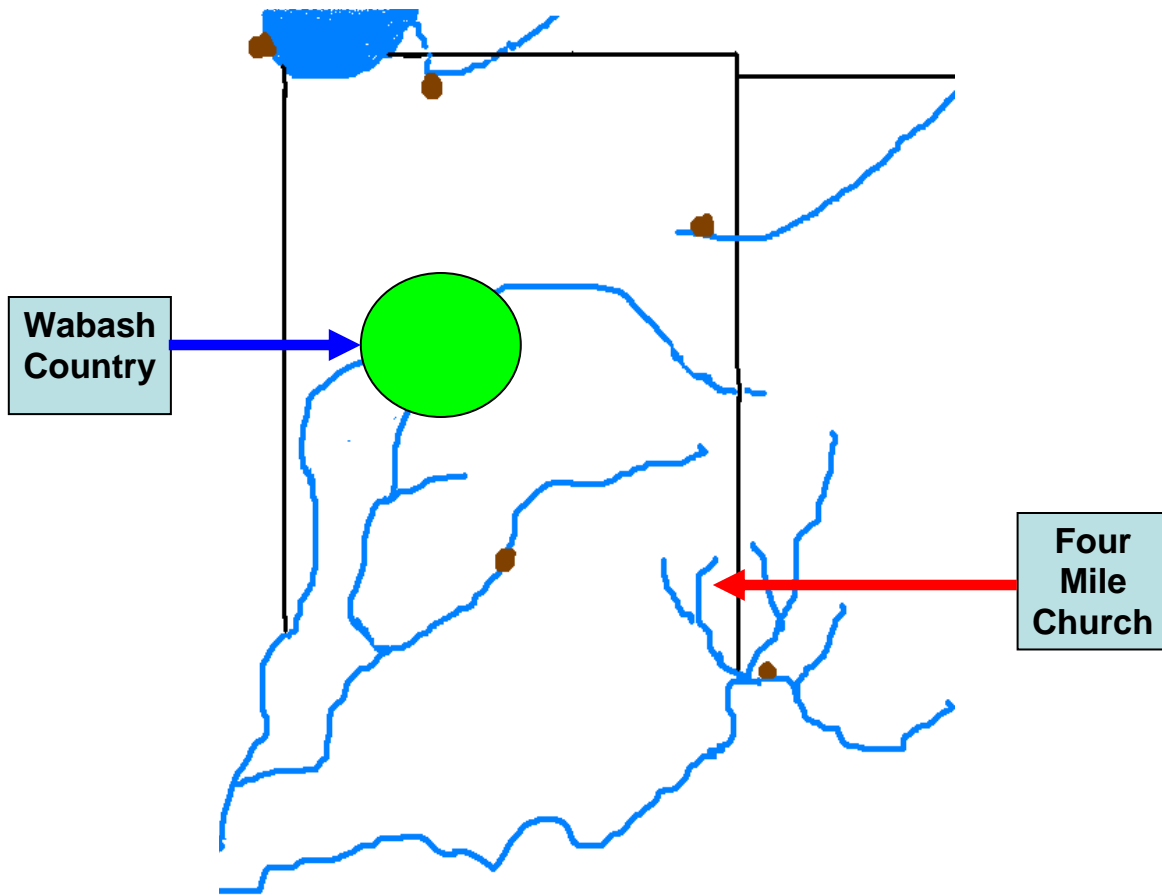
Samuel Huston
Huston



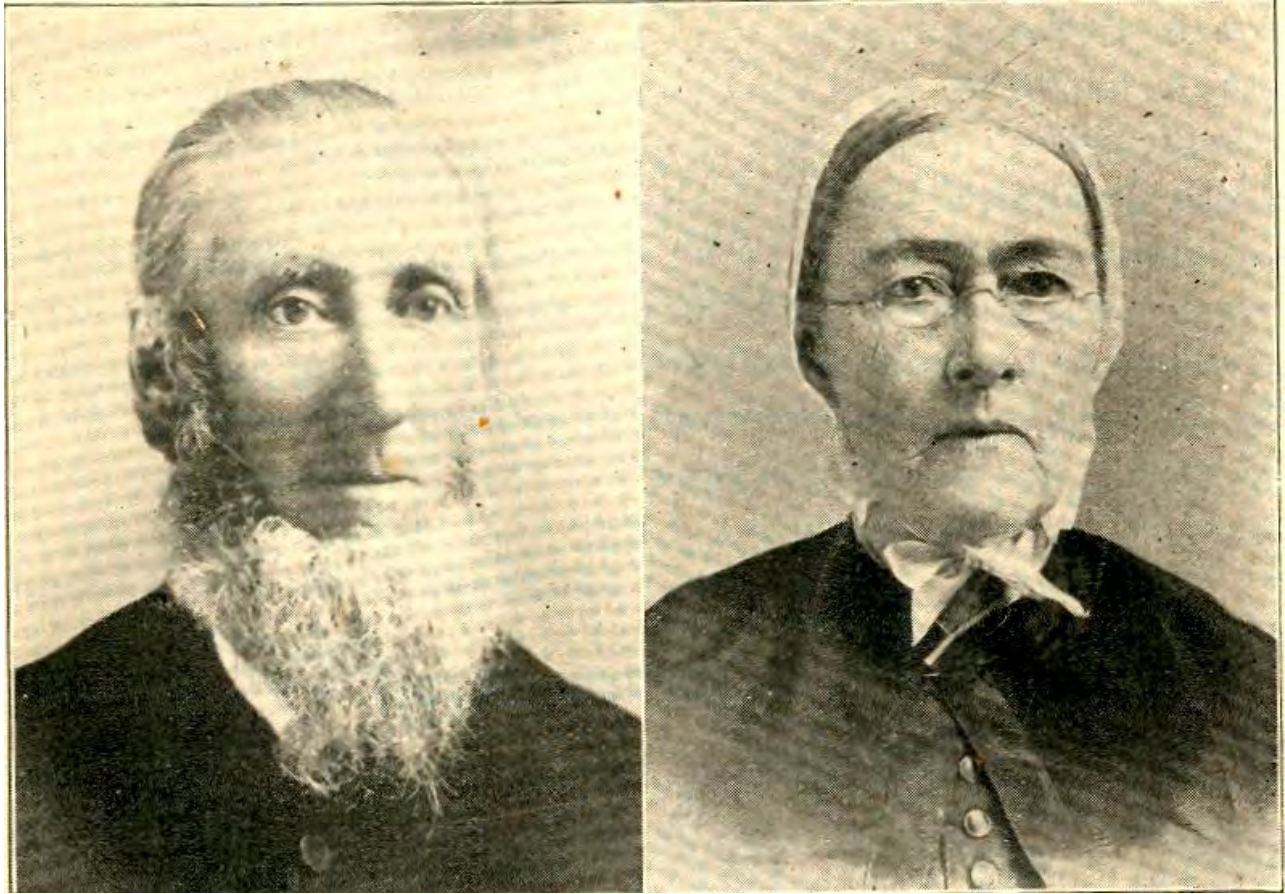


Arrows point to the **Nettle Creek Church** and the **Portage Prairie Church**.

Founding Elders for both were **Aaron Miller** and **David Miller**, the youngest sons of Elder Jacob Miller. Aaron lived here at Four Mile for a while, before returning to Dayton. The Nettle Creek Church, at Hagerstown IN (called “the Brick”), was founded in 1821. The Nettle Creek Church is on this same Delaware Indian Road, which is identified immediately north of the church buildings. The Portage Prairie Church, just northwest of South Bend IN, was founded in 1829. Earliest settlers there included children from the Four Mile.



Settlers from the Four Mile called this the “**Wabash Country**”. This land opened for settlement following treaty with the Indians. This was after the defeat of the Prophet and Tecumseh on the Wabash River at Lafayette IN. It includes Cass, Carroll, Howard and Miami Counties. Following the 1832 Cholera Epidemic, there was a major Brethren migration to this area. This included the children of William Moss and many others from the Four Mile in Indiana, and Twin Creek and the Great Miami River in Ohio, this includes also, those who moved out from the East.



Elder Jacob Rife - wife: Esther Stanley

was successor to Elder Daniel Brower. He was youngest brother of Nancy, wife of Abraham Moss. During his tenure as Elder, he lived about a mile north of the Upper Four Mile Church. About 1900 he retired to father's farm, west of Boston IN. Elder Jacob collected and wrote the first known History of Four Mile Church. We have a handwritten copy dated 1878. An expanded copy was written about 1896 which was forwarded by Elder Carey Toney to President Otho Winger of Manchester College, and is included in his 1911 History of the Brethren in Indiana



John Rife house

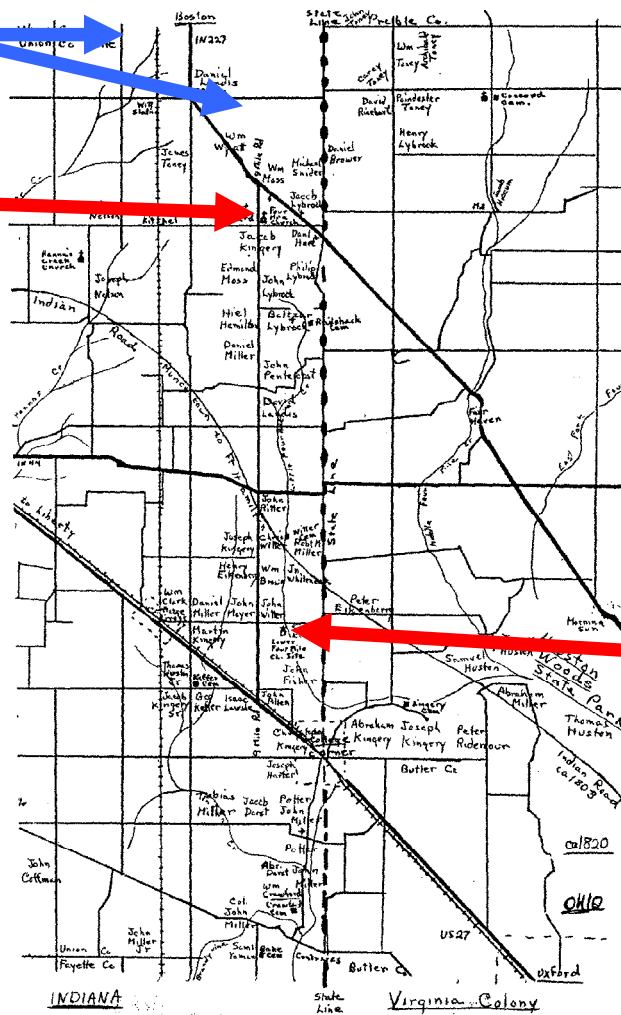
This is the home site of the father of Elder Jacob Rife and of Nancy Rife Moss. John Rife came to Wayne Co IN in 1816, a settler from Winchester VA, being born near Hagarstown MD. His wife was Francis Crist. Both families were Brethren, tracing back to the Coventry Church in Chester Co PA, the second Brethren church in America.

This property straddled the Wayne Co/Union Co line, it is a mile west of Boston IN and nearly a mile south. The Rife families are buried at the Elkhorn Cemetery. John's son Daniel was a doctor in Boston. He died in the 1849 Cholera Epidemic. His family is buried in the Boston Cemetery.

Jacob Rife

Upper Four Mile

Lower Four Mile





Delaware Indian Road

The Conner Brothers, William and John, were children of an Indian trader to the Delaware Indians of northeastern Ohio, and a white girl who was a captive of the tribe. They lived at Schoenbrun Village, a Moravian Mission. These Delawares were Christian Indians. During the American Revolution, the Militia from Pittsburg attacked and massacred the Indians at Schoenbrun. The surviving Indians, including the Conners, fled to Fort Detroit. They were temporarily welcome there, but found a permanent home on the White River. Chief Muncy held his portion of the tribe at Muncytown, now called Muncie IN. Chief Anderson held his portion of the tribe at Anderson's Town, now called Anderson IN. "Straw Town" near Pendleton IN was a third portion of the tribe. The Conner brothers set up trading for these tribes, bringing supplies from Fort Hamilton, on the Great Miami River, north of Cincinnati OH. William Conner (home was "Conner's Prairie" State Memorial) had a trading post at the White River falls in what became Indianapolis IN.

One of these trading routes is the Delaware Indian Road. The road went through the Hueston Woods State Park, and led down to the Beach. It continued up from the Little Four Mile Creek to what is now the RV Park. The path it used there has washed out over these 200 years into a gully. The path continued on past the Indian Mound there, and angled across country. This scene is just west of the park, where the road passed the foundations of a house just west of this building. The foundations of the building are parallel to the angle of the road, and not north-south to the world. Location is such, it may have been one of the Huston houses.



Christopher Witter house

The Delaware Indian Road continued some 2 miles west, to where it forded the Little Four Mile Creek, about a half mile south of IN44, and east side of the Nine Mile road. This was the home site of the deacon, Christopher Witter. He came here in 1806 from the Conestoga Church, near Ephrata in Lancaster Co PA. The path of the road is still used as the lane back from the farm buildings of the Witter farm, to their fields east of the creek.

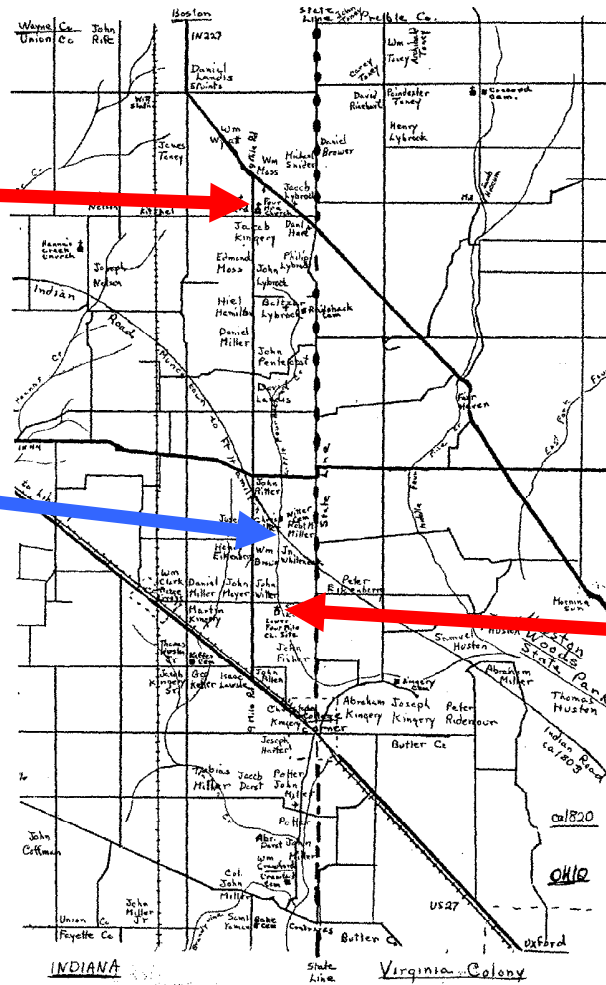
Back of me about 100 yards is the Witter Cemetery, at the crossing of Indian Road over the Little Four Mile Creek. I understand that this is not the original cabin, but is an early family house.

The Delaware Indian Road continued across Union Co IN to Fiant's Ford on the Whitewater River. On it, north of Liberty IN, was born Jouquin Miller, "Poet of the Sierras". It went northward from Fiant's Ford through Philomath, a Universalist Center, was crossed by the National Road near Dublin, and passed immediately north of the Nettle Creek Church. It continued north on the "Buckcreek Road" which intersected with now US35 at Mount Pleasant IN, from which it continued on to Muncytown (Muncie IN). The Buckcreek Church of the Brethren is on that portion of the road.

**Upper
Four
Mile**

Christopher Witter

**Lower
Four
Mile**





Peter Eikenberry Jr - George Witter farm

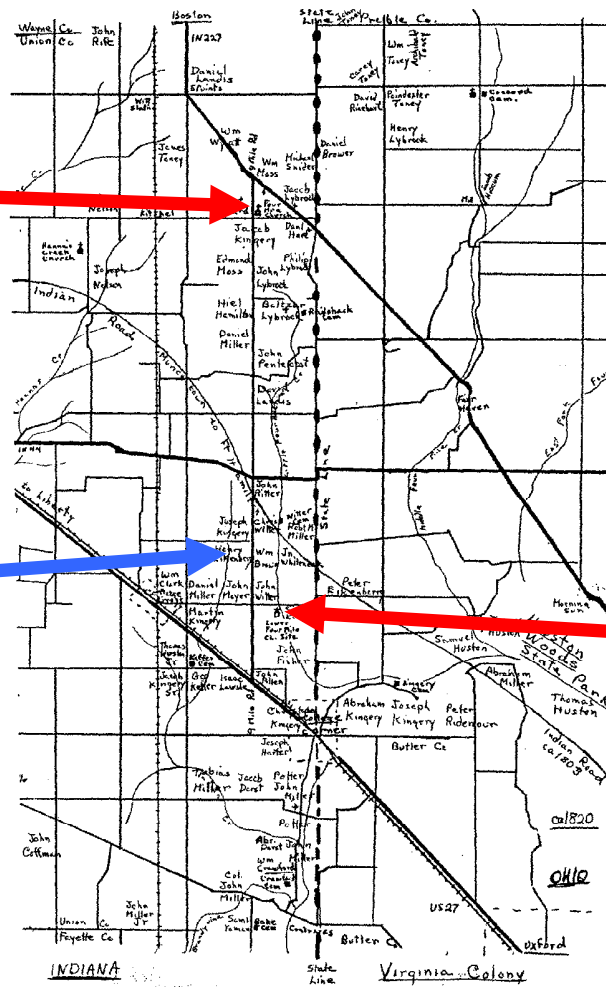
These buildings sit back from Nine Mile Road, on the original north-south road that was west of Nine Mile road. The Nine Mile Road was built about 1855, at one mile from the Ohio State line. It obsoleted the early road built by Philip Lybrook, on the banks of the Little Four Mile Creek, and the above old road about 3/4ths mile west of the Little Four Mile Creek. While the property was owned originally by Peter Eikenberry Jr, these buildings were later, built by George Witter, son of Christopher Witter.

**Upper
Four
Mile**

Peter Eikenberry

George Witter

**Lower
Four
Mile**



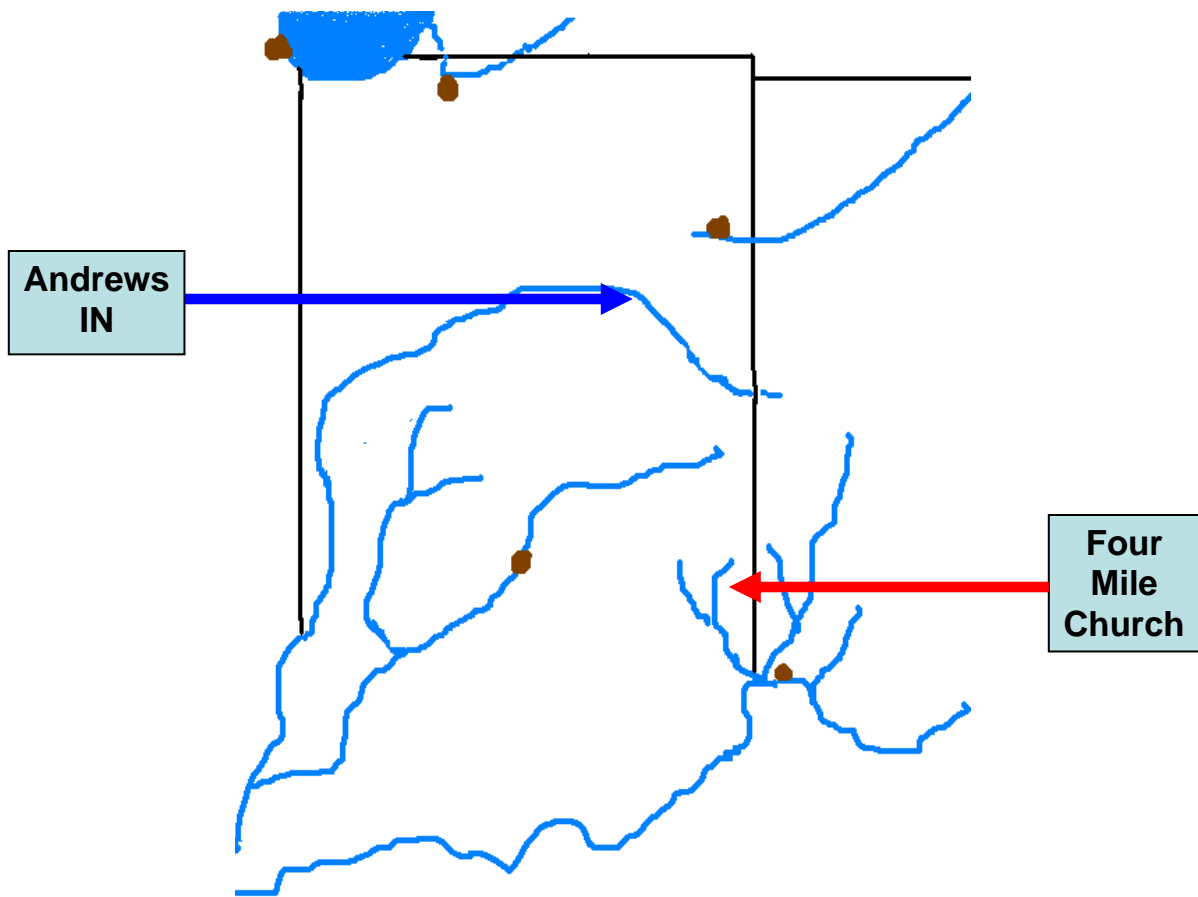


Daniel Leedy and wife – Mary Huston

Among those Prominent Brethren, who came from the Four Mile Church, can be included the minister, Daniel Leedy, the first Brethren Minister on the Pacific Coast. He went to Oregon in 1848. He was a minister at Upper Twin Creek, Preble Co OH, married **Mary**, daughter of John Huston of the Four Mile Church, and moved first to Andrews IN, with his brother (1841), then to Iowa, and from there to Oregon in 1848.



The brother of Daniel was **Elder Joseph Leedy**. His wife was **Lydia**, daughter of Samuel Witter. Elder Joseph was a minister at Upper Twin Creek, Preble Co OH, and went as Elder to Andrews, IN (1841). Their farm there was on the Indiana Canal, on the Wabash River.





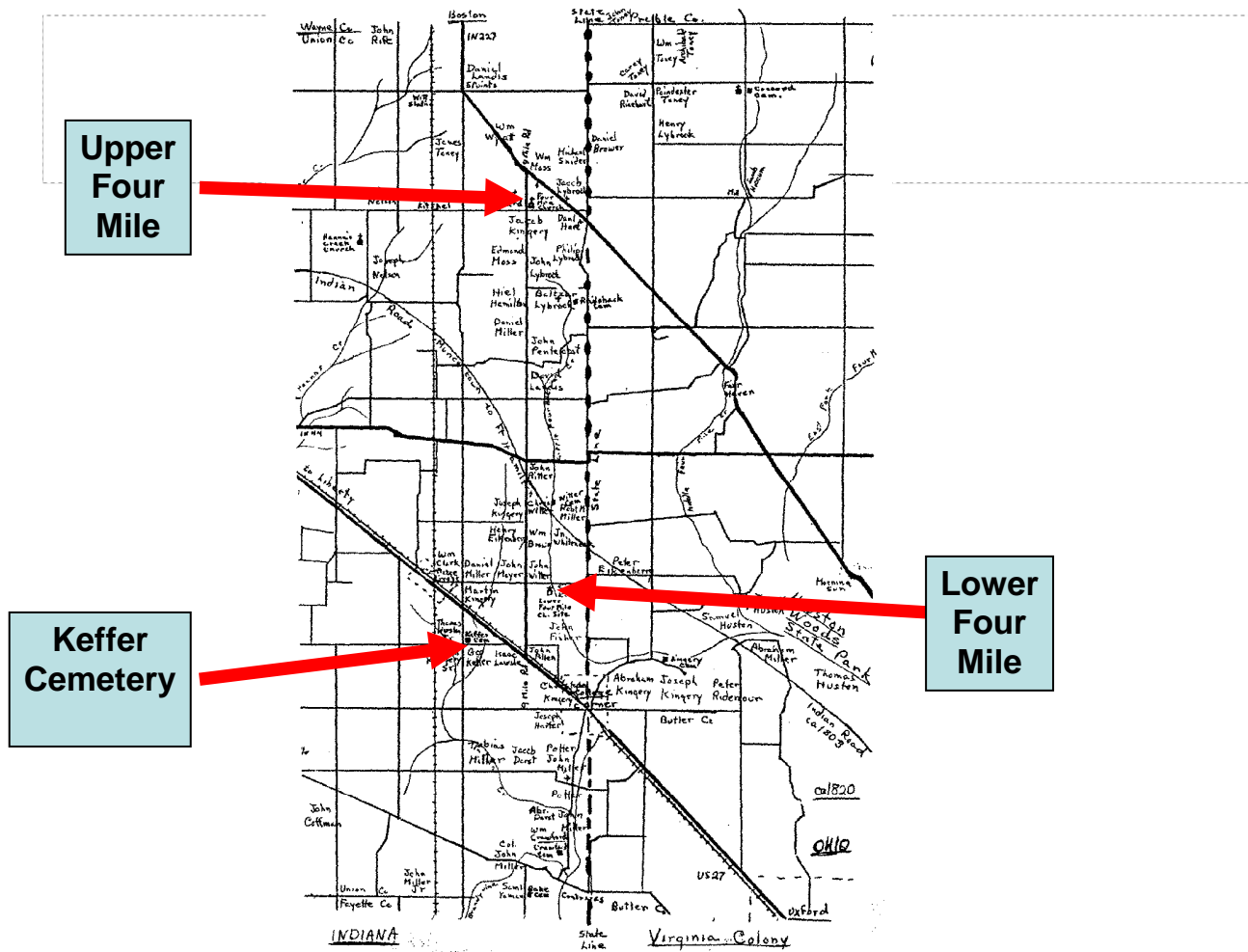
Keffer Cemetery

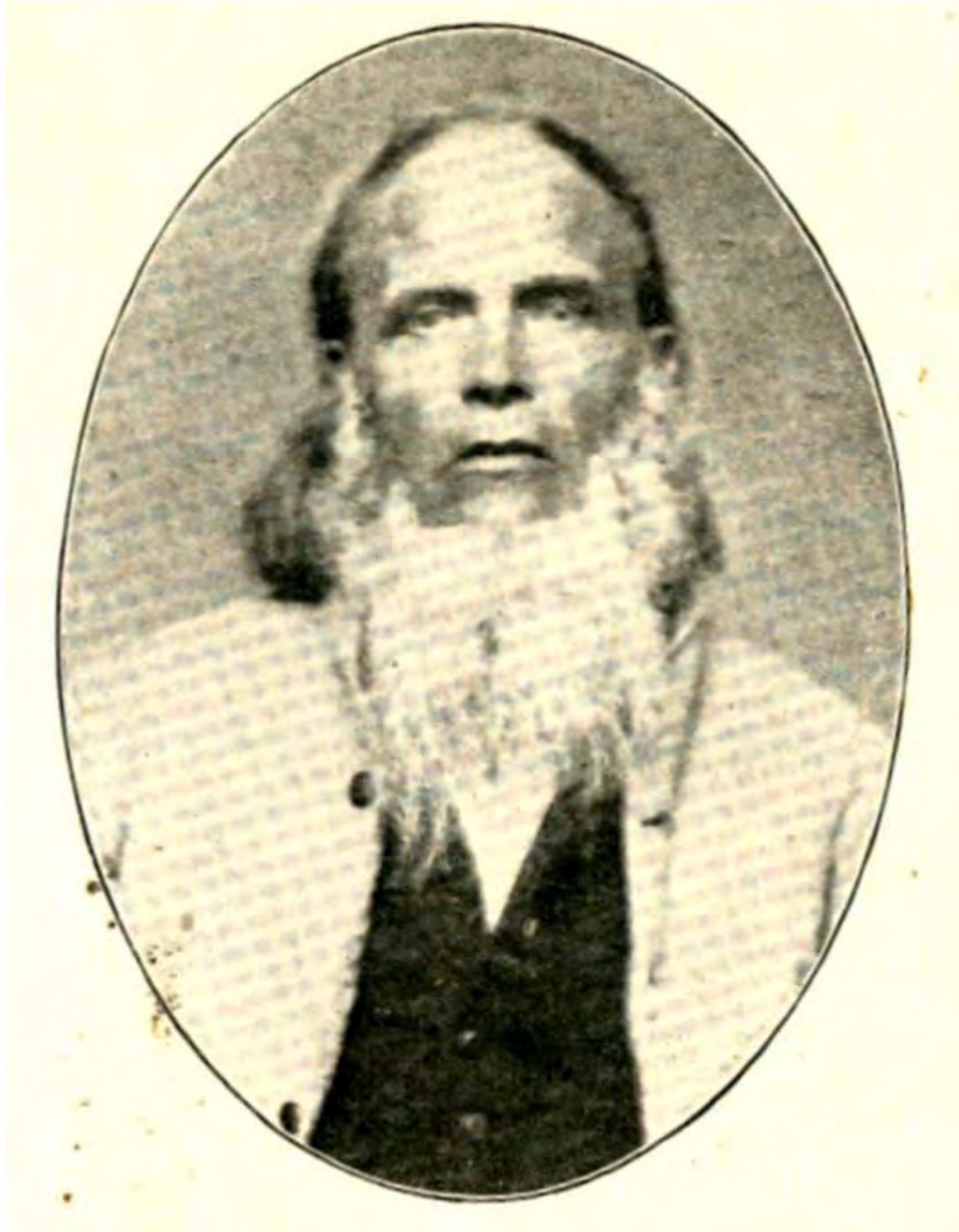
When the Lower Four Mile Church closed, due to the move to Iowa in 1854, a new church was built at Keffer Cemetery. Keffer Cemetery is west of College Corner, and south of Cottage Grove. It was the site of the homestead of Jacob Kingery Sr, father of Joseph and Jacob Kingery, Thomas Huston lived here and Abraham Miller had moved over here. (Jacob Kingery Sr's land was sold to George Keffer, hence the name of the cemetery.)



Barn – Keffer Cemetery Church

(this was pointed out to me – not guaranteed – but that when this congregation closed, the church building was sold, moved east to this farm and made into a barn.)






Elder Heil Hamilton

Another of the Brethren leaders in Indiana was Heil Hamilton. An orphan, he was raised by James Taylor, and attended the Four Mile Church. He lived just south of the Bob Stevens home. In 1846, after marrying **Nancy Kingery**, he moved to Flora IN. He was an early elder at the Bachelor Run Church (Cass Co IN) and the Howard Church (Howard Co IN) in “Wabash Country”.



Edmund Moss Sr - Heil Hamilton house site

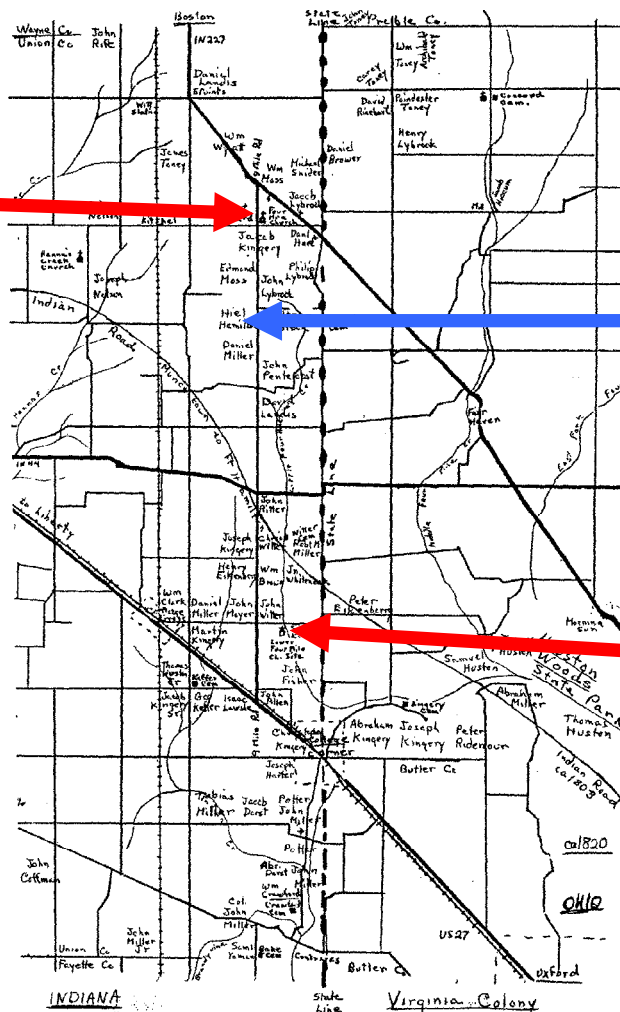
This was the original property of Edmund Moss Sr, father of William Moss. Edmund Moss came out with his son and others of his children from Franklin Co VA. Heil Hamilton owned this property before he moved to Wabash Country.



| Year | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1995 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2000 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2005 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2010 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2015 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2020 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |

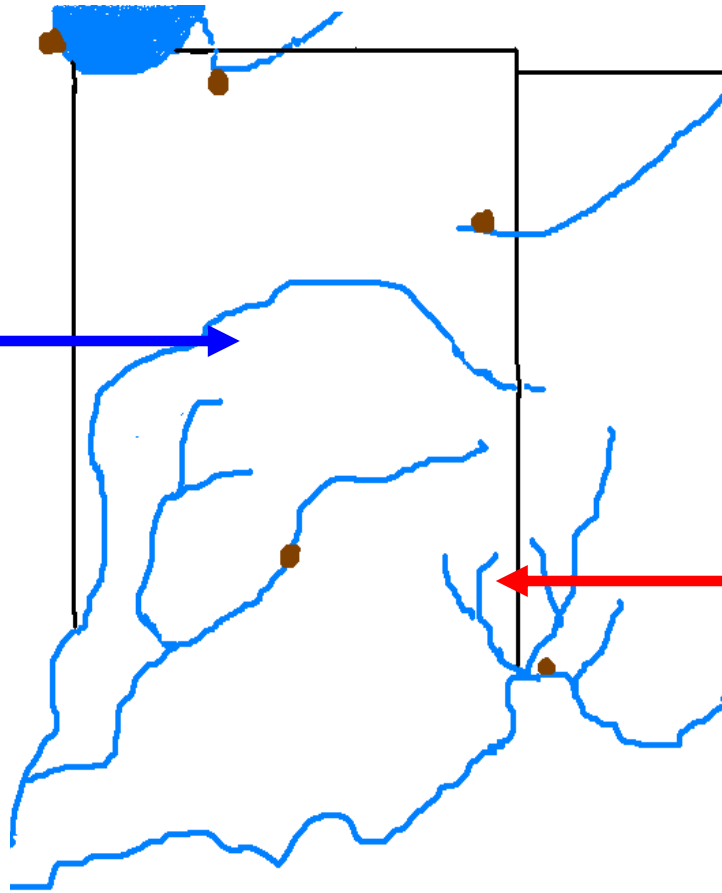
10

~~_____~~

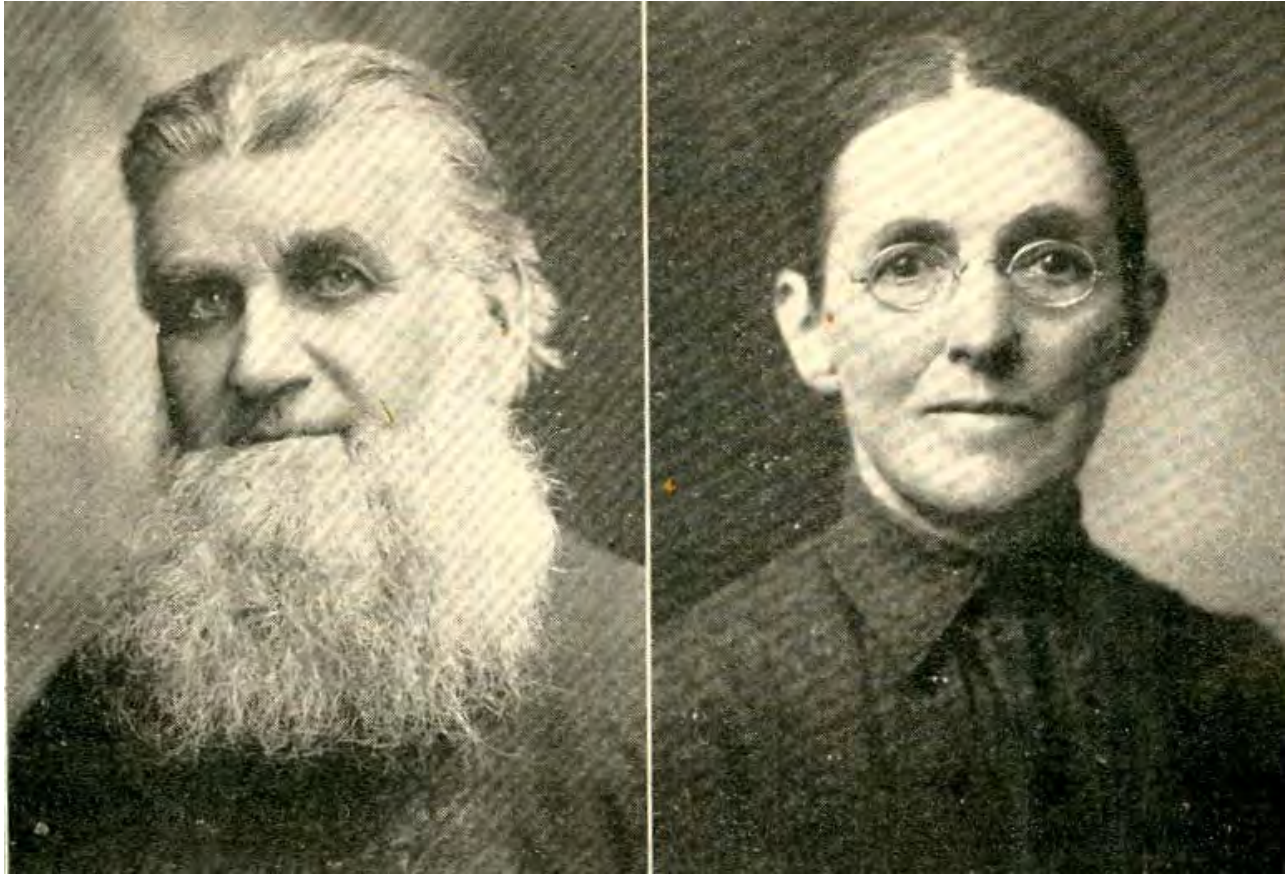


**Bachelors
Run
Church**

**Wildcat
Creek**



**Four
Mile
Church**



One early Brethren leader in Indiana was **Elder William Smith Toney**. This Picture includes his wife, **Mary Moss**. William Smith Toney was the son of James Toney and Sarah Lybrook. Note that he was named for that associate of Elder Jacob Miller, Elder William R Smith, who came to the Four Mile, and went on to Raccoon Creek.

Mary and Sarah were granddaughters of Elder William Moss. Their father, Edmund Moss lived on the Wildcat Creek in Wabash Country. The Bachelor Run Church was founded in his home. Their mother died and their father remarried, these two youngest daughters were returned to their grandparents, David Rinehart, living in Preble Co OH. Please note this picture of Mary, to compare to a similar picture of Sarah later.



James Toney house site

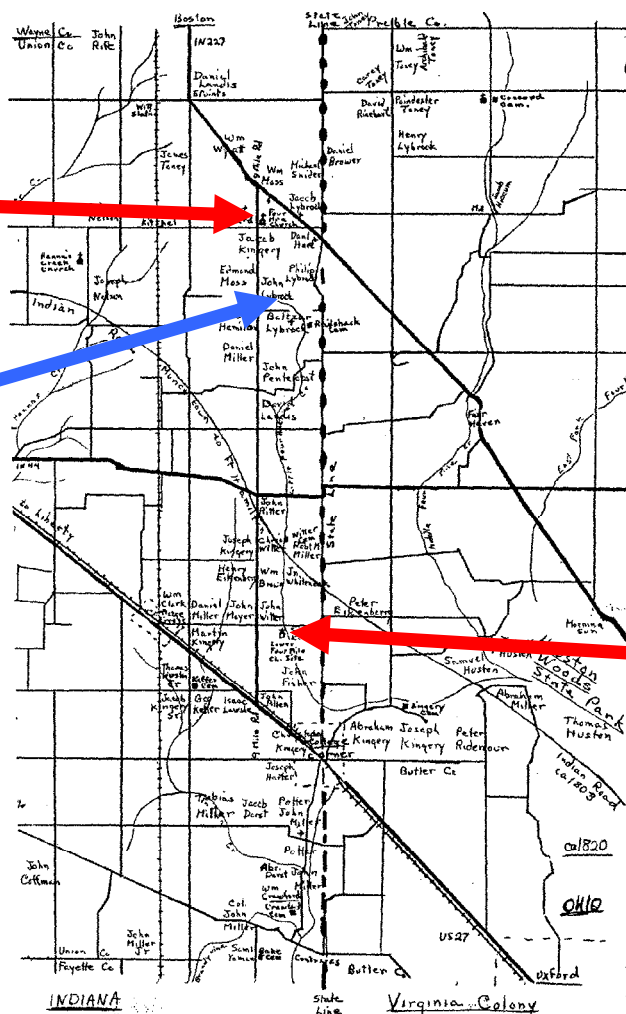
This is the site, and possibly the house, of James Toney and Sarah Lybrook. This is where William Smith Toney was born and raised. This property is immediately west of the home of Philip and Anna Lybrook, Sarah's parents. It is nearly across the road from the house of Edmund Moss and Heil Hamilton. It is less than one mile south of the Upper Four Mile Church building.

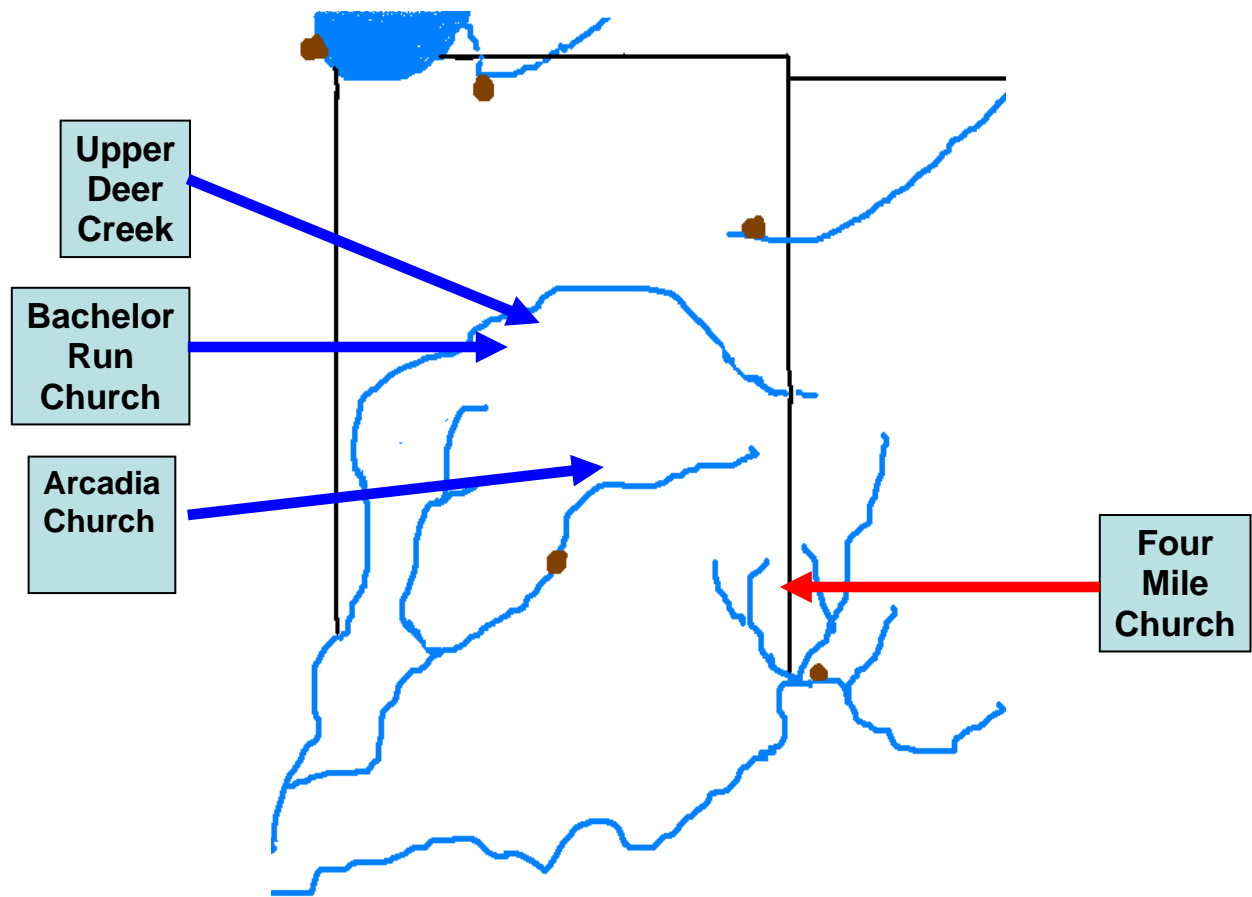
**Upper
Four
Mile**

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| James Toney | William Smith Toney |
|----------------|---------------------------|

**William
Smith
Toney**

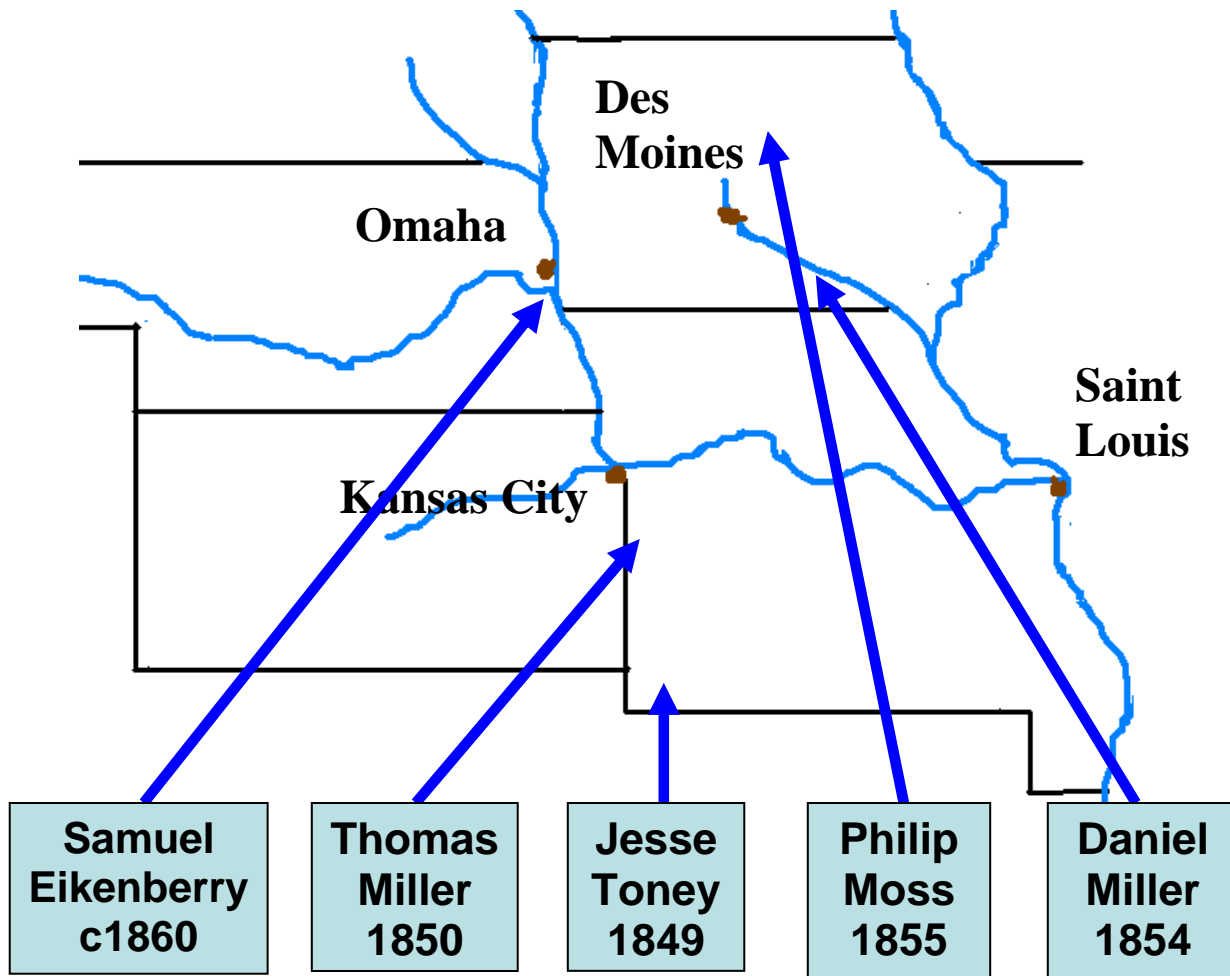
**Lower
Four
Mile**





William Smith Toney took his parents and moved to “Wabash Country”, to the Lower Deer Creek Church in Cass Co IN. This was near the homes of Elder Philip Moss and of Edmund Moss, of the Bachelor Run Church. Philip Moss led a migration to Butler Co IA, in 1855.

Joseph McCarty, wife: Mary Surface – 1850, Elder, Arcadia Church, Hamilton Co IN. Widowed mother married Samuel Kingery, raised in the Lower Four Mile Church



Other Names of Note:

Squire Thompson, wife: Charity Florea – Niles MI, Cass Co MI, 49er, died of Cholera on arrival – Pioneer Cemetery, Los Angeles CA (Squire – son of William Thompson, Avarilla Toney) – sons ran restaurant in LA, owned steamer on river – to St Marys.

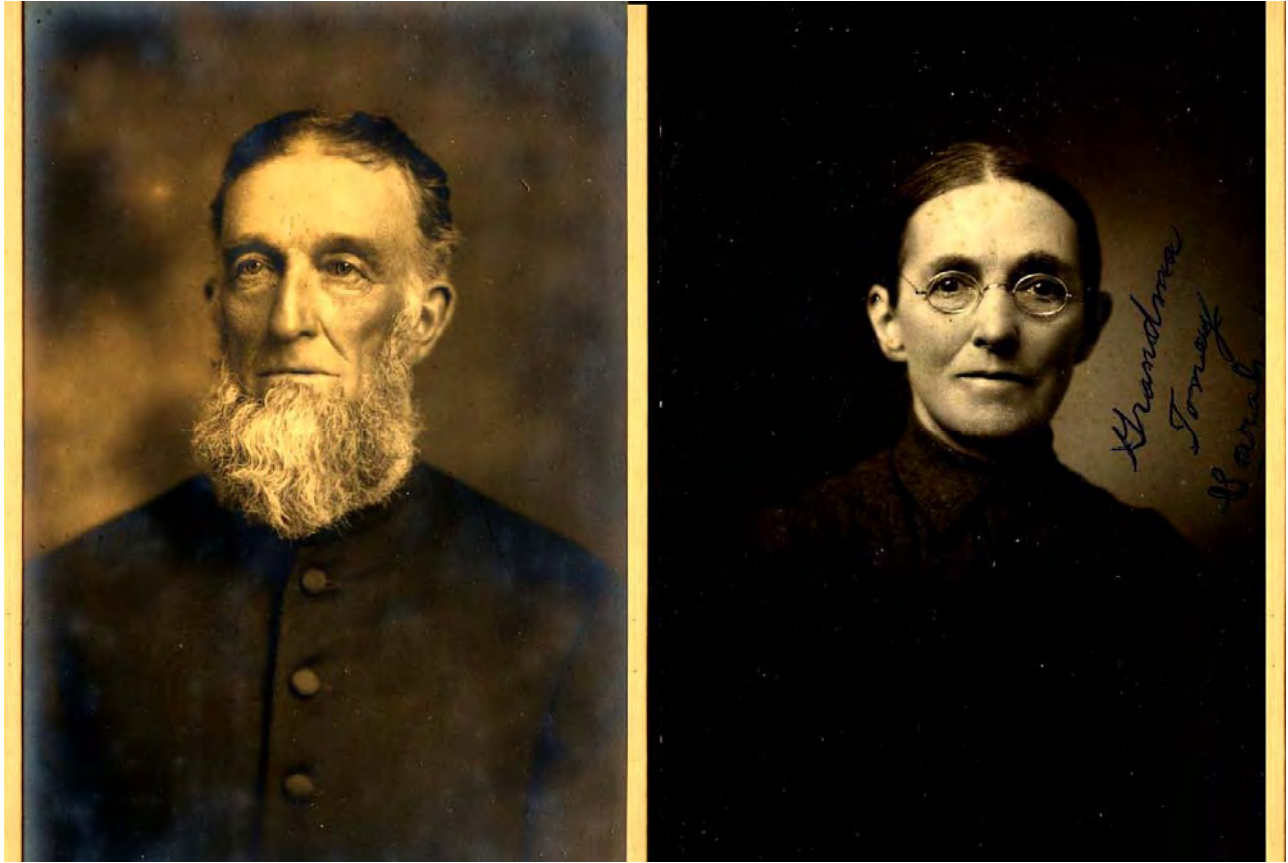
Thomas Miller, wife: Sarah Ronk – minister, Raccoon Creek Church, c1850 to Cedar Co MO, shot during border conflicts, c1862 to Ft Scott KS

Samuel Eikenberry, wife: Martha Crawford – Danville IA, Plattsburg, Cass Co NB – 49er, 1st Nebraska Territorial Assembly, Nebraska Constitutional Convention (son of Peter Eikenberry Jr, Martha – dau of William Crawford)

Jesse Toney, wife: Eve Lybrook – Fulton Co IL (split rails with Abe Lincoln), Neosho, Newton Co MO. (Jesse – son of Carey Toney Sr, Eve – dau of Philip Lybrook) – going to California, 49er, only son died at Neosho, just settled there.

Elders Daniel Miller, uncle and nephew – 1854 – led migration to Monroe Co IA

Elder Philip Moss – 1855 – led migration to Butler Co IA

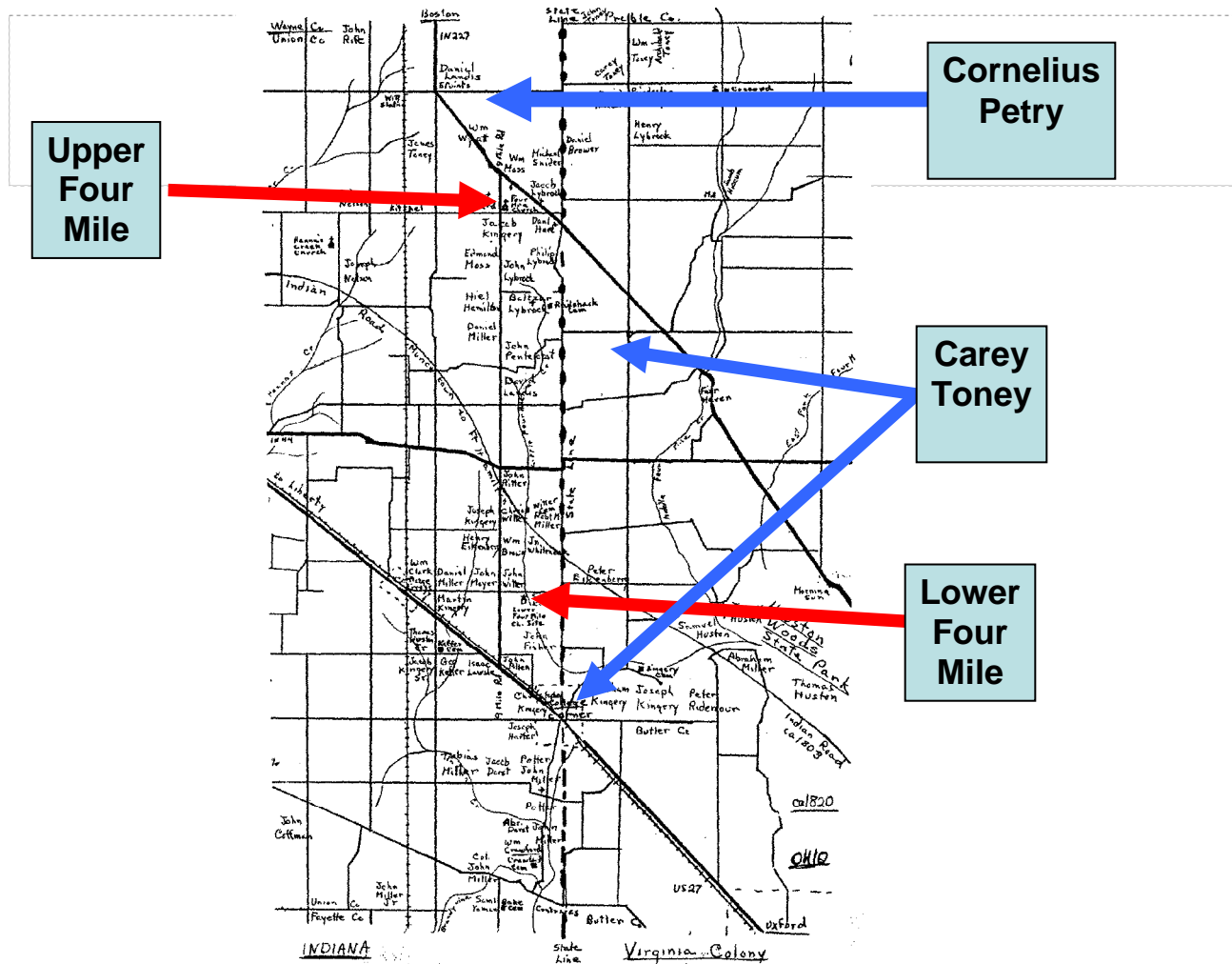


Another Brethren leader in Indiana, and Elder of the Four Mile Church, was **Elder Carey Toney**. This picture includes his wife, **Sarah Moss** (please note how much she looks like her older sister, Mary). They lived in Preble Co OH, on a farm east of Browers. Sarah died, and Carey remarried to Hannah Petro, widow from the Whitewater Church in Fayette Co where Carey also preached. He died in College Corner and is buried with other Toneys at the Concord Church Cemetery. Hannah is buried with her first husband at Springerville IN.



Carey Toney house

This is the house in College Corner OH where Elder Carey Toney died. My mother-in-law, Elsie Petry Olt, as a teenager, cared for her grandfather here.





Elder Cornelius Petry and his wife, **Emma Luella Toney**, daughter of Elder Carey Toney. "Neely" Petry came down from the Price's Creek Church in Preble Co OH because he "didn't want to marry a cousin". Emma Luella died of Tuberculosis, when Elsie was about 12 years old. Ollie Sheets cared for the family while Emma Luella was in the asylum in North Carolina and after she died. About 1913, Cornelius Petry moved back to Price's Creek, because the Four Mile Church HIRED a minister, Rev A J Musselman. (Neely believed strongly in the "Free Ministry".) At Price's Creek he remarried to Alma Minnich.



Jacob Rife/Cornelius Petry house

Carey Toney bought Jacob Rife's farm north of the church, for his daughter and her husband. The house burned about 1900. Neely was at church, on hearing that his house was on fire, he rushed home in the buggy. Charles Hart saw the fire and hurrying back across the fields, saved furniture from the house. He did not know about, so did not save, the box of Four Mile records that were in the house. This house was due east of "Five Points", and was rebuilt with the building there today.



Hanna's Creek Christian Church

Three or four miles southwest of here. John Nelson and his wife; Nancy Lybrook, were members of the Hanna's Creek Christian Church. John was on the committee that built the present Brick Church. The church started in the home of his father, Joseph Nelson, who lived on the Delaware Indian Road, west of the Four Mile Community.

There was a Brethren denominational church fight in the 1820s. It centered over differences in our Pietist and Anabaptist heritages. The early Brethren who went to the frontiers as early as the 1750s, were Pietists, holding to the Anabaptist concept of Adult Immersion Baptism (Trine Immersion).. The Annual Meeting and its Elders, during the American Revolution, because of persecution over our stand on Pacifism, leaned to community with the Mennonites, or pure Anabaptism. This was much more legalistic, and resulted in an authority based on decisions of the Elders and Annual Meeting. This was called: "the Ancient Traditions".

There was also rejection of the Pietist beliefs of the Ephrata Cloisters, which had had hurtful effect on many Brethren Families.

After the horrible New Madrid Earthquake of 1811-12, the strongest in the history of this continent, there was a Great Revival in Kentucky. "The Lord is coming, and I'm not Ready!" The Revival became dominated by Alexander Campbell of Ten Mile in Western Pennsylvania, and ended up with the formation of the Disciples of Christ, or the Christian Church (denomination). Many Brethren were involved in the Revival. Being Pietists these Brethren did not hold to and practice many decisions enacted by Annual Meeting, often because they were unaware of such.

When the National Road opened up across Ohio (1825), the question was asked by Brethren moving west: "What do we do with these 'Strange Brethren'?", the answer: "Avoid Them!" (**the Ban**). Annual Meeting sent Elders out to the Kentucky and Indiana churches (2 by 2). The result was the rejection of the differences that they saw and those practicing them.

Two Kentucky Elders, **Peter Han** and **Abraham Hostetler**, were put on the Ban, and both went with the new Campbellite Disciples of Christ Church.

Elder William R Smith was removed from Eldership of the Raccoon Creek Church.

Elder Jacob Miller was too well considered and could not be removed, but his church (Lower Miami) was divided into four congregations, and three were taken away from him.

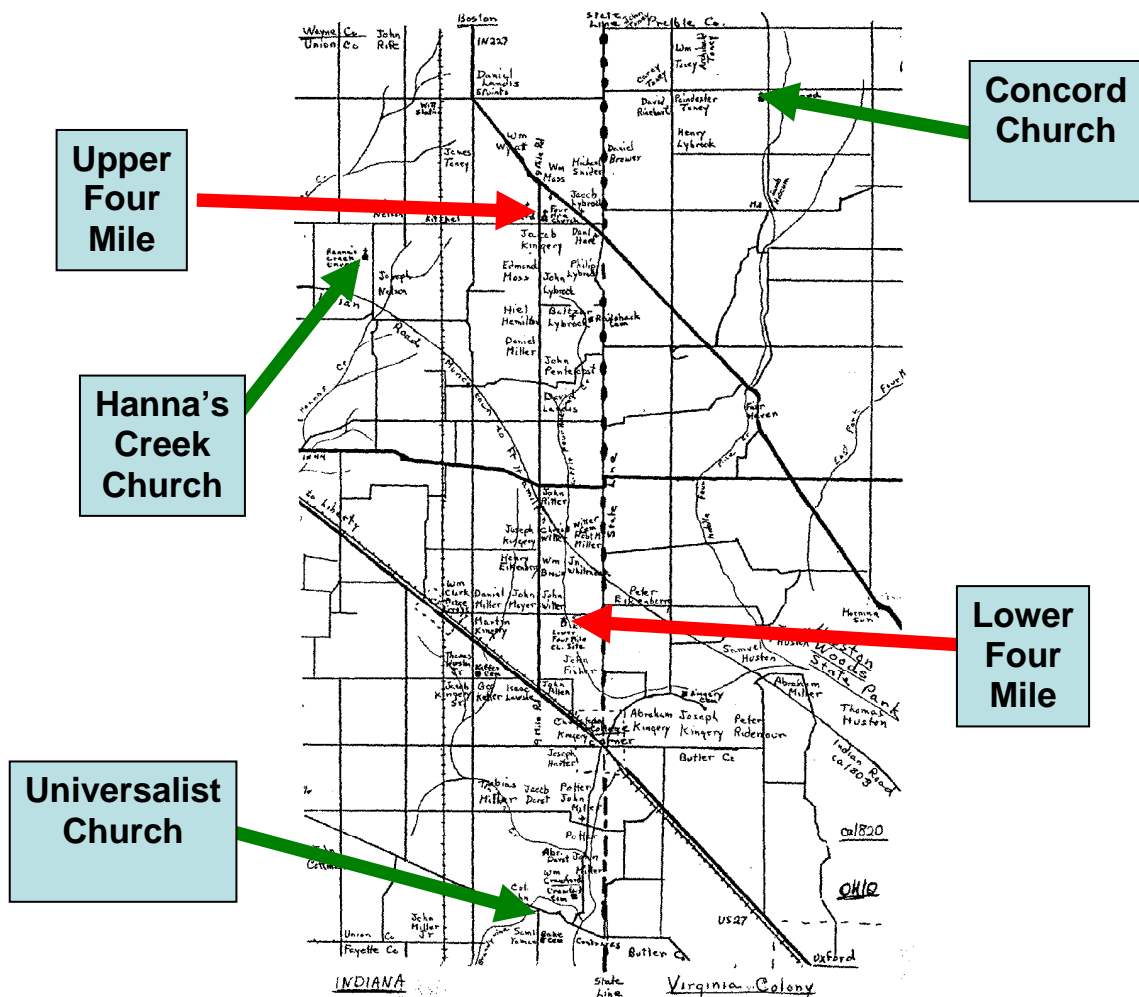
Elder Jacob Rohrer, near Lexington KY, was told: "You are too Happy, when you preach!" "You mean that I can't be happy?" "You are TOO Happy!" and he took his congregation and went Methodist. Asbury College, at Wilmore KY, was one result.

Brethren Historian Abraham Cassell indicates that possibly half of the denomination was lost at this time. My research is finding that the Brethren mostly joined the Disciples of Christ, Methodists, Primitive Baptists, or Universalists. Here at the Four Mile, two Churches of Christ, a Primitive Baptist Church, and one Universalist Church, were formed with early Brethren in their membership.

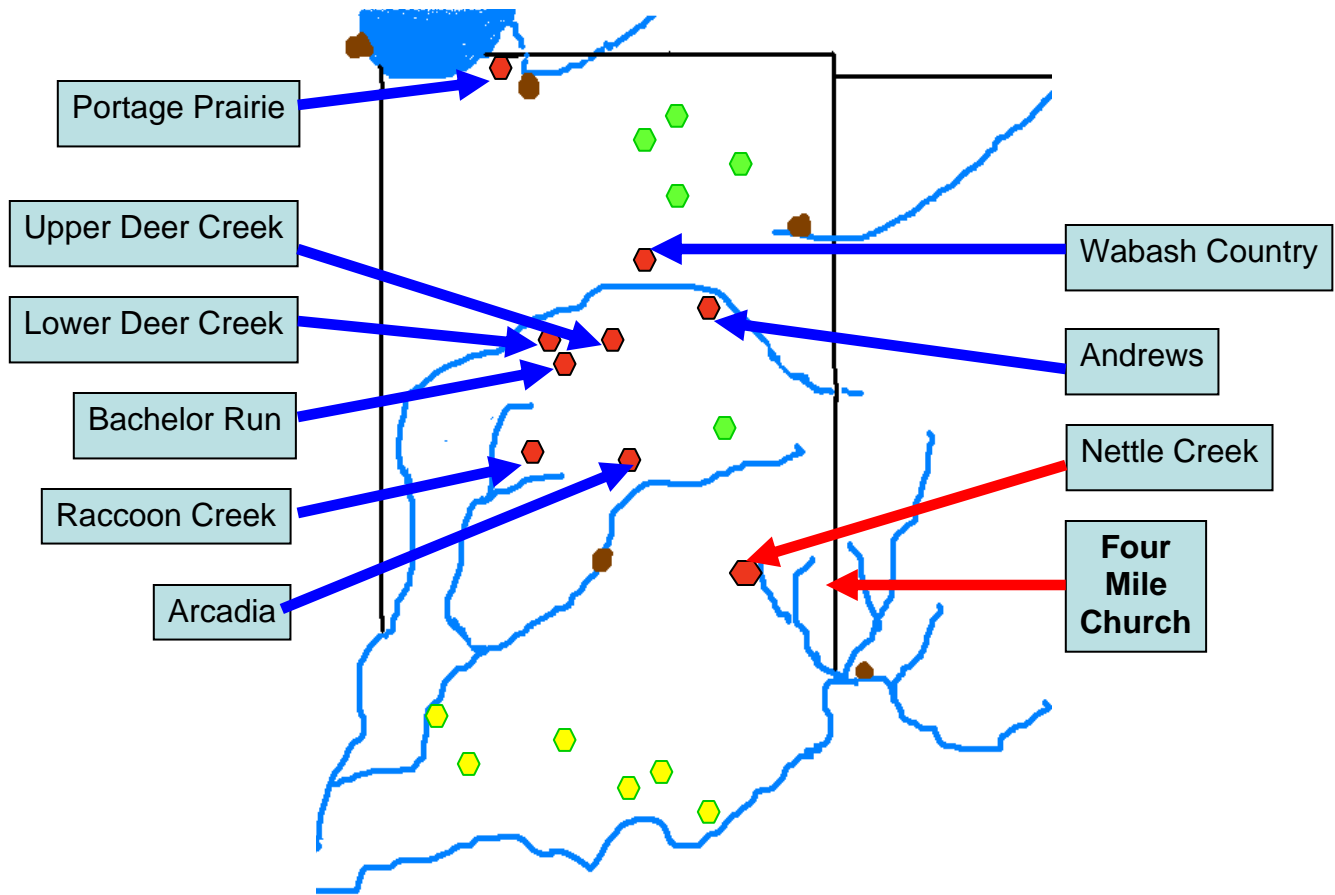


Concord Church of Christ

About 4 miles east of here. Carey Toney Sr was a charter member of the Concord Church of Christ. Many of the Toney and Petry family burials are there (my stone is there).



In the south of our region was a Universalist Church, near Contreras, in Indiana west of Oxford OH. Col John Miller and family were members there (the building is now a house). Benjamin Miller, a son, wrote an extended letter to his brother-in-law, William Miller, of South Bend IN (who held to the Brethren church), explaining his beliefs in Universalism. William's father, Tobias Miller, was a Universalist preacher, believing in "Eternal Restoration", the Pietist belief, as did others of Elder Jacob Miller's children. At Philomath, on the Delaware Indian Road, in western Union County, was a major Universalist Center. Their frontier newspaper, "The Western Star", was originally printed there, before it was moved to Cincinnati. Dublin, on the National Road in Indiana (US40), was a major Universalist Conference Center a century and more ago, and many Brethren moved there.



early Indiana Brethren Churches

Many of the earliest Brethren churches in Indiana, included in their founding members, Brethren from the Four Mile Church. A statement made of our kin, as they moved across the state, was that they “went everywhere, preaching the Word of God”.

- Nettle Creek Church – 2nd Church in Indiana –Hagerstown IN –on Delaware Indian Road - 1822
- Raccoon Creek Church – 3rd Church in Indiana – Putnam Co – 1826– closed
- Portage Prairie Church – 4th Church in Indiana – St Joseph Co - 1829– closed

- green churches – founded – c1830 - from Ohio

- yellow churches – founded 1810-1820 – from Kentucky – now closed or Disciples of Christ



Four Mile Church

This is our history, during our first one hundred years –

[Information collected by Elder Merle C Rummel - husband of Madelaine Olt, granddaughter of Elder Cornelius Petry]