

Indiana Emigrants to Liberia

The Indiana Historian

A Magazine Exploring Indiana History



Focus

Front cover illustrations: On February 3, 1852, the Indiana General Assembly requested information about Liberia from James Mitchell, agent of the Indiana Colonization Society. Mitchell responded in the pamphlet, portions of which are reproduced on the cover. Pamphlet is in the Indiana Division, Indiana State Library. The map of Africa is reproduced from a school geography textbook, circa 1850.

In 1852, the Indiana General Assembly formed the Indiana Colonization Board and began providing funds to help Indiana free blacks emigrate to Liberia on the western coast of Africa. Today, this may sound like an extraordinary idea, but black colonization had been proposed as early as 1815.

This issue explores black colonization and Indiana's part in the nationwide movement in the nineteenth century. The guest editor, Mary Anthrop, Lafayette, is introduced on page 3. Thanks to her for sharing her fascinating work.

On pages 4-5, there is an overview of the legal and social status of blacks in Indiana during this period.

On pages 6-9, the history of

colonization in the context of antislavery and abolitionist movements in the U.S. and Indiana is discussed.

On page 10, there is a brief overview of the founding of Liberia and conditions there at that time.

On pages 11-13, life in Liberia is presented through the stories of several emigrants, mainly from the Wabash Valley of Indiana.

On page 14, "You be the historian" provides suggestions for further work. An interesting question of a conflict of documents is also presented.

On page 15, there is the usual page of bibliography and resources.

Page 16 lists the known Hoosiers who emigrated to Liberia.

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The Indiana Historian provides resources and models for the study of local history to encourage Indiana's citizens of all ages to become engaged with the history of their communities and the state of Indiana.

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Questions about Liberia

HALL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
February 3, 1852.

REV. J. MITCHELL,
Agent of the American Colonization Society:—

I have the honor to communicate to you the enclosed copy of a resolution this day adopted by the Indiana House of Representatives, to which an answer, at an early date is most respectfully solicited.

I am sir, with respect,
GEORGE L. SITES,
Clerk of House of Representatives.

Resolved, That the Rev. J. Mitchell, Agent of the American Colonization Society, be respectfully requested to furnish to this House at his earliest convenience, answers to the following questions, viz :

1st. Should the State of Indiana determine to established a settlement on the coast of Africa, for the accommodation of her colored people, where will be the best point ?

2d. What will be the probable cost of procuring an extent of territory sufficient for the purpose ? what its location, health, fertility, natural productions and inducements for such a settlement ?

3d. What is the character of the soil of Liberia, nature of climate, character of its inhabitants and government ?

4th. What are the inducements for sending our colored population to Liberia ?

5th. How much does it cost to transport emigrants to Liberia each ?

6th. What is the number of colored persons in Indiana at this time, and what proportion of them could probably be induced to emigrate to the land of their fathers ? and to furnish any other information pertinent to the subject in his possession ; and that a copy of this resolution be immediately furnished to the Rev. J. Mitchell, by the clerk of this House.

Adopted February 3, 1852.

Reproduced above is the list of questions asked by the Indiana General Assembly in February 1852. The state was considering whether to support the establishment of an Indiana colony in Liberia.

Mary Anthrop, guest editor

One afternoon about twelve years ago, as I was reading microfilm copies of newspapers in the Tippecanoe County Public Library, my attention wandered to a small local article. The 1854 notice announced the visit to Lafayette of John McKay, an African-American agent of the Indiana Colonization Society. Having recently returned from Liberia, he was traveling around the state recruiting emigrants and securing financial support from white benefactors. How interesting, I thought, and I copied the article.

Several years later I was asked to prepare a program on African-American life in Tippecanoe County before the Civil War. When I remembered the clipping on John McKay's visit to Lafayette, I began a research journey that would take me from county and state depositories to the Library of Congress.

Researching African-American history and the colonization movement in Indiana has been challenging as well as fascinating. Indiana references to colonization relied almost solely on Indiana governmental records, and did not reveal the emigrants' personal stories. So I turned to county secondary and primary resources.

Unfortunately secondary county histories often do not discuss minority experiences prior to the Civil War. At first, some of the fragmented glimpses of African-American life in primary sources appeared insignificant. I discovered, however, that these collected bits of primary information presented

the key to understanding nineteenth-century African-American life.

Contemporary newspapers and periodicals occasionally made references to African Americans and their activities. Newspapers noted church and social gatherings. African-American barbers described their businesses in newspaper ads. Local white commentary on African-American activities, however, often reflected a biased viewpoint. Newspaper articles rarely quoted African Americans.

Legal documents, such as marriage records, court records, and deeds, helped to answer questions about family life, religious practices, legal disputes, and land ownership among African Americans.

Census records of 1850 listed heads of household, family members, occupations, and personal wealth. A few historical depositories held business account books, which described African-American economic exchanges.

Locating original writings of African Americans was another difficult task. The Indiana Colonization Society agents frequently quoted excerpts of emigrant letters in their reports or reprinted them in local newspapers. Some historians, however, question the authenticity of such letters. Opponents of colonization had often charged that agents had edited emigrant letters. Original copies of the letters which would prove the authenticity of the printed versions have almost all disappeared.

Curiosity prompts long-term search

Ho! for Liberia.

Rev. John McKey, a colored man, who returned recently from Liberia, where he had spent a few months enquiring into the condition of the new Republic, is now in this city, the authorized agent of the State Colonization Society of Indiana, soliciting money to erect public buildings for the use of all who may emigrate from this State. He gives a very interesting account of the far off country. He says it is the finest country he ever saw, both as to external appearance, and richness of soil. The climate is not so oppressive as is generally supposed. He says he at no time experienced as warm weather as we are having in Lafayette now. Mr. McKey intends to remove to Liberia soon, and make it his permanent home, and recommends that course to all his colored friends of Indiana. The object for which Mr. McKey is soliciting funds, is a philanthropic one, and should be responded to by all benevolent hearts.

Lafayette Daily Courier, July 7, 1854.

Mary Anthrop noticed this article in an 1854 Lafayette, Indiana newspaper. Her curiosity about this article has led her on a continuing search for more information about Indiana emigrants to Liberia.

The American Colonization Society Collection at the Library of Congress provides an invaluable source of primary materials; it contains letters from Indiana emigrants. Microfilm of the records is available through interlibrary loan.

I began my research journey with a single newspaper clipping. Now I have an overflowing archival box of file folders. I do not, however, consider the journey complete. On the research trail, I explored only one experience of Hoosier African Americans. Now I hope to begin a writing and sharing journey, and I encourage young historians to take on similar challenging trips.

1509	1518	1619	1700	1746	1778	1787	1792	1793
Beginnings of slave trade; Spanish settlers to take African slaves to New World (Grun, 227).	Lorens de Gominot granted license to import 4,000 African slaves to Spanish-American colonies (Grun, 231).	First African slaves in North America arrive at Va. (Grun, 279).	Samuel Sewall's book, <i>The Selling of Joseph</i> , becomes 1st American protest against slavery (Grun, 321).	Five black slaves belonging to French settlers in Vincennes are 1st documented blacks living in what is now Ind. (Thornbrough, Negro, 1).	U.S. Congress prohibits import of slaves into U.S. (Grun, 361).	U.S. Congress passes Northwest Ordinance prohibiting slavery in Northwest Territory (Hawkins, 23).	Denmark becomes 1st nation to abolish slave trade (Grun, 368).	U.S. law requires escaped slaves be returned to owners (Grun, 369).

Being black in Indiana

The earliest report of African Americans living in what is now Indiana comes from a 1746 report on French settlements which states that forty white men and five black slaves lived in Vincennes on the Wabash River. Frenchmen living in the area continued to keep slaves throughout both the French and English occupations. After the American Revolution, the U.S. Congress adopted the Ordinance of 1787 to govern the new western territory. This Ordinance prohibited slavery and involuntary servitude in the Northwest Territory.

Many of the first white settlers in Indiana brought their slaves with them from slave states in the south. After Indiana Territory was formed in 1800, proslavery political leaders including Governor William Henry Harrison enacted laws evading the slavery prohibition in the Northwest

Ordinance and restricting the rights of all blacks in the Territory.

By the time Indiana became a state, the antislavery faction had assumed political leadership. The 1816 Constitution clearly prohibited slavery and involuntary servitude. The effects of the 1816 Constitution and of Indiana Supreme Court rulings in favor of blacks over the next decades slowly eliminated slavery and indentured servitude in Indiana. Nothing was done however to restore civil rights to the growing black population in Indiana.

Blacks were not allowed to vote or to serve in the militia. They could not testify in court cases involving whites. Black children were not allowed to attend public schools. After 1831, black settlers in Indiana were required to register with county authorities and to post a \$500 bond as a guarantee of good behavior.

Blacks moving to Indiana belonged to one of three groups: blacks who had been free or whose families had been free for a long time in their home states; recently freed slaves; and fugitive slaves. Increasing restrictions on the liberties of free blacks living in slave states and laws prohibiting recently freed slaves from remaining in slave states provided the motivation for many to make the dangerous trek from south to north.

Edward J. Roye moved to Terre Haute, Indiana from Ohio. He owned and operated a successful barbershop for several years before returning to Ohio and ultimately emigrating to Liberia. The text has been transcribed for readability.

North Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky provided most of Indiana's black settlers.

At least thirty black farm communities were established, mostly in central and southern Indiana, between 1820 and 1850. Farming and farm labor were the most common occupations of blacks listed in the 1850 census. Others included barber, blacksmith, carpenter, plasterer, brickmason, whitewasher, shoemaker, cooper, teamster, cook, steward, waiter, and domestic servant. Many blacks moving to Indiana cities settled along the Ohio River where work in the river boat industry was available.

Because blacks were excluded from white society, including publicly funded schools, black settlers in Indiana established their own schools, churches, and social organizations.

Increasing tensions nationally between antislavery and slavery factions beginning in the late 1830s resulted in increasing prejudice against blacks. The culmination of this prejudice in Indiana was Article XIII of the Indiana Constitution of 1851, which stated that "No negro or mulatto shall come into, or settle in the State, after the adoption of this Constitution." Section 2 set fines for violations of the article, and Section 3 provided that money from fines be used to defray costs of sending blacks in Indiana to Liberia. Additional legislation required all blacks already living in Indiana to register with the clerk of the circuit court.

Sources: Thornbrough, *Negro*, 1, 32, 68, 142, 143, 151, 166-72; Vincent, xii, xiii.

Successful barber in Terre Haute

PRODIGY:

The 79 feet Barber Pole – the loftiest in this part of Indiana.

Is the sign of EDWARD ROYE'S splendid open-front Barber Shop, in which is carried on Barbering, fashionable and fancy Hair Dressing; every branch of the tonsuratic business pursued; making false curls, (if the hair be furnished, to be woven.) equal to the eastern article; renewing Razors; putting the most perfect and delicate edges on them, coloring Garments, almost any shade, as done in the English factories; Renovating and Listering Garments to the appearance of new. The shop and ground being mine, with entire freedom from indebtedness to all the world (except gratitude and exchange of business.) with the best patronage of the paying kind, prove my permanent residence here. Without the fulfillment of the above promises, no charge will be made. Charges to suit the hard times, and not beyond those in the ordinary shops. Strops of those bringing razors to be renewed, re-conditioned to their first sharpening qualities, without charge. Shop a few doors North of Stewart's Hotel, (Washingtonian House.)

Terre Haute Wabash Courier, September 1843.

1794	1803	1805	1807	1807	1807
Slavery abolished in French colonies (Grun, 371).	Ind. Territorial Legislature enacts law which allows whites to hold Negroes and Mulattoes, and other noncitizens of U.S., as slaves while legally referring to them as servants (Philbrick, 42-46).	Ind. Territorial Legislature enacts law allowing whites to bring Negroes and Mulattoes of and beyond the age of 15 into Ind. and indenture them into a determined service; males under 15 were to serve until 35, females until 32; masters required to register and post a \$500 bond for each servant (Philbrick, 136-39).	England prohibits slave trade (Grun, 379).	Ind. Territorial Legislature enacts law which allows slaves to be brought into territory, requiring them to sign recorded agreement to serve a master; if they refuse, they would be removed to a slave state (Philbrick, 523-26).	Ind. Territorial Legislature adds restrictions for servants; requires a pass when at, or more than, 10 miles from master's home, unable to go to other plantations without permission, and "Riots, routs, unlawful assemblies, trespass and seditious speeches" punished by whipping (Philbrick, 463-67).

Total Black population in Indiana

1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860
630	1,420	3,632	7,168	11,262	11,428

Counties with largest black population

County	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860
Clark	138	243	388	582	520
Floyd	69	265	402	574	757
Grant				147	384
Jefferson	112	240	429	568	512
Knox	284	446	561	530	449
Marion			255	650	825
Randolph	5	123	544	662	825
Rush		107	481	427	419
Vigo	26	123	425	748	706
Wayne	66	417	626	1,036	870

Source: Thornbrough, Negro, 22, 44-45.

Indiana State Library, Indiana Division.

State of North Carolina

Randolph County Be it known to all whom this may concern. That where as A[las] Evans, a young man of Colour, and is a resident of the county Aforesaid, has Informed us the undersigned that he Intends traveling to the western states. And has applied to us for our comindation. This may therefore certify that he is afree man and that we have been Intimately acquainted with him for eight or ten years and so far as our knowledge extends we believe him to be avery Industrious young man one in which much confidence may be placed with good moral character

Givin under our hands. This September 24th d—
A.D. 1849

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Robert Cox | A. S. Harm[ey] JP |
| Elisha Co[ff]fin | Samuel Craven |
| John Miller | James Curtis |
| | Calvin Henson |
| | Henry Craven |
| | Elias Hughes |
| | Samuel Allen |
| | Jack H. Allison |
| | James Scott |
| | Adam Brown |
| | Hiram Henson |
| | Daniel Henson |
| | Peter Black |
| | Hezikiah B. Allen |
| | Joseph Cox |
| | E. I. V. Craven |
| | Wm. Cox |
| | James Allen |
| | Enoch Cox |

The background document above is a reduced-size reproduction of the free papers of A[las] Evans of Randolph County, North Carolina. Free papers provided some security to free blacks travelling from southern states to northern free states. The transcription of this document, which overlays the reproduction, details the necessary information and lists the signers of the document.

After the adoption of Article XIII of the 1851 Constitution, blacks living in Indiana were required to register themselves and their families with clerks of circuit courts. The document at right is a reproduction of a registration certificate issued in Gibson County, Indiana to Gilly Ann Perry. Some Indiana counties were more diligent than others in the registration of blacks. Many of these so-called Negro Registers are available in the Indiana State Archives.

1808	1815	1816	1817	1817	1818	1819
U.S. prohibits slave trade from Africa (Grun, 378).	Paul Cuffee, black Quaker, finances voyage to Sierra Leone, Africa with group of black Americans and establishes settlement (Library of Congress Timeline).	Ind. Constitution forbids slavery; forbids "Negroes, Mulattoes and Indians" to serve in the militia and vote (Hawkins, 84, 86).	Based on Sierra Leone settlement, white proponents of black colonization form American Colonization Society (Library of Congress Timeline).	Samuel Milroy, Ind. General Assembly, proposes a resolution to move free blacks to the West (Crenshaw, 13).	Ind. law declares no person with a fourth or more Negro blood can give testimony in cases involving a white party; intermarriage between whites and blacks forbidden (Thornbrough, Emancipation, 2).	Ill. Black Law restricts black immigration (Thornbrough, Negro, 56).

American Colonization Society

National society promotes colonization

COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

The third annual meeting of the American Society for colonizing the free people of color of the United States, was held at Dr. Laurie's church, in this city, on Saturday, January 5th, 1820.

The meeting was opened by the following address by the Hon. BUSHROD WASHINGTON, President of the Society:

The report made to the last meeting of this Society, by the surviving agent who had been commissioned to visit Africa for the purpose first mentioned, must have satisfied every impartial mind, that a territory of country upon the west coast, sufficient in extent, and unexceptionable as to the fertility of its soil, the healthiness of its climate, and the abundance of its present products, to supply the first wants of the Colonists, may be obtained upon the most reasonable terms.

The report of the Board of Managers made to the same meeting, confirmed, as it now is, by particular and extensive enquiries since prosecuted by the respectable agents employed for that purpose, and by information received from other authentic sources, afford the most satisfactory assurances that men of improved minds, and estimable for their moral and religious principles, may be selected from the free people of color in the United States, who are not only willing, but anxious, to become the founders of the proposed Colony. The difficulty will not be to obtain emigrants, but to make, from among the applicants, a judicious choice of persons worthy of becoming the first settlers, and the best fitted to conciliate the friendship of the natives, and to make the necessary preparations for the reception of their future fellow-citizens.

The Indiana Gazette, February 10, 1820.

The American Colonization Society raised private funds to send a representative to western Africa to purchase land suitable for black emigrants from the U.S. The ACS funded colonies that became Liberia, which still exists today. Excerpts from the Society's annual meeting, as reported in the newspapers, are reproduced above.

The American Colonization Society (ACS) was founded in 1817. It was modeled after the successful venture of Paul Cuffee, a black Quaker and maritime entrepreneur from Massachusetts. In 1815, Cuffee financed a small expedition of free blacks to the British colony of Sierra Leone. He believed blacks could more easily fulfill their potential in Africa than in the restricted legal and social climate of the United States.

At the annual ACS meeting in 1820, Bushrod Washington, nephew of George Washington, urged the state and national governments to set aside money for the establishment of a settlement on the coast of Africa. Government funding was not made available. The ACS was able, however, to raise enough private funds by 1821 to send a representative to purchase land; within three years, the ACS had sent its first emigrants to the area that became Liberia.

Almost from its inception, the ACS encountered opposition. Most black citizens believed they should

remain in the United States and fight against slavery and for equal rights as American citizens. Many white abolitionists saw the colonization movement as a slaveholders' plot to safeguard the institution of slavery by ridding the country of free blacks.

Supporters of colonization included an uneasy alliance of blacks and whites. Free blacks believed they would never see justice in the United States; emancipation for many slaves depended on their willingness to emigrate to Liberia. Some white advocates believed colonization would ensure the separation of the black and white races, others that it would provide emigrating blacks a world free of racial discrimination and prejudice. Some black and white advocates of colonization also thought the presence of black American colonists in Africa would disrupt the slave trade and help Christianize and civilize native tribes.

Sources: Crenshaw, 13-19; Thornbrough, *Negro*, 73, 74, 87.

“And no reasonable man can for a moment entertain the idea that coloured men can ever attain an equal standing with the whites in this country.”

Maryland Colonization Journal, October 1849, p. 51.

1820	1820	1820	1820	1821	1822	1822
Missouri Compromise—Me. enters Union as free state (1820); Mo. as a slave state (1821) (Grun, 386).	In a test case, <i>Polly v. Lasselie</i> , Ind. Supreme Court affirms that Constitution abolished slavery in Ind.; illegal indentures still exist (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 25-27).	American Colonization Society sends 1st immigrants to Sherbro Island, Sierra Leone; high death rate results from unhealthy conditions (Library of Congress Timeline).	January 20 Auxiliary of the American Colonization Society organized in Corydon, Ind. (Crenshaw, 13-14).	American Colonization Society obtains land at Cape Mesurado, Africa using \$300 worth of rum, weapons, supplies, and trade goods (Library of Congress Timeline).	Sherbro Island survivors arrive at Cape Mesurado; begin to build colony, Christopolis, under American Colonization Society agent (Library of Congress Timeline).	Thornton Alexander, a free black, settles in Randolph Co., Ind., starting the Greenville Settlement (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 49).

Indiana colonization efforts

From its headquarters in Washington, D.C., the ACS encouraged the establishment of state auxiliaries. The Corydon *Indiana Gazette*, February 3, 1820 reported on a January 20, 1820 meeting where some of the most notable citizens of the state organized an auxiliary “to aid and assist the American Colonization Society in its laudable and humane intentions.”

Indiana state officials spoke in favor of the colonization effort. The Indiana General Assembly, on February 7, 1825, concurred with a resolution proposed by the Ohio legislature which asked Congress for help in promoting emancipation and colonization. Indiana Governor James Brown Ray in his 1829 message to the General Assembly applauded colonizationists and their activities.

In 1829, another group formed the Indiana Colonization Society

(ICS) in Indianapolis. The ICS met annually until 1838-1839 and then became inactive. For a time, it published *The Colonizationist*.

A majority of Hoosier black citizens opposed colonization. They met in Madison and Indianapolis during the winter of 1841-1842 to discuss emigration. Delegates considered emigration to Jamaica, Canada, or Oregon, but African colonization received little support. The *Indiana Sentinel*, March 1, 1842 (excerpts printed at right) reported on the 1842 conventions which resolved against colonization.

In response to the growing agitation, the ICS renewed its activity for colonization in the fall of 1845 and hired its first regular agent, the Reverend Benjamin T. Kavanaugh, a Methodist minister from Wisconsin. He traveled throughout Indiana organizing local

Indiana black convention in 1842

CIRCULAR.

To the Colored Citizens of the State of Indiana.

The Friends of Philadelphia having called on the colored citizens of Indiana to co-operate with them in getting up a national convention, to be composed of colored representatives, elected and sent from the different States, our brethren of Madison in Jefferson county have honorably espoused the call. The deep interest and ardent philanthropy which led our afflicted brethren to such a train of considerations signified the meeting held by the brethren of Madison, by whose kindness we were favored with a minute of said meeting.

Pursuant to the above, a meeting was held in the African M. E. Church, in Indianapolis, Marion county, Indiana, on the 17th of January, 1842, to take into consideration the propriety of getting up a State convention, which our Madison brethren had not taken into consideration. We regret that they did not consider the expediency of co-operation through the means of a State convention, and we wish the public to understand the whole subject.

Though we wish it to be understood that we appreciate the many proceedings of our Madison friends, we hope, nevertheless, that they will concur with us in getting up a State convention, and let the national delegates be then elected.

The meeting was called to order by J. G. Britton. Turner Roberts was called to the chair, and A. J. Overalls was appointed secretary. Prayer was then offered up by Jesse White, beseeching the God of all goodness to accelerate our weak but willing facilities.

John G. Britton was then called on by the chairman to read the circular from Madison, and state the object of the meeting. He made some very appropriate remarks, and was followed by several other gentlemen.

On motion of J. G. Britton,

Resolved, That the different committees be appointed by the Chair, which was adopted.

On motion, Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed to draw up a statement of the business done at the present meeting and prepare resolutions for the next; which resulted in the appointment of Allen B. Graham, John G. Britton, and Jesse White said committee.

Resolved, That we concur with our Madison friends in the fundamental doctrine as stated in their circular, to wit, that we believe no well informed colonizationist is a devoted friend to the moral elevation of the people of color.

On motion,

Resolved, That we do wholly and solely believe our friends, when they tell us the importance of a general union among our people.

J. White arose, and made some appropriate remarks on the subject of the resolution, and was followed by Mr. T. Roberts.

Resolved, That in our opinion meeting in State convention will be a great means of producing a general union among our people.

Resolved, That we invite all our friends to lend us their influence in getting up a general union among our people.

The meeting then adjourned to meet again at the same place, on the 21st instant.

T. ROBERTS, Chairman,
A. J. OVERALLS, Sec.

Indiana Sentinel, March 1, 1842.

Debate about emancipation and colonization

GREAT MEETING.

THERE will be a GREAT MEETING of the friends of universal liberty—the friends of the immediate emancipation of the slaves in the United States—the friends to the scheme of colonizing them some where within the continent of America; together with those friendly to the old scheme of colonizing them on the coast of Africa: all are respectfully requested to meet at Dublin, Wayne county, Indiana, on FRIDAY, the 15th day of October next, and discuss the merits of their respective schemes—with the hope of uniting the country on some middle ground; consolidate our influence in delivering the oppressed from the hands of the oppressors, and that we may the more speedily give liberty to whom liberty is due.

The above call is made by the undersigned at the request of many citizens, who, with ourselves, are favorable to home colonization; believing it to be a better plan than to let loose upon us, of the free States, the uncultivated negroes of the South. Come Abolitionists!—come Colonizationists!—come all, and let us have a general discussion of our principles.

PLEASANT JOHNSON,
C. W. WITT,
JONATHAN WILSON,
JOEL COX.

September 29, 1841. 45.

Wayne County Record [Indiana], October 6, 1841.

By the 1830s, many people, black and white, opposed colonization. Public debates about slavery and colonization were important means of educating the public about these issues.

Black citizens met in Indianapolis on January 17, 1842 to discuss the organization of a statewide convention to promote unity among the black population regarding colonization. Excerpts from the newspaper report are reproduced at right.

1825	1825	1825	1827	1829	1829	1829
American Colonization Society agent and residents of Christopolis form constitution, government, and digest of laws of Liberia; settlement renamed Monrovia after U.S. President James Monroe; colony as whole formally called Liberia (free land) (Library of Congress Timeline).	February 7 Ind. General Assembly concurs with resolution of Ohio legislature recommending to U.S. Congress a plan for promoting emancipation and foreign colonization (Thornbrough, Negro, 75).	Black community, Cabin Creek, Randolph Co., Ind. founded (Thornbrough, Negro, 49).	U.S. slave states, anxious to get rid of free blacks, organize colonization societies and found colonies in Liberia; many force blacks to emigrate (Library of Congress Timeline).	Mexico abolishes slavery (Grun, 393).	Ind. General Assembly passes a resolution in favor of federal aid to American Colonization Society (Thornbrough, Negro, 75).	November Ind. Colonization Society organized in Indianapolis (Thornbrough, Negro, 75).

COLONIZATION SOCIETY--ITS WANTS.

The Society has sent out five ships within the past year. But owing to the influence of the late epidemic, and other exciting causes, the collections of her agents have not been equal to her wants. So that now in the end of the year she finds herself embarrassed with a heavy debt. The following extract from a letter of her laborious Secretary, Rev. Wm. McLain, will show you her wants for the year 1850:

"COLONIZATION ROOMS.)
Washington, Dec. 14, 1849.

"Yours of the 6th is received. We are in great want of funds. There are 224 who want to go in the packet of January; of them 140 are slaves, whose freedom depends on their going. There are 210 waiting to go from Savannah, on the first of February, of whom 150 are slaves! About 150 want to go from New Orleans in February, of whom a number are slaves! To send all these we want \$30,000."

Of the company that goes from New Orleans a number will be from Indiana. Three have gone from the north of our State by the way of New York, and others in that section are expected to follow in a short time. Thus the stream of emigration has started, and we ask the people of Indiana to encourage it by all righteous means.

Our State has rendered a respectable revenue to the Parent Society within the last year, and we hope the coming year will be more productive. To all our friends we therefore do come to our help now—for now is our time of need. If you have any money to give to the work of colonization, enclose it in a letter and send it to the Rev. Wm. McLain, Washington City, D. C., or to me at Indianapolis.

J. MITCHELL, Agent A. C. S.
Indianapolis, Dec. 20, 1849.

☞ The papers throughout the State will please copy the above statement.

Cambridge Reveille, January 5, 1850.

auxiliaries, soliciting funds, and recruiting emigrants to Liberia.

After several meetings in Indianapolis in 1845, Kavanaugh met with the ICS Board of Managers which decided that an Indiana black citizen should go to Liberia and report back to other Indiana citizens. At a December 1845 meeting, the ICS resolved to request all ministers in the state to take up collections for the ACS on the Sunday nearest July 4. The ICS also made plans to provide the newsletter of the ACS, *The African Repository*, to all ministers.

With ICS approval, Kavanaugh secured the services of the Reverend Willis R. Revels, a traveling African Methodist Episcopal minister. Kavanaugh believed Revels had great influence within the black community in Indiana. Revels won approval from black citizens at meetings in Terre Haute and Lafayette, but he soon gave up his

post. According to Kavanaugh, he was pressured by abolitionists to resign.

The Reverend James Mitchell, a young Methodist minister from Franklin, replaced Kavanaugh as agent of the ICS. Under Mitchell's direction, most of Indiana's emigrants removed to Liberia. Mitchell persuaded William W. Findlay, who emigrated in 1850, to write his appeal "To the Colored People of Indiana." In this 1849 circular, Findlay outlined his reasons for emigrating and invited other blacks to join him. Excerpts are printed below.

Findlay's appeal caused Fort Wayne blacks to voice an extremely strong denunciation of African colonization. Excerpts are printed on page 9.

Sources: *Eleventh Annual Report of the Indiana Colonization Society*, 12, 15; Riker and Thornbrough, 469-70; Thornbrough, *Negro*, 77, 75, 79-81, 87.

Excerpts from Findlay's Appeal "To the Colored People of Indiana"

APPEAL OF WM. W. FINDLAY,
To the Colored People of Indiana.

How can colored men be made truly independent? After much anxious and painful inquiry, I have concluded, that to be truly independent, we must enjoy rights and privileges as broad and as liberal as those enjoyed by the white citizens of the United States.

But such independence we cannot obtain in the United States, therefore I will seek it outside the United States. I will seek it where I know I can find it, and that is in the Republic of Liberia, which is the only christian Republic where the colored man can find a quiet and secure home.

Thousands have gone from this land to that, and all who have been industrious have done well, many of them are becoming wealthy, but what is best, *they are all free!* Come, let us go and cast our lot in with them and be free likewise.

No time should be lost, *act now*; act for yourselves, your children and your race.

WM. W. FINDLAY,
Covington, Ind., April 6th, 1849.

African Repository and Colonial Journal, June 1849, 177-78

1829	1830	1830	1831	1831	1831	1832	1833	1837
Beech, a black community, begins in Rush Co., Ind. (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 49).	Lost Creek, Vigo Co., Ind., site of large land purchases by free blacks from N.C. (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 51).	First national black convention held in Philadelphia, Pa. (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 78).	Nat Turner, a free black, leads slave revolt in Va. (Grun, 394).	William Lloyd Garrison begins to publish abolitionist periodical, <i>The Liberator</i> in Boston, Mass. (Grun, 395).	Ind. General Assembly passes act which requires blacks to post a \$500 bond as a guarantee not to become a public charge and as a pledge of good behavior [Laws revised], 1831, p. 375].	New England Anti-Slavery Society established in Boston, Mass. (Grun, 397).	British Empire abolishes slavery (Grun, 399).	U.S. Congress passes Gag Law, suppressing debate on slavery (Grun, 403).

State government support

Article XIII of Indiana's 1851 Constitution prohibited settlement of blacks in the state and provided for support of colonization. It also directed the Indiana General Assembly to pass laws to implement Article XIII.

The General Assembly in 1852 enacted, and Governor Joseph A. Wright signed, a law establishing the Indiana State Board of Colonization. The law appropriated \$5,000; \$3,000 was for purchase of land in Liberia for Indiana emigrants. Additional funds were for transportation and support of emigrants during the transition period in Liberia.

The General Assembly continued support in 1853. The Colonization Board appointed the Reverend John McKay, a black African Methodist Episcopal minister, as agent for the board to purchase land in Liberia and promote colonization among Indiana black citizens.

McKay escorted two groups of Indiana emigrants to Liberia in 1853 and toured Liberia. He was enthusiastic about the potential of Liberia after talking with Indiana emigrants already settled there. With board assistance, forty-six people emigrated from Indiana in 1853-1854. In 1855, there was a

change in board policy about land for Indiana emigrants, and McKay resigned.

By the end of 1858, there had been a total state appropriation of \$15,000. Of that amount, \$6,499 had been spent: \$3,025 for salaries and \$3,245 for emigration expenses. Eighty-three Indiana emigrants, from February 1840 to November 1862, have been identified. Of those, the State Board of Colonization assisted only forty-seven. The final report of the board in 1863 recognized its failure.

Sources: Crenshaw, 16-19; Thornbrough, *Negro*, 88-89, 91; various state reports.

Dr.	Cr.
For Samuel B. Webster, by Barque "Shirley," Nov. 27, 1852 charged by order of Rev. J. Mitchell, letter of March 25, 1853, at.....	By amount received from appropriation of State of Indiana, forwarded by Rev. J. Mitchell, in March 1853.....
\$30 00	\$1,000 00
For transportation, &c., of Edwin Ash, wife and four children in the ship "Banshee," April 30, 1853 at \$50 00,.....	By amount received from appropriation, by Rev. J. Mitchell in November 1853.....
380 00	2,000 00
For transportation, &c. of twenty-six emigrants from Indiana, in the ship "Banshee," Nov. 9, 1853, at: \$50 00,.....	Balance to credit of State.....
1,200 00	\$3,000 00
\$1,630 00	\$1,370 00

WM. Mc LAIN, Treasurer A. C. Society.

From November 1852 to November 1853, thirty-three black Indiana citizens emigrated to Liberia. The secretary of the Indiana State Board of Colonization, in 1853, reported to the Governor that \$1,650 (\$50 per person) had been expended for their travel. During that time, the Indiana General Assembly appropriated \$3,000 to the ACS for emigration of Indiana blacks. From: *Report of the Secretary of the State Board of Colonization of the state of Indiana for 1853* (Indianapolis, 1853), 15.

Excerpts from the Fort Wayne Response to Findlay's Appeal

No COLONIZATION.—We copy from the Bugle the following account of proceedings at a meeting of the colored people of Fort Wayne, Ind. The meeting was called to take into consideration the merits of an appeal made to the colored people of that State, by Wm. W. Findlay, urging them, if they would enjoy social, civil and political privileges, to colonize in Liberia. Here is the answer to that appeal:

Though denied in some things the full enjoyment of liberty and the pursuit of happiness at present, which are awarded to the whites, yet we are determined to use all lawful means, and to continue in so doing, until we shall be allowed the full privileges of American citizens; for our forefathers fought, bled and died, to secure for us and to us these things, in common with other citizen soldiers, in the Revolutionary War.

That since the Colonization Society has sent forth to the world this broad declaration, we feel insulted when asked to emigrate to Liberia; and when a colored man becomes the tool of such society, or on his own responsibility advocates Colonization, we look upon him as recreant to the best good of his race.

That, while we will labor to elevate our race and secure to them the enjoyment of equal civil and political privileges with the whites, we feel bound to labor to prevent our people from colonizing in Liberia; for every one that leaves this country for that American Golgotha, weakens our hands and throws obstacles in our way that are hard to be overcome.

African Repository and Colonial Journal, October 1849, 311-13.

1837	1838	1839	1842	1843	1843	1846	1847
Roberts Settlement, a black community, begun in Hamilton Co., Ind. (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 50).	Colonies of American Colonization Society, Va., and Pa. merge into Commonwealth of Liberia; claim control of settlements from Cestos River to Cape Mount; adopt new constitution and appoint governor in 1839 (Library of Congress Timeline).	Revolt on the <i>Amistad</i> ; slaves overpower Spaniards (amistad.mysticseaport.org/timeline/amistad.html).	Miss. settlement on Sinoe River joins Commonwealth of Liberia (Library of Congress Timeline).	Ind. General Assembly restricts public schools, previously open to all, to white children only (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 162-64).	Ind. laws prevent Negroes and Mulattoes from marrying whites and serving as witnesses against whites in court (Laws [revised] 1843, pp. 595, 718).	Commonwealth of Liberia angers local traders and British merchants with taxation; British do not recognize commonwealth sovereignty; colonists vote for independence (Library of Congress Timeline).	Liberian Declaration of Independence adopted and signed; British recognize independence and sovereignty, U.S. does not (Library of Congress Timeline).

Life in Liberia

In 1821, the American Colonization Society (ACS) purchased land from the Dey and Bassa peoples along the west coast of Africa in the area of Cape Mesurado. Some slave states in the U.S. became interested in colonization and established settlements in nearby independent colonies. In 1838, the Virginia Colonization Society, the Quaker Young Men's Colonization Society of Pennsylvania, and the ACS settlements merged to form the Commonwealth of Liberia. The Mississippi settlement joined in 1842.

Since European nations denied the legitimacy of Liberia by refusing

to pay custom duties, Liberia declared its independence in 1847. Many European nations were quick to recognize Liberia as an independent nation. The U.S., however, did not recognize Liberia until 1862.

Liberia eventually controlled an area of 38,250 square miles. As a republic, Liberia had a miniature representation of the U.S. government. There was one major difference. In Liberia, no white person could become a citizen or hold a government position.

The oldest and largest settlement in Liberia is Monrovia. It sits on an elevated site near the

Mesurado River. Behind Monrovia is a bold promontory, Cape Mesurado. Coastal land nearby affords a safe harbor.

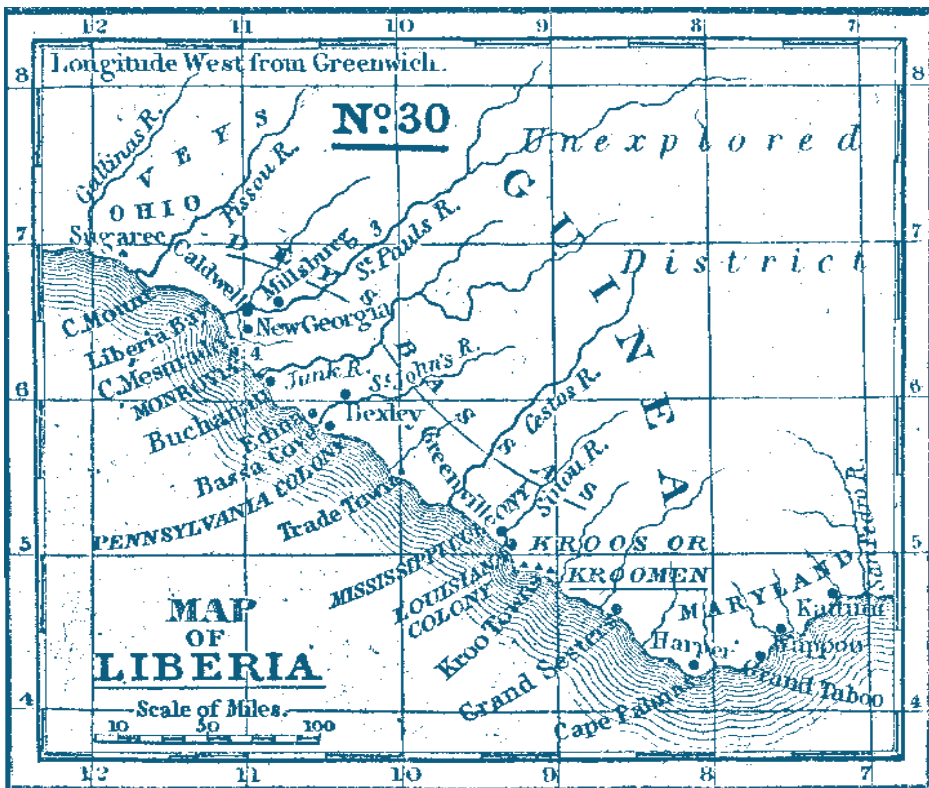
In the mid-nineteenth century, the town of Monrovia was three-fourths of a mile in length. The population was 1,500. The settlers' homes of wood, stone, and brick sat on one-fourth acre lots. The houses were usually one-story or a story-and-a-half high.

As Monrovia was the seat of government, a large stone building served as a state house. There was also a large stone prison. The Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians all had stone houses for public worship.

In Liberia's humid tropical climate, temperatures remained between 65° and 90°, year round with distinct wet and dry seasons.

Most emigrants planned to farm or garden. The ACS instructed them to bring hoes, spades, and rakes. Settlers could not always grow the same crops as they did in the U.S. Corn, for example, did not grow well in some soils in Liberia.

Sources: Library of Congress, *American Memory* web site, <http://rs6.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/libhtml/liberia.html>; Lugenbeel, *Sketches*; "Information About Going to Liberia," *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, April 1852.



1848	1850	1850	1851	1851	1852	1853	1861	1861-1865
Liberian Constitution ratified; 1st election held (Library of Congress Timeline).	U.S. population of 23 million includes 3.2 million slaves (Grun, 417).	U.S. Congress passes Fugitive Slave Act; denies jury trial to alleged fugitives, federal officers enforce return of blacks to south (Thornbrough, Negro, 114-15).	Article 13 of 1851 Ind. Constitution prohibits blacks from entering Ind.; provides money to send current black residents to colonize Liberia, Africa (Thornbrough, Negro, 67-68, 84-85).	Liberia College founded in Monrovia (Library of Congress Timeline).	Ind. General Assembly passes act to provide colonization for Negroes and Mulattoes with \$5,000 appropriation; establishes State Board of Colonization (Laws [revised] 1852, p. 222).	Ind. State Board of Colonization is given power to commission an agent to assist it, with a salary not exceeding \$600 (Laws 1853, p. 23).	Approximately 11,000 blacks live in Ind. (Thornbrough, Emancipation, 12).	U.S. Civil War (Grun, 424, 428).

Indiana emigrants to Liberia

Eighty-three emigrants from Indiana to Liberia have been identified. The first record of Hoosier emigrants sailing to Liberia is on the *Saluda* in February 1840. The western counties of Indiana sent more emigrants than the eastern counties, perhaps because of the heightened influence of the Quaker abolitionists near the Ohio border. Almost ninety percent of the emigrants left Indiana between 1850 and 1854, shortly after Indiana passed Article XIII of the 1851 Constitution.

Despite the positive reports about Liberia, the Indiana Colonization Society and Indiana State Board of Colonization agents and several Indiana emigrants were never able to raise large parties of colonists. Those who did choose to emigrate, however, were most often members of free-born family groups. Only a few Hoosier emigrants were emancipated slaves.

In letters back to Indiana, emigrants often reported how their families reacted to the acclimation fever caused by the tropical

climate. If all members of the family survived the fever, they felt very fortunate.

Few emigrants provided accounts of their experiences. Some wrote application letters to the ACS. Local newspapers occasionally published correspondence from Liberian emigrants. A few original letters exist in archival collections. Letters are also included in official state and ICS reports. These primary resources present incomplete but inspiring stories of courage and determination.

Edward J. Roye

Edward J. Roye, fifth President of Liberia, is the best known Liberian emigrant with Hoosier connections. Roye was born in Newark, Licking County, Ohio, in 1815. In 1833, he enrolled at Ohio University at Athens, acquiring three years of education. He taught one year of school at Chillicothe, Ohio.

In 1837, Roye headed west and stopped in Terre Haute. Within a few blocks of the public square in Terre Haute he purchased a large two-story building and opened a shop with the remainder of his trade goods. Between 1838-1844 Roye bought additional properties, hired barbers, and established the first bathhouse in Terre Haute.

Roye left Indiana in 1845 to attend Oberlin College in Ohio. He initially intended to study French in order to emigrate to St. Domingo. He later claimed he had opposed colonization most of his life, but that a fellow boarder at Oberlin convinced him of the virtues of Liberia.

In 1846, Roye purchased trade goods and passage on the *Barque Chatam* for Liberia. He became a wealthy merchant owning several sailing vessels. His ships were the first to carry the Liberian flag into American and European ports.

Roye's interest soon turned to politics. In 1849 he became the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and from 1865-1868 he served as Chief Justice. Elected president in 1870, Roye proclaimed an ambitious program of financial, educational, and transportation improvements. To implement his ideas Roye sailed to England to settle a boundary dispute and negotiate a loan. His activities led to resentment and accusations of embezzlement. In October 1871, he was deposed from office and summoned to trial. He escaped, but allegedly drowned attempting to reach an English steamer in Monrovia's harbor.

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, dag3d01933.

Edward J. Roye, c. 1856-1860, as senator from Montserrado County, Liberia.

Sources: Svend E. Holsoe, "A Portrait of a Black Midwestern Family During the Early Nineteenth Century: Edward J. Roye and His Parents," *Liberian Studies Journal*, Vol. 3:1 (1970-1971), 41-52; "The Fifth President of the Republic of Liberia," *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, April 1870, 121 - 24; "Drowning of President Roye," *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, July 1872, 220-21.

1862	1862	1863	1863	1865	1865	1865-1903	1866	1869
U.S. President Abraham Lincoln officially recognizes Liberia (Library of Congress Timeline).	U.S. Congress authorizes president to employ blacks in war (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 192).	Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation freeing slaves in seceded states (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 187-88).	Ind. Gov. Oliver P. Morton authorizes black regiment; becomes 28th Regiment U.S. Colored Troops (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 196-99).	Ku Klux Klan organized in Pulaski, Tenn. (Grun, 429).	Black citizens from nearly 30 Ind. counties hold convention in Indianapolis; want repeal of law restricting testimony and education benefits; legislature partially repeals testimony law (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 232).	Without being indicted, or found guilty, at least 20 blacks hanged in Ind. (Thornbrough, <i>Emancipation</i> , 7).	Ind. Supreme Court invalidates Article 13 (Negro exclusion) of 1851 Constitution (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 206).	Ind. General Assembly passes act requiring school trustees with sufficient black population, to organize separate schools for black children (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 323).

William Findlay from Lafayette

William W. Findlay, a barber from Lafayette and Covington, hoped to organize a company of forty to fifty emigrants. He approached the Fountain County Colonization Society for assistance. It agreed to procure one or two large flatboats and solicit local farmers for supplies of wheat, corn, barley, flour, and pork. Emigrants would travel to New Orleans where they would sell off the produce not needed for Liberia. The proceeds of the sale would pay the passage to Liberia.

Forced to abandon his original

plan, but with assistance from the ACS, Findlay and his family, and the Henry Fry family of Covington, removed to Liberia on the *D. C. Foster* in the fall of 1850.

Findlay settled on a forty acre farm on the St. Paul River near Caldwell. In 1854, he was appointed Justice of the Peace in Montserrado County. Through letters to friends in Indiana he hoped to lead future Hoosier emigrants to an Indiana settlement. He wrote: "I believe this is the true home of the colored man, and those who come here with the right

spirit will never regret it. We are all very much pleased with the country, and hope our colored friends in Indiana will join us."

He wrote to Indiana Governor Joseph A. Wright in 1853 hoping to involve investors in Liberia's exportable crops. He assured Governor Wright that he would "be able to make money for them and myself."

Sources: W. W. Findlay to W. F. Reynolds, May 8, 1850, *Lafayette Daily Journal*, July 8, 1850; W. W. Findlay to Joseph A. Wright, March 8, 1853, *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, August 1853, 235-36.

Findlay's letter to Indiana Governor Joseph A. Wright (excerpted here) described conditions in Liberia and sought support for an Indiana colony in Liberia at Grand Cape Mount. These excerpts reproduced at right are from the *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, August 1853. The original is located in the Joseph A. Wright collection at the Indiana State Archives.

UPPER CALDWELL, LIBERIA, }
 March 8, 1853. }
 To His Excellency the Gov. Jos. A. Wright :

SIR : As I look upon you as being an old friend of mine, I take pleasure in addressing you a few lines to let you know something about how we are getting along in Liberia, believing you to be a true friend to Liberia, and to the colored race.

I am much pleased with this country, and I do believe that every colored man, that respects himself, as a man, would do well to come here, for truly I do think that it is a good country; but like all other new countries, a man has privations to undergo, and a reasonable man cannot expect that he can get every thing here as handy as he can in old settled countries. But if he has money he need not lack for luxuries here, and some that he cannot get in America.

We have had some wars with the natives since I have been here, down at Bassa. The President had to take two hundred men and go to Cape Mount, on the account of the native disturbance up there. They came home yesterday. They got the chief Boombo and about fifty of his men, and brought them down.— And he will have his trial as soon as they can get the rest of the chiefs together.

They want to have a settlement at that place as soon as possible, as the natives are all the time fighting and making slaves of each other.— We find that they cannot be kept down unless there is a settlement there, and the Legislature at its last session passed a bill to settle that place, and the President has been holding back waiting to see what Indiana and Ohio were going to do, in regard to selecting lands, as they have said that they wanted that place for a settlement. And the Government has about as many calls on her treasury as she is able to get along with, so I should be glad to hear from the Hoosier and Buck-eye States. And I should be very happy, and think it a great honor if I should be able to help lay the foundation of that new State, and for which I should look back to my old home with much veneration.

1869	1875	1877	1879-1885	1880	1885	1896	1900
Ind. ratifies 15th Amendment to U.S. Constitution giving vote to black men (Thornbrough, Negro, 248).	U.S. Congress passes Civil Rights Act prohibiting discrimination in public accommodations, amusements, and conveyances (Thornbrough, Negro, 257).	Ind. General Assembly amends school law and permits black students to attend white schools where no black schools exist, thereby opening public high schools to black students (Thornbrough, Negro, 341).	Brothers Robert, Benjamin, and James Bagley publish Indianapolis <i>Leader</i> , first black newspaper in Ind. (Thornbrough, Negro, 383-84).	James S. Hinton, 1st black citizen elected to Ind. House of Representatives (Thornbrough, <i>Emancipation</i> , 9).	Ind. General Assembly passes Civil Rights Law prohibiting discrimination in public accommodations, amusements, and conveyances; law generally ignored by white residents (Thornbrough, Negro, 394).	In <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> , U.S. Supreme Court declares that "separate but equal" facilities do not violate the equal protection clause of 14th Amendment (Thornbrough, Negro, 328n).	More than 57,000 blacks live in Ind.; 16,000 live in Indianapolis (Thornbrough, <i>Emancipation</i> , 15).

CAPE PALMAS, Feb. 5, 1853.

REV. MR. J. MITCHELL—*Dear Sir*: I have arrived safe on the shore of Africa, at last. I have had a tedious time of it, having to lay at Baltimore nearly seven months. We set sail from the city of Baltimore on the 27th of last November; forty days from that we have in sight of Cape Mesurado. At two o'clock we dropped anchor. I am much pleased with the country, and prospects are flattering. I took a trip up St. Paul river, some seventeen miles. I would say that a more beautiful country I never saw anywhere. I took breakfast with my friend, Mr. W. W. Findlay, justice of the peace of the county in which he lives. He and his family were all well. He is living in his own house, on his own land, and says he never was so happy in his life, as now. Instead of the death of some of his family, there is an increase of one, as fine a boy as I would wish to see. I also saw Mrs. Tompkins, of Madison, and her family. She says she would not come back for any consideration.

I called on the President, and found him much of a gentleman. I think the colony of Maryland will annex themselves to the republic before long; if so, the Indianians had better make a purchase up the Cavala river, a few miles, as it is much the healthiest place on the coast of Africa. A great many come here that have no fever at all.

I remain, yours, &c.,
S. B. WEBSTER.

Samuel Webster from Lafayette

Samuel B. Webster, a Lafayette barber and president of the African Methodist Episcopal Sunday School Association, participated in the “Colored Peoples Convention” in Lafayette in 1843. He planned to emigrate to Liberia with his wife and two daughters. After the death of his wife, Webster made the trip alone on the *Barque Shirley* in November 1852. After settling on Roberts’ Point Grand Cape Mount, he taught school at the garrison.

In 1853, Webster wrote of his first impression of Monrovia. “The people of Monrovia are generally contented and happy, and live in a style superior to the people in Cincinnati or Baltimore. They have every thing on the table that heart could wish or appetite crave. Some of the citizens live in fine stone and brick houses, and the houses are much better than those occupied by the colored people of the towns in the West.”

The St. Paul, the St. John, and the Junk are the only rivers of any considerable length or width in Liberia. Some of the more prosperous farm settlements, such as Caldwell, Virginia, Ken-

tucky, and Millsburg were located along the St. Paul River. Webster compared the St. Paul to one of Indiana’s most famous rivers: “I have been up St. Paul river as far as Caldwell, and I came to the conclusion to make it my future home. It is certainly the finest country I have ever seen. There are no parts of the Wabash, from its mouth to its head, that can in any way compare with it in beauty and fertility.”

Webster also described the farming he saw in Liberia: “I have actually seen, with my own eyes, large fields of sugar-cane, and drank of the syrup made from it; and as fine specimens of coffee as the world produces. I also saw rice, cotton, cassada, yams, chickens in abundance, and as fine, if not finer hogs than are seen running about the streets of Lafayette, and plenty of them; as fine cattle, although they are not quite as large as our two years old cattle, but make excellent beef. I have eaten several meals of entire African production.”

Source: Samuel B. Webster to Morris and Birtch, January 12, 1853, *African Repository and Colonial Journal*, June 1853, 171-72.

Tompkins Family from Madison

The family of Peter and Harriet Tompkins of Madison emigrated on the *Brig Alida* in February 1851. In less than a year, five members of the family died including Peter. Harriet Tompkins and the surviving children were left homeless and penniless. She wrote several letters to her benefactor, the Reverend John Finley Crowe of Hanover College, asking for aid. “My family being so long sick that before my

husband dead he had spent all the mony that he had brot to this country . . . he left me without any thing. . . . So if you would send me a cage of nales, a box of soap, three or for peaces of coten cloths, calocos . . . some secant handed clothing.” Crowe attempted to send supplies to the family, but the ship carrying the provisions sank off the shores of Liberia. As the ship had already docked at Monrovia, insurance did not cover the loss!

Tompkins, however, would not give up on her new home. She wrote, “I am well contented in this contry as I could be with eny country in the world. I have n[ever] seen any country that I liked better. . . .”

Source: Tompkins to John Finley Crowe, February 28, 1850, John Finley Crowe Collection, Indiana Historical Society. (Original letters at Hanover College, Duggan Library, Hanover, Indiana).

1902	1903	1903	1908	1910	1914-1919	1924	1935	1935
Young black men in Indianapolis form group as branch of Ind. Young Men’s Christian Association; becomes the Senate Avenue YMCA (Thornbrough, <i>Emancipation</i> , 84).	Governments of Liberia and Great Britain agree on Sierra Leone and Liberian borders (Library of Congress Timeline).	July Violent race riots in Evansville; state militia sent by Gov. Winfield Durbin (Thornbrough, <i>Negro</i> , 284-85).	Jack Johnson becomes the world’s 1st black heavyweight boxing champion (Grun, 461).	W. E. B. DuBois establishes National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in U.S. (Grun, 462).	World War I (Grun, 466-76).	Ku Klux Klan-backed Republican party wins Ind. elections (Thornbrough, <i>Emancipation</i> , 31-33).	Ind. law requires Indianapolis to provide transportation for black students required to attend segregated schools (Thornbrough, <i>Emancipation</i> , 56).	Black athlete, Jesse Owens, wins four gold medals at Olympic Games, Germany (Grun, 511).

You be the historian

Sarah A. Fry's letter

Potential emigrants frequently sought reliable information—especially eyewitness testimony—on living and working conditions in Liberia. The American Colonization Society published reports and letters from emigrants. These publications were sent out to free blacks interested in emigrating to Liberia.

Indiana newspapers also printed letters from Hoosier emigrants. Debate over authenticity and accuracy of letters, however, was not uncommon between opponents and proponents of colonization.

In the summer of 1851, a letter reputedly from emigrant Sarah A. Fry appeared in Indiana newspapers. She had emigrated to Liberia with her husband and children from Covington on the *D. C. Foster* in the fall of 1850. A letter from emigrant Samuel B. Webster in 1853 includes a statement that “Mrs. Fry says she did not write that letter that was in circulation there” in Indiana (*African Repository and Colonial Journal*, August 1853, pp. 232-33). Given this denial, can the Fry letter still be used as evidence of life in Liberia?

Evaluate the document

- Why might Sarah A. Fry have written the letter?
- List and compare positive and negative aspects of life according to the letter. Do you think the letter is an accurate description of life in Liberia for Hoosier settlers? Compare this one to other letters cited in this issue.
- Do you believe that the letter would encourage Hoosier blacks to move to Liberia?
- What would opponents of colonization have to gain from printing Fry's letter and the denial in Webster's letter?
- What would supporters of colonization have to gain from printing Fry's letter and the denial in Webster's letter?
- If Sarah A. Fry did write the letter, why might she later deny writing the letter?

Further Research

- Check sources in your area to see if you can find more information about emigrants to Liberia.
- How many people emigrated from neighboring states and other states? Is there a geographical pattern of emigration?
- What is Liberia like today?

From the Covington Friend.
LETTER FROM LIBERIA.
Mrs. SARAH A. FRY, one of the company of colored emigrants from Covington, writes a letter back from Monrovia, dated April 15th. 1851. All of the company were poor, and they have suffered much, of which Mrs. Fry gives a melancholy account. But notwithstanding their many privations, they love Liberia, and would under no considerations return. Mrs. Fry writes:
“Myself and family are not well—we have not got acclimated yet. It goes very bad with Mr. Fry; he has not been able to do anything towards making a livelihood—but I hope he will be able soon. I have lost my two youngest children; a boy and a girl—my babe four months old. Isabell and Elizabeth's health is very bad yet.
“I like Africa very well; but it is a hard country for a stranger that has no means.— If you have no money, you will starve. It is a hard country, I tell you; produce is so very dear you can't get anything you want. I have sold all my things that didn't get lost—my clothing, beds, quilts, pots, kettles, &c.; and I have nothing to live upon. My dear friends, I have seen hard times since I left you all—I have wished I had the slop out of your cow's tubs, and would be glad to get it for my family to eat. We can get no meat, no flour, no lard, because we have no money—we don't get a pound of meat or flour a week. The colored people here are not friends to us; they are harder upon us than the white people ever were. They will not credit us with a cent even when we are sick. Please send us something to eat and wear. I have no clothes for myself, my children or Fry—we sold them for something to eat.— Please send me something to eat and wear.— send me and the children some shoes; we all are bare-footed—and this is a hard place to go bare-foot—it makes wounds on your feet that you can't cure.— Please to send us some of your old bonnets, and shawls; and some white muslin to make us some clothing.— Please send me a quilt and an oven, and some tea cups, and a skillet and lid, &c., and tell all my friends, both ladies and gentlemen, to pity poor me.
“But still I must acknowledge I like Liberia, and I don't want to come back, and I would not come back. *I have liberty here!*
“Mr. Finley has got a school—he is teaching the native boys. If I had one year's start, I could get along. I do all I can to make a living. Give my love to Mrs. Shultz and Mr. Walker, and tell them to come home. This is the place for them—where their fears will all sleep and arouse them no more.— Tell them to come prepared for the country, and they can get along. Please send me some quilt patterns! Tell Miney Howard to come to her native country—I have no doubt but she would like it—but to come prepared, for it is a hard place, but a free one.”

Lafayette Daily Courier, July 21, 1851.

1940-1945	1943	1946	1947	1949	1954	1955	1957	1958	1963
World War II (Grun, 516-24).	Race riots in several major U.S. cities (Grun, 521).	Indigenous peoples of Liberia given right to vote and participate in elections (Library of Congress Timeline).	Jackie Robinson becomes 1st black to sign with major league baseball team (Grun, 527).	Ind. General Assembly bans segregation in public schools (Thornbrough, Negro, 395).	U.S. Supreme Court outlaws segregation in public schools (Grun, 536).	Blacks boycott buses in Montgomery, Ala. (Grun, 538).	President Dwight D. Eisenhower sends troops to Little Rock, Ark.; schools refuse to desegregate (Grun, 541).	Liberian representatives attend 1st conference of independent African nations (Library of Congress Timeline).	Civil rights demonstrations by blacks in Birmingham, Ala.; riots, beatings by whites and police result; “Freedom Marchers,” 200,000 blacks and whites, demonstrate in Washington, D.C. (Grun, 550).

A Note Regarding Resources: Items are listed on this page that enhance work with the topic discussed. Some older items, especially, may include dated practices and ideas that are no longer generally accepted. Resources reflecting current practices are noted whenever possible.

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Internet Resources

- The *African-American Mosaic* at <http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/african/intro.html>
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1963	1965	1968	1980	1985	1986	1989	1997
President John F. Kennedy assassinated in Dallas, Tex. (Grun, 552).	Malcom X assassinated in N.Y.; racial violence in Selma, Ala.; 4,000 civil rights demonstrators led by Martin Luther King, march from Selma to Montgomery; race riots in Watts, district of Los Angeles; 35 dead, 4,000 arrested, \$40 million in property damage (Grun, 554).	Martin Luther King assassinated in Memphis, Tenn. (Grun, 560).	Military coup overthrows government; Liberia’s president assassinated; ends 1st republic of Liberia (Library of Congress Timeline).	Civilian rule restored in Liberia (Library of Congress Timeline).	2nd republic of Liberia established (Library of Congress Timeline).	Liberian government toppled; civil war ensues (Library of Congress Timeline).	President of 3rd republic of Liberia elected after peace restored (Library of Congress Timeline).

Indiana Emigrants to Liberia

Name (age)	Home	Ship
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February 1840

Names not available
(5 emigrants) *Saluda*

March 1850

William W. Findlay (36) Covington *D. C. Foster*
 Frances (27)
 Sarah J. (11)
 Samuel (9)
 W. W. (8)
 H. J. (5)
 C. S. (3)
 J. (1)

Henry Fry (48) - died Covington
 Sarah (27)
 Isabella (11)
 Elizabeth (7)
 H. (5)
 Eliza (9)
 C. (3)
 F. D. (1) - died
 Infant (2 days) - died

February 1851

Peter Tompkins (44) Madison *Brig Alida*
 - died January 1852
 Harriet (45)
 Salina Clay (21) - died
 Martha Clay (18) - died
 Ann Eliza Clay (17)
 Emily Jane Clay (15) - died January 9, 1851
 Josiah Tompkins (7)
 Clay Tompkins (3) - died August 5, 1851

November 1852

Samuel B. Webster (30) Lafayette *Barque Shirley*

April 1853

Elvin Ash (44) Jackson Co. *Banshee*
 Lucinda (45)
 Josephine (10)
 Gabriel (8)
 Nice (4)
 Nancy J. (2)

November 1853

Joseph Ladd (28) Attica *Banshee*
 Susan (17)
 George W. (2 mos.)
 William Brown (45)
 Susan (28)
 John (4)
 Isabella (4 mos.) - died whooping cough

Name (age)	Home	Ship
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Cornelius Simms (49) Vincennes
 Elizabeth (33)
 Charles (18)
 William (14)
 Sarah (12)
 George W. (10)
 Charlotte (6) - died whooping cough
 Thomas J. (4)

Jacob Stephenson (56) Princeton
 Harrison (14)
 Robert (12)
 Charles (10)
 James W. (8)

David Matthews (37) Wayne County
 Alley (28)
 William H. (12)
 Frederick (7)
 David (2)

Rev. John McKay (39) Madison (escort for party)
 Samuel Coleman Attica - source: ACS records -
 List of emigrants

November 1854

Lamar (Tamar?) Peters (50) *Euphrasia*
 George (30)
 Alexander (25)
 Priscilla (20)
 Mary (18)
 Simon (6)
 Charles (4)
 Mary (2)
 Martha (20)
 Rachel (25)

William Robinson (50)
 Mary (30)
 Emily (17)
 Mary (10)

John D. Stewart (20)
 The above emigrants may be from Putnam County and
 Montezuma, Indiana.

November 1859

Rev. M. M. Clark *M. C. Stevens*
 There should be two more emigrants on this ship from
 Indiana.

November 1862

Isabella Harris (30) *M. C. Stevens*
 J. H. Harris (34)

Sources: *African Repository and Colonial Journal*;
 Tom W. Shick, "Emigrants to Liberia, 1820-1843," *Liberian Studies
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