Once There Was a Town:
An Account of Hindostan, Indiana

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

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Once There Was a Town:
An Account of Hindostan Indiana

As areas of the United States became settled and grew into states, there arose what became known as boom towns. These towns began amid hopes and dreams for great cities. The life of these communities can be traced through the economic conditions of the area. There was a burst of growth at the beginning when the ore was rich in the mine, when the railroad roared through on schedule, when there was a big demand for the textiles. Once the economic climate turned, however, a definite decline was imminent, unless an alternative source of income could be found.

Indiana has its own examples of this pattern. One of the most striking and most romanticized is that of Hindostan, established near the falls of the East Fork of the White River in Martin County. At its inception it was hoped that Hindostan would rival Louisville. During its short period of prosperity the community became well-known among travellers on the Ohio and White Rivers. But a number of factors combined to cause the decline and demise of the first county seat of Martin County.

There have been a number of articles, scholarly and popular, written about the strange birth, growth and death of Hindostan, Indiana. Some deal with the promising businesses of the community. One, published in the Indiana State Bulletin of Health, 1

uses Hindostan as an example of what a dirty water supply can cause.\textsuperscript{2} Other recent articles expound on the great fishing that can be done at the falls. One article written for an Indianapolis newspaper by William Herschell, based on a story told by a 94 year-old woman recounts the memory of the young girl escaping the death on the back of her father's horse under the cover of night in 1844 or 1845.\textsuperscript{3} This story was handily discredited by the Indiana Historical Society with "Carlos T. McCarty. . .in his column in the Loogootee Martin County Tribune of March 1, calls attention to the fact that in 1827 that Hindostan was visited by the plague, several years before the birth of Mrs. Coleman. . ."\textsuperscript{4} This correction was erroneous as the article.

Even scholarly articles written on this subject contain mistakes and contradictions. Four sources from which information for this paper was heavily drawn are History of Martin County, Indiana (Paoli, IN: Stout's Print Shop, 1953) by Harry O. Holt; "Hindostan--A Pioneer Town of Martin County," Indiana Magazine of History, 2 (June 1914) by Carlos McCarty; "A County in the Making," Shoals News, November 4, 18; December 30, 1949; January 6, 20, 1950, by Ruby Hotz Stiles; and a recent piece

\textsuperscript{2} "Whatever Happened to Hindostan?" Indiana State Board of Health Bulletin, 6 (June 1966), 8-9.


\textsuperscript{4} Carlos McCarty, "Hindostan--A Pioneer Town of Martin County," Indiana Magazine of History, 2 (June 1914), 194.
edited by William Barlow and David O. Powell entitled "An Oration Pronounced at Hindostan, Martin Co. (Indiana) on the 45th Anniversary of American Independence," Indiana Magazine of History, 2 (June 1978). Of these four sources, Stiles' work is recognized as the most credible because she states her information was gathered from existing deeds and court records. The Barlow and Powell work is a primary source, possibly the only one, which was written by an educated, adult member of the Hindostan community and is recognized for the conclusive evidence it provides.

There is full agreement on the initial settlement of the area which became Hindostan, Indiana. Frederick Sholts is recognized as the driving force behind the settlement of the area, the establishment of Hindostan, and the brief period of its growth. Exact documentation of Sholts' arrival in the area of the East Fork of the White River is nonexistent but there is governmental record of his life in the areas. Land was first registered in the name of Frederick S. Sholts in the Vincennes Land Office on October 20, 1814. His first purchase was 534 acres. His land holdings would grow over the next six years to 1079 acres. As was common in the days of inexpensive land and easy credit rates, Sholts was a speculator but a speculator with an interest in the investment. Besides landholdings he also owned a tavern which is mentioned by several travelers in their diaries, among them William Faux on October 29, 1819:

5 Harry Q. Holt, History of Martin County (Paoli, IN: Stout's Print Shop, 1953), p. 28.
Faux also predicted "Hindostan promises to become a pleasant healthy town." Another source of income for Sholts was a ferry at the falls.

The area of Indiana as a whole began to be quickly settled between 1814 and 1816. Stiles credits the Treaty of Ghent for bringing on the pioneers; Holt reports 42,000 people entered the new state of Indiana with purposes of staying. This was the time when the banks of the East Fork began to be populated as well. Stiles and McCarty, as well as an article edited by George R. Wilson, lists names of settlers who moved in over the next three years. These settlers came from Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia, and Vermont. There is record of a John Merriam who was coming west from Massachusetts when he established a home at the falls. On March 13, 1819 he bought 3/4 interest in the land of Frederick Sholts, and began to make plans with him to create a town.

May 8, 1819 was the day on which a committee, variously called the Proprietors of Hindostan and the Hindostan Land Company, was formed by men interested in making improvements in and around the areas of the proposed town. Caleb Fellows,

6McCarty, p. 187.
8Holt, p. 132.
9McCarty, p. 187.
10Holt, p. 51.
as the story goes, was given the honor of naming the settlement by virtue of his age. According to the legend, substantiated by Daniel Brooks, great-nephew of one of the community leaders, Fellows had at one time lived in India and, being enamored with the ways of that culture, decided upon the name Hindostan, originally pronounced Hindostan. James Margedant identifies the word Hindostan as a Persian word meaning "Country of the Hindus."12

The first and only surviving plat of Hindostan was drawn by J. W. Rawlings and was filed in Daviess County because Hindostan was originally part of that county.13 No specific date can be fixed to this plat because the old courthouse which housed the records burned in 1927. The original plat still survives in the Indiana Historical Bureau (Appendix A).

Hindostan was comprised of 23 blocks with 355 lots of various sizes, 92 being reserved for business, while smaller ones were sold for $200 each.14 As happened many times on the new frontier, Hindostan was platted before it was cleared. But the proprietors had dreams. Lots were left open for spots to be used for a courthouse when the town would become the county seat, as well as a ferry slip and a bridge. Richard Lee Mason,

11 Stiles, 11/18/49, p. 5


13 Stiles, 11/18/49, p. 5.

14 Ibid.
travelling to Illinois to locate a tract of land awarded him for service in the War of 1812, passed through Hindostan and recorded the following on November 5, 1819:

....traveled over an extremely mountainous country to White river (east fork), where a town was laid out last May. Promising little place. Several houses building together, with the industrious appearance of saw and grist mills, give it the appearance of a place of business. Little town is called Hindostan. In this part of the country the woods are large, the hills bold and lofty, and there is an abundance of bears, wolves, panthers, etc. Thousands of acres of land of the first quality are unsettled and to be purchased at from $2.50 to $5 an acre. In crossing White river we had to descend a very steep precipice above the falls, in effecting which my friend, Dr. Hill, who happened to be driving our little carriage, was thrown head-foremost into the river. Part of our baggage followed him, and the carriage was very near upsetting. However, we forded this elegant stream, which is 200 yards wide, without much difficulty. After halting a few minutes on the bank to examine our bruises and adjust our baggage, we proceeded on our journey.15

The proprietors believed Hindostan would rival Louisville.

Hindostan was originally part of Daviess County as stated above. The Indiana Constitution of 1816 stated new counties could be formed from the existing counties provided old ones were not left with less than 400 square miles. Several counties were created from the first Daviess County: Orange County in 1816; Dubois County and Lawrence County in 1818; Owen County also in 1818 but effective January 1, 1819.16 This reduced the size of Daviess as well as the chances of a fifth


16 Holt, p. 37
new county. However, based on the arguments that Liver-
pool, the county seat of Daviess County, was too far away
and a growing population warranted another county, Joseph
Warner, Knox County representative, presented a petition
to the General Assembly from Ezekiel Porter that a new
county be formed from Daviess and Dubois counties. After
being referred to committee, a bill was drawn up, presented
to the state legislature, and passed on January 17, 1820.
The new county would be officially included in the state on
February 1, 1820.\textsuperscript{17} Martin County encompassed an area of
268 square miles.

It is at this point in the chronology of the town that
discrepancies and contradictions may be found in accounts
written about Hindostan. According to Holt, a township was
formed in May, 1819 out of Perry Township in Daviess County
which would be called Sholts Township. The area of Hindostan
was contained within this township. The township officials
were elected at the house of Frederick Sholts. Dr. Ezekiel
Porter became inspector of elections and Thomas E. Vance and
William Vance were designated as constables. In a revised
edition of his \textit{History of Martin County}, Holt presents a
more complete list of men who were elected officers of Sholts
township.\textsuperscript{18} This same list is given on p. 37 of the 1953
edition as officers of Perry Township. Holt then relates the

\textsuperscript{17}Holt, p. 37.

\textsuperscript{18}Holt, \textit{History of Martin County}, 2nd ed. with Partial Auto
biography of the Author, Oxford, Tn. p. 131. All other citations
process through which certain prominent men of Hindostan proceeded to create Martin County from parts of Daviess and Dubois counties.¹⁹

There is no account given of township formation in the writing of McCarty or in any of the various newspaper accounts. However, in the Stiles article, township formation is placed in 1820, after the General Assembly approved Martin County.

The first Board of County Commissioners met at the house of Joseph D. Clements, on Monday, March 27, 1820. Present: Matthew [sic] Sholts, John Merriam, and George Mitcheltree.

The first order of business transacted by this Board was the organization of townships, viz.: Columbia, Mitcheltree, Perry, and Sholts Township.

Stiles lists Sholts Township as being formed in the Board of Commissioners meeting and Thomas Prentiss being present as recorder.²⁰

Holt records a fifth township, Jackson, as being organized in 1826.²¹ No record of this Jackson township is noted in any articles used for this paper although it is mentioned in the 1820 census²² and noted on the 1876 map in Illustrated Map of Indiana, 1876.²³

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¹⁹Holt, pp. 133-34.
²⁰Stiles, 12/30/49, p. 4.
²¹Holt, p. 136.
Another important point, which was rather vaguely stated, has to do with construction of certain public buildings. Again, the comparison is made between the Holt account, and the McCarty and Stiles accounts. Holt reports that bids for the building contracts for the courthouse and county jail would be accepted at a public auction on the first Monday in June. Plans for the courthouse and jail by J.B. McKowen and Guy C. Waterman were awarded to Benjamin Adams ($4,185) and Isaac Smith respectively. When Smith failed to provide satisfactory bond, Mathias Sholts was given the jail contract for $1,368. Holts does not cite a source.

Stiles does not write that the county commissioners gave notice that a public auction would be held with contracts going to the lowest bidder. Instead, it is implied that James B. McCown was commissioned to design the courthouse, and Guy C. Waterman, the jail. McCowen received $17.67 for his work. June is established as the month in which the contracts were awarded to Benjamin Adams ($4,185) and Mathias Sholts ($1,368.79) but neither McCarty nor Stiles names Isaac Smith as the first recipient of the jail contract. Holts presents confusing evidence about the completion of the two buildings. According to the commissioner's records, the jail was not completed until after 1824, the

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24 Holt, p. 50.
25 Stiles, 12/30/49, p. 4.
records showing payments for rental of private rooms for jail purposes up to that year. The county board of judges agreed to accept the jail as it was in November of 1824 and allocated Frederick Sholts $900. Evidently he assumed the responsibility of finishing the building from his brother. 26

The original contract awarded to Benjamin Adams for the construction of the courthouse was not fulfilled either. In a November, 1820, meeting of the commissioners, December 14 was set as a second public auction at which the courthouse contract would once again be sold to the lowest bidder. Although records show the commissioners met in a building called "courthouse" in September, 1824, Holt questions the clarity of records using the word courthouse as the location of the meeting because records also show the county clerk, Lewis R. Rogers, was allocated rent for an office from 1820-1825. Stiles, however, cites records pertaining to another matter which state "Lot marked "A" in the town of Hindostan, on which the Court House was commenced and stands. . . . and where the Jail House was commenced and stands . . ." 27 No physical evidence of these buildings exist because, since houses were torn down and moved, 28 one can also assume major buildings were torn down, the materials recycled for use in other towns.

26Holt, p. 50
27Stiles, 1/6/50, p. 6.
28Ibid.
The residents of Hindostan experienced an active business life as well as a brisk political life. Small business lots the size of which can be noted on the plat, were selling for $200. The customary shops sprang up: James, Thomas, and John Prentiss owned the first store; Lewis Brooks, George Athern, Jesse Shelmire, and men recorded only as Whitt- tery and Crane were also merchants. Sampson White, Porter, and Clements opened taverns to rival Sholts', and Nat Hemmett became the town saddler. 29

The settlers realized the importance of water power and took advantage of the falls nearby. Daniel Brooks, great-nephew of Lewis Brooks, noted in the article printed in Evansville's Sunday Courier and Press that some of the early settlers made plans for a canal to connect the East Fork of the White River with the Wabash, Ohio, and Mississippi rivers for flatboat commerce. 30 However, there is no other mention of these plans in any of the other writings. Mills were opened to process the grain that would come in over land and by the river. The foundations of the saw and grist mills are, according to some accounts, still visible. One particularly prosperous business was a whetstone refinery recorded by Stiles as the Hindostan Stone Company, which produced whetstone variously called Hindustan Grit, 31 Hindostan Oil.

29 Stiles, 1/18/49, p. 5.
30 Margedant, p. 1.
31 Vincennes Sun-Commercial, June 14, 1936, n.p.
Stone, or just Hindostan whetstone. Lewis Brooks is credited with owning the mill. The process through which the raw stone had to pass to get to the finished product has been described as follows:

The work began at the top of the hills and loaded wheelbarrows ran down the inclines and dumped the slabs of stone in the valley below. Teams hauled it out on homemade dirt roads to Hindostan mills at the foot of Hindostan falls. Two hundred pounds a day were smoothed, washed and stacked in sheds to dry. The stones became lighter in color and hardened slightly before they were placed in boxes holding an exact hundred.

According to the younger Brooks, his great-uncle transported the rough slab overland or by water transport from the quarry in Orange County.

The wages for the men who worked in the mills were 50¢ to 75¢ per day; women and girls were hired to rub the stone smooth. These stones were sent all over the world. All sorts of whetstones were manufactured: "carpenters' and benah stones, ax stones to be used in pine regions, files for finishing glass work used by glass makers, harber stones were used for making incisions in turpentine trees, scythe stone, and doctor stones used in calico mills to sharpen print doctor knives" as well as souvenir stones to be sold in French Lick and West Baden.

32 Stiles, 1/6/50, p. 5.
33 Margedant, p. 1.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
As the whetstone business spread to surrounding areas, the methods used to refine the stone changed from water power to horse power. Despite these advances, though, carburendum from Niagara Falls replaced the bluish-gray stone found in the Hindostan area, and Washita stone, purportedly the best grade, from Arkansas, after 75 years of industry. Oslund noted in her article that many of the quarries that opened in the Hindostan area created the generic name of Hindostan whetstone for their product which could be a factor in its alleged popularity.

Another mark of prosperity, to some, was the first stage coach which made a regularly scheduled stop in the small town on the route from Louisville to Vincennes beginning in the summer of 1820. This service continued until the establishment of the O and M Railroad just before the Civil War. General William Henry Harrison used the stage coach route to travel to Vincennes and supposedly stopped for tea with Eliza and Mary Merriam. Tea was served in the proper fashion of the day: on a dry goods box.

Life adopted a regular pace around the construction of the town. Wesley Short officiated at the first wedding ceremony in Hindostan on April 13, 1820; John Waggoner and Jane Denton were the couple. Charles Merriam, son of Thomas and Laura G. Prentiss, born on June 1, 1819, was the first child

37 Stiles, 12/30/49, p. 4.
38 Ibid.
born in Hindostan. The first grand jury of Benjamin Adams, Robert Elsy, Jeremiah Jones, Robert O'Brian, Schuyler Owens, James Perry, Joseph Raney, John Simmons, Stephen P. Stringham, Samuel Stucher, Simon Throser, Leonard Trover, and Lloyd Wedding was called on May 3, 1820. There is no official record of the first death but traditionally it is believed that an Englishman named Haslem died soon after arriving in Hindostan by boat in August. No mention would be made of this but for the fact that by the end of the month, so many people had died that hardly anyone made an official record of the names.\textsuperscript{39}

The epidemic that hit Hindostan has been the subject of much speculation, legend, and fabrication because of the purportedly large number of people who died, the mystery that surrounds the cause of death, the swiftness of the disease, and the far-reaching impact of the epidemic on the future of the town. Legends that have sprung up have created a hidden pot of gold, and have given the idea that Hindostan was an instant ghost town after the sickness had taken its toll. Inaccurate facts about the effects of the disease have attributed the downfall of the town entirely to the high mortality, when in fact that is only part of the reason for the demise of Hindostan. And, finally, inaccurate accounts have both moved the actual year of the epidemic and given the impression that people died needlessly because there was no physician present. Evidence presented below will, hopefully, clear up

\textsuperscript{39}Stiles, 1/6/50, p. 1.
these misconceptions of what actually happened to the town of Hindostan.

The most complete account of that summer has been compiled by Stiles. She writes:

The summer of 1820 was an unusually dry season and the water in White River became very low. Some one in the town of Hindostan suggested that it would be a good time to clear the Falls of the growth of vegetation that grew on the river bed and banks. It was thought that the swift current would carry the debris down the river. After the growth was cut, however, it lodged in the deep water and became a sodden mass of decaying vegetation. The Falls which had been a thing of beauty now became a place to be avoided.

Special mention is made of this description because many believe the water which flowed downstream from the falls, past the town, became contaminated by the rotting debris. The townspople allegedly became sick after using the water. However, Stiles notes the disease, called "the Cold Plague," did not affect travelers coming into Hindostan nor the people downstream at Mt. Pleasant.

Another factor attributed to causing the disease is the abundance of wild snake root. The cows evidently ate this root and passed its effects to the people through their milk. This is plausible; however, since one can speculate the cows were giving milk throughout the summer, this does not satisfactorily explain why deaths occurred during a short period of time at the end of the summer.

Various other causes of the sickness are cholera, an influenza, and yellow fever. But these diseases are contagious

40 Ibid.
41 Vincennes Sun-Commercial, n.p.
and do not provide a reason why travelers entering and leaving Hindostan would not become sick also.

At the present time, the cause of the sickness becomes insignificant because there is no way to prove what it was. There is a note at the end of the McCarty article which states that many southern Indiana communities experienced the same type of quick-death epidemics during the summer of 1821. McCarty mentions Madison, New Albany, Vincennes, Indianapolis, and many other towns as having been afflicted with fatal ailments on a large scale. 42 Palestine suffered such a population loss that the county seat of Lawrence county was moved to donated land that was developed into Bedford in 1825. 43 So many of the early communities suffered epidemics that the General Assembly issued a proclamation: "That the second Friday in April next be observed as a day of public supplication and prayer to Almighty God--every denomination to keep and observe the same as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer."44

The number of deaths attributed to the disease is another variable that cannot be definitively verified. The population of Hindostan before the plague has been placed by some of the more generalizing newspaper articles at as many as 2,000. An article, by O.G. Sefrit "The Cold Plague," The destruction

42McCarty, p. 194.


44Laws of Indiana, 1821-22, p. 171, as cited by Holt, p. 137.
of Old Hindostan" uses that figure. 45 Holt lists 33 heads of families in the town of Hindostan. 46 Stiles reports there were 500 inhabitants in Hindostan in May, 1820, 47 but then gives the more exact figure of 262 as reported by Julius Johnson, sheriff of Martin County, on January 16, 1821. The reason given for the lateness of Johnson's report was "many deaths, thinly settled, and 18 miles to a paper office." 48 If the figures of 500 and 262 are to be believed, 238 men, women, and children died within the general period of seven months.

Two other misconceptions that can be dispelled by the evidence at hand are the beliefs that there were no physicians in Hindostan at the time of the sickness, and the legend of a pot of gold buried in desperation by the county treasurer. There were three men who used the title of "Dr." listed in Stiles' articles: Dr. Exekiel Porter, Dr. John Tennent, and Dr. Lyman G. Austin. Ezekiel Porter dies in the epidemic. 49 There is also evidence of a fourth physician, Dr. Malthus A. Ward. William Barlow and David O. Powell published an article

45 O.G. Sefrit, "'The Cold Plague' The destruction of Old Hindostan," Martin County Republican, July 19, 1901. This is an original manuscript in the State Bureau Library. Further information included on the manuscript states the publication was made in Loogootee, IN, by A.S. Willis.

46 Holt, p. 41.

47 Stiles, 12/30/49, p. 4.

48 Stiles, 1/6/50, p. 5.

49 Ibid., p. 1.
containing Ward's July 4, 1821, speech to the people of Hindostan in the Indiana Magazine of History, (2 June 1978). In the introduction, Ward is placed in Hindostan in 1819 by evidence from his personal letters. This speech and an entry in the county records for a fee of $6.00 paid to Ward in February, 1822, serve as substantiating evidence. In his speech Ward expounded on the principle of freedom and independence, alluded to the similarities between the Americans and the Romans, and commented on more contemporary topics such as the poor economic times the inhabitants had been experiencing. He also remarked:

the ravages of that dreadful mortality, which within the past year, has made such desolation in your houses, and in your bosoms. --The goodly number who are here assembled to greet each other on this joyful anniversary, and to sit down in friendship and harmony at the same festive board, is a spectacle which must be highly grateful to the genius of neighborly love and social order. . . . You behold in each other, those on whose industry and perseverance you repose your hopes of seeing, within a few years, a fair and fertile portion of the state rescued from the condition of a dreary wilderness, where nothing was formerly heard but the howling of the wolf--. . . --men, who will convert the gloomy woods into fields waving with luxuriant harvests, and change the nauseous swamps, emitting pestilence and death, into rich meadows clothed with thick and verdant herbage.

The legend about the pot of gold can be easily dispelled by repeating what Stiles reported in her article: "Court


51Ibid., p. 136.

52Ibid., p. 144.
House records prove the story false, as Dr. Lyman G. Austin, the Treasurer, was still singing sic deeds a number of years later. 53

Oftentimes when youthful promise is suddenly squelched, the youth is glorified and romanticized into something much larger than what was actually the case. Hindostan was no exception. The mysterious plague swept through the town in 1821. The Martin County government was moved by orders of the Indiana General Assembly to Mt. Pleasant in 1828. 54 Because the number of dead attributed to the sickness was, in relative terms, catastrophic, the reason for the move was directly attributed to the plague. A careful examination of what Stiles wrote and of what was happening at the time does not make such an assumption clearly the best explanation.

After describing the effects of the sickness, Stiles did not end her account of Hindostan's effect on the growth of Martin County. It should be recalled that she stated the stagecoach made regular stops in Hindostan until just before the Civil War, a period of roughly 40 years. Since a stagecoach stop is not, by itself, decisive evidence of growth in a community or even of a community holding its own, Stiles also reported that $800 was paid by Sheriff Julius Johnson for a lot; construction of flat and keel boats flourished as well as manufacture of the Hindostan Oil Stone; new businesses were started: a saw mill and ferry by Daniel Hewes of

53 Stiles, 12/6/30, p. 5.
54 Ibid.
Louisville, a kiln which would not fire red bricks by James and John Eberling; a cabinet-making shop by Sanford Brown. The first Post Office was established on March 11, 1824, with Rufus Brown as the postmaster. A most definite sign of growth was the addition to the first plat of Hindostan recorded on July 30, 1823. The three surviving proprietors, Frederick Sholts, John Merriam, and Caleb Fellows, signed this second plat which shows Hindostan increased to 44 lots, although noted in a few sources, no copy of the plat has been found.

Despite this evidence of growth in the town, there are many people listed in the memoirs of Thomas Jefferson Brooks as having left Hindostan in 1825-26: Benjamin Adams, Dr. John Tenant, John Price, Daniel Hewes, Cyrus Goff, Mr. and Mrs. De Long, John Barnes, a Rev. Pfieffer, and Bentley Taylor. Records in the Recorder's Office in Shoals, Indiana, the present county seat of Martin County, shows the Sheriff of Martin County as the grantor of 37 sheriff's deeds between September 13, 1822, and January 7, 1825. The reason for the large number of sheriff's deeds could be the death of the original owner or the inability of the owner to pay the quarterly payments as required under the land acts of the early 1800s.

Frederick Sholts can be used as a model for speculation

about the reason behind so many sheriff's deeds during the three years mentioned above. One can safely assume that Sholts, as well as a larger percentage of the other landholders in Hindostan in the early 1800s, bought their land according to the land acts passed between 1800 and 1817. The major provision of all these acts was the right of settlers to buy the land on credit. A small downpayment was required as well as an agreement to pay quarterly installments over the next four years. Sholts bought 999 acres of his total 1079 acres between October 20, 1814, and June 3, 1819. All these purchases, it may be reasonably surmised, were bought with credit as provided for in the Indiana Act of 1804 and the Act of 1817. The final acreage was bought after cash sales had been reinstated according to the Act of 1820. Sholts sold some of his land to the other proprietors and to the settlers of Hindostan before he had to return the land to the federal government as noted by Stiles:

On January 30, 1829, James Love, sheriff of the county, was directed to sell the property of Frederick Sholts to settle his just debts. The record reads thus: 'Lot marked 'A' in the town of Hindostan, on which the Court House was commenced and stands. . . . and where the Jail House was commenced and stands, is hereby sold to the highest bidder for the sum of $20.25.'

56 Holt, p. 28.
58 Ibid., p. 138.
59 Ibid., p. 141.
60 Stiles, 1/6/50, p. 5.
The prices of the lands recorded in the Grantor's book mentioned above range from 52½¢ paid by James W. Porter for several different lots to $933 paid by Lewis Rogers. Of the people mentioned by Brooks as moving in 1825-26, John Tenant is shown in the Grantor's book as selling 57 lots to six different men between September 13, 1822, and January 7, 1825. The list of people selling their land during this time in Hindostan could go on and on as the extensions granted by the relief acts passed by Congress to aid the landholders expired. 61

By proclamation of the General Assembly the county seat of Martin County was moved from the skeletal town of Hindostan to another promising young town up the river, Mt. Pleasant, whose residents the sickness did not touch. The county commissioners met in Hindostan for the last time on July 7, 1828, and ordered the clerk and recorder to move their offices to Mt. Pleasant immediately. 62 The first meeting in the new county seat was September 1, 1828. 63

Today there is nothing left of Hindostan. The State Conservation Department declared the 134 acres owned at the time by the heirs of Festus Troutman to be a public fishing

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61 Treat, p. 129. There were 12 passed before 1820 and still more after the credit system was abolished in 1820 to help those who either unwisely bought too much land or were caught in the poor economic times.

62 Stiles, 1/6/50, p. 5.

63 McCarty, p. 193.
area and erected a shelter and public bathroom in 1958.\textsuperscript{64}

There is an inaccurate historical marker just south of the site telling all travelers on Indiana 550 that Hindostan was once a booming town of 1200 but was struck down by the "Great Sickness" in 1828. Instead of the prosperity dreamt of by the Proprietors, Hindostan's legacy of buried treasure and lost fortunes thrives in the folklore of Indiana.

\textsuperscript{64}Al. G. McCord, "Restoration Planned for 'Ghost Town,'" \textit{Indianapolis Star}, May 15, 1958, p. 1.
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<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cedar St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Birch St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cottonwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oak Grove</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table outlines the streets and their respective locations in the town. Each line corresponds to a street with its name clearly marked. The map is used for reference and planning purposes, ensuring the layout is clear and easily understood for both residents and visitors. The streets are laid out in a grid pattern, providing a logical and systematic approach to navigation. The streets are numbered sequentially, starting from the north and moving south, with the corresponding line numbers indicating the order of their placement. This systematic approach helps in identifying specific locations and facilitates efficient movement throughout the town. The map also includes additional details such as landmarks and points of interest, further enhancing its utility for those who use it. The streets are named after various types of trees, reflecting the natural environment and adding a touch of beauty to the town's layout. The street widths and design are standardized, ensuring uniformity and ease of travel. The map is an essential tool for anyone living or visiting the town, providing a comprehensive overview of the area and its key features.