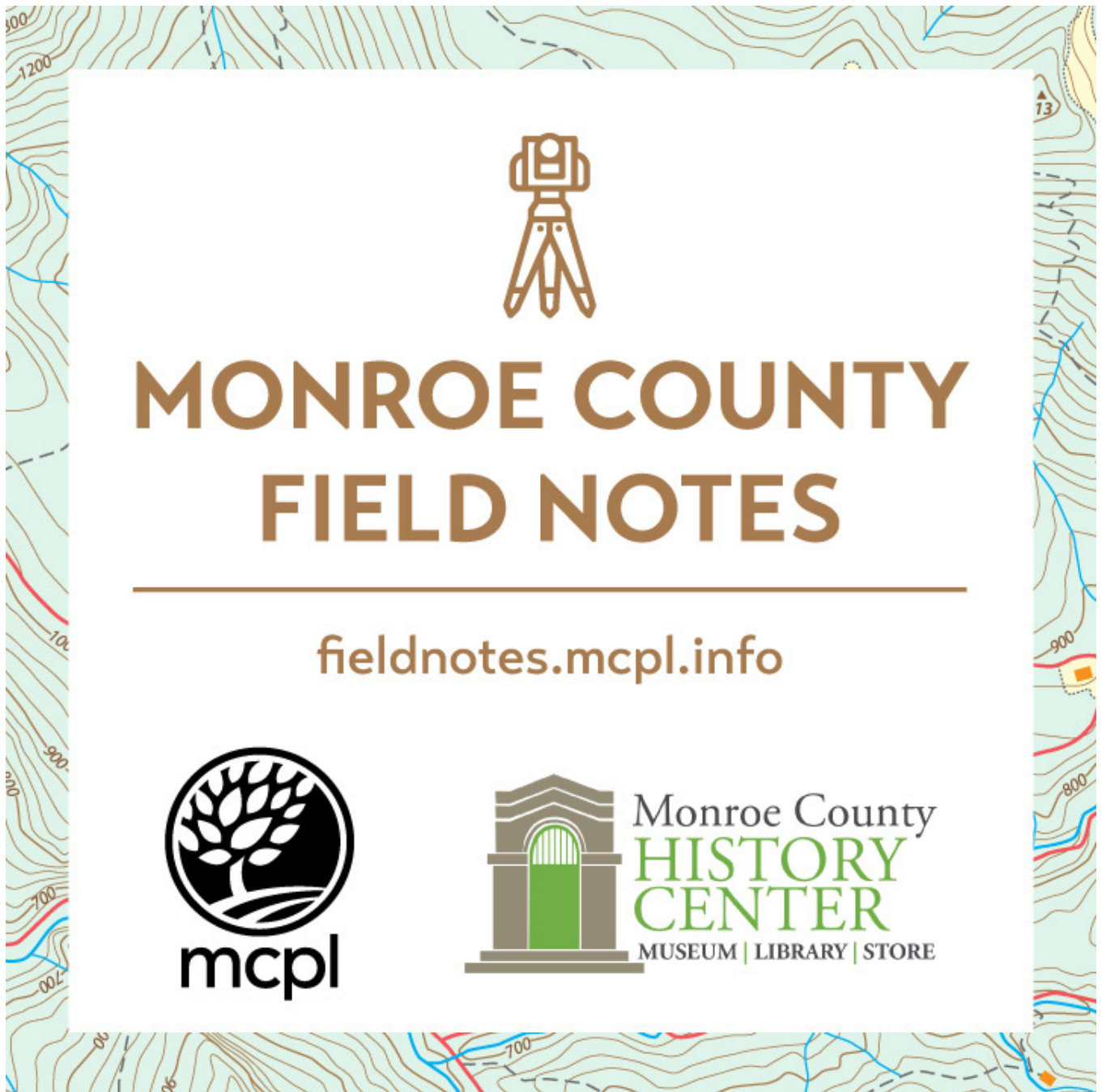


[Monroe County Field Notes](#)



Local history is significant only when it is accessible. Sadly, there are gaps in primary records covering the most dramatic moments in our county's first 60 years. Some of our documents and newspapers were lost in a fire, and some of our most compelling residents didn't know how to read or write.

Monroe County Field Notes is a virtual dig to uncover stories about 19th-century landmarks and people, from 1816–1876. It's fun and free to get involved and your research will help us diversify our community's history!

How to Start / Register

Contact Christine Friesel at indianaroom [at] mcpl.info (subject: Monroe%20County%20Field%20Notes) to join in. You can choose your own address and learn more about the people who used to live on your property or suggest another location you'd like to research. Field reporters should be comfortable reading cursive writing, and have a library card to access eLibrary databases. Don't have a library card? No problem, [you can get one here](#) ! After you register, we'll give you the coordinates and township section for the address you're researching.

What You Might Uncover

Example Field Note:

Coordinates and Township: 39.165438, -86.471481; Bloomington Township (Sec. 36)

My address is in the neighborhood of where Bruster's Ice Cream is now. Using eLibrary resources from Monroe County Public Library, I found out that before the Civil War, my property was home to Hannah McCaw. Hannah was a Black woman who owned this land with her husband, Henry, and their children. The story goes that Hannah ran the [Underground Railroad](#) with her friend, who established the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Hannah is buried in the Covenanter Cemetery at the corner of High and Hillside in Bloomington.

[Learn more about the Underground Railroad in Monroe County.](#)

Research is Fun and Collaborative

Once we give you the coordinates and township section of the address you're researching, you'll [use the 1856 plat map](#) of landowners to find who lived on the property. See also David Nord's [Mapping Monroe County, Indiana. annotated and illustrated bibliography of historic maps of the county, the city of Bloomington, and the IU campus, from 1815 through 1941.](#)

Next, you'll search for the landowner in the US Census. You can use [HeritageQuest](#) to search the 1850, 1860, and/or 1870 census. Our project doesn't go past 1876, but you are welcome to find out more about your characters and what happened to their land or buildings in other years as well.

Once you have more information, you can use any of the local and family history eLibrary resources in the carousel below to help us piece together fragmented stories and facts. Need help? Just ask!



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Monroe County Census 1930

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HISTORY OF Lawrence and Monroe Counties

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[more >](#)

Submit Your Findings

When you've finished your research, email indianaroom [at] mcpl.info (subject: Monroe%20County%20Field%20Notes) with the coordinates and township section we gave you, alongside a paragraph about what you found. Your findings may be used in future projects about Monroe County's history.

Example Field Note:

Coordinates and Township: 39.12318609141971, -86.58709900992096; Van Buren Township (Sec. 13)

According to oral history about the Underground Railroad, Isaac Adkins was a slave catcher, following the laws of the times, working near his home on W. Leonard Springs Road, west of Monroe Hospital and north of Shirley Springs Cave or Leonard Springs Nature Park.

If you fall into your character or property history and go beyond the basics, or want to share more than a short paragraph, email the [Monroe County History Center](#) librarian at library [at] monroehistory.org (subject: Monroe%20County%20Field%20Notes%20Project) .

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(function() { var x = document.createElement("script"); x.type = "text/javascript"; x.async = true; x.src = (document.location.protocol === "https:" ? "https://" : "http://") + "libraryh3lp.com/js/libraryh3lp.js?14734"; var y = document.getElementsByTagName("script")[0]; y.parentNode.insertBefore(x, y); })();
```

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