

Samuel Milroy and William Wilson:
Patriarch and Benefactor

In the course of describing the various grand structures surrounding the City of Delphi, it would be a travesty not to mention the two pioneers without whom the city would not have existed. One was Samuel Milroy, the patriarch, who was born in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, August 14th, 1780. He was a lineal descendant of Robert Bruce. He was married in Center County, Pennsylvania, when his wife passed away, leaving a daughter and one son. In 1806, he went to Nelson County, Kentucky, and there married Martha Huston in 1810, a cousin of Samuel Houston of Texas freedom-fighter fame, and to this marriage ten children were born—seven sons and three daughters. In 1814, he moved to Washington County, Indiana, and purchased land. His role in the founding of our county seat was as land agent at

Crawfordsville, the location of the Federal Land Office, where settlers were obliged to purchase land for settlement. It boggles my mind to think of settlers needing to purchase land at Crawfordsville, only to return to Carroll County to develop it. He was selected to serve as Representative of the district, but resigned to retain his land office appointment, from which he unfortunately was recalled due to his position on National Banking which differed sharply from that of his Commander-in-Chief, Andrew Jackson. Milroy also differed greatly from those who were in favor of "internal improvements", such as railroads, canals, and other extravagant expenditures.

His further political service included serving as State Representative in 1836 for Carroll and Clinton County, Indian Agent for the Pottawatomie in 1839, and was reappointed by President Polk in 1845, and passed away May 26th, 1845, and a substantial monument was erected in his honor at the Milroy Cemetery, now Morning

Heights, east of Delphi, Indiana on
CR 300.

The Weekly Times of Delphi
stated on Saturday, April 21st, 1849
that "He was one of the warmest friends
of the interests of Delphi she ever
had. . . "Had it not been for Milroy
the county seat would have been moved,
possibly to a point east of the city.

The benefactor of the City of
Delphi was William Wilson, who was born
in Pennsylvania November 29th,
1781, and came to this area as a youth.
His land holdings
Involved much of the territory on which
the City was founded
And east of the former village of
Mortonville, a small suburb of the city
east of the present-day downtown.
Mortonville has since been bisected by
new S.R. 25 on the way to Logansport.
Upon his death on January 23rd, 1830,
his remains were laid to rest in the
old City cemetery, and then removed to
Camden.

In 1920, a fitting marker was
placed in the Courthouse to the left of
the south entrance in his honor, with
distant relatives E.W. Bowen and Mrs.
N.W. Bowen, Mr. A.T. Bowen, and Mrs.

Mary Busey and family of Urbana, Illinois present.

Also present were Martha Hanaway of near Camden and Wilson Sterrett. Wilson Street in the present-day city of Delphi was named in his honor, due to the fact that his home, which was constructed in 1830, was in that vicinity. The home was pulled down to construct the present-day Nathaniel Bowen mansion at the corner of Wilson and Main.

And what, you may say, prompted Milroy to name the city "Delphi"? According to James Hervey Stewart, he handed the County Commissioners a slip of paper on which the name "Delphi" was written, and that was the name chosen. With his compass and chain and with the assistance of Wilson and some of the neighbors, laid out the Public Square of the new town. The name "Delphi" means "Oracle of the Sun", the word oracle meaning a person capable of auguring the future.