

JEDIDIAH F. STACEY

AND HIS WABASH & ERIE CANAL CONNECTIONS

By Charles Davis

Jedidiah F. Stacey was born in Orange county, New York on October 5, 1815, where he remained until twenty-one years of age. He then went to Massachusetts where he was engaged as an employee of a railroad, which was being constructed at that time. While there he met Miss Clarinda Lynch, a native of Berkshire county, Massachusetts. They were married on January 1, 1840. On August 7, 1840 their daughter Mary Elizabeth was born at Richmond, Massachusetts. Mary Elizabeth later married Dr. Benjamin Franklin Hudson on December 19, 1858. Their daughter Ada H. Hudson married Frank S. Cumberland on February 15, 1883.

In 1856 Jedidiah and Clarinda also had a son born. He died in infancy.

Railroading was Jedidiah's business for many years. He was in charge of a gang of railroad men most of the time. For some time he was on the New York & Erie Railroad. Then in 1849 he went to Kentucky and worked for the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. He also spent one year on the Milwaukee & Lake Superior Railroad.

In the spring of 1854 Jedidiah Stacey came to Montezuma, Indiana after working for the Indiana & Illinois Central Railroad. After spending a great many years of his life in the employ of these different railroads, he finally settled at Montezuma and became engaged in the business of buying and shipping grain. The property he acquired was through his own exertions.

When Jedidiah bought his home circa 1854 he didn't record the deed. His granddaughter Ada Hudson Cumberland lived in the house most of her life up to her death in 1953. Her obituary states, "the house she lived in had been purchased almost a century ago by her grandfather Stacey." This home lot does not show up in deed records. When Ada died it was listed in her final decree in probate records.

Jedidiah's first notable property deeds are for lots 8-9-10 fronting on the Wabash & Erie Canal on Water street in Montezuma. He purchased them on October 11, 1859. Deed Record 18/377. Next he bought part of lots 15-16 fronting on the canal on Water street on October 17, 1859 from Persius E. Harris. D.R. 18/399 Mr. Harris built a large warehouse on the south end of the lots that contained 78 square feet. It was three stories high and had a track that ran across the street to the canal so grain could be transported from the warehouse to the canal boat.

I [Charles Davis] am trying to find a deed to show who owned the canal warehouse that straddled the canal west of Jedidiah Staceys. "It sat astride the canal so that boats could enter and be loaded inside the building." This building is still there although it has had some changes to its exterior. I think this was Jedidiah's, but will wait for proof.



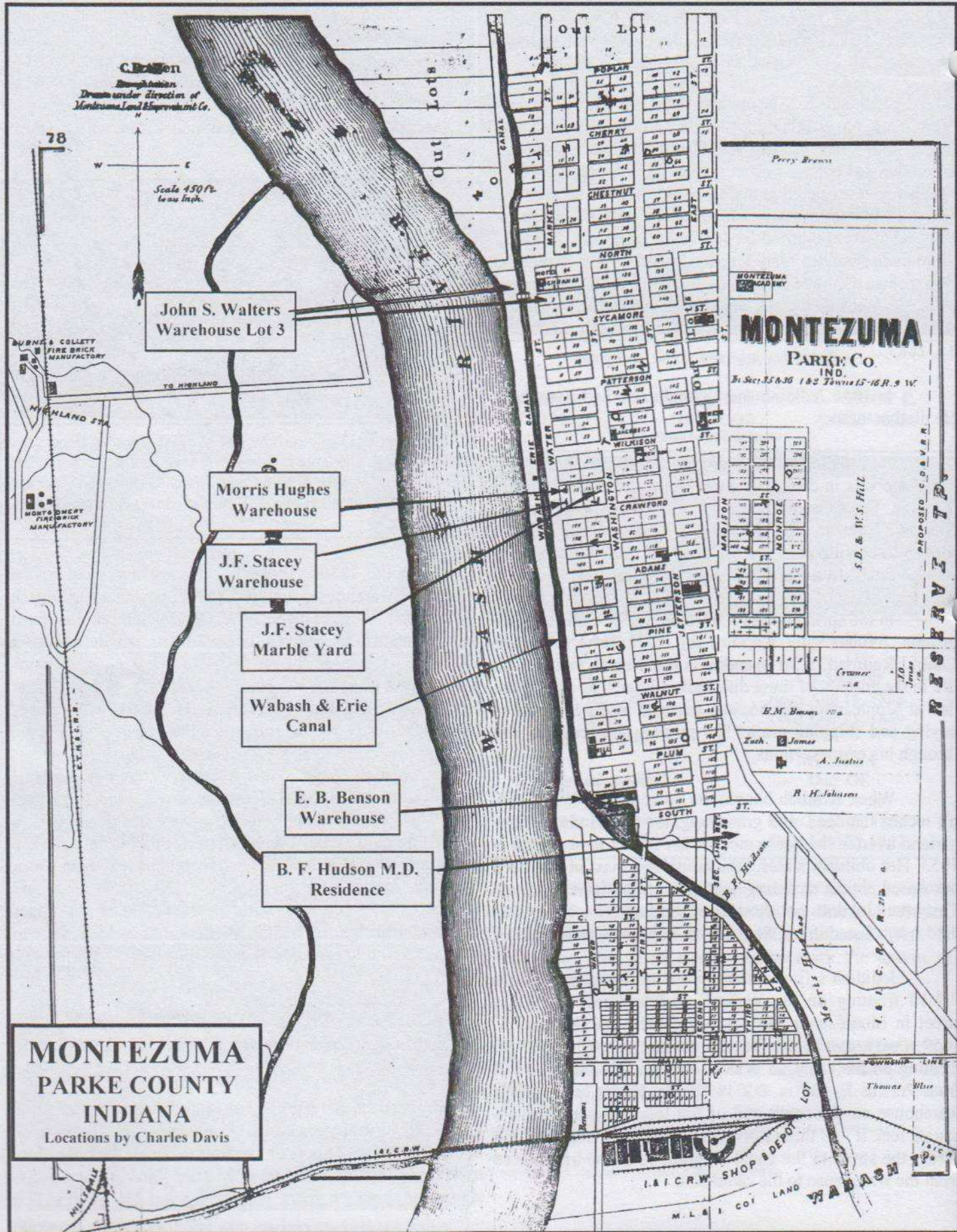
This 1913 photo shows the Wabash River at flood stage at Montezuma. The large building at the left was a warehouse and sat astride the Wabash & Erie Canal so that boats could enter and be loaded and unloaded inside. Here the canal prism is under the flood waters.

In the 1850s "Water street contained most of the stores and warehouses and had a brick pavement and brick sidewalks." Morris Hughes' Warehouse stood on the north end of lots 15-16. Hughes operated this warehouse from 1847-1857 for canal and river traffic. He sold it to Isaiah Swain for \$1400 on September 4, 1857. D. R. 17/350. Peter Sharp operated a store that sat between the two warehouses on lot 15 in 1851 and for some time thereafter.

John S. Walters had a large warehouse north of these warehouses on lot 3. This was next door to James and Jane Wilson's "Phoenix Hotel" for canal travelers. He also owned the land across the street from this lot between the canal and the Wabash River. He purchased them from Whitlock and Majors on May 24, 1848 D. R. 10/527 and March 5, 1849 D. R. 10/53 with the exception of the upper canal road bridge for \$2500. Walters then sold it back to them for \$10,000 on September 2, 1853. D. R. 14-464

In 1860 Jedidiah Stacey sold lots 15-16 to James H. Turner for \$800. Six years later on November 26, 1866 Jedidiah bought them back from Turner for \$1000. D. R. 265/387

Then on September 14, 1866 he purchased part of lot 49 on Washington street from James H. Turner for \$350. D. R. 22/275 This later became the main business district. Upon this lot he set up a "Marble Yard" cutting grave stones for about ten years. His partner was Mr. Sparks. The



**MONTEZUMA
PARKE COUNTY
INDIANA**
Locations by Charles Davis

Rockville Republican of January 1, 1870 states, "Our cemetery [Old Montezuma Cemetery] has been graced by a monument to the memory of Richard Porter, Esq.. Stacey and Sparks have a handsome design for a monument twelve feet in height on exhibition at their marble shop on main street, opposite Wm. A. Henderson's store."

From the time he arrived at Montezuma until his death, Jedidiah was engaged in the business of buying and shipping grain and lumber via the canal and railroad. During the canal period, he was in charge of the aqueducts as well as of keeping the canal in repair from Sugar Creek to Armiesburg. Frederick Bertram Machledt worked as a carpenter in the repairing of both.

Jedidiah F. Stacey died on February 26, 1882 and was laid to rest in Montezuma's Oakland Cemetery. Although he had sold monuments, his stone is rather plain.

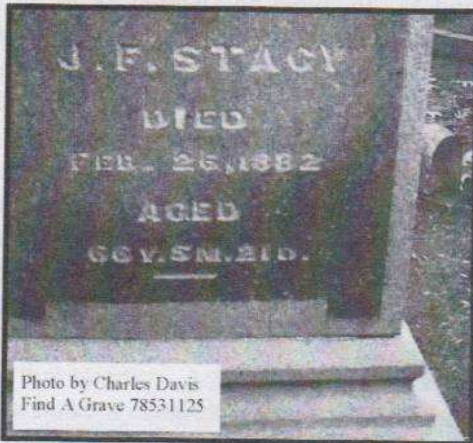


Photo by Charles Davis
Find A Grave 78531125

When Jedidiah's granddaughter, Ada Hudson Cumberland, died, the family lines of Hudson and Stacey died with her. The *Montezuma Enterprise* of June 11, 1953 carried the obituary of Ada Cumberland. Its headline read, "Spent All Her 93 Years in This Community: Ada Cumberland Died Tuesday."

"A life-long resident of this community and possi-



Ada Cumberland

ing the 1850s via canal boat.

"A member of the first graduating class of Montezuma high school, she was married a few years later to Frank Cumberland, an undertaker, who died in 1910. Nearly all of Mrs. Cumberland's life was spent in the home on Jefferson street, which had been purchased almost a century ago by her grandfather Stacey."

In closing this story, I quote Dr. Hudson, Ada's father, from a story he told to Maurice Murphy for the *Rockville Tribune* of April 21, 1914:

"Dr. Hudson's daughter, Miss Ada Hudson, married the late Frank S. Cumberland, furniture dealer and funeral director, one of Montezuma's most prosperous citizens. When he first came to Montezuma, his friends told him not to go there, because there was so much sickness in that vicinity, and it surely was an unhealthy place. He merely replied that such a place was 'a good place for an undertaker to be.' Dr. Hudson was always proud of his son-in-law's success, but he boasted that 'Frank Cumberland never got rich off my practice.'"

GENEALOGY OF JEDIDIAH F. STACEY

By Charles Davis 2011

	BORN	DIED	BURIED	MARRIED
Jedidiah F. Stacey	10-05-1815	2-26-1882	Oakland Cem. Montezuma	1-1-1840 Berkshire co., Mass.
m. Clarinda Lynch	9-27-1817	3-01-1888	Oakland Cem. Montezuma	1-1-1840 Berkshire co., Mass.
<u>Children</u>				
1. Mary Elizabeth Stacey	8-07-1840	12-13-1922	Oakland Cem. Montezuma	12-19-1858
m. Dr. Benjamin Franklin Hudson	3-16-1836	5-10-1923		12-19-1858
<u>Children</u>				
A. Ada Hudson	9-26-1859	6-09-1953	Oakland Cem. Montezuma	2-15-1883
m. Frank S Cumberland	10-7-1851	2-18-1910		2-15-1883 (gen. merchandise, undertaker)
<u>Children</u>				
1. Infant Cumberland		6-??-1884	Oakland Cem. Montezuma	
2. Infant son Stacey		1856	Old Montezuma Cem.	