PROJECT SCROLL · A SERIES IN THREE PARTS

Shipshewana, Indiana

A Potawatomi chief’s name, the railroad that made a town, and the farm sale that became a flea market.

1. The Shipshewana Puzzle: One Name, at Least Five People
2. The railroad that made Shipshewana
3. How a farm sale became a flea market

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SHIPSHEWANA · PART 1

The Shipshewana Puzzle: One Name, at Least Five People

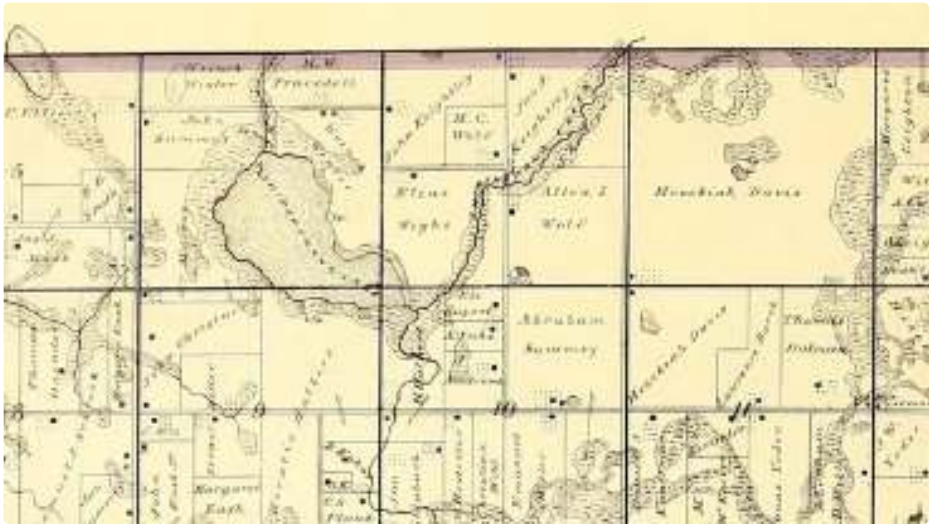
DISCOVERY · 7 NEW FINDINGS › | SERIES · 1 OF 3 › | GO SEE IT | 41 MIN READ

A town, a lake and a monument carry the name of a Potawatomi chief. The old records hold more than one Shipshewana, the best-known story about him was first told in 1931, and the National Archives hold a man of his name alive in Kansas from February to December of the year the plaque says he died, and still there in 1842. Part 1 of a series on Shipshewana, Indiana.

LIVE RESEARCH DOCUMENT

This story is part of a series still being researched. Several records named on this page are held at the National Archives and in local newspapers we have not yet been able to search; we will add what they show.

By Michael Urbanski · Project Scroll · 26 October 2026 · 41 min read



Shipshewana Lake and its creek on the Newbury Township map in the Illustrated Historical Atlas of La Grange County (1874), the first map we have found to print the name. Internet Archive. Public domain.

The short version

Shipshewana, Indiana, is named for a Potawatomi chief, Ship-she-wa-non, who signed treaties in 1828, 1832 and 1833 and was called a war chief at the annuity payment of 1836. The story on the town's 1931 monument, that he was removed in 1838, came home in 1839 and died by the lake in 1841, is not found in any earlier source; the county history of 1882 says the old chief died before the settlers came. And in the National Archives a "Ship she wah no" signed a letter on the Osage River, in Kansas, on 3 February 1841, among "the principal men" of the Potawatomi removed there in November 1840; a chief named "Ship she won no," of the St. Joseph band, signed his band's petition to President Tyler there on 16 November and made his mark on a letter in Washington on 15 December; and in October 1842 the government counted

two heads of family of the name on the Osage River. Whether he is the treaty chief is not proved, but if he is, he did not die by the lake that year.

The name belonged to more than one person: a Potawatomi woman, Angelina Shipshewana, born in 1821 near South Bend; a family, Edward Shipshewana's, that went on to Kansas and Oklahoma; and, in the 20th century, a writer who took it as his own. The lake was still unnamed on the survey of 1830, but a county road ran to "the Shipshewana Saw-mill" by 1839.

Read the whole story ›

✦ NEW FINDING 7 new findings in this story. **See what's new ›**

On Memorial Day 1931 the biggest crowd anyone could remember came out to Shipshewana Lake. There was a maypole dance and a cornet band. A nine-foot granite boulder, hauled twenty-three miles on a house-mover's rig, stood on a grassy mound at the fork of the roads, with a bronze plaque bolted to its face. Fifteen or twenty Potawatomi men, women and children had come down from Athens, Michigan, and a Potawatomi minister, the Rev. William Soney, spoke on "The Attitude and Gratitude of the Indian of Today." Then the plaque was unveiled.

It told a sad and simple story. Chief Shipshewana and his band were "removed from this reservation September 4, 1838," and escorted to Kansas by soldiers. A year later "the heartbroken chief" was allowed to come home to "his old camping grounds on the banks of beautiful Shipshewana Lake," where he died in 1841.

That is the story the town tells today, on a newer marker by the lake, on its website and in nearly every article about the place. It is a moving story. But when we went looking for the man behind it, in the treaties, the pay rolls, the county records and the oldest local histories, we found something most people don't know: the record does not hold one Shipshewana. It holds several. And the story on the plaque was first told, as far as anyone has yet found, on the plaque itself. Then, in the National Archives, we found a chief of his name and his band very much alive, in Kansas and in Washington, in the last weeks of the year the plaque says he died.

HOW TO READ THIS PAGE DOCUMENTED READING OPEN ✦ NEW FINDING

41 documented · 23 readings · 7 new

? What the marks mean

AT A GLANCE

The name	Written Ship-she-wa-non (1828), Ship-shee-won no (1829), Ship-she-wa-no (1832), Ship-she-wuh-no (1833) and Ship-she-wa-eno (1836) in the government's records; Shup-she-wah-no on the 1931 plaque
The chief in the record	Signed treaties in 1828, 1832 and 1833; listed on a pay roll of 1829 as living at the "head of Tippecanoe"; called a war chief at the annuity payment of September 1836
The lake	Just "Lake" on the government survey of 1830; "Shipshewana Saw-mill" in the county's road records by 1839
Other people of the name	Mrs. Angelina Shipshewana (born 1821, near Crumstown, Indiana); Edward Shipshewana and his son Peter (born 1860), whose family went on to Kansas and Oklahoma; a 20th-century writer who took the name
Alive in 1841	"Ship she wah no" signs a letter of the newly arrived Potawatomi on the Osage River, in Kansas, on 3 February 1841; "Ship she won no," a chief of the St. Joseph band, signs a petition to the President there

	on 16 November and makes his mark on a letter in Washington on 15 December
Still there in 1842	Two heads of family named “Shep she wi no” on the government’s count of the Potawatomi of the Osage River, 12 October 1842: a man over forty with a household of eleven, and a younger man with a household of three
The monument	Dedicated Memorial Day, 1931, by the Shipshewana Chamber of Commerce; a newer marker, erected 2003, repeats its words
The town	Platted by Hezekiah Davis and recorded 18 January 1889

CASE FILE

WHAT MOST PEOPLE DON’T KNOW

A chief of the name was alive from February to December 1841. In February a “Ship she wah no” signed a letter in Kansas with the Potawatomi who had just come west from Indiana and Michigan. On 16 November a “Ship she won no” signed his band’s petition to President Tyler, and on 15 December he was in Washington as one of its delegates. The plaque has him dying by the lake that year.

And he was still there in 1842. When the government counted the Potawatomi of the Osage River in October 1842, it found two heads of family of the name: a man over forty with ten others in his house, and a man under forty with a woman and a boy.

More than one person carried the name. Besides the chief, the records show a Potawatomi woman, Angelina Shipshewana, born in 1821 near South Bend, and a Shipshewana family that went west to Kansas and Oklahoma.

The lake’s chief and the treaty chief may not be the same man. The county’s 1882 history says the old chief “died some time prior to the settlement,” before the settlers of the 1830s. Yet a Ship-she-wa-eno was alive, and making speeches, in 1836.

The return-and-death story is first found in 1931. We found no record of it, or of the 1841 death, before the plaque. The 1882 history has him dead before the settlers came; the records of 1841 have a chief of his name alive in Kansas.

The plaque’s date belongs to another removal. 4 September 1838 is the day the soldiers’ march known as the Trail of Death left Twin Lakes, some fifty miles away. No Shipshewana appears on its rolls.

▶ The people in this story (21)

On this page

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8. Plaque or record?
9. “Vision of a Lion”
10. One name, more than one person
11. How the town got the name
12. The name, year by year
13. The Potawatomi today
14. Why it matters
15. Sources

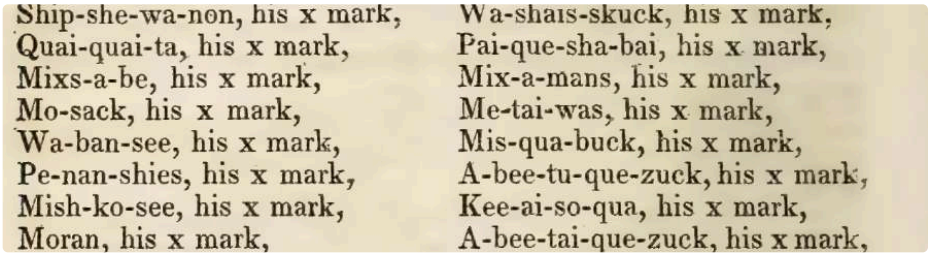
Find in this story: a name, a place, a word

Next ›

PART I

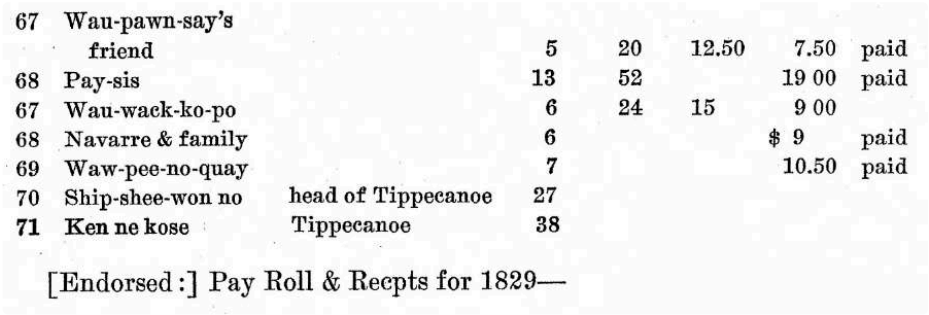
The man in the treaties

The first time the name certainly appears in writing, it is attached to an X. On 20 September 1828, at the Carey Mission on the St. Joseph River, near what is now Niles, Michigan, the Potawatomi signed a treaty with the United States. Fourth on the list of signers is "Ship-she-wa-non, his x mark." DOCUMENTED


Ship-she-wa-non, his x mark,
Quai-quai-ta, his x mark,
Mixs-a-be, his x mark,
Mo-sack, his x mark,
Wa-ban-see, his x mark,
Pe-nan-shies, his x mark,
Mish-ko-see, his x mark,
Moran, his x mark,
Wa-shais-skuck, his x mark,
Pai-que-sha-bai, his x mark,
Mix-a-mans, his x mark,
Me-tai-was, his x mark,
Mis-qua-buck, his x mark,
A-bee-tu-que-zuck, his x mark,
Kee-ai-so-qua, his x mark,
A-bee-tai-que-zuck, his x mark,

Ship-she-wa-non makes his mark: the signers of the treaty of 20 September 1828, as printed in *Treaties between the United States and the Several Indian Tribes* (Washington, 1837), p. 434. Internet Archive. Public domain.

A year later the name turns up again, in the pay roll an Indian agent kept for the payments of 1829. Row 70 reads: "Ship-shee-won no, head of Tippecanoe, 27." The number seems to count the people in his household or band; no money or goods are entered against his name. DOCUMENTED The "head of Tippecanoe" is the lake country where the Tippecanoe River rises, thirty-odd miles south-west of Shipshewana Lake. READING



67	Wau-pawn-say's friend		5	20	12.50	7.50	paid
68	Pay-sis		13	52		19 00	paid
67	Wau-wack-ko-po		6	24	15	9 00	
68	Navarre & family		6			$ 9	paid
69	Waw-pee-no-quay		7			10.50	paid
70	Ship-shee-won no	head of Tippecanoe	27				
71	Ken ne kose	Tippecanoe	38				

[Endorsed:] Pay Roll & Recpts for 1829—

Row 70: "Ship-shee-won no, head of Tippecanoe, 27," in the 1829 pay roll printed in *The John Tipton Papers*, vol. II (Indianapolis, 1942), p. 236. Internet Archive. Printed transcription of a public record.

He signed again on 27 October 1832, at the treaty on the Tippecanoe River, as "Ship-she-wa-no," and in 1833 at Chicago, where a clerk wrote "Ship-she-wuh-no" on the supplementary articles. DOCUMENTED Each spelling is an English-speaking clerk's attempt to catch a Potawatomi name by ear. That is why, a century later, the town's committee had to write all the way to the Smithsonian to learn how to say it.

PART II

A war chief at the payment of 1836



Ten Potawatomi Chiefs, painted from life in northern Indiana by George Winter about 1837, a year after the payment. The sitters are not named; none is known to be Ship-she-wa-no. Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art; photograph via Wikimedia Commons. Public domain.

In September 1836 the Potawatomi of northern Indiana gathered to be paid their annuities. It went badly. Traders crowded the payment ground with claims, rumors flew, and the agent called out the militia. A federal commissioner, J. W. Edmonds, was sent the next year to find out what had happened.

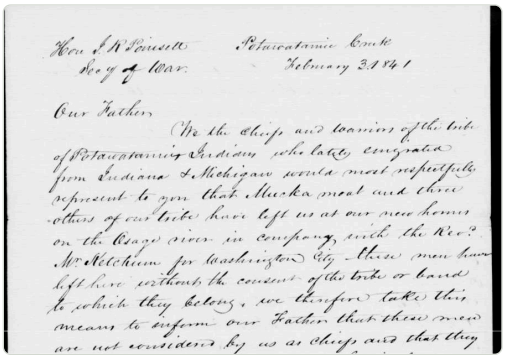
His report names our man twice. On the Monday of the trouble, it says, “Ashkum, and an Indian named Ship-she-wa-eno, made some speeches to an assemblage of about 200 Indians,” insulting the chiefs who had signed the latest land treaties, “daring them to come out of doors, telling them they were not Chiefs.” A witness put it more vividly: the St. Joseph Indians “despatched two of their war Chiefs, Ashkum and Ship-she-naw-a-no, followed by about three hundred young Indians,” who stood the two men on a big box in front of the agent’s house to speak. DOCUMENTED

It is the only time the record lets us hear him, even at second hand. The man it shows is not a heartbroken old exile. He is a war chief in his prime, speaking for the St. Joseph Potawatomi, standing on a box in front of a crowd and telling the treaty chiefs they had no right to sell the land. READING

PART III

Alive in 1841

Five years later the name turns up again, more than five hundred miles to the west, and it turns up early in the very year the plaque gives for his death. On 3 February 1841, at Potawatamie Creek on the Osage River, in what is now eastern Kansas, the chiefs and warriors of the Potawatomi "who lately emigrated from Indiana & Michigan" sent a letter to the Secretary of War. One of their number, Mucka moat, had gone off to Washington with a government man, the Rev. Isaac Ketchum, and they wanted Washington to know he did not speak for them. Twenty-seven men put their names to it. The sixth in the right-hand column is "Ship she wah no." DOCUMENTED ✦ NEW FINDING



Hon J. R. Poinsett Sec'y of War — Potawatamie Creek — February 3 1841

Our Father

We the Chiefs and Warriors of the tribe of Potawatamie Indians who lately emigrated from Indiana & Michigan would most respectfully represent to you that Mucka moat and three others of our tribe have left us at our new homes on the Osage river in company with the Rev.d Mr Ketchum for Washington City these men have left here withouts the consent of the tribe or band to which they belong, we therefore take this means to inform our Father that these men are not considered by us as Chiefs and that they

POTAWATAMIE CREEK, 3 FEBRUARY 1841

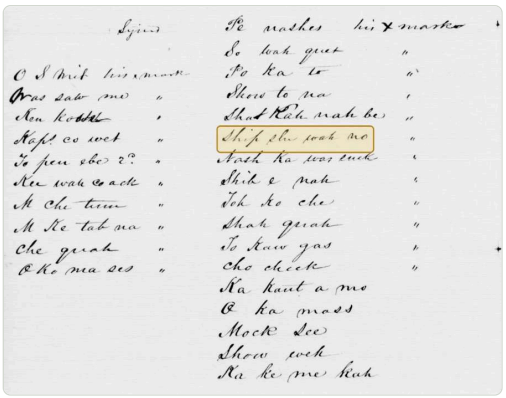
Hon J. R. Poinsett, Sec'y of War

Our Father

We the Chiefs and warriors of the tribe of Potawatamie Indians who lately emigrated from Indiana & Michigan would most respectfully represent to you that Mucka moat and three others of our tribe have left us at our new homes on the Osage river in company with the Revd. Mr. Ketchum for Washington City these men have left here without the consent of the tribe or band to which they belong, we therefore take this means to inform our Father that these men are not considered by us as Chiefs and that they are not authorized to transact business of any kind for the nation …

The opening of the letter. National Archives, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs (M234), roll 642, Osage River Agency, image 822. Public domain.

The complaint is a lively one. The four men had left "without the consent of the tribe or band to which they belong"; they "are not considered by us as Chiefs"; and "should they represent any thing to our Father at Washington to be the wish of the Potawatamies it is our wish they should not be heard." Worse, "it was not until several days after they left that we knew it was their purpose to go to Washington." DOCUMENTED



THE TWENTY-SEVEN NAMES

O S mit his mark · Was saw me · Ken kosh · Kaps co wet · To pen ebe 2d · Kee wah co ack · M che tum · M ke tab na · Che quah · O ko ma ses

Pe nashes his mark · So wah quet · Po ka to · Show to na · Shat kah nah be · Ship she wah no · Nash ka was uck · Shik e nah · Tok ko che · Shah quah · To kaw gas · Cho check · Ka kaut a mo · O ka mass · Mock see · Show wek · Ka ke me kah

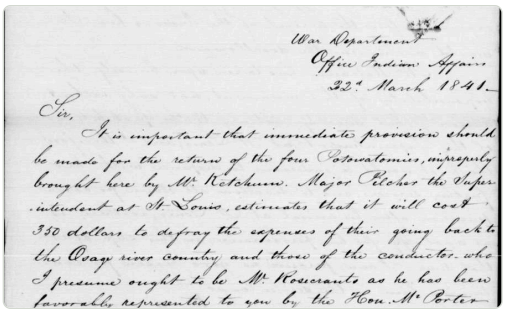
Spelling as written; the ditto marks after the first names stand for "his mark," and the last five names have none. Po ka to, and very likely Pe nashes, would sign again in November, under the petition.

The foot of the letter. M234, roll 642, image 823. Public domain. Highlight added.

Who were the signers? The sub-agent Anthony L. Davis, sending the letter on to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs five days later, said it "embraces the principal men of the late Emigrants with whom Meck E moote emigrated." DOCUMENTED Two parties of Potawatomi from northern Indiana and southern Michigan were removed to Kansas in the autumn of 1840: one of 524 people, removed under contract by Alexis Coquillard of South Bend, which arrived on 6 October and settled mostly at Sugar Creek; and one of about 439, conducted by Robert A. Forsyth, which arrived on 25 November and settled on Pottawatomie Creek. Mucka moat came with the second; a citizen was paid $100 for capturing him on the way. DOCUMENTED So if "Ship she wah no" was one of the principal men of that party, he came west not in 1838, as the plaque says, but in the late autumn of 1840. READING

> *"I am inclined to the opinion that he is not taken to Washington to express the wish of the people he is said to represent, but to serve individual purposes."*

Washington agreed with them. On 22 March 1841 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, T. Hartley Crawford, wrote to the new Secretary of War, John Bell, that "immediate provision should be made for the return of the four Potawatomies, improperly brought here by Mr. Ketchum." Ketchum, he wrote, had made the journey "not only without authority, but directly contrary to the prohibition of the Superintendent at St. Louis"; his bills from before the men reached Washington should be refused, and his services dispensed with. Major Joshua Pilcher, the superintendent at St. Louis, put the cost of the trip home to the Osage River country at $350, and Crawford named a Mr. Rosecrants of Michigan, recommended by Senator Porter, to take them. Bell wrote "Approved" at the foot. DOCUMENTED A note on the folder, in Crawford's hurried hand and hard to read in places, adds that the men were to leave with Pilcher, but one of them had "a sore and swollen thigh," and they set off instead on Sunday morning, 28 March 1841, under an arrangement with Ketchum himself. READING ✦ NEW FINDING



War Department
Office Indian Affairs
22d March 1841

Sir,

It is important that immediate provision should be made for the return of the four Potowatomies, improperly brought here by Mr Ketchum. Major Pilcher the Superintendent at St. Louis, estimates that it will cost 350 dollars to defray the expenses of their going back to the Osage river country and those of the conductor, who I presume ought to be Mr. Rosecrants as he has been favorably represented to you by the Hon. Mr. Porter of the Senate.

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, 22 MARCH 1841

Sir,

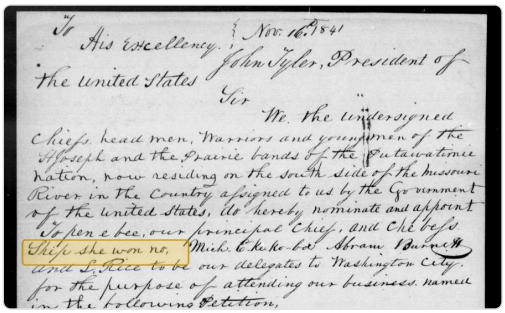
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T. Hartley Crawford to John Bell, Secretary of War. The letter ends on the next page with Crawford's signature and Bell's "Approved."

Sending the four men home. M234, roll 642, images 523–524; the folder note, image 522. Public domain.

Hold on to that complaint. By the end of the year the bands on the Osage River would send a delegation of their own to Washington, and this time they made sure the record showed that the whole tribe agreed. READING

Nine months later the name turns up again, on a bigger errand. In the autumn of 1841 the St. Joseph and Prairie bands of the Potawatomi were living on the Osage River, in what is now eastern Kansas. On 16 November their chiefs, head men, warriors and young men signed a petition to President John Tyler and chose six men to carry it to Washington. The third name on the list of delegates is "Ship she won no." DOCUMENTED ✦ NEW FINDING



To His Excellency } Nov. 16th 1841
John Tyler, President of
The United States

Sir

We the undersigned
Chiefs, head men, Warriors and youngmen of the
Aposepk and the Prairie bands of the Putawatimie
Nation, now residing on the south side of the Missouri
River in the Country assigned to us by the Government
of the United States, do hereby nominate and appoint
To pen e bee, our principal Chief, and Che bess
Ship she won no. Mich. E ke ko-ba Abram Burnett
and L. Rice to be our delegates to Washington City,
for the purpose of attending our business named
in the following Petition,

THE PETITION, 16 NOVEMBER 1841: THE OPENING

To His Excellency, John Tyler, President of the United States } Nov. 16th 1841

Sir

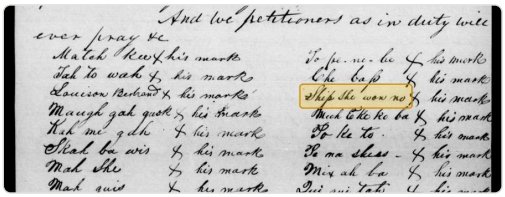
We the undersigned Chiefs, head men, Warriors and young men of the St Joseph and the Prairie bands of the Putawatimie nation, now residing on the south side of the Missouri River in the Country assigned to us by the Government of the United States, do hereby nominate and appoint To pen e bee, our principal Chief, and Che bess. Ship she won no, Mich. E ke ko-ba Abram Burnett and L. Rice to be our delegates to Washington City, for the purpose of attending our business named in the following Petition,

The opening of the petition, as written by its clerk. National Archives, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs (M234), roll 642, Osage River Agency, image 518. Public domain. Highlight added.

The petition is a plain and practical document. The bands had lived in the West "four years," it says, "under peculiar circumstances, and in a condition, unknown to our people, previous to our

emigration here from our native lands." They asked for "a portion of that one hundred and fifty thousand dollars" promised at Chicago in 1833, "for the purpose of building horse or ox Mills in our own Country, to open farms and to buy some live stock." They complained that the Osages and Kansas "have repeatedly stolen our horses," and they wanted back the money kept out of their annuities in 1838 and 1839 "without their Knowledge." DOCUMENTED

> *"they need it now; for their help and encouragements in their new homes."*



THE SIGNERS: THE HEAD OF THE RIGHT-HAND COLUMN

To pe ne be × his mark

Che bass × his mark

Ship She won no × his mark

Mich E ke ko ba × his mark

Po ke to × his mark

Pe na shess [?] × his mark

Mix ah ba × his mark

The four delegates who signed by mark lead the column, in the order the petition named them. Each man made his mark, an X, and the clerk wrote "his mark" beside it.

The marks under the petition. M234, roll 642, image 519. Public domain. Highlight added.

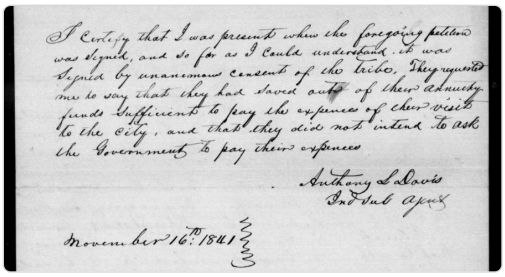


Mah ah que	his mark	Mauk sa	his mark
Men to waw be	his mark	Mas ma qua	his mark
Mo kah	his mark	Me gow kote	his mark
Shah sha quah	his mark	Kah taut	his mark
Wah waw suck	his mark	We se ah mo	his mark
Nash ka waw suck	his mark	Pam wa tuck	his mark
Shaw dance	his mark	Ka baw sa	his mark
Po sho	his mark	Ah saw wek	his mark
Shin O wek	his mark	Pat e que	his mark
Waub muck	his mark	No sha kum	his mark
Na che wek	his mark	Waup me me	his Mark
M Kit ah wa nins	his mark	Nah muck skuk	his mark
O Sibuck	his mark	Bowek	his mark
Kah ka wah	his mark	Shauk e to	his mark
Suck see	his mark	Mon e met	his mark
Kone gee	his mark	Po tosh	his mark
Wap ske ah	his mark	Pos kow we	his mark
Qua gin	his mark	Shah qwah	his mark
Wah pah pet	his mark	Skah on	his mark
Ke siss	his mark	K che ko chak	his mark
Mis e na saw	his mark	Chese pone	his mark
Auk nock sa	his mark	To pe ne be	his mark
Shin nah	his mark	To posh	his mark
Wag mah ka so	his mark	Kah kat mo	his mark
Che ques	his mark	She bon go	his mark
Muck ke	his mark	Suh gos ka	his mark
Shaw we	his mark	To kah gos	his mark
Kah bok skuk	his mark	Kit ah ba nah	his mark
Ask ke buck ke	his mark	Che quah	his mark
Pen kese	his mark	Mah ke	his mark
Mo nis	his mark	Pen skuck	his mark
Ap tah ke shick	his mark	Waub gah	his mark
Pem ko wek	his mark	Mo kes	his mark
Antwine	his mark	M She ka	his mark
On kote	his mark	Qui set	his mark
Saw waw quit	his mark	Pe E nesh	his mark
E twa ke shick	his mark	M Kow dah	his mark
Se saw wah	his mark	Kosh qua	his mark
Mo nee	his mark	Mah she nin	his mark

The petition continues: the second sheet of marks, 78 names. M234, roll 642, image 520. Public domain.

The marks do not stop at the foot of that page. The petition runs on to a second sheet, image 520, with two more full columns of names, each followed by an X and “his mark.” By our count, 27 men signed on the first page and 78 on the second: 105 marks in all, from the St. Joseph and the Prairie bands together. And just past halfway down the second sheet’s right-hand column the name To pe ne be appears again: the name of the principal chief, who heads the right-hand column of the first page. Either a second man carried the name or the same man made a second mark; the page does not say which, and it is one more reminder that in these records a name is not yet a person. DOCUMENTED

The man who wrote the government's certificate under it, the same sub-agent Anthony L. Davis, said the petition was signed "by unanimous consent of the tribe," and that the bands had saved enough from their own annuities to pay for the trip. This time, unlike Mucka moat in February, the delegates went with the tribe's consent on the record. DOCUMENTED



I Certify that I was present when the foregoing petition was signed, and so far as I could understand, it was signed by unanimous consent of the tribe, They requested me to say that they had saved out of their Annuity funds sufficient to pay the expences of their visit to the city, and that they did not intend to ask the Government to pay their expences

Anthony L Davis
Ind Sub Agt

November 16th 1841

THE SUB-AGENT'S CERTIFICATE

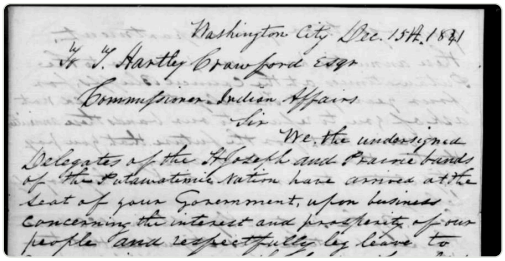
I Certify that I was present when the foregoing petition was signed, and so far as I could understand, it was signed by unanimous consent of the tribe, They requested me to say that they had saved out of their Annuity funds sufficient to pay the expences of their visit to the city, and that they did not intend to ask the Government to pay their expences

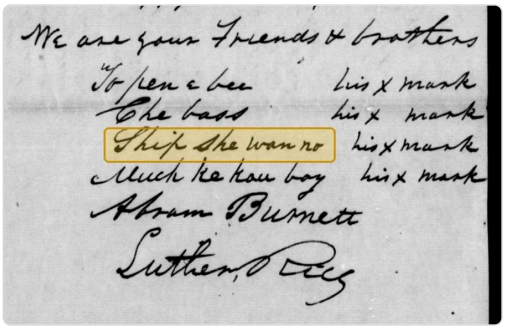
Anthony L Davis
Ind Sub Agt

November 16th 1841

The government's witness. M234, roll 642, image 521. Public domain.

A month later the delegates were in Washington. On 15 December they wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, T. Hartley Crawford, with three more points. A $2,000 annuity from the Chicago treaty, meant for their bands, had been paid "for four years past" to the Potawatomi at Council Bluffs. The iron and steel promised every year by "the Treaty at St Joseph in 1828" were "of no use to our people." And they asked fair shares for families who had joined them. At the foot of the letter, the clerk wrote "Ship she wan no," and beside it is his mark. DOCUMENTED





Washington City Dec. 15th 1841

To T. Hartley Crawford Esqr,
Commissioner Indian Affairs

Sir

We the undersigned Delegates of the St Joseph and Prairie bands of the Putawatimie Nation have arrived at the seat of your Government, upon business concerning the interest and prosperity of our people …

We are your Friends & brothers

To pen e bee his x mark
Che bass his x mark
Ship she wan no his x mark
Much ke kau boy his x mark
Abram Burnett
Luther Rice

THE LETTER, WASHINGTON, 15 DECEMBER 1841

Washington City Dec. 15th 1841

To T. Hartley Crawford Esqr,
Commissioner Indian Affairs

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We are your Friends & brothers

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Abram Burnett
Luther Rice

The head and foot of the delegates' letter. M234, roll 642, images 515 and 516. Public domain. Highlight added.

Is this our man? The record cannot quite say. The name is the same, spelled as clerks spelled it, and so is the band: the St. Joseph Potawatomi, the band the war chief spoke for in 1836. The delegates

even cite the 1828 treaty at St. Joseph, the treaty Ship-she-wa-non signed. READING No document yet ties the man of 1828 to the man of 1841 by more than his name and his band. OPEN

But if they are one man, the plaque's story cannot stand. In the very year it has him dying of a broken heart by the lake, he was on the Osage River, and then in Washington, talking to the government about mills, horses and money owed to his people. READING

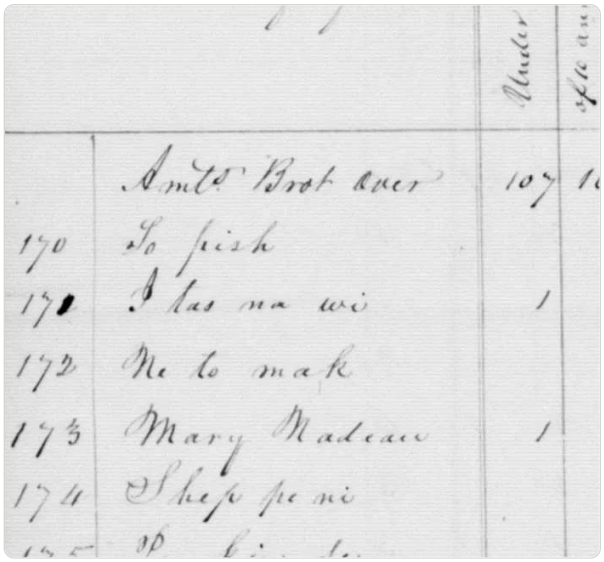
PART IV

Still there in 1842

The records do not let him go. Following instructions from the superintendent at St. Louis, dated 22 August 1842, on 12 October 1842 Anthony L. Davis took a muster roll of the Potawatomi of the Osage River, page after page of heads of families, each with the number of males and females in the house, young and old. DOCUMENTED Somewhere on those pages is our name. Before you read on, see if you can find it.

SPOT THE CHIEF

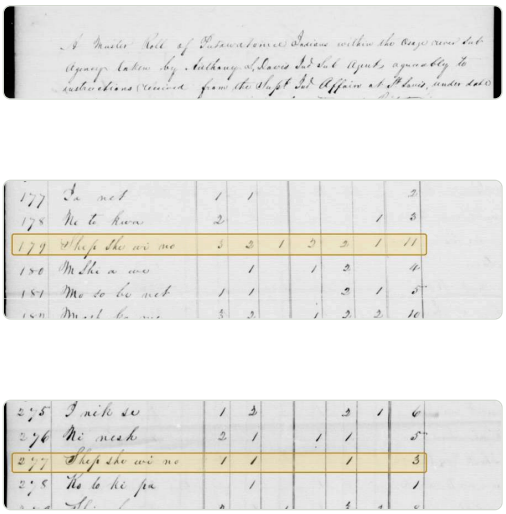
This is the whole names column of one page of the 1842 roll, heads of families 170 to 197, as Davis's clerk wrote them. One of them is our name. Can you find him before you open the answer? Watch out: there is a decoy.



▸ **Show me where he is**

M234, roll 642, image 686, the names column. Public domain. Highlight added.

There he is. Number 179 is "Shep She wi no," with a household of eleven: a man over forty, a woman over forty, four people between ten and forty, and five children. Number 277 is another "Shep she wi no," a younger man with one woman and one boy. DOCUMENTED ✦ NEW FINDING



THE COUNT OF 12 OCTOBER 1842

A Muster Roll of Putawatomie Indians within the Osage river Sub Agency taken by Anthony L. Davis Ind Sub Agent agreeably to instructions received from the Supt. Ind. Affairs at St. Louis under date of the 22nd day of August 1842, this 12th day of October 1842

No. 179, Shep She wi no: males under 10, three; from 10 to 40, two; over 40, one. Females under 10, two; from 10 to 40, two; over 40, one. In all, eleven.

No. 277, Shep she wi no: a boy under 10, a man from 10 to 40, a woman from 10 to 40. In all, three.

The heading, and the two families of the name. M234, roll 642, images 680, 686 and 689. Public domain. Highlight added.

Two heads of family, one name. The older man, with his large household, fits a chief who had been signing treaties since 1828; the younger could be a son or a nephew who carried the name on. READING But the roll gives only names and numbers, and it does not say which of them, if either, is the man of the treaties, the delegate of 1841, or the chief of the lake. OPEN

Old friends are on the same pages: number 116, Abram Burnett; number 131, “To pe ne be”; number 190, “Po ko to”; and number 209, Luther Rice, the “L. Rice” of the petition. DOCUMENTED Whatever else is true, the chief the plaque buried by the lake in 1841 has a name still being written on a government roll in Kansas a year after the plaque’s date for his death. READING



Where the name is found in the record, 1828 to 1842. Point 5, the Osage River, holds three records: February 1841, November 1841 and October 1842. The dashed line joins the records in date order; it is not a route anyone is known to have travelled. The cross marks the lake where the 1931 plaque has him die in 1841, the same year in which a chief of the name signed papers in Kansas and in Washington.

For teachers: “Alive in 1841?”, a two-page classroom handout on the petition (PDF) › (projectscroll.com/classrooms/shipshewana-1841-petition.pdf)

PART V

What his days were like

No one wrote down a day in Shipshewana's life. But the county's oldest history, written in 1882 from the memories of the first settlers, describes the world he moved through. READING

His people's "deeply cut trails ran through the woods, taking the best courses, and never missing the beaver dams, in every direction, so that the settlers had to blaze their road in order not to wander off on the wrong track." They hunted alongside the newcomers. Deer, turkeys and bears were plentiful, and bees so thick that one hunter cut sixteen wild hives in a day. In spring, families went to the sugar bush to boil maple sap; settlers once found a sugar trough left behind by a White Pigeon party below Van Buren. Even after the removals, the history says, Potawatomi families came back "to exchange venison and cranberries for the pioneers' extra potatoes and flour." DOCUMENTED

Put those lines beside the treaty records and a year in the life of a Potawatomi leader of the 1820s and 1830s comes into focus: the spring maple sugaring, the summer villages and cornfields, the autumn journey south to the treaty grounds and the payments, the winter hunting camps, and always the trails between the lakes. A chief's work was talking: in council, at the treaties, at the payments, and, as the 1836 report shows, in front of a crowd. READING

PART VI

When did he die?

Here the stories part company.

The 1882 history says the chief is "said to be buried somewhere on the banks of the lake" and adds, plainly: "The old chief died some time prior to the settlement." The first settlers came to the north part of the township in 1834. DOCUMENTED

> *"The old chief died some time prior to the settlement."*

The 1931 plaque says he was removed in 1838, came back in 1839 and died in 1841. We searched the county and state histories of 1874, 1882, 1893, 1908 and 1920, and found the return and the 1841 death in none of them. The earliest telling we have found is the plaque itself, unveiled in 1931. ✦ NEW FINDING

Where did the 1931 story come from? An account of the monument, printed in 1932 from the Shipshewana Handbook and the Elkhart *Truth*, gives the answer its committee had. "Little if anything is of record concerning Chief Shipshewana," it admits. Older residents remembered what they had heard "from the lips of Johnny Thorp," a white man who had joined Shipshewana's band when young, gone with it to Kansas, come back with the chief, and settled a few miles east of the town; he died about 1896, aged more than eighty. "What is recalled of Thorp's reminiscences seems to be about all there is of available history." DOCUMENTED So the plaque rests on memories of memories, written down more than thirty years after the man who held them had died. READING

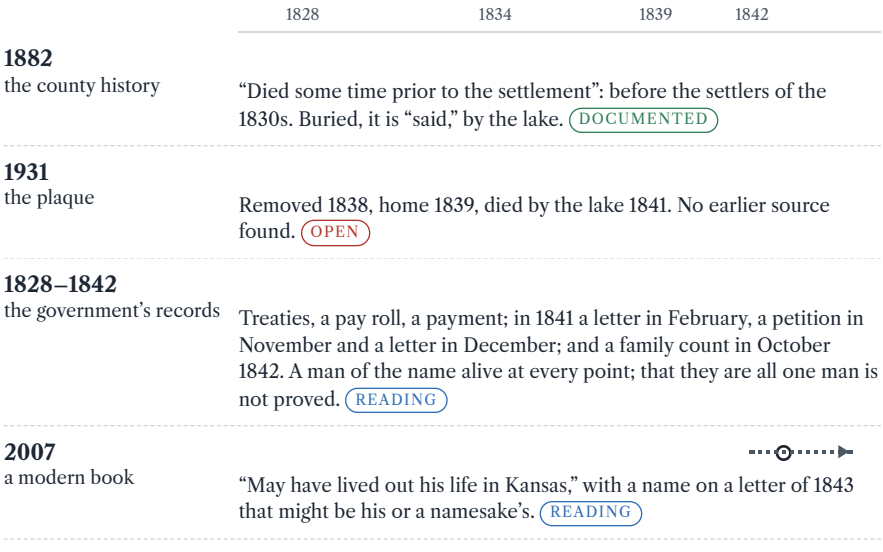
The plaque's date is a clue too. On 4 September 1838, soldiers marched the Potawatomi of Chief Menominee's village from Twin Lakes, near Plymouth, toward Kansas, the removal remembered as the Trail of Death. DOCUMENTED The muster rolls of that march, as transcribed, list no one named Shipshewana. DOCUMENTED The 1931 committee seems to have borrowed the best-known date of removal in northern Indiana. READING Later county writers put the La Grange removal in 1837 instead, and a researcher of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation wrote in 1995 that she believed she had found the chief's name on a roll of a party that left the South Bend area on 17 August 1840. READING We have not found that roll. The letter of February 1841 tells a slightly different story: it puts a "Ship she wah no" among "the principal men" of the party that came with

Mucka moat, the second removal of that autumn. DOCUMENTED Either way, the year is 1840, not 1838. READING

And then there are the records of 1841. Alan McPherson's *Notable American Indians* (2007) first reported that the National Archives held two letters sent from Kansas in November and December 1841, signed by a chief of the name, and he wondered whether the chief "actually may have lived out his life in Kansas." DOCUMENTED The petition and the Washington letter above match his dates. READING His summary differs in one point: he wrote that one of the letters objected to the sale of Indiana lands, and in the pages we have read neither does. READING Put the four answers side by side and they cannot all be true.

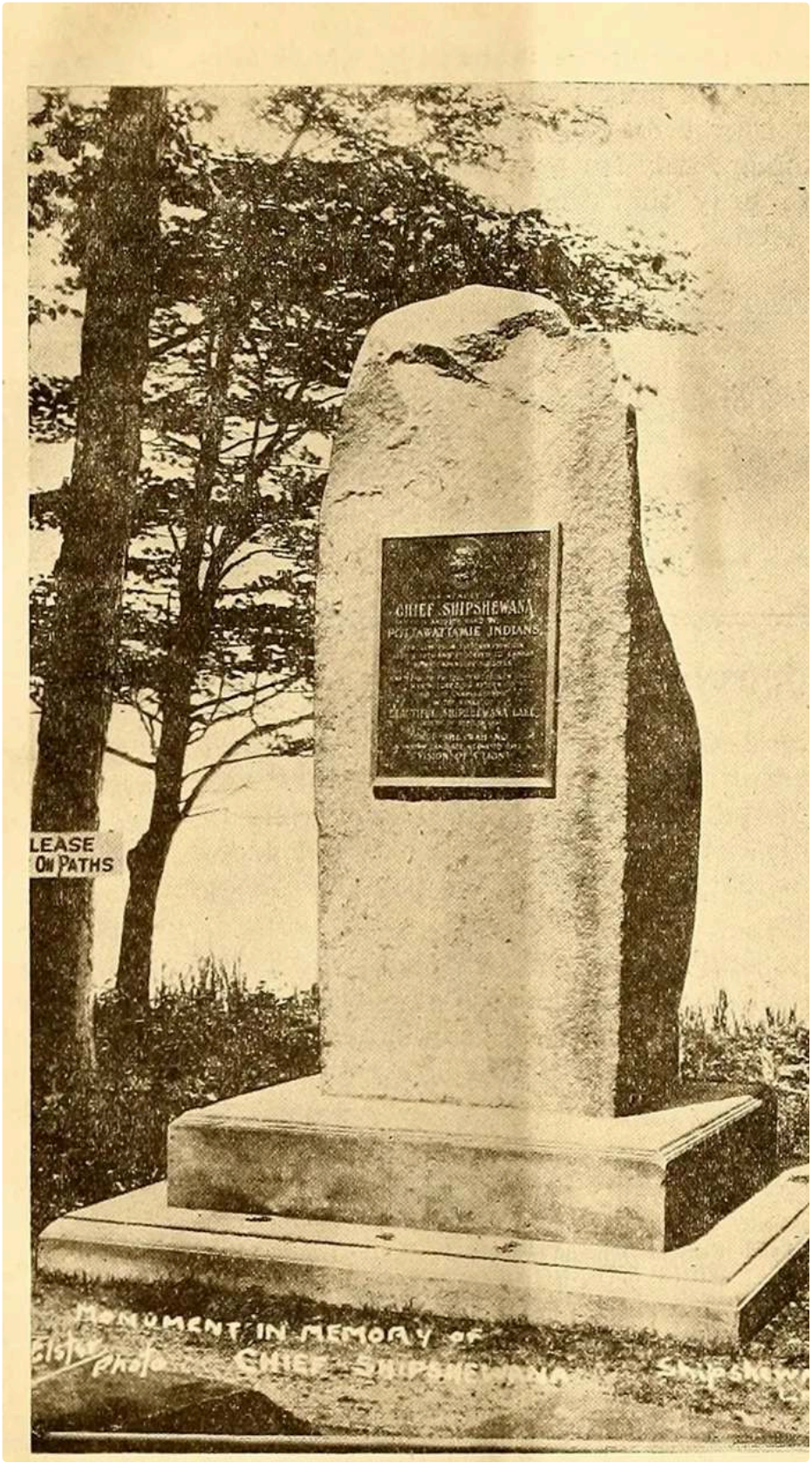
One chief, four endings

What each source says became of him, on one time line, 1826 to 1846. The plaque's death falls between two of the government's records.



PART VII

The monument of 1931



The boulder monument soon after its dedication, from *The Brethren Evangelist*, 2 July 1932, p. 11. Internet Archive. Public domain.

The monument was the work of the Shipshewana Chamber of Commerce, which had talked about it for years. The boulder came from the Deeter farm east of Brighton. Its owner had offered it free to anyone who could move it, and no one would, until the Chamber heard of it. Mel Weaver of Scott and his house-moving crew took three days to bring its eight or nine tons to the lake, and Jonathan Farver set it on its base for nothing. The Brethren camp association gave the triangle of ground at the entrance to its campgrounds; an artesian fountain bubbled in a pool at the foot of the mound. DOCUMENTED

The Improved Order of Red Men, a fraternal society of white men, conducted the unveiling. R. L. Case spoke on the area's Indian history. But the speaker people remembered was Potawatomi: the Rev. William Soney of Algonac, Michigan, minister to a Potawatomi congregation, who preached in the Brethren tabernacle the following Sunday as well. Dalby of South Bend showed his collection of Indian relics, and Memorial Day, Saturday, 30 May, was proclaimed Chief Shipshewana Day. DOCUMENTED

The marker that stands by the lake today, erected in 2003, repeats the 1931 words almost exactly. DOCUMENTED

PART VIII

Plaque or record?

Six things people say about Shipshewana, most of them from the 1931 plaque. Make your call on each, true, false or no record, and see what the record says.

Chief Shipshewana and his band were "removed from this reservation September 4, 1838."

NO RECORD

No record found. 4 September 1838 is the day the march remembered as the Trail of Death left Twin Lakes, and no Shipshewana is on its rolls as transcribed.

A year later "the heartbroken chief" was allowed to come home to the lake.

NO RECORD

No record found before 1931. The county atlases and histories of 1874 to 1920 do not tell it; the earliest telling found is the plaque itself.

He died on the banks of Shipshewana Lake in 1841.

NO RECORD, AND GOOD REASON TO DOUBT IT

On 3 February 1841 a "Ship she wah no" signed a letter in Kansas; on 16 November a chief named Ship she won no signed his band's petition there, and on 15 December he made his mark on a letter in Washington. In October 1842 two heads of family of the name were counted on the Osage River. If he is the chief of the plaque, he did not die by the lake that year. The 1882 county history, for its part, has the old chief dead before the settlers came.

A Potawatomi chief named Shipshewana signed treaties with the United States.

TRUE

True. Ship-she-wa-non made his mark on the treaty of 1828 at the Carey Mission, and signed again in 1832 and 1833.

The lake carried his name long before the town did.

TRUE

The meaning "Vision of a Lion" came from a Potawatomi speaker.

TRUE

True. A county road ran “to the Shipshewana Saw-mill” in 1839, fifty years before the town was platted.

True. Thomas Topash gave it to J. P. Dunn, who printed it in 1908. A linguist has since read the name as “great-cat-den-place.”

PART IX

“Vision of a Lion”

The plaque ends with a translation: “SHUP-SHE-WAH-NO in Indian language means ‘VISION OF A LION.’” The committee found it through H. J. Bontrager, whose letters went from Indiana University to Columbia, to the Smithsonian, and finally to a book on the shelf back home: Jacob Piatt Dunn’s *True Indian Stories* (1908). DOCUMENTED

Dunn had it from Thomas Topash, a Potawatomi of the Lake Wawasee country and a grandson of the chief Wawasee. Topash said the name was properly Shup’-she-wah’-no. *Shup-she*, he explained, was a fierce wild beast with a big head and mane. When Dunn objected that there were no lions in Indiana, Topash answered that the people “see everything in their vision.” DOCUMENTED

Topash’s first word holds up: a Prairie Band Potawatomi word list gives *shupshe*, “lion (cougar).” The cougar, the great cat of the eastern woods, fits a name far older than any lion seen in America. READING The second half is less certain. A linguist’s analysis, published in William Bright’s *Native American Placenames of the United States* (2004), reads the lake’s name instead as “great-cat-den-place,” a place name rather than a vision. DOCUMENTED Was the lake named for the man, or the man for a place? For now, Topash is the only Potawatomi speaker on record, and his reading is the one the town chose to carry. OPEN

> *“They see everything in their vision.”*

PART X

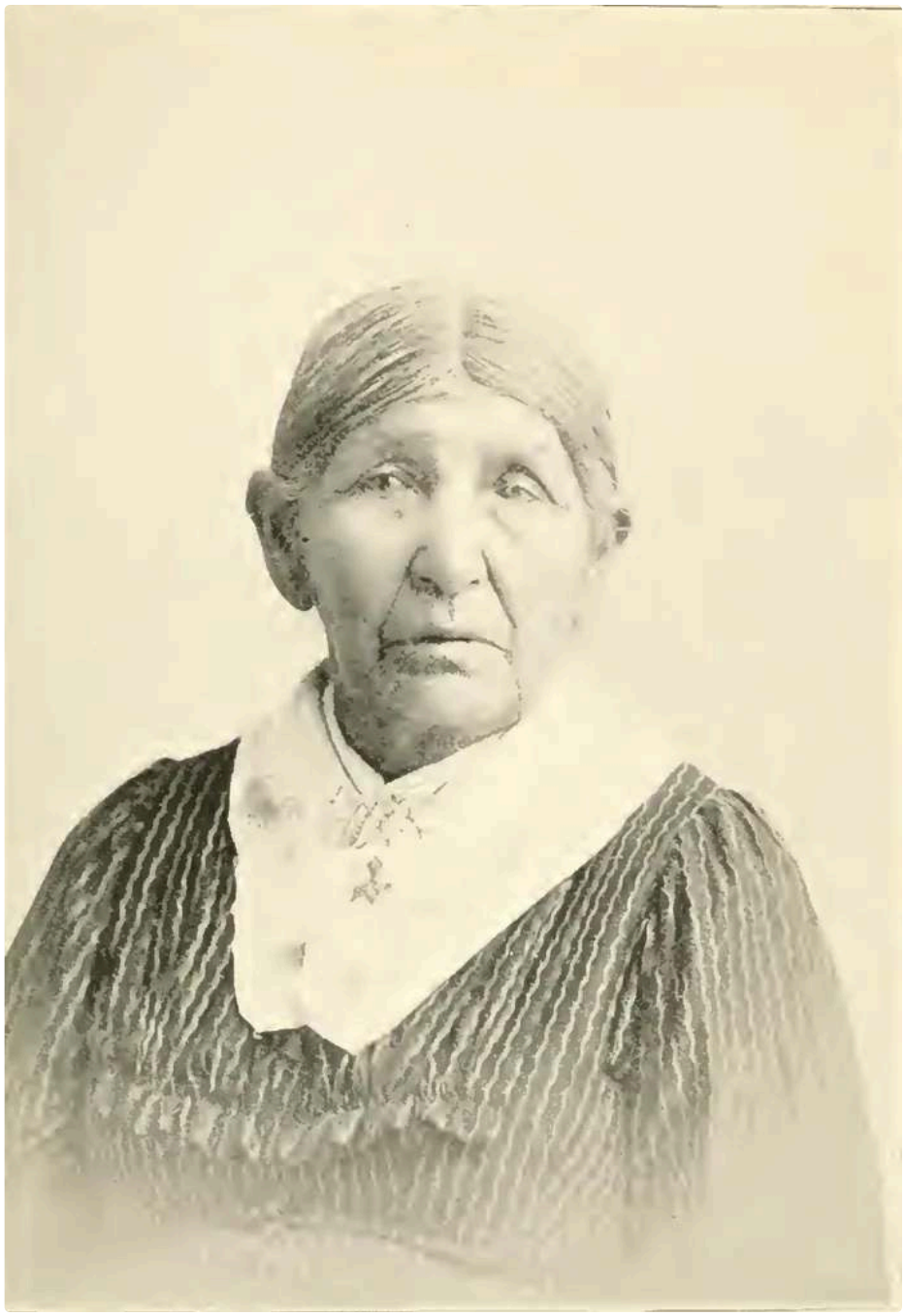
One name, more than one person

Here is the part of the story most people never hear.

The name Shipshewana in the record

THE NAME AS WRITTEN	WHO	WHEN	SOURCE
Ship-she-wa-non (1828), Ship-shee-won no (1829), Ship-she-wa-no (1832), Ship-she-wuh-no (1833), Ship-she-wa-eno (1836)	The treaty chief; a war chief at the payment of 1836	1828–1836	Treaties; 1829 pay roll; Edmonds report, 1837
Ship she wah no	One of “the principal men” of the Potawatomi removed to Kansas in November 1840	February 1841	Letter from Potawatamie Creek, National Archives (M234, roll 642)
Ship she won no, Ship she wan no	A chief of the St. Joseph band and a delegate to Washington; whether he is the treaty chief is not proved	November and December 1841	Petition and letter, National Archives (M234, roll 642)

THE NAME AS WRITTEN	WHO	WHEN	SOURCE
Shep she wi no (twice)	Two heads of family on the Osage River: a man over forty with a household of eleven, and a younger man with a household of three	October 1842	Muster roll, National Archives (M234, roll 642)
“The old chief”	The lake’s chief in the settlers’ memory, said to be buried by the lake	Died before the settlers of the 1830s	County history, 1882
Mrs. Angelina Shipshewana	Potawatomi woman of the Crumstown neighborhood	Born 1821	McDonald, 1899
Edward Shipshewana; Peter Ship-she-wa-no	A family that went on to Kansas and Oklahoma	Peter born 1860; on the 1887 roll	Citizen Potawatomi Nation; allotment roll, 1887
Shup-She-Wa-No	A member of the Society of American Indians at Mayetta, Kansas, on the Prairie Band reservation	1913	The Society’s *Quarterly Journal*, 1913
Shupshewana, Shup-She	Howard L. LaHurreau, a 20th-century Fort Wayne writer who took the name	20th century	His own writings



Mrs. Angelina Shipshewana, born 1821, of the Crumstown neighborhood west of South Bend. Photograph in Daniel McDonald, *Removal of the Pottawattomie Indians from Northern Indiana* (Plymouth, 1899), facing p. 39. Internet Archive. Public domain.

A woman of the name. In 1899 a Plymouth historian, Daniel McDonald, printed the photograph of "Mrs. Angelina Shipshewana," a Potawatomi woman who "did not speak a word of English." She was born in 1821 and lived near Crumstown, in St. Joseph County, Indiana, sixty miles west of the lake. DOCUMENTED Born seven years before the 1828 treaty, she belonged to a Shipshewana family that stayed in Indiana when most were sent west. The photograph has been in print for more than 125 years, but in no account of the town's namesake that we have found is her name set beside the chief's. ✦ NEW FINDING

A family that went west. The Citizen Potawatomi Nation of Oklahoma honors the Wano family, whose name, it says, "stemmed from the elusive Chief Edward Shipshewana," the son of Pam-mon-ke-duck, Wandering Boy. Edward and his wife Zoa had a son, Peter Shipshewano, born in 1860, and the family's story "spread through Indiana, Kansas and eventually Oklahoma." DOCUMENTED On the Citizen Potawatomi allotment roll of 1887, Peter Ship-she-wa-no, aged 28, is listed with a second

name, Pah-mah-mka-quk, the name the family history gives his grandfather. Ellen, Passo and Gabe Ship-she-wa-no are on the roll too. DOCUMENTED A man who had a son in 1860 was probably a generation younger than the chief who signed in 1828. He may have been his son or nephew, carrying the name on. READING

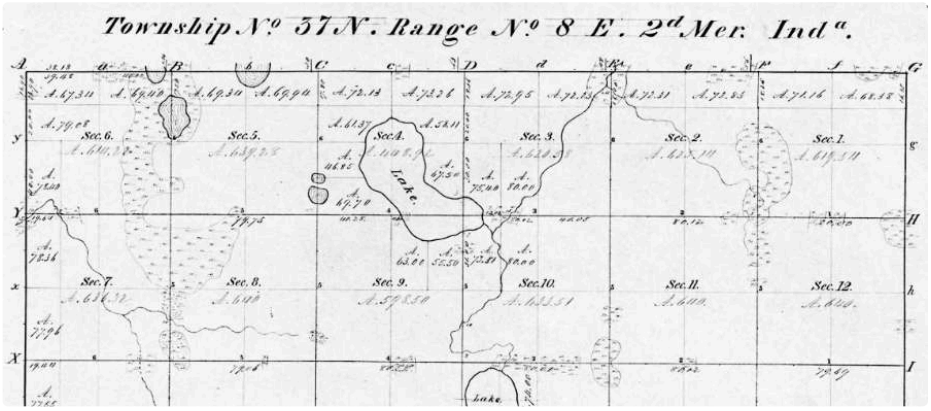
A name that stayed in Kansas. In 1913 a "Shup-She-Wa-No" of Mayetta, Kansas, on the Prairie Band reservation, was listed as a member of the Society of American Indians. DOCUMENTED

A man who took the name. In the 20th century a Fort Wayne man, Howard L. LaHurreau, who wrote and spoke on Potawatomi history, signed himself "Shupshewana" and "Shup-She." DOCUMENTED So when a history of 2001 credits "the Potawatomi elder Shup-Shewana" with dating an ancient council to A.D. 796, it is not quoting the chief of the lake. READING

And the two at the heart of it: the lake's chief, who in the 1882 history died before the settlers came, and the treaty chief, a war chief alive and speaking in 1836, and under the same name a delegate of his band in Kansas and Washington in 1841. They may be one man whose death the settlers got wrong, or two men, an older and a younger, under one name. The record so far allows both. READING

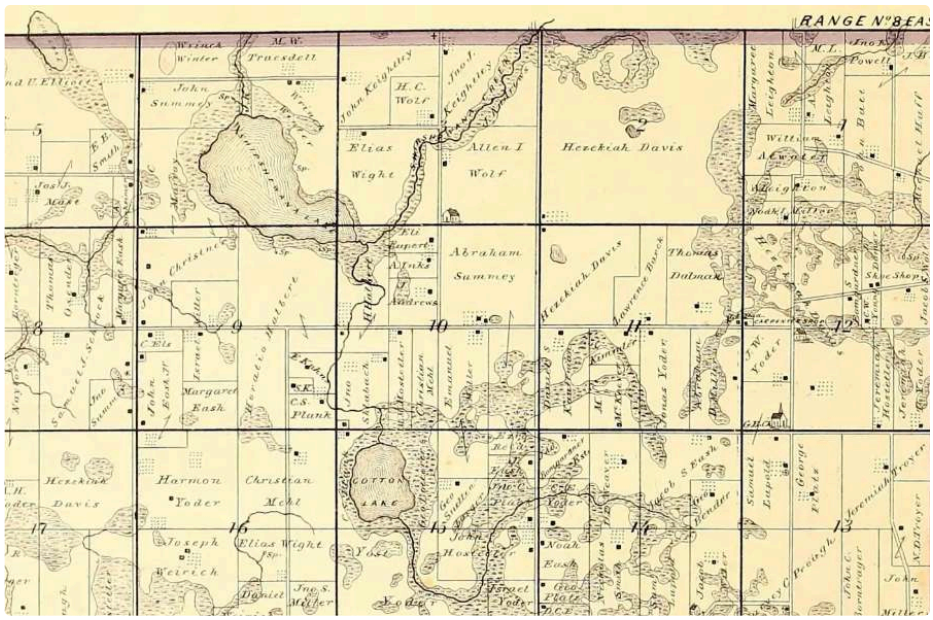
PART XI

How the town got the name



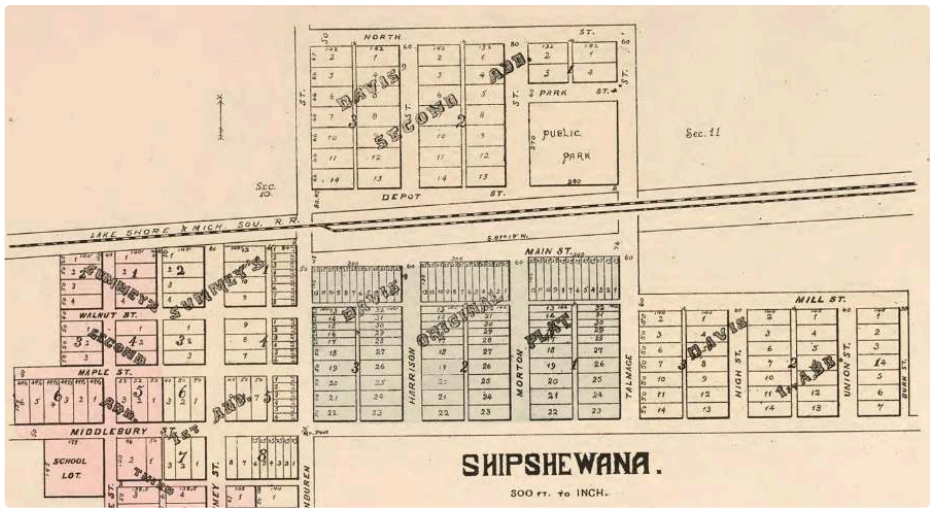
No name yet: Shipshewana Lake is simply "Lake." in the government survey of 1830, Township 37 North, Range 8 East (copy certified at Detroit, 1849). Indiana State Archives, via the Internet Archive. Public domain.

When the government surveyor A. St. C. Vance walked the township in 1830, he drew the lake in Sections 4 and 9 and wrote one word in it: "Lake." DOCUMENTED Within a few years the settlers had a name for it. Andrews and West built a dam and saw-mill on its outlet in 1835, and in the county commissioners' road records of 1839 a new road runs "to the Shipshewana Saw-mill in Sec. 3." That is the earliest dated use of the name for a place in La Grange County that we have found, thirty-five years before the name was printed on a map. ✦ NEW FINDING

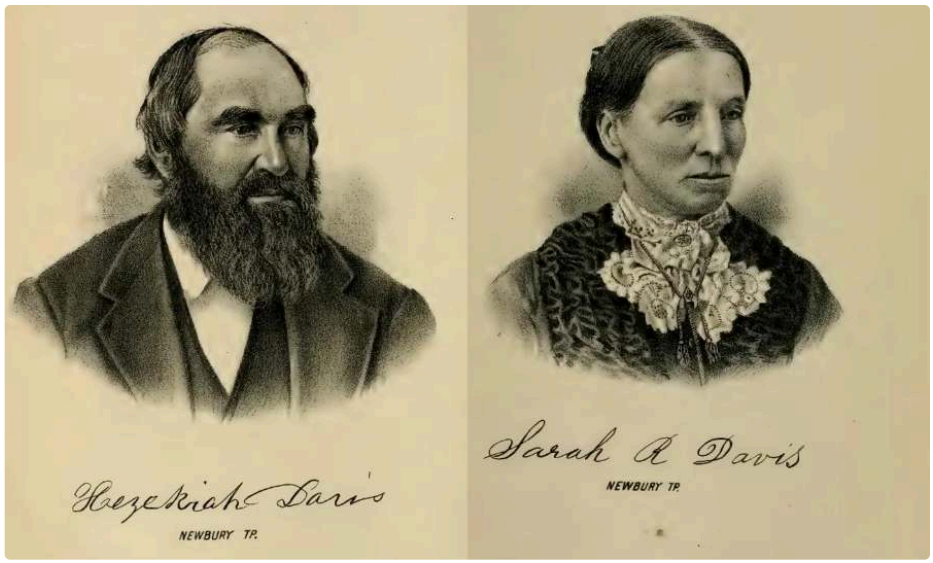


"Shipshewana Lake" and "Shipshewana Creek" on the map of Newbury Township in the county atlas of 1874. Hezekiah Davis already owns land to the east; the town that would take the lake's name is fifteen years away. *Illustrated Historical Atlas of La Grange County* (1874), p. 30. Internet Archive. Public domain.

For fifty years after that, Shipshewana was a lake, a creek and a mill, with farms around it. Then, in 1888, a railroad came through. Hezekiah Davis, who had come to the county as a boy in the 1830s and owned 1,400 acres by the end of his life, laid out a town beside the tracks, and the plat was recorded on 18 January 1889. DOCUMENTED A marker put up in 2000 by the town and the Davis and Summey descendants says the new town was named to honor the chief, and the town's own history adds that it was Hezekiah's wife, Sarah, who chose the name. DOCUMENTED We have not yet found Sarah's part in a source older than these. OPEN



Shipshewana four years old: the plat in the *Illustrated Atlas and Columbian Souvenir of La Grange County* (1893), with Davis's original plat, Summey's additions and the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad. Internet Archive. Public domain.



The town's founders, seven years before they platted it: Hezekiah Davis and Sarah R. Davis of Newbury Township, engraved portraits in *Counties of La Grange and Noble, Indiana* (1882). Internet Archive. Public domain.

How the railroad made the town, and the town nearly lost it, is the story of Part 2 (projectscroll.com/news/the-railroad-that-made-shipshewana/).

PART XII

The name, year by year

1828	"Ship-she-wa-non" signs the treaty at the Carey Mission.
1829	"Ship-shee-won no, head of Tippecanoe," 27 people, on the pay roll.
1830	The surveyor marks the lake: just "Lake."
1832–33	Signs again, on the Tippecanoe River and at Chicago.
1836	A war chief with Ashkum at the annuity payment.
1839	A county road runs to "the Shipshewana Saw-mill."
1840	Two removal parties from northern Indiana and southern Michigan reach the Potawatomi lands in Kansas, 6 October and 25 November.
1841	"Ship she wah no" signs the emigrants' letter on the Osage River, 3 February. "Ship she won no" signs his band's petition, 16 November, and makes his mark in Washington, 15 December.
1842	Two heads of family named "Shep she wi no" on the Osage River muster roll, 12 October.
18 YEARS LATER	
1860	Peter Shipshewano is born, son of Edward and Zoa.
1874	"Shipshewana Lake" printed on a county map.
1882	The county history: the old chief "died some time prior to the settlement."
1889	Hezekiah Davis's town plat is recorded.
1899	Mrs. Angelina Shipshewana's portrait is printed.
1908	Thomas Topash tells J. P. Dunn the name means "Vision of a Lion."
1913	A "Shup-She-Wa-No" of Mayetta, Kansas, joins the Society of American Indians.

18 YEARS LATER

1931 The boulder monument and the story of the 1839 return.

72 YEARS LATER

2003 A new marker repeats the 1931 words.

PART XIII

The Potawatomi today

DOCUMENTED The removals did not end the Potawatomi story in this country. Some families, like Angelina Shipshewana's, never left; others went west, and some came back. The fifteen or twenty Potawatomi who came to the dedication in 1931 came down from Athens, Michigan, near the Pine Creek reservation that Chief Moguago bought in 1845, today the home of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi.

DOCUMENTED Today there are Potawatomi nations in Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Kansas and Oklahoma, and First Nations in Ontario. The Shipshewana name is still carried in Oklahoma, by the Citizen Potawatomi family that traces itself to Chief Edward Shipshewana.

PART XIV

Why it matters

None of this takes anything away from the 1931 monument. The people who raised it wanted to honor a Potawatomi leader in the place that still bears his name, and they asked Potawatomi people to come and speak. That was more than most towns did. But a monument can only carry what its makers knew, and they knew, by their own account, very little.

The record knows more. It knows a war chief who stood up at the payment of 1836, a chief of his name who went to Washington for his people in 1841, and a family of eleven under that name on a government roll in 1842. It knows a woman born near South Bend in 1821, and a family that carried the name to Kansas and Oklahoma and carries it still. The town's name belongs to all of them.

✦ NEW FINDING **WHAT'S NEW HERE**

The story that Chief Shipshewana was removed in 1838, came home in 1839 and died by the lake in 1841 is found in no source before the monument plaque of 1931. The county history of 1882 says instead that "the old chief died some time prior to the settlement"; the 1931 committee's own account says its history came from the remembered stories of Johnny Thorp, who had died about 1896.

Found by Michael Urbanski, Project Scroll, 26 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

The lake now called Shipshewana was only "Lake" on the government survey of 1830, but by 1839 the La Grange County commissioners were laying out a road "to the Shipshewana Saw-mill in Sec. 3": the earliest dated use of the name for a place in the county that we have found, 35 years before it was printed on a map.

Found by Michael Urbanski, Project Scroll, 26 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

At least four people have carried the name Shipshewana: the chief of the treaties of 1828–33; Mrs. Angelina Shipshewana, a Potawatomi woman born in 1821 near Crumstown, Indiana, whose photograph Daniel McDonald printed in 1899; Edward Shipshewana, whose son Peter (born 1860) was on the Citizen Potawatomi allotment roll of 1887; and a

20th-century writer, Howard L. LaHurreau, who took the name. No account of the town's namesake that we found sets them side by side.

Found by Michael Urbanski , Project Scroll, 26 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

A chief named "Ship she won no," of the St. Joseph band of the Potawatomi, signed his band's petition to President John Tyler on the Osage River in Kansas on 16 November 1841, as one of six delegates, and made his mark on the delegates' letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington on 15 December 1841: the year the 1931 plaque has Chief Shipshewana die by the lake. A 2007 book reported letters of those months without saying where they were; we found them on National Archives microfilm M234, roll 642, images 515–521, and read them on the page images. Whether the delegate is the treaty chief of 1828 is not proved.

Found by Michael Urbanski , Project Scroll, 27 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

A "Ship she wah no" signed the letter of 3 February 1841 from Potawatamie Creek, on the Osage River in Kansas, in which the chiefs and warriors of the Potawatomi "who lately emigrated from Indiana & Michigan" told the Secretary of War that Mucka moat and three others had gone to Washington without their consent. The sub-agent Anthony L. Davis wrote that the signers were "the principal men of the late Emigrants with whom Meck E moote emigrated," the party that reached Kansas on 25 November 1840. Louise Barry summarised the letter in 1963 with five of its signers; the name Ship she wah no is not among them, and we found the full list in no publication we searched. It is the earliest record yet found of the name in Kansas, in the year the 1931 plaque has the chief die by the lake.

Found by Michael Urbanski , Project Scroll, 27 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

How Mucka moat's unauthorized trip to Washington ended. On 22 March 1841 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, T. Hartley Crawford, told the Secretary of War, John Bell, that "immediate provision should be made for the return of the four Potowatomies, improperly brought here by Mr. Ketchum": $350 for the journey back to the Osage River country, with a Mr. Rosecrants of Michigan, recommended by Senator Porter, to conduct them. Crawford called the Rev. Isaac Ketchum's journey "directly contrary to the prohibition of the Superintendent at St. Louis" and advised that his further services be dispensed with; Bell wrote "Approved." A note on the folder adds, in a hand hard to read, that one of the men had a sore and swollen thigh and that the party left on Sunday, 28 March 1841. We found no published account of how the journey ended in the searches we made.

New documentation · Found by Michael Urbanski , Project Scroll, 28 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

The muster roll of the Potawatomi of the Osage River Sub Agency, taken by Anthony L. Davis on 12 October 1842, lists two heads of family named "Shep she wi no": no. 179, a man over forty with a household of eleven, and no. 277, a younger man with a household of three. The name was still answering a government count in Kansas a year after the plaque's date for the chief's death. Which of them, if either, is the treaty chief is not proved.

Found by Michael Urbanski , Project Scroll, 27 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

A **new finding** is a fact found in a primary source that we could not find in any published history, article or website we searched. Credit: Michael Urbanski, Project Scroll. If you know of an earlier publication, tell us and we will say so here. All our discoveries › (projectscroll.com/discoveries/)

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Numbers in the text point to this list; entries without a number are further sources we consulted. How we research › (projectscroll.com/how-we-research/) · The libraries behind all our stories › (projectscroll.com/sources/libraries/)

VISIT AND SEE

Chief Shipshewana memorial. The 1931 boulder and the 2003 marker, at the fork of the roads by the entrance to the old Brethren campgrounds on the south-east shore of Shipshewana Lake. The lake shore around it is private; please stay by the road. Directions › (https://www.google.com/maps/dir/?api=1&destination=County%20Roads%20N%20900%20W%20and%20N%20905%20W%2C

Shipshewana Lake. The lake the 1830 surveyor called only "Lake," a mile north-west of town. There is a public boat launch.

Directions › (https://www.google.com/maps/dir/?api=1&destination=Shipshewana%20Lake%2C%20LaGrange%20County%2C%20IN)

Public places only. Please respect private land and posted hours.

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Project Scroll is independent research and does not speak for any Potawatomi nation or other tribal nation. Potawatomi history on this page is drawn from the published record cited below, written largely by outsiders, and the nations' own accounts may differ.

▸ CORRECTIONS: NONE

ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

Research and reporting

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CORRECTIONS	Errors are corrected on the page, and each correction is noted there.
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SHIPSHEWANA · PART 2

The railroad that made Shipshewana

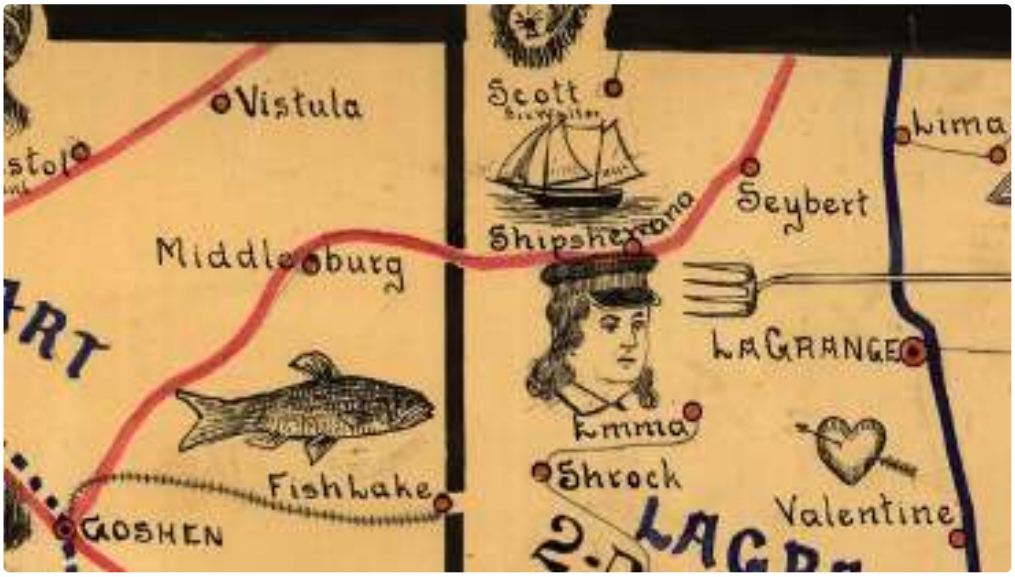
DISCOVERY · 4 NEW FINDINGS › | SERIES · 2 OF 3 › | GO SEE IT | 21 MIN READ

In 1888 a crooked little railroad called the Pumpkin Vine came through the farms of Newbury Township, and a town was laid out beside it. The company went broke within months, bank robbers rode its handcars, and a patent-medicine king built a second line. Part 2 of a series on Shipshewana, Indiana.

LIVE RESEARCH DOCUMENT

This story is part of a series still being researched. The Goshen, LaGrange and Sturgis newspapers of 1887–89 have not yet been searched; we will add what they show.

By Michael Urbanski · Project Scroll · 27 October 2026 · 21 min read



Shipshewana on the railway mail clerks' study map of 1897, Galbraith's railway mail service maps, Indiana. Library of Congress. Public domain.

The short version

Shipshewana was laid out in January 1889 beside a new railroad from Goshen to Sturgis, finished the month before. The company that built it was in federal receivership by March 1889 and ordered sold in July; the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern took it over that December, and the town "grew as by magic." Robbers twice escaped from the Shipshewana bank on a railroad handcar, in 1897 and 1906.

A second line, H. E. Bucklen's St. Joseph Valley Railway, ran east to LaGrange from 1905 until all service through Shipshewana ended in April 1918. Passenger trains on the Pumpkin Vine

ended by 1931, the line north of town closed in 1960, and the last trains ran to Goshen in 1980. The roadbed is now the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

Read the whole story ›

✦ NEW FINDING 4 new findings in this story. **See what's new ›**

On the night of Tuesday, 2 November 1897, somebody broke into the Lake Shore railroad's tool house at Sturgis, Michigan, and wheeled out a handcar. Sometime after one in the morning the night agent at the Shipshewana depot, twelve miles down the line, thought he heard a handcar on the track. A little later he saw three men sneaking around the station.

In the morning the cashier, Hewlett Davis, came to open the family bank and found the front doors sprung and the safe blown apart with dynamite. Thousands of dollars in cash were gone, with a bundle of notes and papers. The handcar turned up in the Little Elkhart River near Middlebury, where the robbers had pumped it on down the line and tipped it in. Bloodhounds were brought in. It took ten months for Chicago detectives to arrest a man they charged with the job.

It was a railroad robbery in a railroad town. Ten years earlier there had been no bank, no depot and no town, only farms around a lake. The tracks those robbers rode had made everything they stole.

HOW TO READ THIS PAGE DOCUMENTED READING OPEN ✦ NEW FINDING

51 documented · 2 readings · 4 new

? What the marks mean

AT A GLANCE

The line	Goshen, Indiana, to Sturgis, Michigan, 35.81 miles, through Middlebury and Shipshewana; called the Pumpkin Vine for its curves
Its names	Michigan, Indiana & St. Louis (1887); Canada & St. Louis (1887); Sturgis, Goshen & St. Louis (1889); the Goshen and Sturgis branch of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern; New York Central (1914); Penn Central (1968)
Built	Grading began at Sturgis, April 1887; track finished between Goshen and Sturgis, December 1888
The town	Platted beside the tracks by Hezekiah Davis, recorded 18 January 1889; "over 500" people by 1893
A second railroad	The St. Joseph Valley line, east to LaGrange, from 1905; the track west of LaGrange was torn up after 1918
The end	North of Shipshewana abandoned 1960; the last trains to Goshen ran in 1980; rails removed 1982
Today	The Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, about 17 miles, Goshen to Shipshewana

CASE FILE

WHAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW

The railroad came first. Track was laid through the farms in 1888, and Hezekiah Davis recorded his town plat beside it a month later.

The company that built it went broke almost at once. Within three months of the last rail, a New York trust company had the road in federal receivership, and by July 1889 a Goshen court had ordered it sold. The Lake Shore took it over that December.

Shipshewana had two railroads. From 1905 to about 1918 a second line, built with a patent-medicine fortune, ran east from the town to LaGrange.

The bank robbers came by rail. Twice, in 1897 and 1906, men robbed the Shipshewana bank and got away on a railroad handcar. By 1921 they came by automobile.

▶ The people in this story (13)

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Find in this story: a name, a place, a word

Next ›

PART I

A railroad to St. Louis that stopped at Goshen

The plan was enormous. A line would run from Bay City, Michigan, south through Battle Creek and Sturgis, across northern Indiana to Goshen, and on toward the Indiana coal fields and St. Louis. DOCUMENTED On 21 April 1887 the Goshen correspondent of the Indianapolis *Sentinel* reported that grading of the "Michigan, Indiana and St. Louis Railroad" had begun at Sturgis that day, and that the company promised "to have trains running by the 1st of November." Goshen went wild: "Real estate has advanced 50 per cent. within the last ten days." DOCUMENTED

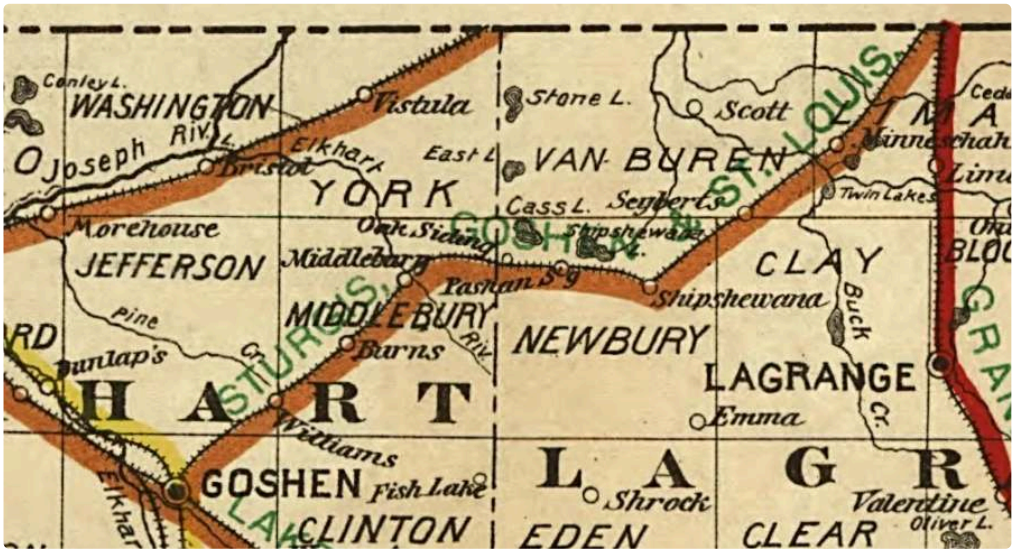
> *"Real estate has advanced 50 per cent. within the last ten days."*

The trains did not run by the first of November. That month the Michigan and Indiana companies were merged as the Canada and St. Louis, incorporated at Goshen, and the building took another year. DOCUMENTED The first passenger train left Goshen for Middlebury on 5 November 1888, and in that first month, the trail's historians report, more than 1,900 passengers rode it. In December 1888 the track was finished all the way to Sturgis. DOCUMENTED Regular service over the line began on 20 December 1888, by one railroad historian's account, and through trains to Battle Creek began on the last day of the year. DOCUMENTED

Who built it? The "prime mover," the *Chicago Tribune* said in 1890, was Milton Mercer, a Goshen ex-banker. The first directors were Mercer, E. D. Chipman and W. L. Stonex of Goshen and Jonathan S.

Mather of Middlebury; in August 1888 control passed to J. J. Burns of Battle Creek, the contractor, and his associates. DOCUMENTED The towns along the way helped pay for it. Goshen had a $25,000 subsidy pending in June 1888, and on Saturday, 22 September, Middlebury Township voted $10,000 "to secure the construction of the Canada and St. Louis railway through that vicinity." DOCUMENTED

It was never a straight road. It swung around farms and wetlands so often that people called it the Pumpkin Vine. DOCUMENTED And it never got anywhere near St. Louis.



The Pumpkin Vine on the state's railroad map of 1896, lettered "Sturgis, Goshen & St. Louis," curving north-east from Goshen through Middlebury and Shipshewana toward Sturgis. Indiana State Board of Tax Commissioners. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division. Public domain.

PART II

A town on a cornfield

Shipshewana did not grow up around the railroad. It was laid out for it. On 18 January 1889, a month after the track was finished, Hezekiah Davis recorded the plat of a new town on his land beside the line. Abram Summey filed the first addition that April, and more additions followed in 1890 and 1891. DOCUMENTED

Did Davis pay for it? The county atlas of 1893 says only that he "did much to bring the Canada and St. Louis railroad to his neighborhood, having faith in the town then unborn." DOCUMENTED A marker put up in 2000 says he paid $10,000 to bring the railroad. We have found no record of that payment; the only $10,000 in the record of 1888 is Middlebury Township's vote. OPEN

The new town had its station from the start. In June 1889 the State Board of Equalization assessed the railroad's buildings at Shipshewana: a depot at $400, a water tank at $400 and a stock pen at $50. DOCUMENTED It is the earliest record of the depot we have found. ✦ NEW FINDING Twenty years later the state still assessed a "passenger and freight house" at Shipshewana at $400, with a water tank, a windmill and a hand-car house. DOCUMENTED The first train at Shipshewana to make the papers came to grief: on 3 May 1889 passenger train No. 6 was derailed at the station by an open switch, and its engineer was badly hurt. DOCUMENTED

The county atlas of 1893 put it simply: "The town grew as by magic after the completion of the railroad." It was "ten to eighteen miles from any other considerable town," surrounded by rich farms. Within four years it had brick business blocks, the Summey block on the west side of the street, a Methodist church, a mill run by the Hawks Manufacturing Company of Goshen and the planing mill

of the Farver brothers, and “a population of over 500.” It was, the atlas said, “an important shipping point for lumber, live stock and grain.” DOCUMENTED

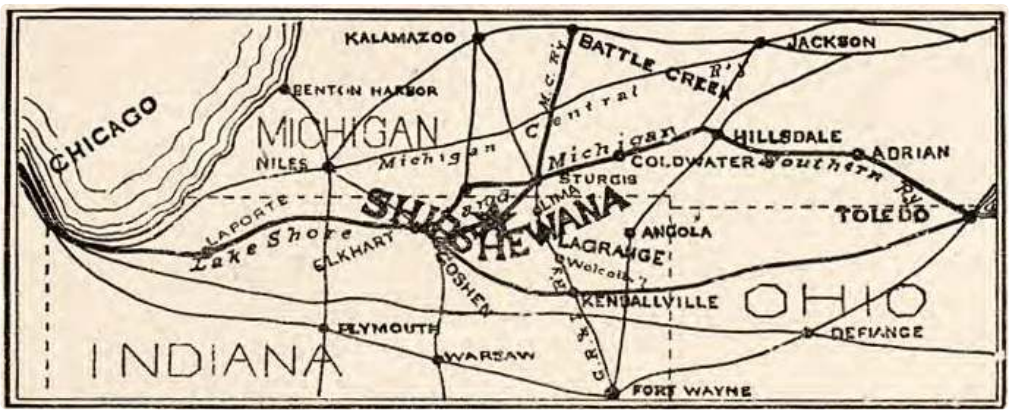
> *“The town grew as by magic after the completion of the railroad.”*



“Bank Building and Hotel ... of the late Hezekiah Davis, Shipshewana,” in the *Illustrated Atlas and Columbian Souvenir of La Grange County* (1893). Library of Congress. Public domain.

It was really two towns. Davis owned the east side and the Summeys the west, and people called them Davistown and Summeytown. Between them, George Curtis remembered, ran a 150-foot strip called “No Man’s Land,” which was not sold off in lots until Davis’s estate was settled. Curtis, who later founded the Shipshewana auction, also remembered a big band-saw mill with a railroad switch running back to it, the town park “stacked full of lumber before the mill burned in 1901,” and four Lake Shore passenger trains and two freights a day. DOCUMENTED

At the center of it stood the Davises. Their three-story brick Davis Hall held the Bank of Shipshewana, which Hezekiah had opened in 1890; the brick Hotel Davis stood opposite. DOCUMENTED Hezekiah died in 1891, and by 1893 the bank’s president was his widow, Sarah R. Davis, with Francis H. Halbert as cashier. DOCUMENTED



All roads lead to Shipshewana: the locator map printed beside the town’s history in the 1893 county atlas, with the four-year-old town lettered larger than Chicago. Library of Congress. Public domain.

PART III

Bankrupt before its first birthday

The town boomed. The railroad company did not. On 11 March 1889, less than three months after the last rail went down, the Farmers' Loan and Trust Company of New York sued in the federal court at Detroit, saying the company had not paid the interest on its construction bonds. The court put the road, from Goshen through Sturgis to Battle Creek, in the hands of a receiver, W. K. Ackerman of Chicago. DOCUMENTED In Indiana the trade press named Thomas A. Starr receiver of the Canada and St. Louis, with J. J. Burns as general manager. DOCUMENTED

On 10 July 1889 Judge Van Fleet of the circuit court at Goshen ordered the Canada and St. Louis sold. The sale was to bring no less than $9,000 a mile, and the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern was named as a likely buyer. DOCUMENTED The *Railroad Gazette* put the floor at $225,000, with Starr as commissioner to sell it; the two figures do not agree. OPEN In August it went, at a foreclosure sale, to a new company, the Sturgis, Goshen and St. Louis. DOCUMENTED The Lake Shore stood behind it. From 1 December 1889 it ran the line from Goshen to the junction near Sturgis, 35.81 miles, as the Sturgis, Goshen and St. Louis, by owning its stock and taking on its bonds. DOCUMENTED

For the new town, it was the best possible ending. A bankrupt short line might have stopped running. Instead Shipshewana found itself on a branch of one of the great railroads of the Midwest, the Lake Shore, with connections to Chicago and the East. READING The bankruptcy and the forced sale are missing from the town's and the trail's published histories, which go straight from the building of the line to the Lake Shore. ✦ NEW FINDING

PART IV

The night of the handcar

Which brings us back to November 1897. The night agent heard the handcar; the robbers, the papers decided, had come in from Sturgis on the stolen car at about half past one, blown the safe and gone on down the line toward Middlebury, where they tipped the car into the Little Elkhart River. One wire report put the cash at $10,000 in currency, with valuable papers besides; the county's 1982 history says $4,000. DOCUMENTED Within weeks one of the gang, Collins Louchins, had confessed, and the circuit judge issued bench warrants for three more men, and by the last day of the year a farmer twelve miles west of town had dug up the stolen deeds, mortgages and notes: "Buried about two feet he found the tin box containing the papers, which were nearly all intact." DOCUMENTED

The Davis brothers offered a large reward. In September 1898 Chicago detectives arrested a man with at least four names, Monaghan, Morrissey, Keeley and Murphy, known as "Big Head," whose real name was said to be Sharlan or Sharbau, and charged him with the Shipshewana job; a Fort Wayne paper named him Thomas Sharlau, alias Kelly. DOCUMENTED

It happened again. At half past one in the morning of 24 October 1906, six masked men raided the village. Three tied the liveryman, Eash, to a chair in his barn and bound two farmers who were putting up their horses; the others dynamited the bank vault. The safe held, and they got very little. They escaped, a Washington paper reported, "on a handcar toward" Goshen. DOCUMENTED

On 29 November 1921 the Farmers State Bank was robbed again, and a wire story printed that December called it "the ninth time the bank has been robbed in 20 years and the third time this year." This time the thieves had cut the safe with an acetylene torch, taken some $15,000 in cash and Liberty bonds, and driven off in an automobile. DOCUMENTED The county history of 1920 counts only four robberies and a fire: November 1897; "1905," perhaps the raid of 1906; June 1916, when

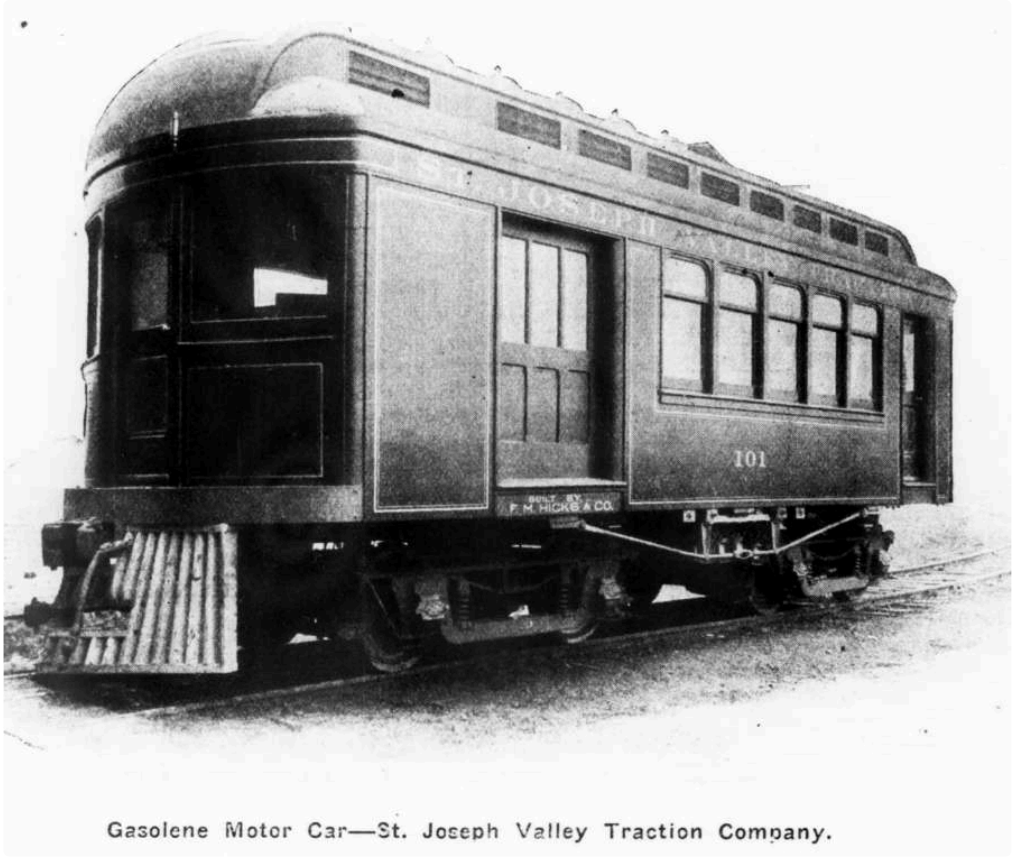
postage stamps were taken; and 26 August 1919, when the thieves ruined the safe but got only War Savings Stamps. DOCUMENTED The United Press story of 27 August said "nothing was taken" and put the damage at $300. DOCUMENTED Counting the two earlier robberies of 1921 that the wire story implies, the record would hold seven, or eight if the "1905" robbery was not the raid of 1906. OPEN Either way, the getaway had changed: in 1897 and 1906 the robbers left on the rails, and in 1921 they left by road. ✦ NEW FINDING

PART V

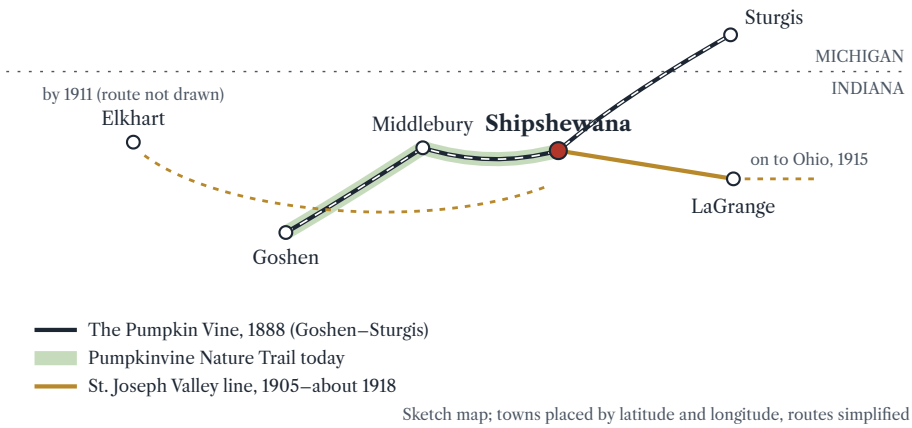
The second railroad

For a few years Shipshewana had two railroads. In 1904 crews began grading a new line between LaGrange and Shipshewana, and on 31 March 1905 passenger service began between the two towns. DOCUMENTED At Shipshewana it had no depot at first, only a small wooden shelter at Main and Morton streets. DOCUMENTED In April 1916, on a complaint from a resident, the state's Public Service Commission ordered the company to submit plans for a station building at Shipshewana, and approved them that May. DOCUMENTED Whether the station was ever built, with the road two years from its end, we have not found. OPEN It was the St. Joseph Valley Railway, the project of Herbert E. Bucklen of Elkhart, who had made a fortune selling Bucklen's Arnica Salve; railroad historians called it the "Arnica Salve Railroad." DOCUMENTED

Bucklen dreamed of linking the electric lines of Chicago and Toledo. His road reached Elkhart in the west by 1911 and Columbia, Ohio, in the east by 1915, about seventy miles in all. DOCUMENTED Local historians say it ran on three kinds of power at once, and the record bears them out. Its first car, put in service between LaGrange and Middlebury in 1905, was a gasoline-electric: "a four-cylinder gasolene engine of the marine type" turned a generator that fed four electric motors, with a storage battery besides. DOCUMENTED The line from Elkhart to Bristol, opened in 1910, ran under trolley wire, and when the road was sold off in 1918 the list included three steam locomotives, Fairbanks-Morse gasoline engines and ten miles of copper trolley wire. DOCUMENTED



The St. Joseph Valley's gasoline-electric car, new in 1905: "Gasolene Motor Car—St. Joseph Valley Traction Company." *Railroad Gazette*, 21 April 1905, p. 380. Internet Archive. Public domain.



The two railroads of Shipshewana. The Pumpkin Vine ran from Goshen to Sturgis from 1888; the St. Joseph Valley line ran east to LaGrange from 1905, and later reached Elkhart and Ohio. The trail now follows the old line from Goshen to Shipshewana. Map by Project Scroll.

It never paid. Bucklen died in January 1917; that December the road went into receivership, and on 11 April 1918 all service through Shipshewana ended. The track west of LaGrange, through Shipshewana, "was torn up and sold to Chicago junk firms." A new company saved nine miles east of LaGrange. DOCUMENTED Shipshewana was a one-railroad town again.



Rails! Cars! Wire!

Material and Equipment of the St. Joseph Valley Railway Company and the St. Joseph Valley Traction Company

Elkhart, Indiana

Just purchased from the Receiver of the above named Companies their entire Tracks, Rails, Machine Shop Tools, Implements, Wire, Cars, Rolling Stock and material of all kinds.

The St. Joseph Valley Railway Company extended from the town of LaGrange, Ind., to Columbus, Ohio, and the St. Joseph Valley Traction Company extended from the City of Elkhart, Ind., to the town of La-Grange, Ind.

The material is in excellent condition and represents approximately the following:

75 miles of 70-lb. Standard Steel Rails.
240,000 Ties.
2—Steel Bridges.
1—40-ton Locomotive, 8-wheels.
1—45-ton Locomotive, 10-wheels.
1—65-ton Mogul Locomotive, 8-wheels.
1—Combination passenger car.
3—Passenger Cars.
3—Fairbanks-Morse Gasoline Engines.
5—Freight Box Cars.
6—Freight Flat Cars.
1—Box Caboose Car.
4—Engine Water Tanks.
1—Ballast Car.
1—Baggage Car.
9 miles of 350,000 C. M. copper Feed Wire.
10 miles of 000 copper Trolley Wire.
36 miles of No. 9 Iron Wire.
46 miles of No. 10 copper Telephone Wire.
2—Section Speeders.
Shop Machines.
Tools.
Implements.
Section Men's Tools, and
A large quantity of miscellaneous apparatus.

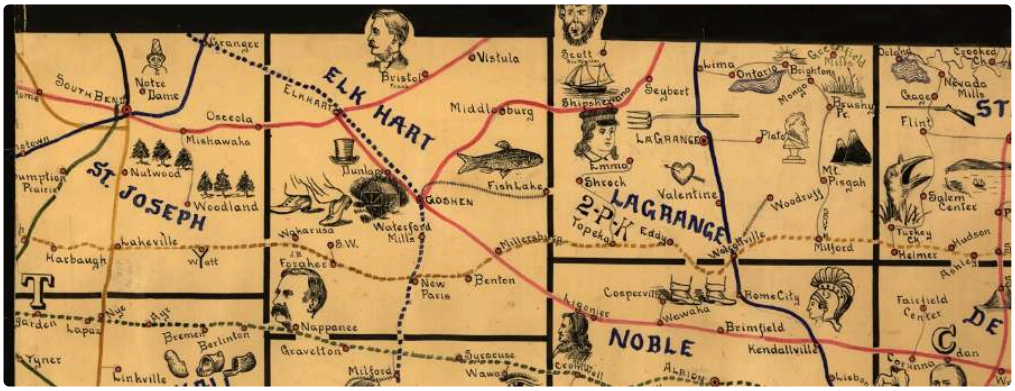
Immediate delivery can be given on any part of this equipment. Inspection can be made from my office in the city of La-Grange, Ind. Inquiries should be addressed to

BENJ. HARRIS
Liquidator
LaGrange, Ind.

Everything must go: the liquidator's advertisement, *Electric Railway Journal*, 4 May 1918, p. 70, shown here in two halves, with the three locomotives, the Fairbanks-Morse gasoline engines and the copper trolley wire. Internet Archive. Public domain.

PART VI

Shipshewana on the clerks' map

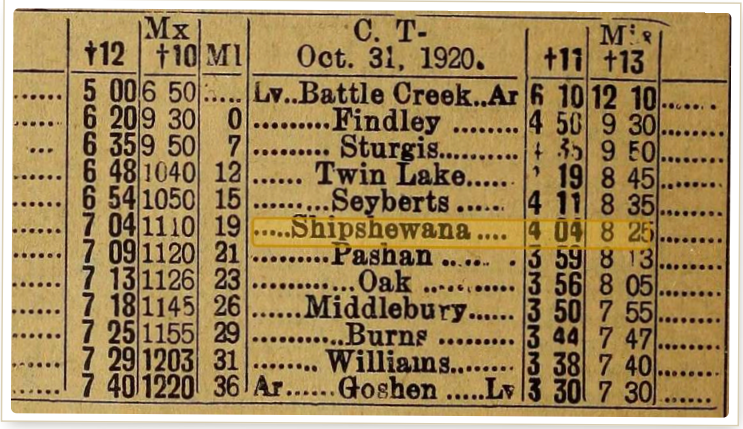


Northern Indiana on the railway mail clerks' map of 1897, from South Bend to LaGrange, with a picture at nearly every stop. Galbraith's railway mail service maps, Indiana. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division. Public domain.

The mail came by train, sorted on board by railway mail clerks who had to know every stop by heart. In 1897 one of them drew a map of Indiana to study by, with a little picture at the towns: a fish for Fish Lake, a heart and arrow for Valentine, a portrait of Sir Walter Scott for Scott. At Shipshewana he drew a sailing ship. DOCUMENTED For a clerk on the night mail, the ship was a reminder of how to say the name. READING

PART VII

The long goodbye

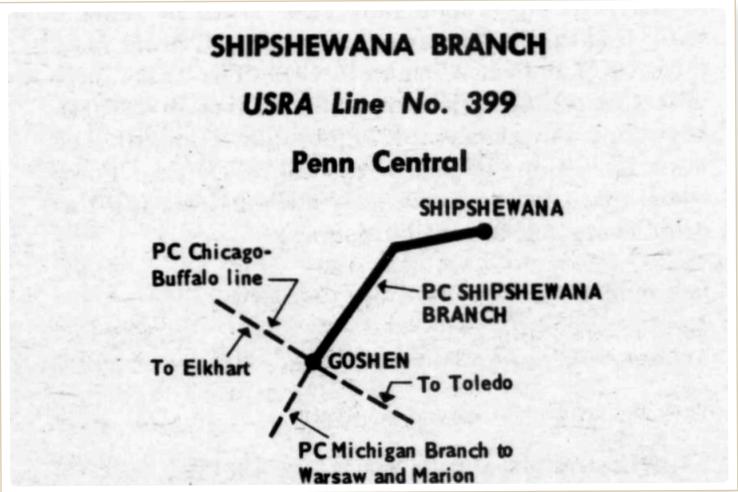


	†12	Mx †10	Ml	C. T- Oct. 31, 1920.	†11	M†13	
.....	5 00	6 50	.....	Lv..Battle Creek..Ar	6 10	12 10	.....
.....	6 20	9 30	0	.....Findley	4 50	9 30	.....
...	6 35	9 50	7	..... Sturgis.....	4 35	9 50	.....
.....	6 48	1040	12	..... Twin Lake.....	4 19	8 45	.....
.....	6 54	1050	15	.....Seyberts	4 11	8 35	.....
.....	7 04	1110	19	.....Shipshewana	4 04	8 25	.....
.....	7 09	1120	21	.....Pashan	3 59	8 13	.....
.....	7 13	1126	23	.....Oak	3 56	8 05	.....
.....	7 18	1145	26	.....Middlebury.....	3 50	7 55	.....
.....	7 25	1155	29	.....Burns	3 44	7 47	.....
.....	7 29	1203	31	..... Williams.....	3 38	7 40	.....
.....	7 40	1220	36	Ar.....Goshen Lv	3 30	7 30	.....

Two trains a day each way: the branch under its New York Central name, in the timetable of 31 October 1920. Shipshewana is mile 19; the next stop south is Pashan. *Central States Guide* (1921), p. 14. Internet Archive. Highlight added. Public domain.

The Lake Shore became part of the New York Central in 1914. DOCUMENTED The trains kept running, but the roads were getting better every year. By the trail's historians' account the mail stopped riding the branch by 1928 and passenger service ended by 1931; by 1928, a railroad historian wrote, the passengers had only one mixed train a day, except Sunday. DOCUMENTED By 1952 the railroads' *Official Guide* listed Shipshewana as a station "for freight only." DOCUMENTED Freight kept the line alive: lumber, grain, livestock, coal and fertilizer.

In 1960 the track north of Shipshewana, to Sturgis, was abandoned, and Shipshewana became the end of the line. DOCUMENTED The New York Central merged into the Penn Central in 1968, and in 1974, the county's history records, the bankrupt Penn Central gave up the branch. DOCUMENTED In 1973 the branch saw fifty round trips a year, and Shipshewana shipped 275 carloads. DOCUMENTED In April 1975 the Penn Central stopped running over it because the track was unsafe, and in December 1976 service still had not resumed. DOCUMENTED A federal subsidy was promised in 1976, but the trains did not come back until June 1979, when the State of Indiana leased the line and a short-line operator, the Indiana Interstate Railway, started freight again. ✦ NEW FINDING In the summer of 1980 a restored steam engine pulled excursion cars between Middlebury and Shipshewana on Sundays. DOCUMENTED



The branch as the federal planners drew it in 1975, when they recommended leaving it out of Conrail. *Federal Register*, 4 March 1975, p. 9771. Internet Archive. Public domain.

It was not enough. The operators said they could no longer bear the cost, and the last trains ran on 30 November 1980. The federal order that let the Indiana Interstate run expired at 11:59 that night. The rails were pulled up in 1982. DOCUMENTED That year, the county history counted what was left: LaGrange County's 79 miles of railroad had shrunk to twenty-one and a half. DOCUMENTED

PART VIII

From rails to trail

Then the Pumpkin Vine got a second life. In 1989 a group of cyclists proposed turning the old roadbed into a trail. Many neighbors were against it, and local governments were cool. The Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail raised $60,000, borrowed the rest, and on 22 December 1993 bought the corridor from the Penn Central for $100,000. DOCUMENTED

The first mile and a half of trail opened on 2 March 2000. The Shipshewana to Middlebury section was finished in 2012, the last half-mile in Middlebury in September 2023, and in June 2024 the Friends drove a golden spike to celebrate the finished trail, about seventeen miles from Goshen to Shipshewana. DOCUMENTED The trail ends where the trains did, on Depot Street.

PART IX

The line, year by year

1887 Grading begins at Sturgis, 21 April; trains promised by 1 November. The Canada & St. Louis is formed in November.

1888 Middlebury Township votes $10,000, 22 September; first passenger train, Goshen to Middlebury, 5 November; track finished to Sturgis, and service begins, in December.

1889 Town plat recorded, 18 January; receivership, March; a train derailed at Shipshewana, 3 May; depot assessed, June; sale ordered, July; the Lake Shore takes over, 1 December.

1893 "The town grew as by magic": over 500 people.

1897 Robbers ride a stolen handcar to the Bank of Shipshewana.

1905	The St. Joseph Valley line opens to LaGrange, 31 March, with a gasoline-electric car.
1906	Six masked men raid the bank and flee by handcar.
1914	The Lake Shore becomes part of the New York Central.
1917	Bucklen dies, January; the St. Joseph Valley line goes into receivership, December.
1918	All St. Joseph Valley service through Shipshewana ends, 11 April; its track west of LaGrange is sold for junk.
1921	Bank robbers arrive and leave by automobile, 29 November.
1931	Passenger service has ended.
21 YEARS LATER	
1952	Shipshewana a station “for freight only.”
1960	Track north to Sturgis abandoned.
15 YEARS LATER	
1975	Penn Central stops running to Shipshewana, April.
1979	The Indiana Interstate Railway brings freight back, June.
1980	Steam excursions in summer; the last trains, 30 November.
1982	The rails are pulled up.
1993	The Friends buy the corridor, 22 December.
31 YEARS LATER	
2024	The golden spike: the trail is finished.

PART X

Why it matters

Most towns in the valley grew slowly around a mill, a crossroads or a county seat. Shipshewana was different: it was made, almost overnight, by a railroad that was itself bankrupt within months. For ninety years the trains brought it everything, from customers to bank robbers. When they stopped, the town did not die. Part 3 (projectscroll.com/news/how-a-farm-sale-became-a-flea-market/) tells what it found to take their place.

PART XI

The case file: what we asked, and what we found

1. **The three kinds of power.** Answered: the 1905 trade press describes the gasoline-electric car, and the 1918 sale list names steam locomotives, gasoline engines and trolley wire. DOCUMENTED

The whole series as one PDF › (projectscroll.com/data/shipshewana-series.pdf)

✦ NEW FINDING **WHAT’S NEW HERE**

The railroad that made Shipshewana went broke almost at once. Grading began at Sturgis on 21 April 1887, with trains promised by 1 November; the track was finished only in December 1888. On 11 March 1889 the Farmers' Loan and Trust Company of New York had the road put in federal receivership for unpaid interest on its construction bonds, and on 10 July 1889 the circuit court at Goshen ordered the Canada and St. Louis sold. The Lake Shore and Michigan Southern took it over from 1 December 1889.

Found by Michael Urbanski, Project Scroll, 27 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

Twice the Shipshewana bank was robbed by men who came and went on the railroad: in November 1897 thieves stole a Lake Shore handcar at Sturgis, rode it to Shipshewana, dynamited the Davis bank's safe and left the car in the Little Elkhart River near Middlebury; in October 1906 six masked men blew the vault and escaped "on a handcar." By 1922, when the bank was reported robbed for the ninth time in twenty years, the robbers came by automobile.

Found by Michael Urbanski, Project Scroll, 27 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

In June 1889, five months after the town plat was recorded, Indiana's State Board of Equalization assessed the railroad's buildings at Shipshewana: a depot at $400, a water tank at $400 and a stock pen at $50. It is the earliest record of the Shipshewana depot that we have found.

Found by Michael Urbanski, Project Scroll, 27 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

Trains did not run to Shipshewana for four years before the line's last chapter: the Penn Central stopped running over the branch in April 1975 because the track was unsafe, service still had not resumed in December 1976, and freight came back only in June 1979, when the State of Indiana leased the line to the Indiana Interstate Railway. The usual account has the federal subsidy keeping the line open from 1976.

Found by Michael Urbanski, Project Scroll, 27 October 2026.

▸ What we searched

A **new finding** is a fact found in a primary source that we could not find in any published history, article or website we searched. Credit: Michael Urbanski, Project Scroll. If you know of an earlier publication, tell us and we will say so here. All our discoveries › (projectscroll.com/discoveries/)

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Numbers in the text point to this list; entries without a number are further sources we consulted. How we research › (projectscroll.com/how-we-research/) · The libraries behind all our stories › (projectscroll.com/sources/libraries/)

VISIT AND SEE

The Shipshewana depot. Built in 1888 and called the town's oldest building; a folk-art gallery from 1986 to 2016. View it from the street; the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail ends nearby. Directions › (https://www.google.com/maps/dir/?api=1&destination=Depot%20St.%20and%20Morton%20St.%2C%20Shipshewana%2(

Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. About 17 miles on the old roadbed between Goshen, Middlebury and Shipshewana, open to walkers and cyclists; mostly paved. Directions › (https://www.google.com/maps/dir/?api=1&destination=Pumpkinvine%20Nature%20Trail%2C%20Shipshewana%2C%20I

The Davis buildings. Davis Hall and the site of the Hotel Davis, on Main Street; the hotel burned in 2004 and the Davis Mercantile stands in its place. Directions › (https://www.google.com/maps/dir/?api=1&destination=255%20Main%20St%2C%20Shipshewana%2C%20IN%2046565)

Public places only. Please respect private land and posted hours.

▸ **CORRECTIONS (1)**

ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

Research and reporting

Michael Urbanski (projectscroll.com/about/michael-urbanski/) · Project Scroll

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SHIPSHEWANA · PART 3

How a farm sale became a flea market

DISCOVERY · 2 NEW FINDINGS › | SERIES · 3 OF 3 › | GO SEE IT | 17 MIN READ

In 1922 George Curtis, Shipshewana's bandleader, sold a few animals at his place on the edge of town. A century later his sale is a livestock auction, an antique auction and one of the Midwest's biggest flea markets, and almost every number told about it is disputed. Part 3 of a series on Shipshewana, Indiana.

LIVE RESEARCH DOCUMENT

This story is part of a series still being researched. The LaGrange County newspapers of 1922 to 1981 are not online; we will add what they show.

By Michael Urbanski · Project Scroll · 27 October 2026 · 17 min read



Draft horses on an Amish farm in LaGrange County, 2016. Photograph by Carol M. Highsmith. Library of Congress. No known restrictions.

The short version

George Curtis, the town's bandleader, held the first Shipshewana sale in 1922; it became a monthly community sale, and he built a sale barn in 1927. Fred Lambright bought it in 1946 and moved it south of town the next year, and the flea market began on its own, with sellers working out of their car trunks, roofed over in 1947. Fred's nephew Walter Schrock owned it from 1961,

with a partner, Levi J. Yoder, by 1964; Robert Lambright and his sons Keith and Kevin bought it in 1981.

The sources disagree about what was sold at the first sale and where. The famous visitor figures, one or two million a year, were never counted. What has been counted, about 1,700 cars a market day, points to a few hundred thousand visitors a year, the order of the market's own estimate of up to 400,000.

Read the whole story ›

✦ NEW FINDING 2 new findings in this story. **See what's new ›**

By 1922 George Curtis had been leading Shipshewana's bands for twenty years. He had watched the town grow up beside the railroad, and his musicians had marched at the county's Corn School in LaGrange. That year he tried something new. He put a few of his animals up for sale at his place on the edge of town, and the sale went so well that he held another a few weeks later. DOCUMENTED

A century later the bandleader's little sale has become a livestock auction, a weekly antique auction with auctioneers selling side by side, and one of the biggest outdoor flea markets in the Midwest, in a town of about 650 people.

Just what Curtis sold that first day, nobody agrees. The market's own history says "six pigs, seven cows and several head of young cattle" were sold at Curtis's home. The county's 150th-anniversary history of 1982 says it was "six pens of pigs and several head of cattle," at his farm just east of town. A newspaper story for the auction's hundredth birthday remembered "a jersey cow and a few hogs," sold in "a small building uptown." DOCUMENTED This is the story of how the sale grew, and of the numbers people quote about it, some of which nobody has ever counted.

HOW TO READ THIS PAGE DOCUMENTED READING OPEN ✦ NEW FINDING

34 documented · 6 readings · 2 new

? What the marks mean

AT A GLANCE

Founded	1922, by George Curtis
Early name	The Shipshewana Community Sale, held the last Friday of every month
First sale barn	1927, built by Curtis
Owners	George Curtis (1922); Fred Lambright (1946); Walter Schrock, his nephew (1961), with Levi J. Yoder as partner by 1964; Robert Lambright and his sons Keith and Kevin (1981)
Counted	About 1,700 cars a market day (2024, 2025); 872 booths filled on one day, reported in 2006; a recorded peak of 40,000 people on a Fourth of July
The flea market	Began with sellers working out of their car trunks; roofed over in 1947
Today	The Shipshewana Trading Place, 345 S. Van Buren St.: flea market Tuesdays and Wednesdays, May to September; antique and livestock auctions every week

CASE FILE

WHAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW

The flea market was an accident. Nobody planned it. People coming to the livestock sale began selling things out of their car trunks, and in 1947 the sale's new owner put a roof over them.

The founder was the town bandleader. George Curtis organized Shipshewana's first band in 1902 and a girls' band ten years later.

Even the basic dates are told three ways. The year Fred Lambright bought the auction appears in print as 1946, 1947 and 1949. The owners' own blog explains two of them: he bought in 1946 and built a new barn a year later.

The millions were never counted. Guidebooks have put the crowds at one or two million a year, with no count behind either. What has been counted, about 1,700 cars a market day, points to a few hundred thousand visitors a year, the order of the market's own estimate of up to 400,000.

▶ The people in this story (6)

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5. The Lambrights again
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9. Why it matters
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11. Sources

Find in this story: a name, a place, a word

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PART I

George Curtis, bandleader

George Curtis was one of the people who watched Shipshewana grow from nothing. Late in life he remembered a "pretty lively town": a big band-saw mill where the town park is now, with a railroad switch running back to it, the park "stacked full of lumber before the mill burned in 1901," four saloons, three blacksmith shops, two elevators, a weekly paper, an apple dryer and a laundry. The Lake Shore, he said, ran four passenger trains and two freights a day. DOCUMENTED

He was also the town's music man. He organized Shipshewana's first band in 1902 and a girls' band in 1912, and his bands marched in LaGrange's Corn School, the county's fall festival, for its first fifteen years. DOCUMENTED And in 1922 he held a sale.

PART II

The first sale

Soon the Shipshewana Community Sale was held regularly on the last Friday of every month. In 1927 Curtis built the first sale barn and holding pens. DOCUMENTED

A sale day was a day out. In 1930 the women of the Methodist church began serving food in Curtis's garage, the first Auction Restaurant; in 1940 Milo and Ruth Miller took it over, cooking much of it from Ruth's own garden and kitchen. DOCUMENTED

Why did it work? A sale needs buyers and sellers who can get there. Shipshewana had the railroad, and it sat in the middle of a large and growing Amish settlement, families who farmed with horses and bought and sold livestock all year. READING



An Amish farmer drives his team along a country road near Shipshewana, 2016. Photograph by Carol M. Highsmith. Library of Congress, Carol M. Highsmith Archive. No known restrictions.

PART III

A roof over the car trunks

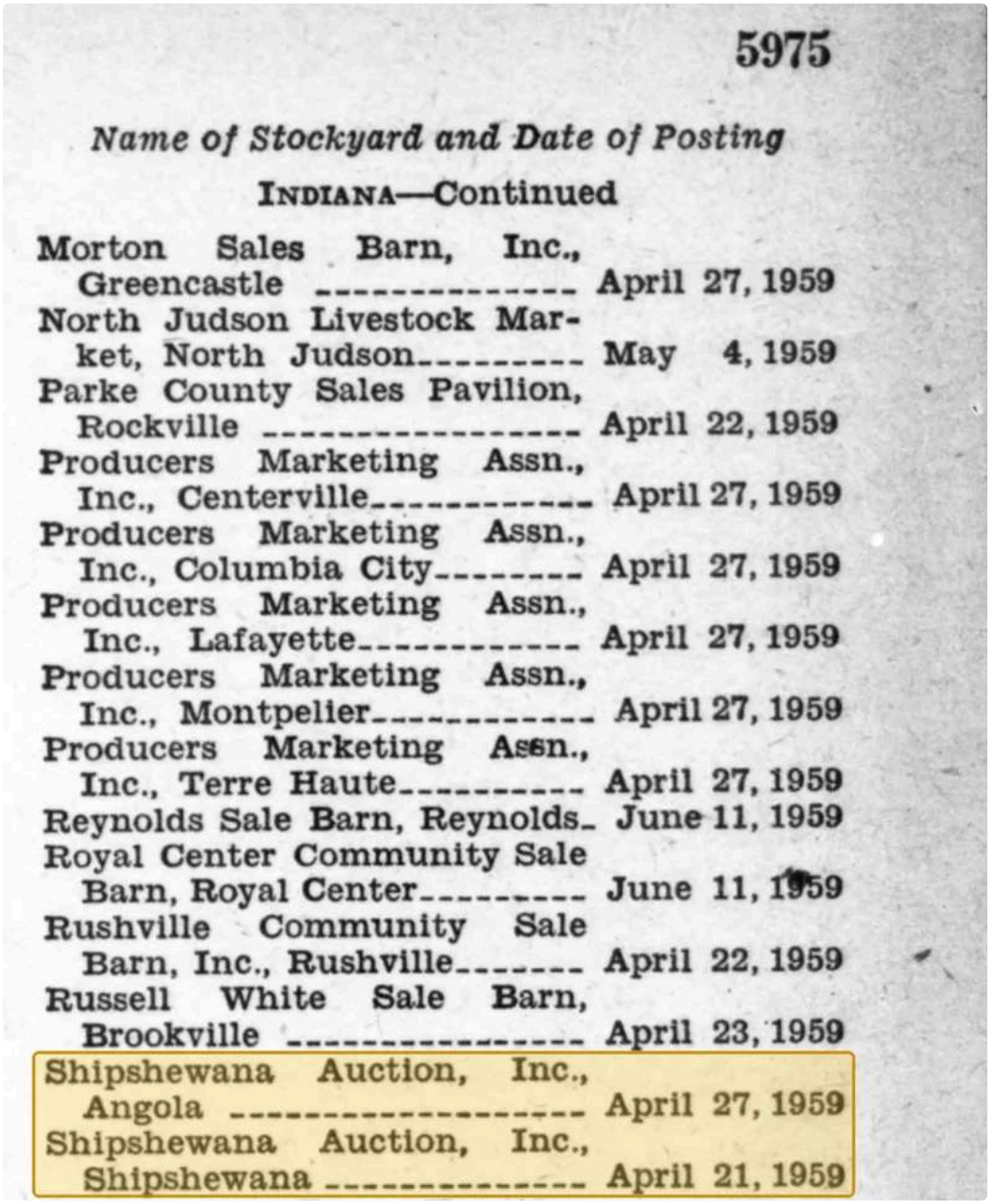
In the 1940s Curtis sold the auction to Fred Lambright, a farmer from near Shipshewana. The year depends on whom you ask: 1946 in the county history of 1982, 1947 in the market's own history, 1949 in a newspaper story of 2022. DOCUMENTED The owners' blog, in 2013, told it as two events: "George sold the business in 1946 to Fred Lambright, who, a year later, built a new sale barn." DOCUMENTED So 1946 is probably the sale and 1947 the move; 1949, also the founding year in business directories of 2001 to 2004, is still unexplained. READING Lambright moved the sale south of town on State Road 5, where it still is, and named it the Shipshewana Auction. DOCUMENTED In 1950 the high school yearbook carried his advertisement: "SHIPSHEWANA AUCTION ... Bring Us What You Have to Sell and Buy What You Need. FRED LAMBRIGHT, Prop." DOCUMENTED

Something else was happening on sale days. People who came to buy and sell livestock began to bring other things to sell, and to sell them out of the trunks of their cars. In 1947 a roof went up over this "grassroots flea market." DOCUMENTED David Luthy, a historian of Amish tourism, wrote in 1994 that by 1947 it was common to see "five or six people selling baked goods or old tools" in the parking lot on sale days, quoting a visitors' guide of 1984. DOCUMENTED The writer of a book on Amish buggies, published in 2003, sat in a small restaurant beside a man "who had been one of the first 14 exhibitors at the Shipshewana Flea Market." DOCUMENTED

Lambright built a new Auction Restaurant in 1950, with seats for fifty or sixty people. DOCUMENTED

PART IV

Schrock's years



5975

Name of Stockyard and Date of Posting

INDIANA—Continued

Morton Sales Barn, Inc., Greencastle	April 27, 1959
North Judson Livestock Market, North Judson	May 4, 1959
Parke County Sales Pavilion, Rockville	April 22, 1959
Producers Marketing Assn., Inc., Centerville	April 27, 1959
Producers Marketing Assn., Inc., Columbia City	April 27, 1959
Producers Marketing Assn., Inc., Lafayette	April 27, 1959
Producers Marketing Assn., Inc., Montpelier	April 27, 1959
Producers Marketing Assn., Inc., Terre Haute	April 27, 1959
Reynolds Sale Barn, Reynolds	June 11, 1959
Royal Center Community Sale Barn, Royal Center	June 11, 1959
Rushville Community Sale Barn, Inc., Rushville	April 22, 1959
Russell White Sale Barn, Brookville	April 23, 1959
Shipshewana Auction, Inc., Angola	April 27, 1959
Shipshewana Auction, Inc., Shipshewana	April 21, 1959

Under federal law: Shipshewana Auction, Inc., posted as a stockyard on 21 April 1959, with a branch at Angola. *Federal Register*, 25 July 1959, p. 5975. Internet Archive. Highlight added. Public domain.

Walter Schrock, Fred's nephew, bought the business in 1961. DOCUMENTED His own obituary says he owned "the Shipshewana Auction from 1961-1981," after four years running the livestock auction at Sturgis. DOCUMENTED The 1982 county history says in one article that he bought it after Fred Lambright's death in 1966; that is wrong. Fred died on 29 January 1966, and by then Schrock had run the auction for five years. DOCUMENTED He did not run it alone. In December 1964 a federal order under the Packers and Stockyards Act named "Walter L. Schrock and Levi J. Yoder, partners, d/b/a Shipshewana Auction Company," and suspended them for seven days for guaranteeing sellers minimum prices. DOCUMENTED No history of the market that we have read names Yoder. ✦ NEW FINDING

Under Schrock the flea market grew from about 100 sellers to 400, and in 1968 he enlarged the grounds. DOCUMENTED That same year, the county history records, a barn burned on the auction property. DOCUMENTED It was not the sale barn, or not for long: in July 1968 a Michigan reporter found more than fifty buggies tied beside the Shipshewana Livestock Auction barn on horse-sale day, with 350 horses to sell. DOCUMENTED By 1978 the weekly antique auction had grown so big that a new building went up for it, with as many as ten auctioneers calling sales at once. DOCUMENTED

In 1979 fire destroyed the livestock auction barn and holding area. Schrock said he would rebuild, and volunteers helped put up a new barn in about three months. DOCUMENTED

PART V

The Lambrights again

In 1981 the business came back to the Lambright family: Fred's grandson Keith, his brother Kevin and their father, Robert Lambright, bought it from Schrock. DOCUMENTED (A Goshen College page about Robert and his wife, Goldie, says they bought it in 1977, "the next year" after moving into Shipshewana; Schrock's obituary and the county chronology both say 1981. OPEN) In 1984, the owners' blog says, they enlarged the flea market to a thousand spaces and the restaurant to seat 110; four years later they built a new restaurant and turned the old one into offices. DOCUMENTED Robert Lambright died in 1992, and his sons carried on. DOCUMENTED

Who owned the sale

1922 — **George Curtis**
Holds the first sale at his place; builds the first sale barn in 1927.
Source: the market's history; *7 Score and 10* (1982)

1946 — **Fred Lambright**
Buys from Curtis; a new barn south of town in 1947; "FRED LAMBRIGHT, Prop." in 1950.
Source: *7 Score and 10* (1982); the owners' blog (2013); *The Suwanian* (1950). Also told as 1947 and 1949.

1959 — **Shipshewana Auction, Inc.**
Posted as a stockyard under the federal Packers and Stockyards Act.
Source: *Federal Register*, 25 July 1959

1961 — **Walter L. Schrock**
Fred's nephew; owner until 1981. By 1964 in partnership with Levi J. Yoder as the Shipshewana Auction Company.
Source: Schrock's obituary (2010); *Agriculture Decisions*, December 1964

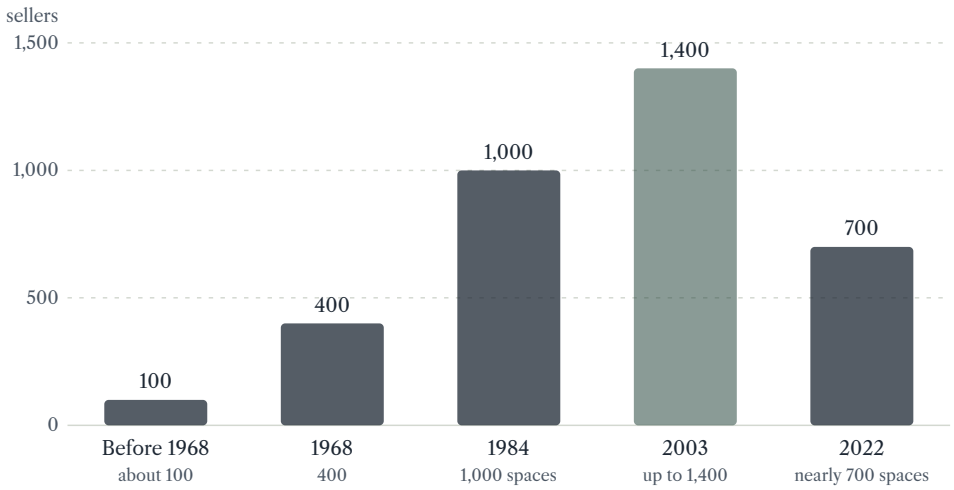
1966 — **Shipshewana Livestock Auction, Inc.**
The stockyard's new name from 1 January 1966. Fred Lambright dies on 29 January.
Source: *Federal Register*, 19 May 1966; *Gospel Herald*, 15 March 1966

1981 — **Robert, Keith and Kevin Lambright**
Fred's son and grandsons buy it back; today the Shipshewana Trading Place.
Source: *7 Score and 10* (1982); Schrock's obituary. A Goshen College page says 1977.

Over the next forty years the Lambrights built a small world around the market: the Farmstead Inn in 1997, an antique mall next door in 1998, a conference center in 2003, an RV park on the flea market grounds in 2008, an event pavilion in 2012 and an RV service center in 2016. The business is now the Shipshewana Trading Place. DOCUMENTED In 2022, its hundredth year, the auction hosted the World Livestock Auctioneer Championship. DOCUMENTED

PART VI

How big is it?



Sellers at the flea market, as reported: about 100 before 1968, 400 in 1968, 1,000 spaces in 1984 and nearly 700 spaces in 2022, from the market's own history; up to 1,400 in 2003, from a book on Amish buggies. The darker bars come from the market itself.

The flea market likes to call itself the Midwest's largest. Its own figures show it growing fast from the 1940s to the 1980s and then settling down: a thousand spaces by 1984, "nearly 700 spaces" on forty acres in 2022. A book on Amish buggies of 2003 put it at "as many as 1400 exhibitors." DOCUMENTED

The crowds are another matter. A national flea market directory of 2000 said the market "draws nearly two million visitors annually." A Shipshewana guide of 2010 halved that: "a million visitors come to this little town every year." DOCUMENTED We found no turnstile count, survey or study behind either. ✦ NEW FINDING

What has actually been counted

1,700
cars a day, on average, in the market's parking: the market's figure in 2024, the county visitors' bureau's in 2025

872
booths filled, counted by a magazine writer walking the grounds after Labor Day, reported in 2006

40,000
people on one Fourth of July, "the largest attendance ever recorded," by an undated Goshen

400,000
visitors a year: the market's own projection for 2024. An estimate, not a count

College page

Those are the only counts we found. DOCUMENTED Put together, they point well below the millions. Some 1,700 cars a day over the forty-odd market days of a summer is about 75,000 cars; at two or three people a car, that is 150,000 to 225,000 people, before the tour buses and the year-round auctions. The market's own estimate of "up to 400,000 visitors" a year is of that order. Two million is not. READING

Where did the millions come from? Perhaps from the county. In 2024, the visitors' bureau said, "more than 2.5 million people visited LaGrange County." DOCUMENTED Many of them came for the market. READING A county figure is easily repeated as a market figure. READING Other estimates have come and gone without a method: "20,000 to 30,000 persons" on a summer market day, "25,000 visitors weekly" in 1992, "between 12,000 to 15,000 people per week" in 2017. DOCUMENTED

> *"A daily average parking of about 1,700 cars."*

PART VII

Story or record?

1. **"Six pigs, seven cows and several head of young cattle."** The market's version. The 1982 county history has "six pens of pigs and several head of cattle"; the 2022 newspaper, "a jersey cow and a few hogs." All agree on pigs. OPEN
2. **"At his home" or "uptown"?** The market says Curtis's home; the 1982 history, his farm just east of town; the 2022 story, a small building uptown. Perhaps the first sale was at the farm and the early monthly sales in town. OPEN
3. **1946, 1947 or 1949?** The year Fred Lambright bought it. Mostly settled: the owners' blog has the sale in 1946 and a new barn in 1947. The 1949 of the 2022 story is unexplained. READING
4. **1961 or 1966?** The year Walter Schrock bought it. Settled: 1961. Fred Lambright was alive until January 1966, and Schrock's obituary dates his ownership 1961 to 1981. DOCUMENTED
5. **1977 or 1981?** The year Robert Lambright and his sons bought it. A Goshen College page says 1977; every other source says 1981. OPEN

PART VIII

The year by year

1902 George Curtis organizes Shipshewana's first band.

20 YEARS LATER

1922 Curtis holds the first sale; the Shipshewana Community Sale follows, on the last Friday of each month.

1927 Curtis builds the first sale barn and holding pens.

1930 Methodist women serve food in Curtis's garage: the first Auction Restaurant.

1940 Milo and Ruth Miller take over the restaurant.

1946	Fred Lambright buys the sale from Curtis.
1947	A roof goes up over the sellers' car trunks: the flea market.
1950	Fred Lambright builds a new Auction Restaurant.
1959	Shipshewana Auction, Inc., posted as a federal stockyard.
1961	Walter Schrock, Fred's nephew, buys the business.
1964	Schrock and Levi J. Yoder, partners, named in a federal order.
1966	Fred Lambright dies, 29 January; the stockyard is renamed Shipshewana Livestock Auction, Inc.
1968	The flea market grounds are enlarged; 400 sellers.
1978	The antique auction, grown to ten auctioneers selling at once, gets a building of its own.
1979	Fire destroys the livestock barn; volunteers rebuild it in three months.
1981	Robert, Keith and Kevin Lambright buy it.
1984	The flea market reaches 1,000 spaces.
1988	A new Auction Restaurant; the old one becomes offices.
1992	Robert Lambright dies.
1997	The Farmstead Inn opens.
2006	A magazine reports 872 booths counted filled on a visit after Labor Day.
16 YEARS LATER	
2022	The hundredth year, and the World Livestock Auctioneer Championship.
2024	About 1,700 cars a market day; the market projects up to 400,000 visitors a year.

PART IX

Why it matters

The railroad made Shipshewana, and for ninety years it was the reason people came. The auction became the other reason. When the last train left in 1980, the town did not fade away like so many railroad towns; by then the crowds were coming by car and bus to the sale that George Curtis started with a few animals. The Pumpkin Vine is a trail now, and the people walking it are, many of them, on their way to the flea market.

This is the last of three parts. Part 1 (projectscroll.com/news/who-was-shipshewana/) asks who Shipshewana was; Part 2 (projectscroll.com/news/the-railroad-that-made-shipshewana/) tells how the railroad made the town.

PART X

Test yourself

Ten questions from all three parts. Tap an answer to see whether you are right, and why.

1. **When did Ship-she-wa-non first sign a treaty with the United States?**

   1821 | 1828 | 1838 | 1889

   At the Carey Mission on the St. Joseph River, 20 September 1828. Part 1 › (projectscroll.com/news/who-was-shipshewana/)

2. **What did the government surveyor write in the lake in 1830?**

   Shipshewana | Lake | Chief's Lake | Davis Lake

   Just "Lake." The name appears in the county's road records by 1839. Part 1 › (projectscroll.com/news/who-was-shipshewana/)

3. **What happened on 4 September 1838, the date on the plaque?**

   The chief died | The Trail of Death left Twin Lakes | The town was platted | A treaty was signed

   The march remembered as the Trail of Death left Twin Lakes that day. No Shipshewana is on its rolls. Part 1 › (projectscroll.com/news/who-was-shipshewana/)

4. **Who gave the meaning "Vision of a Lion"?**

   The Smithsonian | Johnny Thorp | Thomas Topash | Sarah Davis

   Thomas Topash, a Potawatomi of the Lake Wawasee country, told J. P. Dunn, who printed it in 1908. Part 1 › (projectscroll.com/news/who-was-shipshewana/)

5. **What did people call the crooked railroad from Goshen to Sturgis?**

   The Pumpkin Vine | The Arnica Salve | The Corn Belt | The Lake Shore

   It swung around farms and wetlands so often that it was called the Pumpkin Vine. Part 2 › (projectscroll.com/news/the-railroad-that-made-shipshewana/)

6. **What happened to the railroad company within months of finishing the line?**

   It went to St. Louis | It went bankrupt | It merged with the New York Central | It was electrified

   A New York trust company had it in federal receivership by March 1889, and a court ordered it sold that July. Part 2 › (projectscroll.com/news/the-railroad-that-made-shipshewana/)

7. **How did the 1897 bank robbers get away?**

   By automobile | On horseback | On a stolen handcar | By canoe

   They pumped a handcar stolen at Sturgis down the line and tipped it into the Little Elkhart River. Part 2 › (projectscroll.com/news/the-railroad-that-made-shipshewana/)

8. **What paid for Shipshewana's second railroad?**

A lumber fortune | A patent-medicine fortune | A federal grant | The town

Herbert E. Bucklen of Elkhart, maker of Bucklen's Arnica Salve, built the St. Joseph Valley line. Part 2 › (projectscroll.com/news/the-railroad-that-made-shipshewana/)

9. **What else was George Curtis, besides the founder of the auction?**

The banker | The depot agent | The town bandleader | The mayor

He organized the town's first band in 1902 and a girls' band in 1912. Part 3 › (projectscroll.com/news/how-a-farm-sale-became-a-flea-market/)

10. **How did the flea market begin?**

A county fair | Sellers working out of their car trunks | A church rummage sale | A railroad promotion

People who came to the livestock sale began selling from their car trunks; in 1947 a roof went up over them. Part 3 › (projectscroll.com/news/how-a-farm-sale-became-a-flea-market/)

Score: **0** of 10

✦ NEW FINDING **WHAT'S NEW HERE**

The visitor figures repeated for the Shipshewana flea market, "nearly two million visitors annually" (a flea market directory, 2000) and "a million visitors" a year (a local guide, 2010), rest on no count, survey or study that we could find. What has been counted, about 1,700 cars a market day (2024, 2025), 872 booths on one day in 2006, and one recorded peak of 40,000 people, fits the market's own estimate of up to 400,000 visitors a year.

Found by Michael Urbanski [redacted], Project Scroll, 27 October 2026.

▶ What we searched

In December 1964 a federal order under the Packers and Stockyards Act named "Walter L. Schrock and Levi J. Yoder, partners, d/b/a Shipshewana Auction Company": a partner in the auction whom no history of the market names. With Fred Lambright's obituary (he died on 29 January 1966) and Schrock's (owner 1961 to 1981), it disproves the 1982 county history's statement that Schrock bought the auction after Lambright's death in 1966.

Found by Michael Urbanski [redacted], Project Scroll, 27 October 2026.

▶ What we searched

A **new finding** is a fact found in a primary source that we could not find in any published history, article or website we searched. Credit: Michael Urbanski, Project Scroll. If you know of an earlier publication, tell us and we will say so here. All our discoveries › (projectscroll.com/discoveries/)

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Numbers in the text point to this list; entries without a number are further sources we consulted. How we research › (projectscroll.com/how-we-research/) · The libraries behind all our stories

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VISIT AND SEE

Shipshewana Trading Place. The flea market runs Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8 to 4, from early May to late September, with extra holiday markets; the antique and livestock auctions run every week of the year. Check the market's site for the current schedule.
Directions › (https://www.google.com/maps/dir/?api=1&destination=345%20S%20Van%20Buren%20St%2C%20Shipshewana%2C%

Shipshewana Lake Park. A county park on the lake north-west of town.
Directions › (https://www.google.com/maps/dir/?api=1&destination=Shipshewana%20Lake%2C%20LaGrange%20County%2C%20I

Public places only. Please respect private land and posted hours.

▸ CORRECTIONS (1)

ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

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