

Ruth A. Headington, wife of Col. Jim Headington, but known and loved far and near as "Aunt Ruth," is one of the pioneer women of Jay County. Of the women identified with the earliest history of Portland, she alone remains; and Hon. Robert Huey, who will soon celebrate his 86th birthday, is the only man now living who was here when she first came to this place.

Mrs. Headington's mind is stored with many interesting reminiscences of the earlier settlers of Portland and vicinity. When she first came to Portland our populous little city could boast of but two houses. One of these was a log house, occupying the ground where the Silvemore store now stands. It was used as a court house, and the hickory trees stood so close that in the fall the nuts beat a lively tattoo upon the clapboard roof. The other house was a long, double log house, and stood where the Miller & Huston building now stands; this was the residence of Christopher Hanna.

In building the first hewed log structure in the town, it took all the men within five miles two days to raise it and several gallons of whiskey to keep up the steam. This building afterward became famous as "Hickory Hall."

The first frame house was built by Dr. Dixon Milligan, where the "Trade Palace" now stands. The lumber was hauled from Richmond with oxen, and it often took seven or eight days to bring one load. This eventually became the first tavern in the town. The first store of any note was started by William Shull, and was afterward transferred to William Brandon.

**Source unknown**