

WABASH VALLEY

P R O F I L E S

A series of tributes to hometown heroes who have made a difference.

Cuthbert and Thomas Bullitt

One hundred ninety years ago next month, five men united to plat a village named "Terre Haute." Among them were the Bullitt brothers of Louisville, Ky.—Cuthbert and Thomas.

On Sept. 19, 1816, the Bullitts, along with Abraham Markle, Jonathan Lindley and Hyacinth Lasselle, formed the Terre Haute Company to acquire 13 tracts of land in the Harrison Purchase, comprising 3,344.25 acres, from speculator Joseph Kitchell. From those tracts, engineer William Hoggatt and assistant James Boord prepared a village plat, recorded Oct. 25, 1816, in the Knox County Courthouse.



Cuthbert Bullitt

Born in Warfield, Va., the two sons of Major William and Mary (Burbridge) Bullitt were named after their paternal uncles of considerable renown. Uncle Cuthbert Bullitt was a judge of the General Court of Virginia; Uncle Thomas Bullitt was a captain in the French & Indian War and the head of the survey party that platted Louisville in 1783. The two brothers relocated to Louisville in 1804, initially residing at Oxmoor, an elaborate 1,000-acre estate maintained by Kentucky's first lieutenant governor, Alexander Bullitt, their first cousin. Cuthbert's wife was Anne Neville, daughter of Gen. Joseph Neville, a member of the Mason-Dixon Line survey team. Thomas wed Diane Gwathney, daughter of Gen. George Rogers Clark's eldest sister Ann.

The brothers quickly befriended William Henry Harrison, governor of the Indiana Territory, who advised them of investment opportunities. Soon they were prosperous merchants and erected fine town houses in Louisville on what is now known as Bullitt Street. Cuthbert also acquired a farm. Besides investing in the Terre Haute Co. in 1816, the Bullitts joined with Kitchell and Lindley to purchase land in Orange County, where Lindley platted the town of Paoli, and in Lawrence County, Indiana. On March 3, 1817, the Bullitts bought Samuel Jackson's mill and 480 acres in Lawrence County to construct Big Spring Mill, a large stone mill now part of Spring Mill State Park. For six years they acquired land nearby, converting the southern Indiana wilderness into an industrial center.

Troubled by ill health, the Bullitts relinquished 1,440 acres and their Lawrence County mills to James Montgomery of Pennsylvania for \$20,000 in early 1823. Thomas died Dec. 10, 1823, at age 46, while Cuthbert died at age 51 on Oct. 21, 1825. Both are interred at Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville.



First Financial Bank

Always Close to Home

www.first-online.com • MEMBER FDIC

You'll find First Financial Bank in these and other cities and towns near you:

Terre Haute 238-6000 • Brazil 443-4481 • Rockville 765-569-3171 • Clinton 832-3504
Sullivan 268-3331 • Marshall, Illinois 217-826-6311 • Robinson, Illinois 618-544-8666