

History of Findlay

Findlay's origin dates back more than 200 years. The earliest known settler of Hancock County was a Frenchman by the name of Jean Jacques Blanchard. Blanchard arrived here in 1769 and settled with the Shawnee tribe of Native Americans.

It was not until the War of 1812 that Findlay was founded. In that year, Colonel James Findlay commanded the second regiment for General Hull. He moved the Ohio Frontier Army from Dayton to Detroit, opening a road to the Blanchard River and building a stockade. That stockade was named Fort Findlay in his honor. The fort stood west of the spot where the Main Street Bridge today crosses the Blanchard River.

Findlay was first laid out in the year 1821 by Joseph Vance and Elnathan Cory. Wilson Vance gave the town of Findlay its name. The early spelling of Findley was used until 1870 when the modern spelling (Findlay) was used.

The city's population grew rapidly in 1886 when gas and oil were discovered. The discovery led to much attention for Findlay. Thousands came to see the famous gas wells and the first practical use of natural gas in mechanical arts was developed in Findlay. As a result of the boom, the town quadrupled in population virtually overnight. The gas proved to be of short duration, but continued oil discoveries enabled the town to move forward with steady population growth.

Industry and agriculture combined to provide a strong and well-integrated basis for the community's prosperity. The majority of Findlay's manufacturing plants have grown from within the community itself, although others have been attracted by the positive business climate.