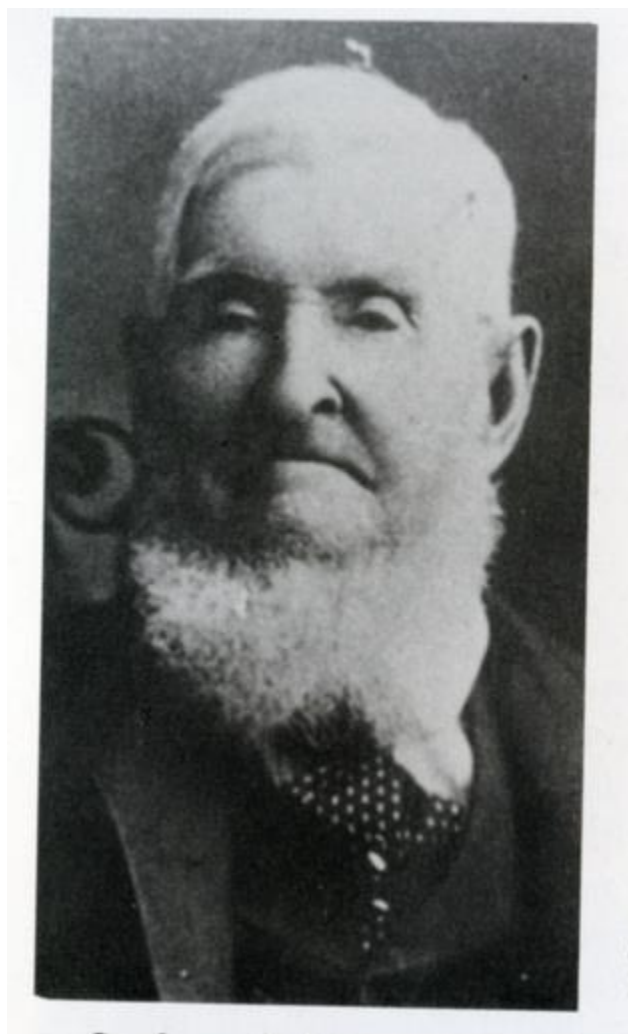


William Tingle



Resource: <http://www.georgesbasement.com/LangfordOnMassey/MasseyDataBank>, Material taken from the National Registry of Historic Places designation October 20, 2014, #14000872

It is unclear when William Tingle first arrived in the area. Some say that he may have been the first trader in the area in 1832. Other accounts place him in the area in 1834 and 1837. Regardless of the actual date, documentation showed that he was an early visitor in the area. Tingle was born in c.1812 in Sussex County, Delaware. He was married twice, first to Sarah Anne McKee in 1846 and at her death, he married her sister, Isabella McKee in 1847.

While traveling in southwest Missouri trading with the Indians, he saw the land offered a place for future settlers to come and set up residence. His entrepreneur spirit took over. He knew they needed supplies and items to build and furnish their homes. They needed land to settle. Thus, his interest in mercantile and land ownership was sparked. The Sarcoxie area was surveyed in 1835 and officially platted in August 1839. At that point, he saw an opportunity to buy up land at a reasonable price. In 1838-39, William Tingle and Benjamin F. Massey partnered to operate as Merchant Traders. It was reported that they partnered in the purchase of 160 acres of land from Thacker Vivion, land entry dated November 4, 1839. Tingle partnered with Massey and erected a large general store that was well supplied with merchandise he acquired through his trading endeavors. The partners purchased Vivion's Mill in 1841 and renamed it Victor Mills. They sold the mill sometime around 1844.

In August 1840, Tingle and Massey developed the first official plat of Sarcoxie. It is believed that Thacker Vivion may have platted and sold lots prior to Tingle and Massey's purchase of the town site. However, no legal records of Vivion's lot sales have been found. Therefore, Tingle and Massey are regarded as the founders of Sarcoxie. Due to a controversy of the plat, it took an act of the Missouri General Assembly to authorize the legal recording of the plat in February 1849. The incorporating of the town, through an act of county court, bears the date of Aug. 29, 1868. Due to unknown reasons, the city government was dropped and not reinstated until 1881.

It is unclear exactly when Tingle left the area but it may have resulted following the Tingle and Massey partnership ending in 1844. Their Real Estate holdings had to be liquidated at an auction following the Powell law suit. Financially they appeared to have lost considerable holdings. He left Sarcoxie and settled on a large farm on Turkey Creek, near where Joplin is located. He began mining lead, erected a lead smelter, and established a store.

Historians believe Tingle may have brought a trusted slave with him when he came to the area. It was reported that "Pete" was intelligent and Tingle trusted him to make deals and collect and handle his money. When the Civil War started, Tingle gave Pete his freedom. He even provided him with cash, a team, other property and sent him off the Kansas.

Photo from Joplin Historical Society, Hoover Museum

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