



SYNCOATED NOTES #10

A Sedalia Convention & Visitor's Bureau Blog

By L.C. Melton

SEDALIA, ILLINOIS & IOWA

The mysterious fellow whose hometown of Sedalia, Illinois named the Indiana berg also gave his own name to Moran, Indiana down the road. However, this is the extent of information I can garner on the Illinois, Sedalia. Given the date of the Indiana settlement as 1872-3, Moran must not have lived in Sedalia, Illinois as his hometown for much more than a decade, assuming it was named for our Sedalia in Missouri.¹ The dates of the Vandalia Railroad are also variable as it came and went as a part of other lines over the years. In addition an 1907 ad lists the RR's headquarters as Sedalia , Illinois so I may have to revisit Illinois again when I have time to do some railroad research.

However, while prowling place names in the midwest, I came upon a reference to Sedalia. Iowa not previously discovered. Unfortunately there is no mention of the source of the name, only that it was the first name given the present town of Jamaica. When Jamaica was platted it became Van Nest in 1882 and then changed to Jamaica.²

Apparently the name that the townspeople wanted (Sedalia) was already taken and they couldn't agree on a different one. So the story goes, the mayor put on blindfold, faced a map and placed his finger on Jamaica, and so the town name was born.³ Sort of pin the tail/name on the city in this case.

The 1882 incorporation gives it plenty of time to have been named for Missouri's Sedalia and that will have to be our assumption until we learn otherwise. Sedalia, er, Jamaice was/is in Guthrie County and is a northwest suburb of Des Moines today.⁴ Like most of its cousins it has a population of 225 plus or minus.

¹Moran, Indiana; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moran,_Indiana.

²Mott, David; *The Annals of Iowa*; Volume 17 | Number 7 (Winter 1931); pps. 513-543; "Abandoned Towns, Villages and Post Offices of Iowa" David C. Mot <http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5451&context=annals-of-iowa>

³*Most People Don't Know The Meaning Behind These 11 Iowa Town Names* <http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/iowa/11-ia-town-names-meaning/>

⁴*Iowa Communities and Counties (Past & Present)*; <http://iagenweb.org/state/places.php?letter=S>