A Short history of Greenville, Indiana
By Stephen Pearce (Circa 2009)

Greenville is over 190 years old, having been platted in May of 1816. This is before Indiana became a state. Andrew Mundle, a schoolteacher from Kentucky, and Benjamin Haines, a farmer and clockmaker, who came to Indiana territory from Pennsylvania, founded it. These two men owned adjoining sections of land and joined together to establish the town approximately less than one mile north of the Old Buffalo Trace. There is no record of why the founders chose the name of Greenville. The town was originally in Clark County. When Floyd County was formed from Clark and Harrison counties, Greenville vied with New Albany to be chosen as the county seat. At that time, Greenville and New Albany were both approximately the same size. New Albany was chosen when the leaders of New Albany offered the county commissioners the inducement of a city lot and a bell for the courthouse. This was too much for the commissioners to resist, therefore New Albany was chosen as the county seat.

Greenville had the first school in the county. It was the type of school known as a "blab school", one where all the students read the lessons out loud. This school was in existence even before Greenville was founded. Greenville also had a seminary, a sort of glorified high school, which was established around 1850. Norman Coleman, the head of this school, became lieutenant governor of Missouri and the first Secretary of Agriculture in later life. Greenville had the first post office in the county. Moses Kirkpatrick was the first postmaster. The post office was located in Kirkpatrick's general store.

Greenville's most famous citizen was John B. Ford. While in Greenville, Mr. Ford operated a tannery, a harness shop, a brick factory, a mill (this building is still in existence), a pie safe factory, and had a fleet of huckster wagons that sold goods throughout the countryside. Mr. Ford became wealthy from a government contract or harness during the Mexican War. He left Greenville and moved to New Albany where he began to make glass. He made the first plate glass in America. After many setbacks in the glass business, he persevered and later was a main participant in the establishment in Pittsburg Plate Glass and Libbey-Owens-Ford Plate Glass companies.

Greenville had many businesses and civic enterprises. Among these were taverns, hotels, mills, general stores, a millinery store, a butcher shop, a jewelry store, 2 doctors, a monument factory, a feather mattress cleaning establishment, a mail order store, brass band, orchestra, skating rink, two lodges (the Odd Fellows and Masons), dairies, and a cigar factory.

On March 26, 1908, a great fire that destroyed a major portion of the town including many businesses and the school devastated Greenville. The town never fully recovered from this tragedy and from that time until the present day has been mainly a small rural town whose residents mainly worked in the cities of Louisville and New Albany.