

CANAWLERS AT REST

AUGUSTUS JOCELYN

b. Circa 1771-1780

d. Early 1830s

By Carolyn I Schmidt

Our subject Augustus Jocelyn should not be confused with the New Albany, Indiana printer, Augustus Jocelyn Sr. (1821-1873) of Connecticut and his son, Augustus Jocelyn Jr. (Circa 1847-1883) of Indiana. They also were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church and may have been relatives of our subject.

Augustus Jocelyn was born between 1771-1780 according to the 1830 Federal Census taken in Franklin County, Indiana. Little is known about his early life other than he came to Indiana from New York and was a Methodist minister.

In the *General Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* held in New York an Augustus Jocelyn was admitted on trial as a Methodist Episcopal minister in 1797 serving in Redding, CT and stationed in Middleton, CT in 1798. He was admitted with full connections with the Methodist Episcopal Church in CT in 1799, was ordained a Deacon in 1800, an Elder in the Redding district in 1801, an Elder in the New London district in 1802 and 1803, and in 1804 was listed under those "who are under a location through weakness of body or family concerns." The book contains the minutes through 1828 but does not mention Augustus again. He may have been our subject or a relative of the New Albany Jocelyns.

Reifel's *History of Franklin County, Indiana* places our subject in Brookville, Franklin County, Indiana at a convention of delegates in 1822 or 1823, who came from Randolph, Wayne, Union, Fayette, Franklin and Dearborn counties in Indiana and assembled at Harrison, Ohio to "consider the practicability of constructing a canal down the [Whitewater] valley." Augustus, who represented Franklin County, would have been between 41-50 years of

age.

At the time of the canal convention Augustus was a Methodist Episcopal minister. Through his contact with those who came to hear him preach, he "worked up quite an interest in behalf of the improvement of the valley." The *History of Fayette County* says he was "the most active champion of the proposition. The consensus of opinion among the delegates at the convention was heartily in favor of taking steps toward a preliminary survey, and the beginning of actual work as soon as possible."

Shortly after this meeting was held, Colonel Shriver, an engineer of the United States army, began a survey for the canal, got as far as Garrison's creek, and died. After a short suspension of the survey, the work was resumed by Colonel Stansbury, United States civil engineer, and within a short time he completed it. His estimates of the cost somewhat dampened the spirits of the canal advocates, and as a result the question lay dormant.

Augustus came to Brookville, Franklin County, Indiana to minister to the people. He is listed as the corresponding secretary of the American Bible Society in that county in 1823. He preached in the old brick Methodist Episcopal church that stood on the bluff at the north side of town. In Johnson's "Recollections of Early Brookville" he describes Augustus saying: "The Rev. Augustus Jocelyn, a Methodist preacher, ministered to the people in godly things at this church. He was a man of no ordinary talents. He was a tall man, about six feet high, bald-headed, but wore a wig. He had cultivated oratory and had graceful gestures, with distinct articulation. His figures (of speech) were grand, and he illustrated his sermons by philosophy, politics and history as well as from the Bible. He had generally among his auditors the most enlightened citizens of Brookville."

He preached sermons elsewhere as well. At the second log meeting house known as Cain's Meeting House in Wayne County his sermon was from 2 Peter ii, 21-22 "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." He portrayed the dreadful state of the backslider so well that some of those present never forgot it.

The Honorable O. H. Smith in his "Sketches of Preachers in Early Indiana" describes Augustus writing, "Mr. Jocelyn was, at times, one of the ablest sermonizers of the age. At others, he would lose the text, and forget his

entire discourse. I saw him at one time at Centerville, standing silent before the congregation, his eyes gazing in vacancy. 'I am lost—the text and the subject have left me,' and down he sat. A hymn was sung, the meeting was closed, and the congregation retired. On one occasion he was preaching at Connersville; I was sitting just before him. He seemed to preach long. I became uneasy about the fire in my office—I could not tell why. The moment he closed, I stepped out and saw the smoke issuing from the window. I arrived barely in time to save the building. I told him why I left so abruptly. He said he noticed my uneasiness and closed the sermon sooner on my account."

Probably the most unusual time Augustus spoke was at the trial of 86-year-old Samuel Fields, who, as a young man, had fought valiantly in the American Revolution. Later Fields was convicted of murdering a constable, who was trying to serve a writ against him, and was sentenced to be executed. On May 27, 1825, the day scheduled for his execution, the white-haired, wrinkled old man was dressed in white and placed on a recumbent chair to support his withering body. The chair sat on a wagon that was driven through a crowd of thousands to the gallows. There Augustus Jocelyn addressed the crowd in an eloquent divine speech, said he had spoken to the prisoner several times and found him to be penitent. Following this short service the sheriff told Fields he had but 23 minutes to live. A rope was placed around his neck and fastened to the gallows.

Just as the sheriff was about to hang Fields, the pompous Indiana governor, James Brown Ray, who always tried to call attention to himself, stepped up and said: "Samuel Fields! You have been convicted of the crime of murder, by a jury of your county, and sentenced by the Court to be executed on this day. Your last hour is just expiring. Your petitions have been received, weighed, and investigated. Your whole case had been examined and matured. In making this appeal, you have imposed upon me the performance of the most responsible and important duty of my life. If, in coming to a conclusion on the subject, I had attempted to consult popular felling, I must have been lost in the variety of opinion. Duty with me is above all other considerations, and my conscience must be my guide. Though you stand convicted, a majority of the officers of the Court that tried you, and about 800 of your fellow-citizens have petitioned in your behalf, including the clergy of your county, men well known for their attachment to good government and law—men who would never identify themselves with your case, if they thought you a willful and malicious murderer. Your own and these petitions have had weight with me, but let me assure you that you have had a still more powerful advocate. The blood you freely parted with in our struggles for independence, and your infirmities

and scars speak for you! Those soldiers who fought for our common country, who now stand around, are powerful orators and successful advocates for you; and I almost fancy that I hear the voice of the Washington and Warren calling for mercy in your behalf. Take this, Sir, (handed him a pardon), and remember, that by exercising the high constitutional power, I am responsible to my country for your good behavior. Thought I view you as a child in intellect, and as a dying man, yet should you ever, by the favor of Heaven be restored to health, remember that I am your security for your conduct. While I am willing, under all circumstances to restore you to life, I do not do so under the belief that you have committed no crime. No; my opinion is, that you might have been convicted of manslaughter. But as the verdict stands against you, you must either be hanged or pardoned. I have no power to commute—to change your punishment—no, none, but to forgive you. In doing this I may err. But 'to err is human—to forgive divine.'"

The Telescope from the Bowery in New York carried an article about the trial from the *Brookville Enquirer*. The article concluded, "Never had electricity more influence upon the human frame, than this act had on the prisoner and spectators. The throb of universal approbation was instantaneously felt; and some even shouted with joy. The poor old man raised his head from the most stupid lethargy, and at once became animated; gratitude was immediately seated on his heart. But few seemed dissatisfied with this magnanimous act of the Governor."

The first school in Brookville was held in the old log courthouse by Mr. Dennison. He was followed the next years in different locations by Mr. McLaughlin, then Solomon Allen, then Mr. Harris, then Mr. Haines, and finally they found a teacher who became famous for his work, Augustus Jocelyn. Reifel describes him as follows: "He was a man of much ability and a good teacher, although he held strictly to the old Biblical adage, spare the rod and spoil the child. He seems to have been a sort of jack-of-all trades, and could turn his hand with equal facility to teaching, preaching, doctoring or editing newspapers. He had been a Methodist preacher in New York, before coming to Brookville, and filled the pulpit frequently after locating here. He taught more terms of the school from 1818 to 1830 [he did not arrive until 1822-23] than any other man, and was undoubtedly the best teacher which the town had up until the time the seminary was established." He taught in an abandoned house and frequently in an upstairs room in his own home. It was a subscription school and tuition was from two to three cents a day. One of his pupils, John Milton Johnston, would later become a judge.

The first printing press brought to Brookville in 1815 was from Philadelphia. It was known as the Ramage

pattern. After Ogle had started the first paper in Brookville several printers tried publishing a paper using the press. Robert John & I. N. Hanna had charge of the *Brookville Inquirer*, but Robert, John & Company was dissolved in October 1824. Then D. W. & Charles W. Hutchens took it over and called it the *Franklin Repository*. On November 12, 1825 they applied to Henry Clay to publish laws in their paper and it was granted. In Clay's papers it is also reported "that the Brookville, Indiana Franklin Repository has been transferred to Augustus Jocelyn of Brookville, Indiana, who is entitled to receive the compensation for having published the laws." Rev. Augustus Jocelyn took over the paper around 1826.

Besides printing the paper, Augustus also used the press to print things like the funeral card for Lavinia John in Brookville on Nov. 28, 1826 and the *Freemasons, Indiana Harmony Lodge Bylaws* of Brookville Harmony Lodge in 1828. He was helped with the printing by his apprentice, John W. Holland, who had been born in Wellsburg, West Virginia on October 23, 1810 and moved to Franklin County, Indiana with his parents as a young boy. In 1829 Holland moved to Lawrenceburg to pursue the printing trade and to Indianapolis in 1830.

The June 1828 issue of the *Franklin Repository* carried an article in which Augustus Jocelyn interviewed and questioned Governor Ray about his politics following Ray's address in Brookville. Quite an uproar occurred in the newspapers following the interview. According to the footnotes in *Messages and Papers Relating to the Administration of James Brown Ray Governor of Indiana 1825-1831* "The pro-Administration editor of the *Repository*, Augustus Jocelyn wanted to stop the Jackson followers in Indiana from claiming Ray as decidedly friendly to their candidate's election." Ray had earlier said he would support either Adams or Jackson.

Augustus comments following the interview were reprinted from the *Franklin Repository* in papers statewide. He wrote, "At the close of the conversation, we observed to his excellency [Ray] that we did not wish him to declare himself on either side of the Presidential question..."

"We have introduced this subject for the purpose of showing the opposition that there exists not the slightest pretext in fact, for their claiming the Governor of Indiana for Jackson; and that when his name is used abroad, with a view to produce an effect favorable to the election of the hero, they practice a foul deception upon the public, as well as upon their adherents."

Augustus "explained" Ray's sentiments in a later issue. The whole ordeal is too lengthy to publish. However,

when the Jackson Central Committee learned that Ray was seeking the support of both parties as an independent, they pushed to have Israel T. Canby be their candidate for governor.

The *History of Franklin County, Indiana* says the last issue of the *Franklin Repository* on file in the recorder's office is dated November 19, 1828. However, copies of the September 5, 12, 19, October 10, November 12, 19, 24, and December 16 of 1829 and January 10, 1830 are available at the Indiana State Library.

The above history also states that sometime in 1828 or 1829 Augustus renamed his paper *The Brookville Western Agriculturist* hoping the title would bring in more support. However the same history states that the editor of the *Brookville American* in 1879 saw a copy of the *Western Agriculturist and General Intelligencer*, its full name, dated November 19, 1829. Apparently Augustus printed two newspapers for a time.

On September 11, 1827, Augustus advertised in his *Franklin Repository* offering his newspaper for sale. He gave ill health as the reason for wanting to retire from the business. In January, 1830, Augustus "sold the old press and type of his defunct paper to Milton Gregg, who promptly hauled them out of town, not caring to rush in where a preacher had failed. The press, which had been doing duty in Brookville for fifteen years, was taken to Lawrenceburg and in that flourishing town Gregg started the *Western Statesman*," according to the *History of Franklin County, Indiana*. The *History of Dearborn and Ohio Counties* gives a more detailed account saying, "Gregg purchased of Mr. Jocelyn the Brookville printing materials. They were old and badly broken in sorts. Mr. Gregg sent a wild Hoosier teamster for the printing establishment, who laid a quilt on the floor and emptied all the cases on it—all sizes and varieties of types in one inglorious 'pi.' John W. Holland, [Augustus' apprentice] who lived and flourished at Indianapolis long after, and if living yet, will vividly recollect aiding the writer in distributing the 'pi.' It took three weeks. C. F. Clarkson, who had commenced his apprenticeship with Gregg & Culley, finished it in the office of the *Statesman*."

In 1828 Augustus Jocelyn was listed as a member of the Indiana State Society of the American Society for Colonization of the Free People of Color of the United States. There was a movement started in 1821-22 to relocate freed blacks back to Liberia in Africa where they would have greater freedom and to compensate their owners. Three well know early supporters were Henry Clay, John Randolph and Richard Bland Lee.

The law of 1827 provided for the organization of seminaries. An act to incorporate the Franklin County Seminary at Brookville was approved on January 22, 1830. It appointed Thomas W. Coalscott, William McCleery, Augustus Jocelyn, James A. Lowes, Abraham Lee, David Mount, Joseph Meeks, William R. Morris, John Davis, John Wynn and William Simms as its trustees. They could adopt a common seal; carry the object and design of the institution into effect; increase the number of trustees; employ or appoint tutors and professors; place them under the direction and supervision of learned men they could select; establish a constitution, by-laws and regulations to govern the seminary, tutors, professors and students; sue and be sued, etc. The first meeting of the trustees was on Saturday, December 11, 1830. At that time a committee composed of John Wynn, Augustus Jocelyn, and John T. McKinney was appointed to select "some suitable person as a teacher to take charge of the Franklin County Seminary." On April 2, 1831 they reported that after he had been examined, Rev. Isaac A. Ogden had been found qualified to act as principal. The seminary conducted classes in spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, English, grammar, United States history, ancient history, modern history, rhetoric, natural philosophy, algebra, geometry, Greek and Latin. It cost students from two to four and a half dollars a quarter to attend. But due to the free school movement, it was not very prosperous.

In *Taxpayers Franklin County, Indiana 1813-1831* Augustus is shown as paying taxes in Brookville township in 1828. The 1830 Federal Census shows his home in 1830 being in Franklin County, Indiana. Living with him is a female age 30-39, who is probably his wife, 3 females between the ages under 5 to 19, and one male under 5. The 1830 census does not give names of those living in the home. After this time there is little record of Augustus. He is mentioned in the *Probate Order Book I, Franklin County, Indiana*. In March 1832 the estate of Titus Smith owed him money but there was not enough money to pay him. On November 14, 1832, he was a creditor of the estate of John Shank and was to receive 20 cents on each dollar owed to him. In May 1834 he was listed to be paid sums of money from the estate of James Remy. However, it is not known if he was still in Brookville at this time or if he was alive.

In 1832, the citizens of the Whitewater valley petitioned the Legislature for another canal survey, and in 1833 the General Assembly authorized a preliminary survey. It was made in the summer of 1834 by competent surveyors. Jesse Lynch William and William Gooding, presented a report of this work on December 23, 1834. They had found the valley to be shallow with an excessive fall. The canal would be seventy-six miles long with seven dams and fifty-six locks. Cost was estimated at \$1,142,126. It would pro-

vide the following counties with an outlet for their produce to be transported at an average cost of \$3.55 per ton: Franklin, Rush, Fayette, Henry, Randolph, Hancock, and portions of Wayne, Union, Decatur, and Delaware. Previously costs were as high as ten dollars per ton.

Construction of the Whitewater Canal began at Brookville, Indiana in 1836 as part of the statewide Mammoth Internal Improvement Bill. With its southern terminus at Lawrenceburg on the Ohio River, the Whitewater Valley Canal Co. reached Connersville, Indiana in mid-1845. Later that same year 69 miles of canal were completed to Cambridge City, which was on the National Road. In 1847, the merchants of Hagerstown financed their own 7 mile canal extension. At Harrison, the Whitewater also connected with the 25-mile-long Cincinnati and Whitewater Canal of Ohio, which was completed in 1843. Destructive floods in the narrow valley, inadequate financial returns, and the railroad doomed the waterway.

Since little could be found about Augustus Jocelyn after about 1830, he may not have seen the Whitewater Canal being constructed. Due to his failing health it is highly probable that he did not see it completed.

Augustus Jocelyn was a man who greatly participated in the public life of Brookville and was a well known figure while he was there. It seems strange that he seems to have dropped off the map. If anyone can find further information about him contact CSI headquarters. We'd like to put this canawler to rest.

Sources:

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Canal Engineers, Special Agents And Others Employed By Indiana In 1841

Doc. No. 6 Indiana House of Representatives

Report of the Board of Int. Improvement, in relation to the number of persons in the employ of the State, connected with the public works.

Office Board of Internal Improvement,
 Indianapolis, Dec. 13th, 1841.

Hon. John W. Davis,
 Speaker of the House of Representatives:

SIR—In reply to a resolution of the House of the 10th inst, enquiring the "number of Engineers, Special Agents, and others in the employ of the State, connected with the system of Internal Improvements, their names, amount of their salaries, and the nature and extent of their services," the Board respectfully report.

That on the **Wabash and Erie Canal**, Richard Adams and O. Bird, are employed as superintendents of repairs. It is their duty to regulate the introduction of the water, so as to keep the water at the proper height, to take care that breaches in the canal are prevented so far as possible, and to repair them promptly when they occur. Each has under his care 70 miles of canal over which he travels almost constantly. The compensation allowed is three dollars per day, when actually employed, including traveling and all other expenses.

John Roach has been employed a portion of the time during the past season in attending the **Locks at Huntington**, and in superintending the operations of contractors on the **St. Joseph's Feeder** at \$35 per month. The services of this individual were of a temporary nature, and are probably discontinued before this time. The sum paid to these three individuals was included in the amount of repairs stated in the annual report, though the names were not there given.

S. Fisher, the resident Engineer, has been employed in the service of the State whenever his services were necessary. His duties have been, to superintend the

construction of the **Steam Boat Lock** at Delphi and to give some attention to the repairs of the line, together with the closing up of unsettled accounts.

His total compensation for the year amounts to \$___ as give in the annual report.

These several items of work having been completed, an Engineer will no longer be required, unless it be in the place of a superintendent.

There are four collectors of tolls on the **Wabash and Erie Canal**, at Fort Wayne, Lagros [Lagro], Logansport and Lafayette, each receiving \$15, per month.

T. A. Morris is employed as Resident Engineer on the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad, and superintendent on the Central Division of the **Central Canal**, at a yearly salary of \$1,500. R. M. Patterson, is employed as principal assistant Engineer on the Madison Railroad; their duties are to attend to the construction of the work on said road, and make the proper estimates of work done &c. To T. A. Morris is also assigned the charge of the finished part of the work.

H. C. Moore is employed as superintendent upon the **White Water Canal** at a salary of \$1,000 per annum; his duty is to keep the finished portion of the canal in proper repair and to exercise such supervisory power over the unfinished portion of the canal, as is directed by law; and during the past season he has, under the direction of the Board, attended to a large number of Arbitrations on said line, and in addition to these services he has several times visited the New Albany and Vincennes road—collected and paid over the tolls—and superintended the repairs.

John Burk is employed on the **Central Division Central Canal**; his duty is to keep the finished part in repair and regulate the supply of water, and pay such attention to the unfinished part as is required by law. During the past summer his pay has been at the rate of \$300, per an-

num; from the first of the present month it has been reduced to \$150.

W.F.F. Thompson was appointed in September last, superintendent of the New Albany and Vincennes road, at an annual salary of \$150. His duty is to collect the tolls on said road, pay them out and see that the road is kept in repair.

S.C. Bradford is employed as superintendent on the **Southern Division of the Central Canal** and collector of tolls, at a yearly salary of \$150. His duty is to collect tolls and to make such repairs as are absolutely necessary.

Adam Green is employed on the Madison Railroad, at a per diem allowance of two dollars; his duty is to keep the track in repair, clean out the side ditches and such other repairs as are necessary to ensure the safe running of the cars.

Two collectors of tolls are employed on the **White Water Canal**, one at Brookville, the other at Lawrenceburg, each at a yearly salary of \$100.

In order to run the cars on the Madison Railroad, two modes have been adopted, one by farming out the privilege—the other, to run them by agents of the State; the latter method is the one now in use, and so far has met the expectations of the Board. Connected with running the train under any mode, a shop with a superintendent well skilled in the building and repair of cars and the keeping in order the loco-motives is indispensable.

The following is a list of agents connected with this department.

Samuel Thomas, superintendent of Machinery—salary \$70, per month; his duty is to keep the engine and cars in good order for safe running.

John Lodge superintendent of transportation—salary a per diem allowance of \$2; his duty, to attend to the transportation of freight and passengers; to go daily with the train in and out, and settle all accounts &c.

R. J. Elvin Clerk at depot, at a per diem allowance of one dollar; his duty is to keep the books containing an account of transportation, &c.

F. Lunger, Engine man is employed to superintend and conduct the locomotive and train; he is paid a per diem allowance of \$2.

There is also employed one fireman whose duty is

to attend to the fire, wood and water; also one other hand on the train to assist in loading and unloading; each at a per diem allowance of one dollar.

It will be recollected by the House, that the present law provides for the appointment, by the Board of arbitrators to assess damages to contractors in certain cases, and to those who may apply for damages on account of the location of any of the public works; (these appointments are not given) they have probably amounted to fifty persons, during the past year, and their pay to \$500.

In connection with the foregoing subject, it may not be improper here to state that under the existing laws, the right to an appeal from the award of arbitrators, in certain cases, is allowed. Under this permission, a large number have been taken, a number of which are yet pending in the circuit courts, and a few in the supreme court.

To secure the interest of the State, Attorneys have been employed; at this time about ten Lawyers are engaged in those cases, the amount to their fees are yet unknown; they are made to depend upon the nature of the case and the amount in controversy.

In the account of payments contained in the annual report of the acting commissioner heretofore made to the Legislature, the foregoing expenses of Engineers, Superintendent &c. were included, though the names of the persons employed were not in every case given.

Respectfully submitted.
Philip Mason,
J. L. Williams

SPEAKERS BUREAU February 6, 2013 - Huntington, IN

Bob Schmidt presented a 45-minute PowerPoint program about Indiana's canals featuring the Wabash & Erie Canal in Huntington to 21 members and friends of the Huntington Genealogy Society on February 6, 2013 in the Indiana Room of the Huntington City-Township Library at 7 p.m. He pointed out a stereo-card on a library shelf, which showed the dam that pooled water to feed the canal at Huntington. He answered many questions following his presentation.

This library has excellent canal reminiscences published by F. S. Bash in the local newspaper. It also has a canal boat model hanging from the ceiling in the hallway and a model of a automatic canal bridge that was patented November 22, 1859 by D. Berry. Patent No. 26,156