

CANAWLERS AT REST

JOSEPH C. HURD

Find-A-Grave #106477741

b. 1811

d. April 8, 1873

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Joseph C. Hurd was born in Morris county, New Jersey in 1811 to Uel and Sarah Wiggins Hurd. He had five sisters and brothers.

Joseph moved to Illinois in 1845 where he set up a tanyard after having learned the trade in New Jersey. He was married to Harriet B. Townsend of Mt. Carmel, Illinois. In 1847-48 he moved to Indiana and settled in Knox county, Indiana. There he retailed liquor for about two years. He then began farming and farmed until his death. For sixteen years while cultivating his farm along the Wabash River near Vincennes, Indiana, he tended the lock that allowed boats to bypass the "Grand Rapids" in the river at that point.

David Burr recommended building a lock at Grand Rapids in 1837. The area was surveyed by Thomas S. Hinde. Hinde recommended that the lock and dam be built next to property he owned so that he had access to the water power provided by the dam.

In 1845 Sylvanna Lothrop was employed to make a detailed estimate for a lock and dam at Grand Rapids and reported that this single lock and dam would open four hundred miles of river to navigation by the same class of boats that plied the Upper Ohio. He estimated a lock with a chamber 210 by 50 feet. The dam was to be 1,030 feet long, 57 feet wide, and 10 feet high at the comb, and convex up stream.

On the 13th of January, 1846, an act was passed by the legislature of Indiana, chartering the Wabash Navigation Company, and substantially the same act was passed by the legislature of Illinois on the 30th of January 1847. The subject of this joint act was to improve navigation on the Wabash River, The river was being improved primarily to carry agricultural products to market. The first project was to be a dam and lock at Grand Rapids to overcome all obstructions at that point of the river. They could hold, buy, sell such real and personal estate that was necessary to carry out their projects. They had jurisdiction over the river from fifteen miles below Terre Haute to the south for about two hundred and fifty miles and the land on either side including the timber, rocks, stones, gravel, or earth on it. They could sell water rights. Once the locks and dams were built the company had regulation and control of boats passing through them. They also were required to keep them in good repair.

The lock's dimensions were to be not less than two hundred and ten feet in length and fifty feet in width in the chamber. Work was to start within ten years from the date of the act and the lock and dam at Grand Rapids had to be finished within five years thereafter.

The lock had a lift of ten feet. If it had been built of stone, it and an earthen dam would have cost \$95,000; however, they built it mainly of cypress crib-work filled with soft friable sandstone and it cost about \$70,000. It was to pass boats drawing 3½ feet at lowest water and to lengthen the period of navigation from two to three months. In other words, all boats that could get to the Grand Rapids could pass through.

By 1873 this Grand Rapids lock had proven to have been built too light and was defective. Ice breached the dam in 1871 for about 150 feet and by 1872 more than 250 feet was exposed. It was useless to repair it and a new substantial, lasting lock of the proper dimensions was estimated to cost \$135,000. It was suggested that the State of Indiana remove the lock, pay the Wabash Navigation Company \$8,000 for it and purchase the buildings the company owned on the Indiana shore for less than \$1,500. These buildings included a two-story frame house, a stable, and two



Grand Rapids Dam on the Wabash River—historic photo

small frame buildings, one of which was used as an office for the lock-tender (probably Joseph C. Hurd's office). They thought that while rebuilding the lock the buildings could be used for a superintendent's office and later, when the project was completed, as a residence for the lock-tender.

It was estimated that it would cost \$110,000 to rebuild the lock. The purchase of the navigation company's franchise and property along with current expenses would cost an additional \$40,000. Therefore, it was recommended that the 1874 appropriation for the improvement of the Wabash River be \$150,000 with no other improvements made to the river until the Grand Rapids project was completed.

In 1897 a concrete and stone lock and dam was finally completed. It cost \$260,000. It created a fisherman's paradise in the water below the dam.

Frederick Hinde Zimmerman built the Grand Rapids Hotel in 1922 alongside the dam. It took advantage of the tourist trade. The dam was abandoned in 1931.

While still in Mt. Carmel, Illinois, Joseph C. and Harriet B. Hurd's son James Uel Hurd (1847-1894) was born. Later, while farming and tending the Grand Rapids lock, they had six more children. They were Joseph Critington Hurd (1849-1929), Sarah E. Hurd (1851-?), Mary F. Hurd (1852-1871), Charles M. Hurd (1857-1862), Caroline Hurd (1860-?), and Clara Hurd (1861-1924). There is little information about

their children except for their following two sons.

James Uel Hurd received a common school education. In 1872 he married Fanny Rees. They had two children, Lelia and Hattie Hurd. Fanny died in March 1882 and James married Emma Orr, daughter of James Orr. He and his brother, Joseph Critington Hurd, owned the home farm in Knox county and the ferry at that place after their parents died. James belonged to the Masonic fraternity and the A.O.U.W.

Joseph Critington Hurd also received a common school education. He married Mary Finger, daughter of John Finger, of Indiana in 1879. They had three children, Carban, Clarence M. and Blanch M. Hurd. He owned 200 acres of land, which he farmed. He was a Republican, a member of the Masonic fraternity and a member of A.O.U.W.

According to the U.S. Federal Census of 1870, Joseph C. and family were living in Decker, Knox county, Indiana. He had real estate valued at \$10,000 and a personal estate of \$2,747.

Joseph C. Hurd passed away on April 5, 1873. He was laid to rest in Rose Hill Cemetery in Mt. Carmel, Illinois. After his death Joseph Critington Hurd moved his family to the family farm and Harriet Hurd, his mother, lived with them. On February 12, 1883 Harriet B. (Townsend) Hurd passed away.



JOSEPH C. HURD
DIED APRIL 3, 1873
AGED 62 YEARS, 5 DAYS

JOSEPH C. HURD'S FAMILY

<u>Name</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Death</u>	<u>Cemetery</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Marriage</u>	<u>Place</u>
Hurd, Joseph	1767		1818				
m. Lum, Margaret	1768		1846				
Hurd, Uel	3-09-1788	Morris Co NJ	4-08-1847		Montgomery Co IL	4-28-1810	Morristown NJ
m. Wiggins, Sarah "Sally"	1-23-1790	Mt Hope NJ	bef. 1860		Montgomery Co IL	4-28-2820	Morristown NJ
Hurd, Joseph C.	1811	Morris Co NJ	4-08-1873	Rose Hill	Mt Carmel IL		
m. Townsend, Harriet B.		Mt. Carmel IL	2-12-1883				
<u>Hurd, James Uel.</u>	10-03-1847	Mt. Carmel IL	10-05-1894	Rose Hill	Mt Carmel IL	1872/1884	
m1 Rees, Fannie C.			2-15-1882			1872	
Hurd, Leila			8-08-1876				
Hurd, Hattie							
m2 Orr, Emma	10-16-1864		11-07-1945	Rose Hill	Mt Carmel IL	1884	
Hurd, Berite	2-17-1884	Knox Co IN	5-25-1840				
m. Smith, J. Stuart	1864 IL						
<u>Hurd, Joseph Critington</u>	1-31-1849	Knox Co IN	6-25-1929		Mt Carmel IL	1878	
m. Finger, Mary Francis	1860		1955	Rose Hill	Mt Carmel IL	1878	
Hurd, Carban	1879		1949	Rose Hill	Mt Carmel IL		
m. Hershey, Grace	1881		1958	Rose Hill	Mt Carmel IL		
Hurd, Clarence M	11-12-1881		7-29-1940	Rose Hill	Mt Carmel IL		
Hurd, Blanch M.	9-07-1883		9-28-1969	Rose Hill	Mt Carmel IL		
<u>Hurd, Sarah E.</u>	1851	Knox Co IN	2-17-1871	Rose Hill	Mt Carmel IL		
<u>Hurd, Mary F.</u>	1853	Knox Co IN	1862				
<u>Hurd, Charles M.</u>	1857	Knox Co IN	1946				
<u>Hurd, Caroline "Callie"</u>	1860	Knox Co IN	1924				
<u>Hurd, Clara</u>	1861	Knox Co IN	1862				
Hurd, Edward	1813		1881				
Hurd, Susan Maria	1814		1900				
Hurd, William	1817		1900				
Hurd, James L	1823		1900				
Hurd, Margaret	1828		1868				



Top: Rose Hill Cemetery, Mount Carmel, Illinois
Bottom: JOSEPH C. (Critington) HURD, 1849-1929

Photos courtesy T. L. Hallam and Jeanealogy

Sources:

Ancestry.com.

Illinois, Deaths and Still Births Index, 1916-1947

Public member trees

U.S. Federal Census: 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880

Find-A-Grave #106477741 and #106477946

History of Knox and Daviess Counties, Indiana. Chicago, IL: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1896.

Report of the Secretary of War Being Part of The Message and Documents Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress at the Beginning of the First Session of the Forty-third Congress, Vol. II. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1873.

"Report of the Chief of Engineers" October 20, 1873

Wikipedia: Grand Rapids Dam