

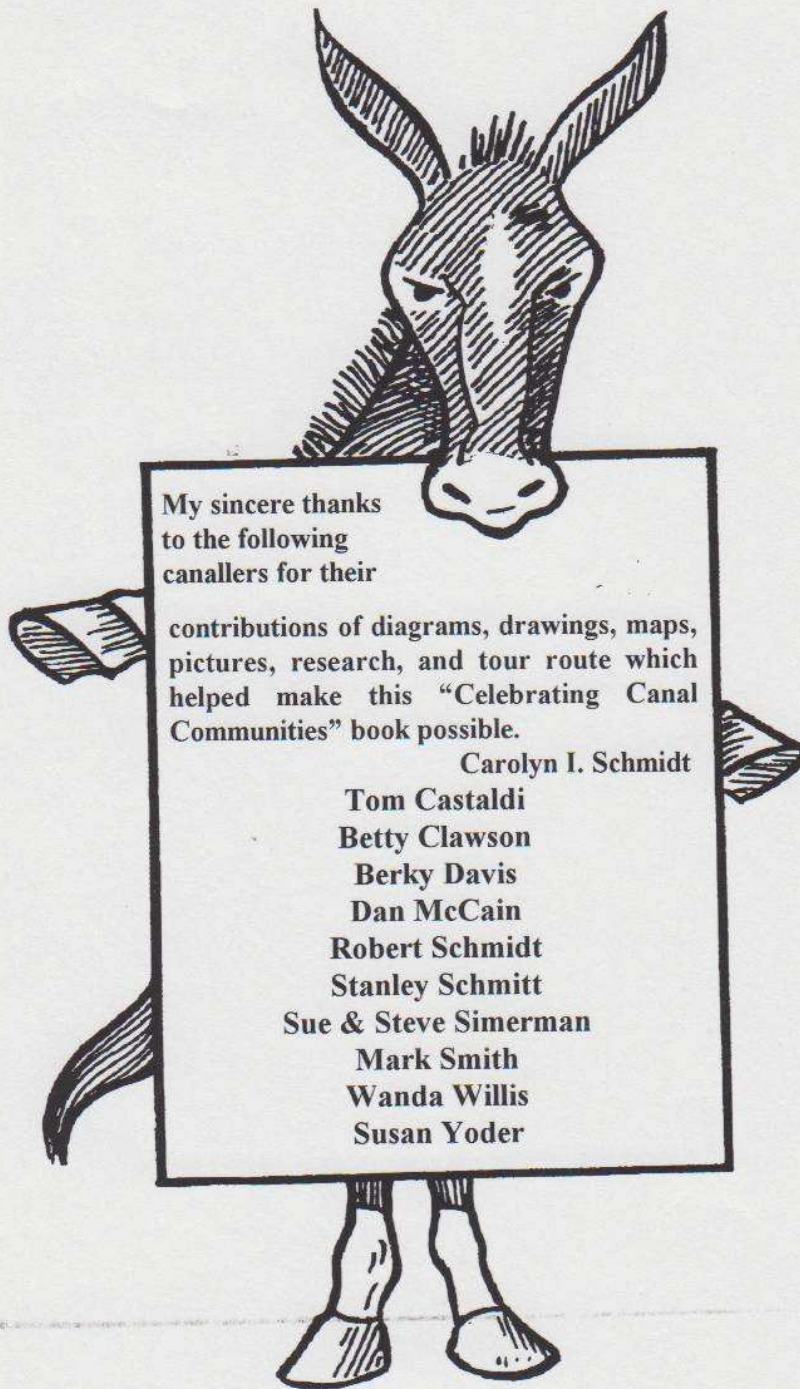
# WABASH & ERIE CANAL



**Carroll / Tippecanoe / Fountain  
Counties**

Canal Society of Indiana P.O. Box 400087 Fort Wayne, IN 46804





My sincere thanks  
to the following  
canallers for their

contributions of diagrams, drawings, maps,  
pictures, research, and tour route which  
helped make this "Celebrating Canal  
Communities" book possible.

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# WABASH & ERIE CANAL



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**Canal Society of Indiana P.O. Box 40087 Fort Wayne, IN 46804**



# FOREWORD

## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Each tour given by the Canal Society of Indiana attempts to relate the history of the canal and point out the location of its structures in a particular area of Indiana or in a neighboring state. The tours also include other canal related buildings and the early history of the counties and towns being toured. They usually have a theme--something that ties the area together. There were several possibilities for the theme of this tour.

The major city covered is Lafayette with Delphi as an anchor at one end of the tour and Attica at the other. All three of them have called attention to the Wabash and Erie Canal in their area through archaeological digs, construction of parks or public areas, placement of historical markers, or media reports. Thus they have celebrated the canal. Our theme could be Canal Celebrating Communities.

These communities and the smaller ones in between also were, and in some cases still are, major producers of pork in Indiana and the United States. Our theme could be Pork on the Canal.

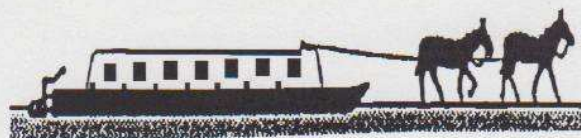
Still another common tie is the need for water in the canal below Delphi. To the north of Delphi the rivers were narrow enough that they could have a dam erected across them to back up water to feed the canal. The largest dam built across the Wabash River was at Pittsburg near Delphi. Below this point the Wabash became too powerful and its flood plain too wide to dam with the crib style dam used in canal days. Creeks below Delphi became the suppliers of additional water to add to that fed into the canal from the Pittsburg dam. The creeks that had dams erected on them were Deer Creek, Wild Cat Creek and Wea Creek. Our theme could be Canal Dams.

Water was in short supply not only due to smaller streams having to be used to provide it but to the gravel bottom at places along the canal below Delphi. These areas absorbed water almost as fast as it was let into the canal. The first boats to reach both Lafayette and Attica had to be pulled through the mud by oxen or mules. The canal bottom had to be compacted by having animals pull brush and small trees back and forth through the mud and then letting it harden to make the canal water tight. Also the side cut canal just below Attica, which lowered boats into the river, had a gravel bottom that so drained off the canal water that the legislature passed a law forbidding its use. Our theme could be Water Loss.

Another possibility for our theme could be Side Cut Canals since the area had two. At Pittsburg, across from Delphi, a short side cut canal was built on the opposite side of the river from the canal. It provided canal boats access to Pittsburg via the slack water pool created by the dam at that location. The boats could cross or float down the Wabash River on the pool from Carrollton. At Attica the side cut canal was on the same side of the river as the main line and was joined to it. This side cut lowered boats into the Wabash River where they were poled across to the town of Williamsport.

There were so many possibilities for a uniting theme that we wanted the tour to celebrate them all. Celebrating Canal Celebrating Communities seemed to cover the bases but was just too long. Shortened, our theme for the Spring 1999 tour became Celebrating Canal Communities. We have so much to celebrate about the Wabash and Erie Canal: its being the longest continuous canal ever built, its opening up of the frontier for settlement, its transportation of farm commodities, and its stimulus to the communities that grew up along its course. We hope you enjoy Celebrating Canal Communities. Welcome aboard.

Carolyn Schmidt



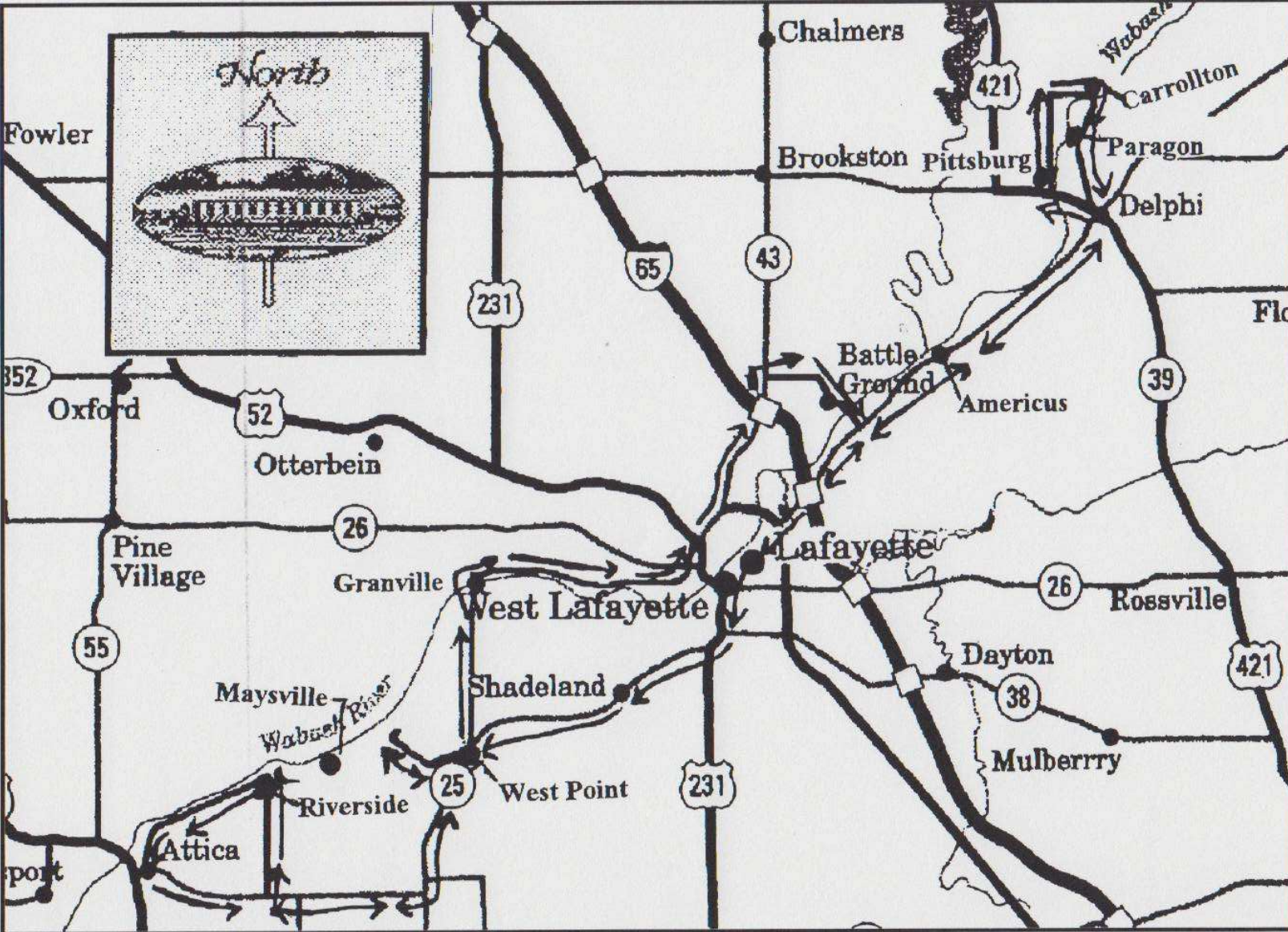


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## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

# “Celebrating Canal Communities” TOUR ROUTE

### INTRODUCTION

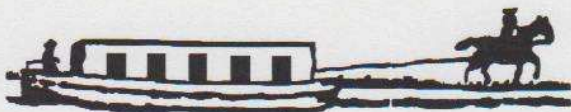
This tour is of the section of the Wabash and Erie Canal that runs between Carrollton, north of Delphi, to Attica. Though headquartered in West Lafayette, the actual route along the canal will be traveled from the north to the south just as the canal was built in this part of the state.

This route is written in the following manner. The direction of the turn is given first and is followed by the general compass direction in parentheses. The name and number of the road/street or a general description of the turn is then given.

(N) = North, (S) = South, (NE) = Northeast, etc.

US = Federal highway, SR = State Road, CR = County Road, St. = Street

Points where the tour will stop and places that will be pointed out in passing will be in bold type. The stops either will be fully described in the engineer's report and/or elsewhere in the book.



### HEADQUARTERS AT SUPER 8 MOTEL, WEST LAFAYETTE

The buses will leave the inn.

Right (N) on SR 43

Right (E) on SR 225

Left (NE) on SR 25 to Delphi

On route to Delphi where the “Celebrating Canal Communities” Tour begins your tour guide will provide you with a general orientation.

### THE TOUR

#### CARROLL COUNTY

Arrive at Trailhead Park on the southwest side of Delphi.

Left (NE) on SR 25

Left (NW) Washington St. in Delphi

**Cross Wabash & Erie Canal**

Left into parking lot by Peters Revington

#### STOP #1 Canal Park

1. Half of the group tours the Case House while the other half tours Canal Park—then groups switch.

2. Half of the group walks the northern portion of the canal to the IOOF Cemetery while the other half boards the bus for Pittsburg.

Right (SE) on Washington

Right (SW) on SR 25 (Main St.)

Right (NW) on US 421

Right (N) on 900 W (West Rd.)

#### STOP # 2 Pittsburg

Note the canal boat mural on the side of the restaurant.

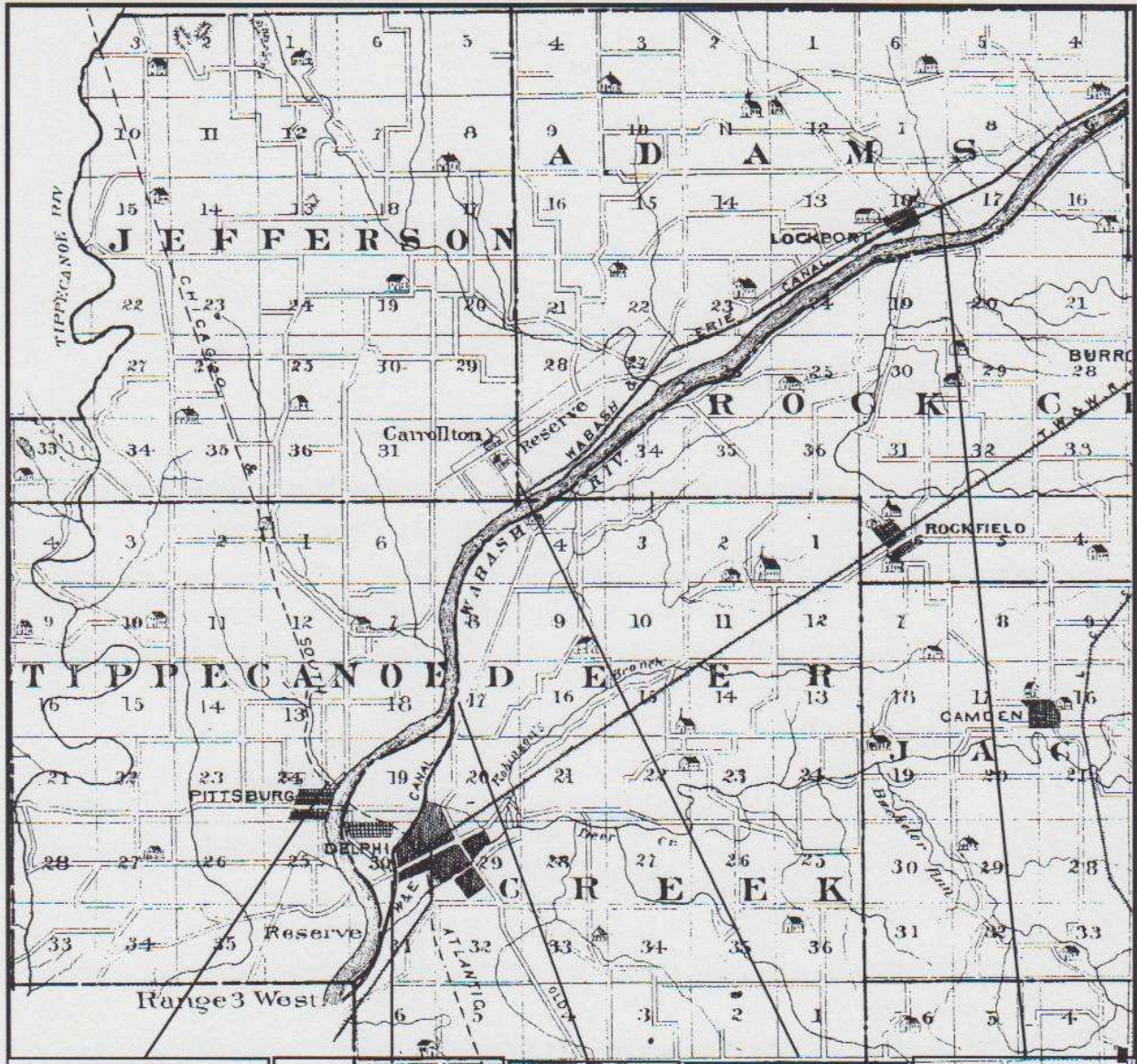
Photo by Bob Schmidt



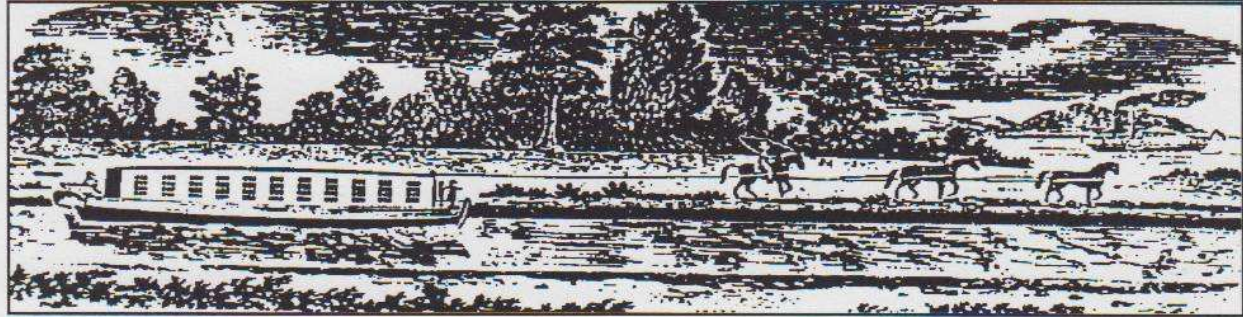


CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

CARROLL COUNTY - 1876



<p><b>Pittsburg</b> Dam across Wabash River with Steam Boat Lock, Side Cut Canal to Mills</p>	<p><b>Delphi</b> Side Cut Slip, Mill Race, Lock No. 33, Deer Creek Dam and Tow Bridge</p>	<p><b>Paragon</b> Guard Lock, Slackwater Crossing</p>	<p><b>Carrollton</b> Lock No. 31, Guard Lock No. 32, Towpath Bridge,</p>	<p><b>Lockport</b> Burnett's Creek Arch Culvert 100, Lock No. 28, Lock No. 29</p>
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## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Continue (N) on West Rd. (Range Line)

Right (E) on CR 700 N turns into CR 725 N

Right (S) on CR 700 W

Right (SW) on Towpath Road

**STOP # 3 Carrollton Lock # 31 and Guard Lock # 32, site of Menser Tavern**



The Menser Tavern stood at the Carrollton bridge  
Taken from an old photo

Cross bridge and continue (SW) on the road which becomes the Carrollton Rd. and then Wilson St. in Delphi

Right (SW) on Monroe St. to IOOF Cemetery

The group returning on the bus tours the cemetery and walks back to Canal Park passing the lime kilns and seeing the north end of the canal trail. Upon reaching Canal Park they are picked up by bus and taken to Honan Hall for lunch.

The other group, which has finished the cemetery tour, boards the bus to do the above bus tour and when finished is taken directly to Honan Hall for lunch.

**LUNCH AT HONAN HALL**



Case Monument at the IOOF Cemetery  
Photo by Bob Schmidt

Continue (NW) on Monroe St.

Left (SE) on Washington St.

Right (SW) of SR 25 (Main St.)

Almost immediately after passing under I-65 you will pass over Wild Cat Creek.

Right (N) on Conservation Club Rd.

**STOP # 4 WILD CAT CREEK TOW PATH BRIDGE ABUTMENT**



This abutment for the tow path bridge is on the west side of Wild Cat Creek. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Left (S) on Conservation Club Rd.

Right (SW) on SR 25

Cross US 52 to Schyler St.

Schyler curves left to 15th St.

Right (W) on Greenbush St.

Left (S) on 9th St.

**Pause to see Greenbush Cemetery**

Right (W) on Salem St.

Right on US 231 the follow left (SW) TO DOWNTOWN signs.

Left (S) on 3rd St.

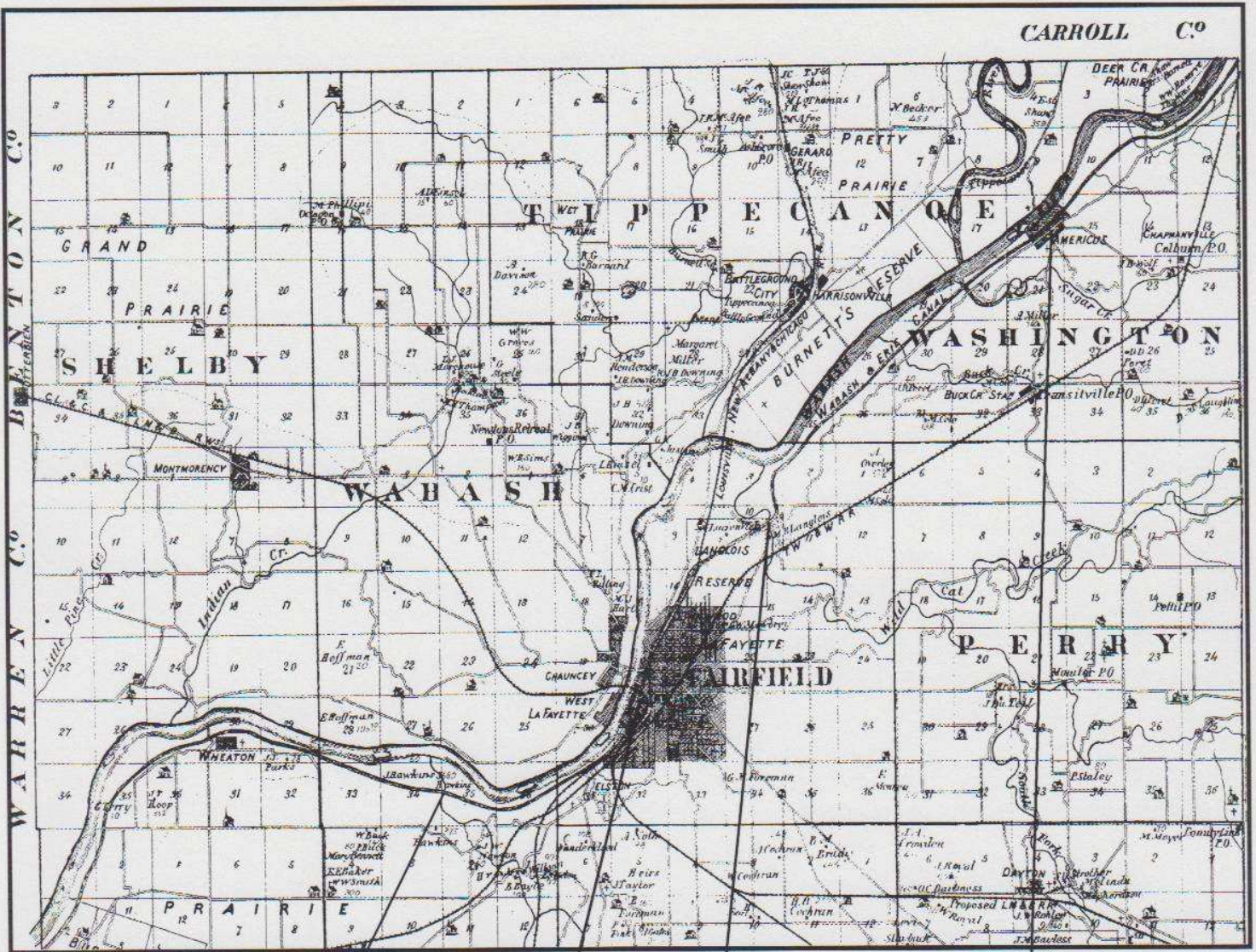
Right (W) on Ferry St.

Left (S) on 2nd St. to Riehle Plaza



CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

TIPPECANOE COUNTY - 1876

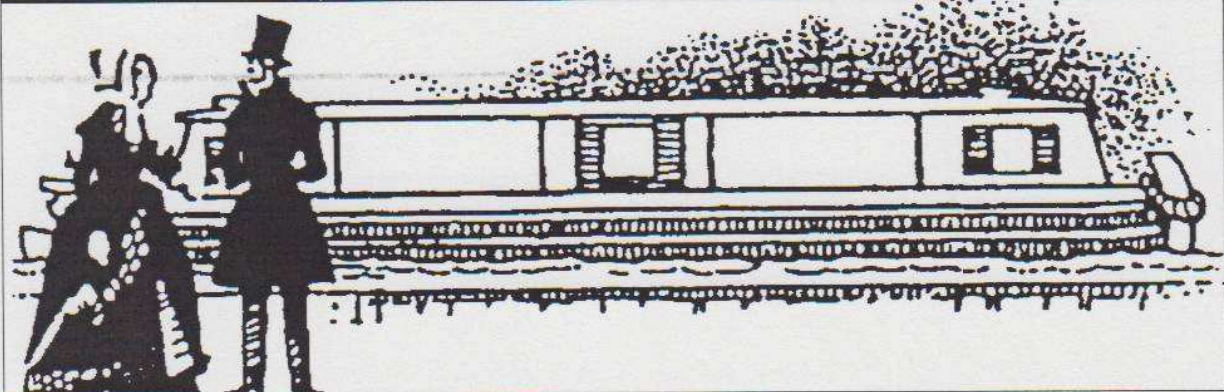


Wea Creek  
Feeder Dam, Aqueduct, Lock No. 34

Lafayette  
Canal Basin, Toll Collecting Point

Wild Cat Creek Feeder Dam, Guard  
Locks, Towpath Bridge, Flood Gates

Americus Canal Hotel,  
End of W&E when planned





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### STOP # 5 Riehle Plaza



The old train station sits at Riehle Plaza. Photo Bob Schmidt

The bus drops us off at the plaza, proceeds across the river on the bridge, and picks us up on the West Lafayette side of the plaza.

Bus turns right on Columbia, crosses bridge and turns right on Tapawingo to pick us up.

Left (W) and cross bridge back to Lafayette

Left (N) on 3rd St.

Left (W) on Columbia St.

Left (S) on 2nd St. **John Purdue Building (canal era) now Sgt. Prestons**

2nd St. becomes Wabash Ave. and passes under railroad overpass

Right (W) on Chestnut immediately after passing beneath railroad

Right (N) on 1st St.

Left (W) on Walnut St.

Left (S) on Sycamore St. **Route of canal from basin**

Left (E) on Smith St.

Right (S) on 1st St.

Right (SW) on Wabash Avenue. It crosses the railroad tracks and stays to the left up the hill.

Right (SW) on SR 25 to West Point

Right (W) on CR 510 S

Right (N) on West County Line Rd. to Flint Creek

Left (W) on gravel drive just before Flint Creek

### STOP # 6 Flint Creek Aqueduct Site



Old cars fill the canal bed on west side of Flint Creek where canal crossed via an aqueduct Photo by Bob Schmidt

Right (S) on West County Line Rd.

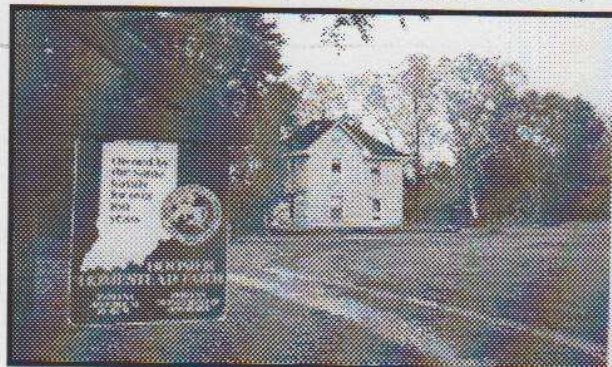
Left (E) on CR 510 S

Right (SW) on SR 25

Right (W) on SR 28

Right (N) of CR 500 E to Riverside across railroad tracks **Pause to point out location of Maysville to the north, Zacariah Cicott's trading post across Wabash River, and talk about Riverside**

Left (SW) on River Road **Pause to point out location of the Fix Farm, a Hoosier Heritage Farm located across from CR 325 E. (200 W&E workers buried)**





# CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

## FOUNTAIN COUNTY - 1876

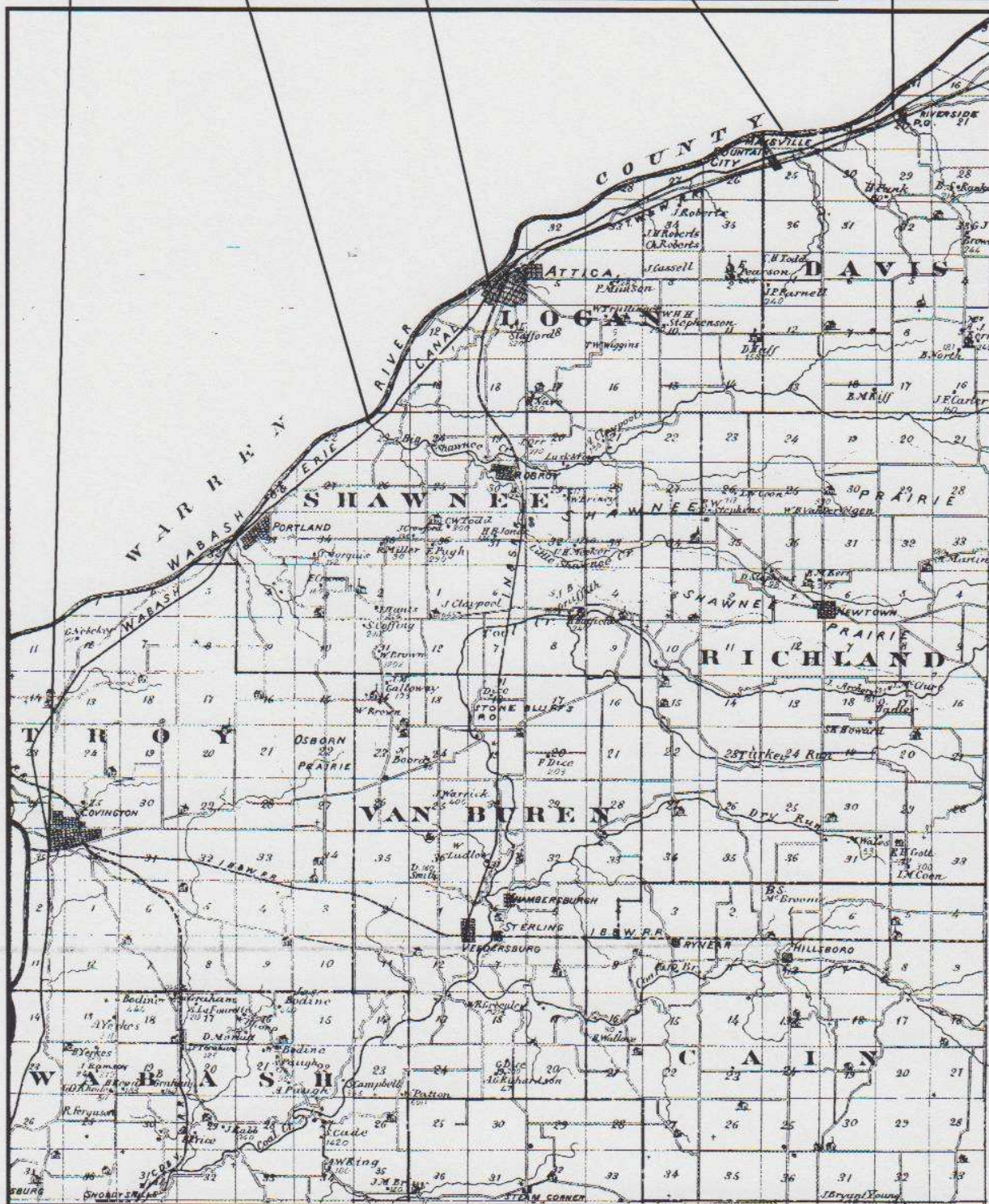
Covington  
Lock No. 36, Toll  
Collecting Point

Shawnee Creek  
Aqueduct No. 9,  
Feeder Dam and Canal

Attica Lock No. 35  
"Canal War", Side Cut  
Canal for Williamsport

Maysville, Riverside  
Canal Camp, Cemetery for Canal Workers  
Who Died from Cholera on Fix Farm

Flint Creek  
Aqueduct No. 8





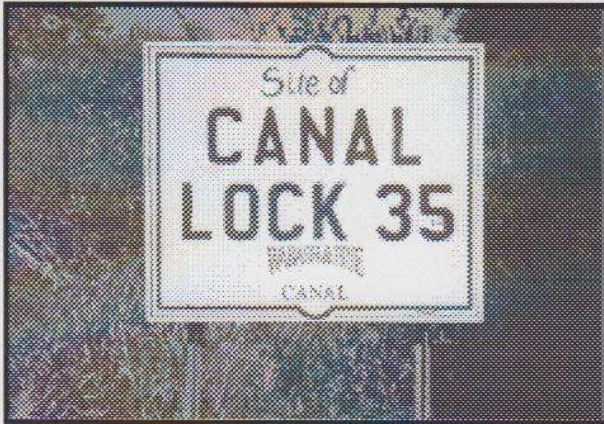
# CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Continue SW on River Road which becomes Perry Street in Attica

Right (NW) on Main Street

Left (SW) on Union Street

Right (NW) on Washington Street **Pause to see site of Lock # 35 and markers placed there.**

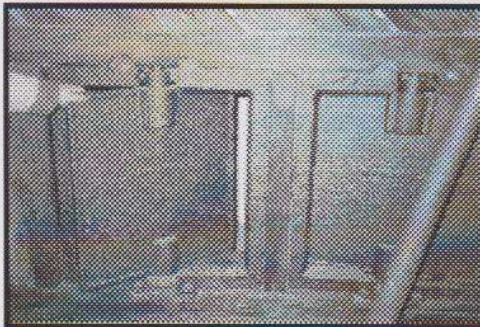


Marker placed by property owner at Lock # 35 of Wabash and Eric Canal in Attica. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Left (SW) on Canal Street

Left (SE) on N. Monroe

Left (NE) on Perry St.



WICKET GATE PADDLES TAKEN IN CUMBERLAND MARYLAND MUSEUM

Photos by Bob Schmidt



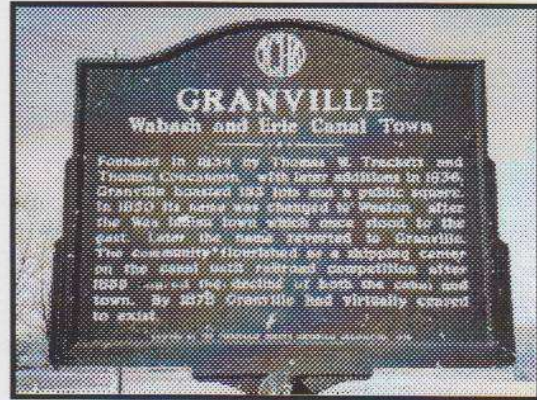
MITRE SILL AS FOUND IN THE GRONAUER LOCK IN NEW HAVEN INDIANA

Right (SE) on Jackson St. which becomes SR 28

Left (N) on 25 to town of West Point

Left angle (N) onto CR 700 W

**Pause at Granville marker**



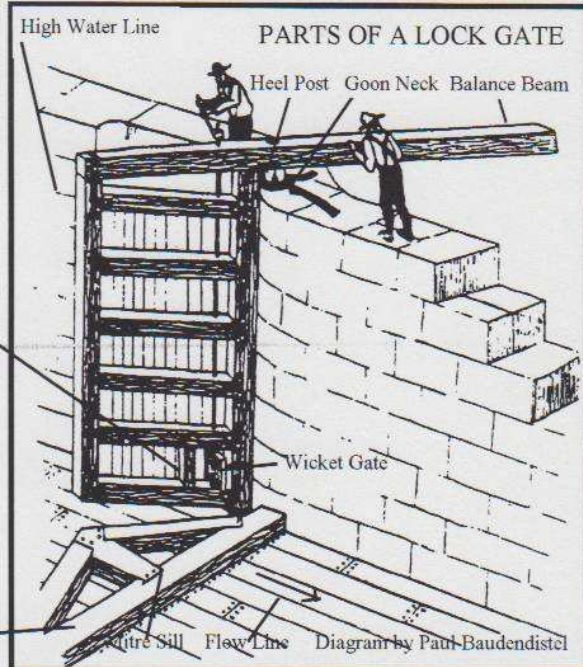
Marker at Granville, canal town Photo by Bob Schmidt

Cross the Wabash River

Right (E) on Division Rd. which passes **Ft. Ouiatenon** and becomes River Road

River Road becomes SR 43 and takes us back to the Super 8 Motel

## END OF TOUR





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### 1847 CHIEF ENGINEER'S REPORT

The following 1847 structure report is that of Jesse Lynch Williams, chief engineer of the Wabash & Erie Canal, describing the conditions of the structures. To clarify the report and to make it easier to find each structure, headings have been added before each of his structure descriptions. Some headings include current information. Some are repetitive to his report. Structures are listed under the counties in which they occur.

Williams sometimes varies his numbering plan. Note that if a structure is no longer of use or has been washed away, Williams does not assign it a number. Also note that the guard locks at the creeks and the dams across the creeks are not numbered. The dams across the Wabash River and some of the guard locks on the river are numbered.



**JESSE LYNCH WILLIAMS**

**CARROLL, TIPPECANOE, & A  
PORTION OF FOUNTAIN COUNTY**  
(From below Georgetown to below Attica in  
Fountain County)

#### CARROLL COUNTY

**Road Bridge No. 39:**

Road bridge No. 39, may last three years.

**Culvert No. 94: (Hillbond Road)**

Culvert No. 94, of wood, 2 spans, 12 feet wide and 2 feet high--submerged.

**Culvert No. 95: (River Road)**

Culvert No. 95, of wood, 6 feet wide by 18 inches high--submerged.

**Road Bridge No. 40:**

Road bridge No. 40, will last 3 years.

**Culvert No. 96:**

Culvert No. 96, of wood, 6 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

**Culvert No. 97:**

Culvert No. 97, 8 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

**Road Bridge No. 41: (CR 100 W)**

Road bridge No. 41--will last three years.

**Culvert No. 98:**

Culvert No. 98, of wood, 6 feet wide by 18 inches high, not entirely submerged.

**Culvert No. 99:**

Culvert No. 99, of wood, 2 spans each 10 feet by 18 inches high--submerged.

**Culvert No. 100: (Burnett's Creek Arch, East of Lockport, in 1999 wooden steps and marker visible)**

Culvert No. 100, over Burnett's Creek, an arch of 20 feet chord, built of hammer-dressed stone--in good repair excepting the ring stone at each end, a part of which are of soft stone and are falling to pieces.

**Lock No. 28: (East of Lockport by Burnett's Creek Arch, in 1999 right side of lock visible, left bank destroyed)**

Lock No. 28, 10 feet lift, built upon the combined plan the plank facing renewed last winter--the gates also new.

**Road Bridge No. 42:**

Road bridge No. 42, will last two or three years.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

**Lock No. 29: (At Lockport across from Potawatomi Spring)**

Lock No. 29, 9 1/2 feet lift, built upon the combined plan, needs immediately new caps and new planking for 3 feet next the top--gates are new.

**Road Bridge No. 43:**

Road bridge No. 43, will last 3 years.

**Culvert No. 101:**

Culvert No. 101, of wood, 10 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

**Culvert No. 102:**

Culvert No. 102, of wood, 10 feet by 18 inches--submerged

**Lock No. 30:**

Lock No. 30, 7 feet lift, built upon the wooden crib plan. During the ensuing winter the top course and part of the 2nd course with some of the upper planking should be renewed; with these repairs the lock may last 4 years. Gates one year old.

**Road Bridge No. 44:**

Road bridge No. 44, will last two years.

**Culvert No. 103:**

Culvert No. 103, of wood, 6 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

**Culvert No. 104: (Rattlesnake Creek mill race)**

Culvert No. 104, for the mill race at Rattlesnake, built of wood, 8 feet by 2 feet. The covering timber of this culvert cannot be submerged without backing on the saw mill wheel. It will require renewal in 5 or 6 years.

**Culvert No. 105: (Rattlesnake Creek)**

Culvert No. 105, 2 arches each 15 feet chord, built of timber. The arches will last 4 or 5 years. The head walls will need some repairs within three years.

**Culvert No. 106:**

Culvert No. 106, of wood, 6 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

**Lock No. 31: (Carrollton)**

Lock No. 31, 8 feet lift, built upon the wooden crib plan--with some slight repairs may

last 3 years. The lower gates need renewal in 1849. The upper gate is upon "English Patent plan," which is submerged.

**Lock No. 32: (Guard Lock at Carrollton)**

Lock No. 32, 9 feet lift, built upon the wooden crib plan, with some repairs may last 3 years--gates renewed last year. This is the outlet lock connecting with the slackwater at the crossing of the Wabash.

**Road Bridge No. 45 A cement Wabash River bridge at Carrollton stands almost in same location as the towpath bridge, where boats entered the Wabash, were poled across and were towed about 4 miles downstream before entering the canal above Delphi )**

Towing path and road bridge across the Wabash River at the head of the slackwater. The superstructure is built upon "Lounge's patent" weather boarded and roofed, and is in all respects permanent. The spans are as follows: 3 spans each 94 feet clear, 1 span 105 feet clear, 1 span 70 feet clear, and one span 43 feet clear for a draw, in all 6 spans. The bridge rests upon 5 piers and two abutments, formed of durable masonry. The stone procured from the Georgetown quarry and the workmanship good.

The next three miles of the canal are formed by the slackwater in the Wabash river, created by the feeder dam opposite Delphi with a towing path constructed on the east bank.

**Culverts No. 107, 108, 109, & 110:**

Along the slackwater there are four small wooden culverts, Nos. 107, 108, 109, and 110, constructed under the towing path--all of which are submerged.

**Wabash Guard Lock: (Paragon)**

The next structure is the Wabash guard lock, constructed at the entrance of the canal, where it leaves the slackwater. It is constructed of wood upon the crib plan--will need renewal in 1849. The gates will last five years, being new.

**Road Bridge No. 46:**

Just below the guard lock is Road bridge, No. 46, used also for changing the towing path from the north to the south side of the canal--will require rebuilding in two years.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### Road Bridge No. 47:

Road bridge, No. 47, crossing the canal where it occupies the Delphi bayou. This bridge is three times the common length. Will need rebuilding in two years.

### Road Bridge No. 48: (At Washington St., Delphi)

Road bridge No. 48, at Bowles and Colten's warehouse, double length, will last one year.

### Road Bridge No. 49:

Road bridge, No. 49, at Delphi, will need rebuilding in 1848.

### Lock No. 33: (On Delphi's Van Scoy Towpath Trail)

No. 33, five feet lift--the walls of extra height to guard against the Wabash floods. Built of wood upon the crib plan--will last three years; gates will also last three years.

### Wabash Dam No. 4: (Pittsburg Dam)

Wabash dam, No. 4, opposite Delphi, is 590 feet long and 12 feet high from low water. It is constructed by means of timber cribs--slopes of three to one on the upper and lower sides--filled with stone--the whole resting on rock bottom. The abutments are of timber; the north abutment must be rebuilt during the low water of 1848; and the south abutment during the low water of 1849. This dam answers to the double purpose of forming a pool in which the canal crosses from the north to the south side of the Wabash, and also furnishing the chief supply of water from this point to Coal creek, a distance of over 70 miles. In order to pass forward so large a quantity of water, this dam will require raising permanently about one foot. The stone filling is washed out of a small portion of the crib on the lower side, and should be replaced. These improvements and repairs should be made during the low water of 1848.

### Deer Creek Dam: (Delphi)

The next structure is Deer creek dam, erected for the double purpose of a feeder and of forming a pool in which the canal crosses this stream; length 170 feet; height 10 feet from low water; formed of cribs filled with stone, resting on a foundation of brush and trees; abutments built of wood and will require renewal in 1849. The dam may be considered a safe and durable

structure. The pool of this dam forms the upper end of the Lafayette level, and the plan proposed of passing through this level a greater quantity of water for the canal to Coal creek, involves the necessity of adding 15 or 18 inches permanently to its height. Bed of the creek at the dam is sand.

### Towpath Bridge at Deer Creek:

Towing path bridge across Deer creek, a simple wooden structure about 10 feet wide, uncovered, resting on one stone pier in the strongest current, and three timber bents--the bridge is in good order, but the portion which is of timber will require rebuilding in five or six years.

### Deer Creek Guard Lock:

Deer creek guard lock--built of timber upon the wooden-crib plan--may last until 1850; gates need rebuilding before the winter floods.

### Culvert No. 111: (Shaker Run now Bridge Creek also known as Thayer's Culvert)

Culvert, No. 111, over Shaker run, of wood--two spans, each 12 feet by 3 feet--submerged.

## TIPPECANOE COUNTY

### Guard Lock: (Kites)

Guard lock at Kites, designed to guard against extreme flood in the Wabash when the river is admitted to flow in--built of wood; the cribs will last perhaps four years, gates two years. To pass the enlarged quantity of water some additional sliding gates must be placed in the main gates during the ensuing winter.

### Culvert Nos. 112, 113, 114, and 115:

Culvert No. 112, of wood, 9 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

Culvert No. 113, of wood, 6 feet by 28 inches--submerged.

Culvert No. 114, of wood, 9 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

Culvert No. 115, of wood, 9 feet by 18 inches--submerged.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Each of the last named four culverts is banded with iron, as security against the upward pressure in time of high floods, when the river is higher than the canal.

### **Road Bridge No. 50: (Americus)**

Road bridge, No. 50, at Americus, will last one year.

### **Culvert No. 116:**

Culvert, No. 116, of wood, 6 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

### **Culvert No. 117: (Sugar Creek Culvert)**

The next structure is Sugar creek culvert, No. 117, a large wooden arch of 24 feet chord; the arch springing from the slate rock, in good condition--will last five years, when it must be rebuilt of cut stone. Head walls may need some repairs within two or three years.

Just above Sugar creek a small wooden culvert was constructed for the passage of a mill race. The mill having been abandoned, the culvert may be dispensed with. It is therefore not numbered.

### **Culvert No. 118: (Buck Creek)**

Culvert, No. 118, over Buck creek, of timber, 4 spans, 12 feet by 3 feet, in good order--submerged.

### **Culvert No. 119:**

Culvert, No. 119, 2 spans, 10 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

### **Flood Gates: (near Wild Cat Creek)**

Flood gates near Wild Cat, abutments of wood, not in good order; may last two years.

### **Wild Cat Dam: (Dam across Wild Cat Creek near Lafayette)**

Wild Cat dam, erected for the purpose of a feeder, and also to raise a pool, in which the canal crosses this stream, 221 feet long and 13 feet high, from low water. The dam is formed by means of cribs filled with stone, resting on foundation of brush and trees. The bed of the creek is formed of sand and gravel. This dam is in good and safe condition; abutments of wood, and will require rebuilding, one in 1849 and one in 1850.

### **Guard Lock: (North side of Wild Cat Creek where tow path and road bridge abutment remains)**

On each side of Wild Cat, a guard lock is constructed to protect the canal from the floods, built of wood upon the common crib plan. The guard lock on the north side of the creek, is too low, the walls at the upper gates must be raised four feet during the present summer. One pair of gates to be renewed this season, the other pair will last three years. On the lower end of this lock, is a small bridge on which the towing-path is crossed--will last three years. The walls of the guard lock will need renewing within three years.

### **Guard Lock: (South side of Wild Cat creek)**

Guard lock on south side of creek, constructed in the same manner as the other, was injured by the high floods of last winter, but since repaired, may last two years. Upper gates will last four years, lower gates will last two years.

Adjoining this guard lock, a set of culverts are placed under the guard bank with sliding gates at the upper end, through which the feeder is passed, the culverts are submerged, the whole structure recently re-built, having been washed out by the great flood last winter.

Towing-path, and road bridge across the Wild Cat, this structure was washed away by the floods of last winter. In May last, a contract was made by the State officers for building a new bridge upon "Long's patent," of 160 feet clear span, resting on permanent stone abutments. The total cost will be about \$6,500, and must be paid for the expenditures of 1847-48.

### **Culvert No. 120:**

Culvert No. 120, of wood, 10 feet by 18 inches--submerged.

### **Road Bridge No. 51: (Crossover bridge)**

Road bridge No. 51, used also for crossing the towing-path from the south to north side, must be rebuilt in 1848.

### **Road Bridges No. 52 & 53: (Lafayette)**

In the town of Lafayette, are several street bridges, on two of which, State or county roads are said to cross, these bridges, Nos. 52 and 53 should be re-built during the coming year.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### **Culvert No. 121:**

Culvert No. 121, below the paper mill, of wood, 2 spans, 8 feet by 18 inches, not submerged, to place the timber permanently under water, will cost \$20.

### **Culvert No. 122:**

Culvert No. 122, near large pork-house, 6 feet by 12 inches, not submerged--an expense of ten dollars will place it under water.

### **Guard Lock: (Wea Bluffs)**

Guard lock for the protection of the Wea Bluffs, the necessity for this lock will not much longer exist, and therefore it will not require renewal.

### **Culvert No. 123: (Durkees Run)**

Culvert No. 123, for Durkees Run, of wood, 3 spans, 11 feet by 3 feet, not fully submerged--an expenditure of \$15.00 required for this purpose.

### **Aqueduct No 7: (Wea Creek)**

Aqueduct No. 7, over Wea creek, 3 spans 32 feet each, abutments and piers as well as the trunk, constructed of timber. The foundation was undermined by the great flood of last winter, and the piers were settled as much as two feet. The trunk has been raised to the proper level and the foundation secured with brush and stone. Whether the work will stand in this condition, it is impossible to say, the timber will last six or seven years, when the trunk must be renewed upon the present plan and the abutments and piers rebuilt of stone.

### **Lock No. 34:**

Lock No. 34, 10 feet lift, is located just south of the Wea aqueduct. It is built of timber upon the frame plan, the workmanship very imperfect and wholly unsuitable for canal structures. Owing to the imperfect manner of its construction, this lock with its gates, will probably last but three or four years.

### **Wea Creek Feeder Canal:**

Just below the lock a feeder is introduced from the Wea, it is 25 chains long, constructed with 15 feet width at bottom, the banks of this feeder should be raised one foot throughout to keep out floods.

### **Wea Feeder Dam:**

Wea feeder dam is built upon a temporary plan, being formed wholly of brush and gravel, and will require a small annual expenditure to keep it at proper height, it is about 200 feet long and raised 4 1/2 feet above low water.

To pass through the long level from Wea to Attica, the large quantity of water required below, the upper end of the level must be kept at the height of five feet above the bottom. To meet this requirement one foot in height must be added to the Wea dam, and this expense, together (with) the raising of the feeder banks, must be incurred in 1848.

### **Culvert No. 124:**

Culvert No. 124, of wood, 11 feet by 2 1/4 feet--submerged.

### **Road Bridge No. 54: (Granville)**

Road bridge No. 54, at Granville, will last seven years.

### **Road Bridge No. 55:**

Road bridge No. 55, two miles below Granville. Of this bridge the embankments only are completed, the wood work under contract at \$250, which will be paid in the expenditures of 1848.

### **Culvert No. 125:**

Culvert No. 125, of wood, 2 spans, 10 feet by 2 feet--submerged.

## FOUNTAIN COUNTY

### **Aqueduct No. 8: (Flint Creek)**

Aqueduct No. 8, over Flint creek, 2 spans, 32 feet each, trunk of wood, resting on one pier and two abutments, also built of timber, the workmanship imperfect, but the structure will probably last six years, when the whole must be re-built, the trunk with timber and the abutments and pier with stone.

### **Road Bridge No. 56:**

Road bridge No. 56 may last seven years.

### **Culvert No. 126: (Turkey Run or Grindstone)**

Culvert No. 126, 2 spans, 10 feet by 2 feet of wood--submerged.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### **Culvert No. 127: (Opossum Hollow - Young's Branch)**

Culvert No. 127, over Young's branch near Maysville, of timber 4 spans, 10 feet by 3 feet--submerged.

### **Culvert No. 128: (Stone quarry branch)**

Culvert No. 128, over the stone quarry branch, of wood, 10 feet by 2 1/4 feet will require an expense of \$10, to submerge it

### **Culvert No. 129: (Attica)**

Culvert No. 129, in Attica, of wood, 2 spans, 10 feet by 2 feet--submerged.

### **Road Bridges Nos. 58 & 59:**

In Attica, there are two road bridges, Nos. 58 and 59 -- will last five or six years. An agreement was made by the State officers, and not yet fulfilled, to erect a bridge in the upper part of Attica, in commutation of damages the cost will be about \$400.

### **Lock No. 35: ("Battleground Lock" In Attica, between Jackson & Washington Streets on canal, site of Attica/Covington Canal War/Skirmish 1846.)**

Lock No. 35, 6.20 feet lift, of timber, built upon the frame plan, this lock appears to be well built and in good condition, may last six or seven years, the gates will last three years. The large horizontal braces were left out in building this lock and must be immediately added.

### **Road Bridge No. 60: (Williamsport Road)**

Road bridge No. 60, for Williamsport road, will last six years.

### **Culvert. No. 130:**

Culvert No, 130, of wood, 11 feet by 2 1/4 feet--submerged.

### **Road Bridge No. 61:**

Road Bridge No. 61, may last six years.

### **Aqueduct No. 9: (Shawnee Creek, covered bridge style aqueduct)**

Shawnee Creek Aqueduct No. 9, one span of 80 feet clear. The trunk and superstructure are upon the same plan with aqueduct No. 1 over the St. Marys\*, to the particular description of which reference is here made. Abutments are of cut stone masonry, the

whole work appears to have been well constructed, and may be considered permanent, excepting the trunk, which will need renewal once in 10 years; as a further exception to this remark, it should be stated that the chords on which the whole structure depends are deemed insufficient in strength, and I have advised that additional strength be given it, by adding a strong iron chain or bar extending the length of the chord, and attaching to each foot of the arch. The expense may be \$300, and will be paid in the expenditures of 1848.

\*Earlier in his report, Williams describes the St. Marys aqueduct as follows:

The next structure is aqueduct No. 1, over the St. Mary's river, of two spans, each 80 feet in the clear. The trunk is of timber, 17 feet wide, suspended by means of iron rods to the arches and truss frame. The weight of the trunk, is sustained by arches made of thin oak plank footing on a chord of similar construction. The arches and chords are attached to, and firmly connected with a strong truss frame of oak timber. The chords rest on the coping, at a height of six feet above the canal bottom, so that every part of the structure, excepting merely the trunk, is quite above the water in the canal, and by being roofed and weather boarded is secured against decay. The piers and abutments are of cut stone masonry. The abutments, though strongly built, were imperfectly grouted and puddled, and from this cause are liable to leakage. Constant watchfulness will be required for a time to guard against a breach around the abutments, which might be caused by this imperfection. Some additional protection of stone is required around the foundations, to guard against undermining by floods. Owing to a sudden curve in the canal at the west end of the aqueduct, cribs of timber filled with stone must be erected to prevent injury from the concussion of boats. Besides these small expenditures there is reason to anticipate but little expense at this point for ten years to come. The whole structure was newly erected in 1845-1846.

### **Shawnee Feeder Canal:**

At the south end of this aqueduct, the Shawnee feeder is received. It is near one-half mile in length and twelve feet wide at the bottom.

### **Shawnee Feeder Dam:**

Feeder dam across Shawnee Creek, 80 feet long and 8 feet high, built upon the usual crib plan, is in good condition and may be considered a safe structure. The abutments are of timber and may last seven or eight years.



## Carroll County Past and Present

(Much of the information used in the Delphi portion of this Carroll County history was compiled by Susan Yoder and is included with her permission. Additional information has been inserted into her manuscript.)

Carroll County was formed in 1828 and named for Charles Carroll the last living signer of the Declaration of Independence. The waterways of the Wabash and Tippecanoe Rivers and Wild Cat and Deer Creek and the nearby forests of oak, walnut and poplar attracted trappers, traders, and early settlers. In the 1820s a French fur trading post was still located north of Rockfield.

As the land was cleared Carroll County became an agricultural county with about 95 percent used for farming. Over 120 thousand acres produce corn and over 50,000 acres grow soybeans. The farms within the county are 30% above the state farm's average size. Carroll county leads not only the state but the nation in the production of livestock--primarily hogs and pigs.

The county has an unusual number of service and hospitality oriented business due to the manmade lake and resort area of Lake Freeman. It has more than four dozen wholesalers and many manufacturers. It also boasts of over 20 historical markers. Some are canal related.

Delphi is its county seat. The courthouse has a Civil War monument with a statue on top called "The Color Bearer."

### The Canal Dream

Following the success of the Erie Canal from New York to Buffalo, Indiana's leaders had a dream of digging a state-wide network of canals. Several attempts were made before and after Indiana was granted statehood in 1816, but all failed for lack of funds. The first Hoosier lottery was conducted in 1819, with the hope of raising the necessary funds to build a canal around the Falls of Ohio, but the game garnered only \$2,536. This was considerably shy of the dollars needed to begin construction. It was the

Internal Improvements Act of 1836, which appropriated a time-sensitive 6 million dollars for canal building and other improvements that launched Indiana into the Canal Era.

Several weaknesses were inherent in the young state's implementation of the congressional act enabling the waters of Lake Erie to unite with the Wabash. The first was allowing the purchase of Federal lands with only 1/7 of the cost in cash. The remainder was to be paid in six equal annual installments. Because of the insufficient influx of cash, the State found it necessary to borrow \$600,000. As sectional jealousies surfaced, legislators were lobbied to include their constituencies in the public works. Consequently, only seven counties in the state were *not* included among those intimately touched by the proposed improvements scheme.

Only two canal systems were successfully completed in Indiana: the 101 mile Whitewater Canal from Hagerstown to Cincinnati, and the 468 mile Wabash & Erie Canal from Fort Wayne to Evansville on the Ohio River. The Wabash & Erie connected with canals in northern Ohio, which then joined the Erie Canal. At 468 miles in length from Toledo to Evansville, it was the largest man-made structure in the United States. It was said that the Wabash & Erie Canal was a part of the second-longest canal in the world. The Grand Canal in China is purported to be the longest.

### ~ Carrollton ~

Carrollton was platted in 1836 by Baker and Dugan. It was established in anticipation of the Wabash and Erie Canal. Its name is somewhat confusing because, for a short time, Delphi was known by that name as well. The area we refer to as Carrollton today was located on the northwest side of the Wabash River. There were 90 lots arranged on either side of where Lock No. 31 and Guard Lock No. 32 were later built. It was necessary for canal boats to cross the river at this point since Ballard's Bluff stood in the way of the canal.

There the canal engineers decided to build a dam across the Wabash between what is now Pittsburgh and Delphi so the canal could



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

continue on the east side of the river. This dam would create a slack water pool that extended beyond Carrollton. At Carrollton, 4 1/2 miles above the dam, the pool would be 8 feet deep. This pool would serve three purposes: 1. It would slow down or still the current in the river so canal boats could be locked into the river at Carrollton, towed across it, and re-entered into the canal above Delphi. 2. It would feed water into the canal above Delphi. 3. It would furnish power for manufacturing.

When the dam was being constructed, the citizens of Logansport demanded a steamboat lock be built in it so as not to cut off their town from steam boat navigation. They also demanded that the tow path bridge to be built at Carrollton be a draw-bridge so steamboats could reach their town.

This bridge was necessary so that canal towing animals could tow the canal boats across the river and reach the towpath on the other side. Prior to the construction of this bridge, the boats were poled across the river and the animals ferried over. The bridge had a track along its lower side on which a tram car was located. The towing animals pulled the tram car to which the canal boat's towline was attached. This tram was a safety measure during times of strong currents. It followed a track and kept the canal boat on course alongside the bridge. Without it, the boat might have pulled the mules or horses into the Wabash River and drowned them.

At times when the river current was too swift, the canal boats did not enter it. A Mr. Sterling describes such a time in the **History of the Wabash Valley**:

"The Wabash River was very high...(and) was still rising. ...The river was so high the boats were tied up in the locks, and the canal was full of them. The mules and horses were hitched on both sides in the covered bridge."

The bridge, built in 1838-39 by Samuel Greenup, was a covered bridge style wooden structure of three spans each 94 feet clear, 1 span 105 feet clear, 1 span 70 feet clear, and one span 43 feet clear for the draw bridge (6 spans in all). Its northern abutment was part of

the Guard Lock No. 32. It was blown down on July 4, 1873 by a fierce storm. A five-span iron bridge, which also had a walkway for the towing animals, was then built and used until 1879 when an ice gorge destroyed it.

Several other bridges were built over a span of time. The fate of the current concrete bridge is presently under consideration. At low water, a person standing on it can look down into the water on its northeast side and see the timbers embedded in the river bed that supported the piers of the old W&E bridge. One can almost imagine the boats crossing the river and reentering the canal about one-half mile below the bridge at Paragon.



Above: This picture of today's Carrollton Bridge was taken at low water in the Wabash River looking north. Below: By looking over the opposite side of the bridge the foundation timbers of the old tow path bridge are visible at low water. Photos by Bob Schmidt



Two locks at Carrollton lowered the canal boats into the river. The upper lock #31 was a standard lock, however Lock #32 was a guard lock to protect the canal from the river during,



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

times of very high water.

Chief Engineer Jesse Lynch Williams described the condition of these locks in his 1847 report:

**Lock No. 31**, 8 feet lift, built upon the wooden crib plan--with some slight repairs may last 3 years. The lower gates need renewal in 1849. The upper gate is upon "English Patent plan," which is submerged.

**Lock No. 32**, 9 feet lift, built upon the wooden crib plan, with some repairs may last 3 years--gates renewed last year. This is the outlet lock connecting with the slackwater at the crossing of the Wabash.

While the dam was being built, work also took place on the canal channel on the east side of the Wabash River. The earth dug from the channel was piled ten feet high to create the towpath. For 2 1/2 miles the towpath followed the river so the horses or mules could tow the canal boats along the slackwater. Then about 1 1/2 mile above the dam there was a guard lock where the canal channel left the slack water pool, made up of the river and the low land on its western side, and flowed to the south between two visible banks. The town of Paragon grew up around this guard lock but nothing of the town or lock remains.

The placement of the towpath on this section of the canal was unusual. The towpath is normally between the river and the canal and is strongly built to protect the canal. Because of the slackwater pool, the towpath was on the opposite side of the canal from the river all the way from Carrollton to Deer Creek below Delphi where it crossed to the west side of the canal along the river. It continued thus until it reached Wild Cat Creek outside of Lafayette.

At first there was no way for the towing beasts to walk across the Wabash River at Carrollton. They had to be ferried across by boat while the canal boats were poled across the river. But by October 1841 the towpath bridge was completed.

While the canal was being dug in 1838, a post office was established at Carrollton for the canal workers. Isreal (sic) Steel was the first postmaster.

George Friday and Ignatious Menser built a house on the northeast side of the road at the bridge in 1840. It was across the road from Lock #31 and Guard Lock #32. It later became a cooper shop and then the Menser tavern which was razed in 1915.

The Speece Brothers' Warehouse and store was located one half mile to the east. Its business boomed and provided funds for placing a steam powered boat on the canal. However, the wake of the boat damaged the canal banks, was thought to be dangerous, and was taken off the canal.

Today a marker stands along the northwest side of Tow Path Road at the Carrollton bridge which reads as follows:

### CARROLLTON ON THE WABASH

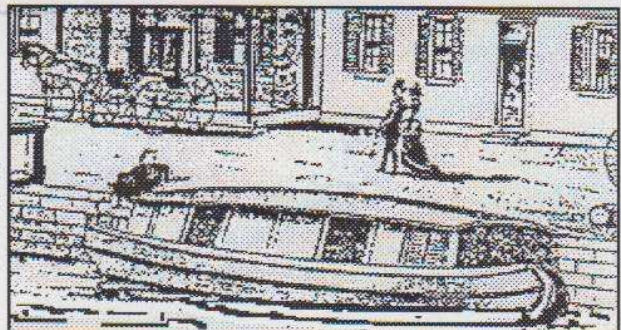
90 lots platted in 1836 on both sides of Wabash - Erie Canal lock.

A Post Office in 1838-39.

The lock passed canal boats into the river on the pool of the Great Dam at Pittsburg five miles below.

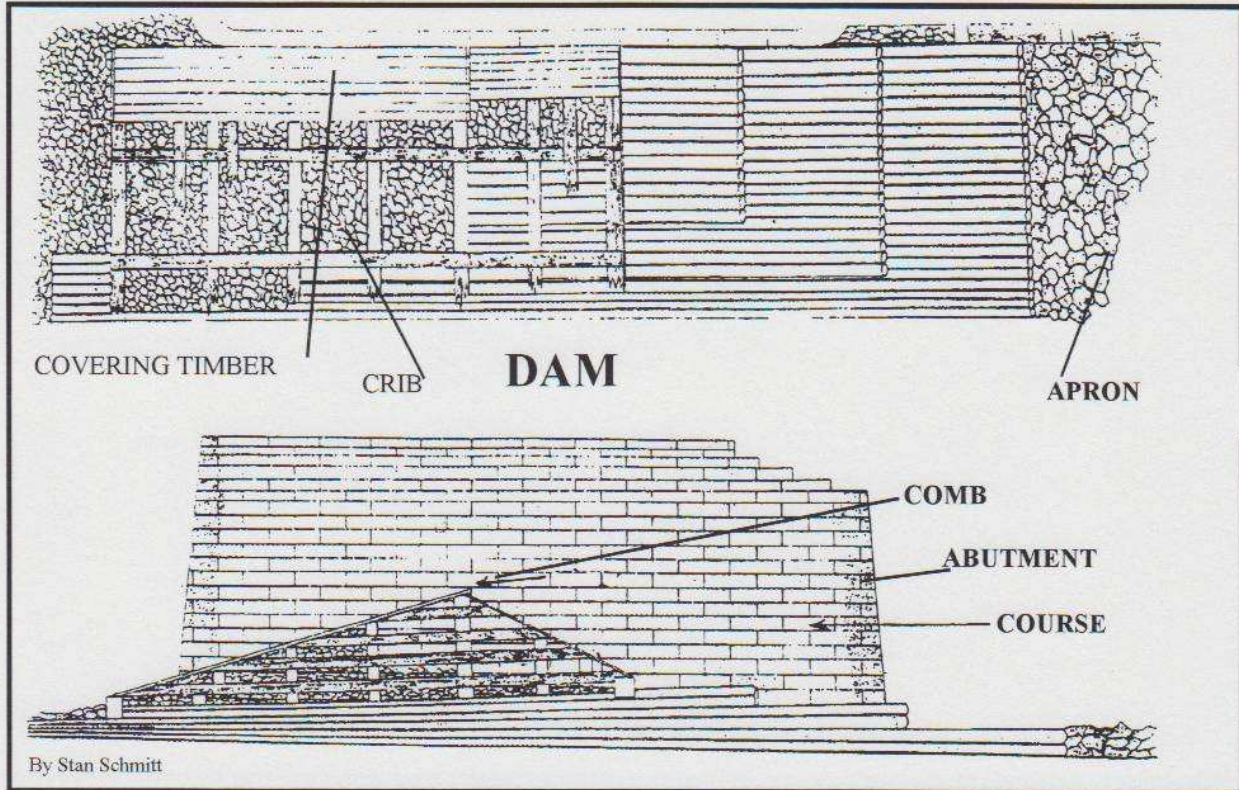
The mules carried the towline across the covered bridge to the towpath on the south bank and rehitched.

The Mentzer Tavern stood here until 1915. Speece Bros. Warehouse and the Fort Dearborn Trail were 1/2 mile east.





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES



### ~ Paragon ~

Below the Carrollton bridge the canal crossed wooden culverts 107.108.109 and 110 before reaching Paragon. Paragon was platted in 1831 for Jesse Jackson. The Wabash & Erie Canal guard lock was located at this point. When the slackwater pool was high during floods the canal had to be closed at this lock.

In Jesse Lynch Williams' report of 1847 he says that the lock will need to be renewed in 1849. He does not assign the Paragon Guard Lock a number like he did at Carrollton. It would have been Lock No.33, but he assigns that number to the lock located at Delphi.

The following repairs done on the lock were reported in Tom Castaldi's *The Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook II: Cass, Carroll, and Tippecanoe Counties*:

On June 17, 1847 a contract to raise and enlarge the embankment on top of which the towpath ran was awarded to Patrick Sillis.

On October 19, 1850, Wilson Smith was contracted to rebuild the Paragon guard lock as well as the guard lock at Deer Creek, the lift lock at Delphi, and the south abutment of the Deer Creek dam.

Other contracts went for work to be done on June 25, 1861 by H. L Kilborn for \$225 (rebuild); February 8, 1862 by George Townsend for \$38.72 (hewn timbers); May 1, 1863 by Charles W. Gibson for \$188.84 (full repair south side of lock); and December 16, 1863 by J. W. Davidson (rebuild west side of lock). The lock was equipped with an overflow guard for use in periods of high water.

Just below the guard lock was a road bridge that also allowed the towing animals to cross the canal as its towpath changed from one side to the other.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### ~ Delphi ~

In 1828, Delphi was platted by Samuel Milroy and named in honor of Charles Carroll, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence. The town of Delphi, for a few days known as Carrollton, was located on 100 acres donated for the county seat by William Wilson.

#### The Canal Era Begins

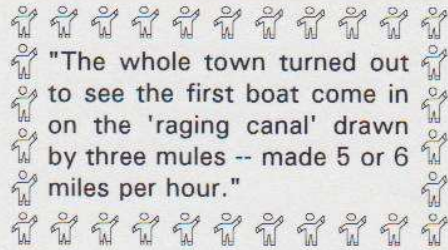
On February 22, 1832, the Wabash & Erie Canal was started in Fort Wayne, IN, on the anniversary of George Washington's birthday. Once completed, it connected Toledo, OH (Manhattan) and Evansville, IN. The Toledo to Lafayette portion survived longer than the southern section.

In Indiana, the canal was built mostly by Irish immigrants using shovels, picks, wheelbarrows and the horse-drawn slip-scoop. By 1837, there were 1000 laborers employed on the state's canal system. Accidents, fever, cholera, fights, and snakebite exacted a heavy toll of the work force, many of whom were buried as they fell on the towpath.

Locks, dams, and bridges were built to allow for topographical differences along the route. American ingenuity rose to the occasion as unique engineering solutions were found to meet the particular challenges presented by Indiana's geography. Swing bridges, systems of counterweights, tumbles, dams, locks, and waste weirs were part of the canal builders' experience.

Local engineering marvels included a swing or pivot bridge on Franklin Street / Bicycle Bridge Road; the Carrollton drawbridge, which allowed steamboats access above and below it; the stone Burnett's Creek arch, reminiscent of Roman aqueducts, up the towpath from Lockport; and the 170-foot Deer Creek dam and towpath bridge southwest of Delphi.

The canal reached Logansport in 1838 and Delphi in 1840. An article from Cass County historical records declared:

 "The whole town turned out to see the first boat come in on the 'raging canal' drawn by three mules -- made 5 or 6 miles per hour."

Traditionally 40 feet wide, parts of the Delphi portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal were 80 feet wide due to a natural slough. This wider section lent itself as a natural port and a fine area for warehouses, piers, loading, unloading and passing water traffic.

#### Canal Commerce

Both packets and line boats were decked in hues of green, yellow, brown, red, white, or blue, complete with coordinating panels and window frames. The Silver Bell was painted silver and drawn by a matched team of gray mules in silver harness. It was known for its tinkling silver bells and speeds up to eight miles per hour.

Barges were constructed of wood, which was in great supply throughout the region traversed by the "Big Ditch." Farmers, loggers, wagon makers, and others made use of the canal with their own canal boats, transporting goods to market and bringing back items on their return. Given the independent nature of these "Westerners", the canal held great appeal with the general populous over railroads because the common pioneer could construct a makeshift canal craft with the tools at hand. Rail cars could not be easily fashioned and were often built near foundries, purchased, and shipped by water inland. The Wabash, which had long been a native thoroughfare servicing the inhabitants of the area, became alive with water traffic and related businesses. Items exported from this area were grain, logs, pork, and whiskey. Numbered among the imports were coffee, salt, manufactured goods, and settlers.

Taverns, akin to hotels today, sprang up at regular intervals, spaced the distance it took to travel in one day. Bedrooms were furnished with three to five beds. Curtains hung from the high posts, to be drawn for privacy at night. Newspapers were often laid on the tables







## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

regardless of how old they were, often with an accompanying admonishment to refrain from stealing them.

The traditional three to five mile per hour speed limit was neither obeyed nor adequately enforced. Packet boats were built for speed as they carried passengers, mail, and other time-sensitive cargo. Although there were clearly defined rules regarding speed, lock entry and departure, and tolls, these often gave way to the fighting prowess of the deck hands.

To be sure, speeding and fighting were not the only wayward pastimes practiced on the canal. The ticket price on a canal boat typically included meals and a bunk at the rate of about five cents a mile. This figured out to be about a mile in twenty minutes excluding locking. Frequently, a pedestrian would wave down a packet at meal time and jump aboard. At the announcement of the meal the cheat would consume as much food as possible within the twenty-minute span, pay the captain his five-cent fare and disembark a mile from his original point of departure.

To appreciate the canal's impact on the population, consider that when the canal began operations, Indiana had a population of 350,000. By 1840, it had 988,000. In 1835, Indiana counties bordering the canal boasted 12,000 inhabitants and in 1850, 150,000. Just in the three years following the opening of the canal from Fort Wayne to Huntington, five new counties were created along its route. During this time, many of the newcomers were people who were attracted by the boom and moved northward from southern Indiana.

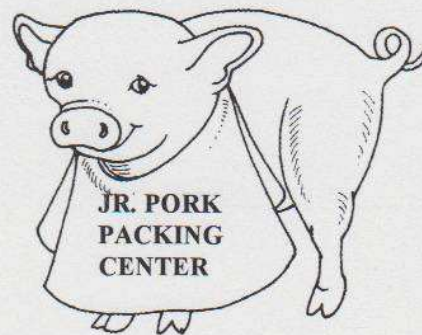
During the harvest season, the canal was an ideal means of transportation for extra crops and livestock. Good roads were non-existent, as much of Indiana was still a wilderness with well-established towns mostly on the Ohio and along the Wabash and Whitewater Rivers. Before the canal trade opened, it was not uncommon that farmers received ten cents a bushel for wheat or forty-five cents a bushel if it could be transported to Michigan City. After canal trade was initiated, farmers earned a dollar per bushel. Likewise, the cost of imported goods dropped as transportation improved. In a matter of a few years, salt

plummeted from ten dollars a barrel to four dollars.



One of the most important uses of local natural resources was the production of plaster and whitening products. Limestone was quarried from near the land surface and placed in tall kilns along with wood as fuel. The "burning" of the lime caused the rock to disintegrate. The final product was sifted, loaded in barrels, and shipped via canal boat to destinations such as New York City and New Orleans.

Perhaps the largest industry along the canal was the Spears, Case, and Dugan pork packing and grain business. Next to Madison, Delphi was referred to as the "junior pork packing center of the West." Delphi's canvas hams were famous worldwide.



On a body of water designed to be virtually without current, the possibility of a catastrophic wreck with loss of life seems ludicrous, but it occurred. Having left Lafayette headed east, on the eleventh of June in 1844, the packet "Kentucky" was approximately five miles from Logansport when disaster struck. Most of the passengers were enjoying supper below deck when a break in a mill dam allowed the escape of a powerful surge of water. The



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

wave propelled the small craft out into the muddy, flood-swollen Wabash where it was dashed to bits against trees. Killed in the incident were Mr. Thomas Emerson of Logansport, and Mr. J.A. Griffin of Fort Wayne. Although both of their bodies were finally recovered long after the incident, the body of a stranger traveling from Indianapolis was never found.

In 1849 when the incidence of cholera was high in Lafayette and other places along the canal line, Delphi passed the following ordinance:

### CHOLERA

"Be it ordained by the Mayor and Common Council of the Town of Delphi, That all persons passing or traveling from places infected with the cholera, be prohibited from staying in our midst more than time sufficient to procure a meal or victuals; that all places of public entertainment be required to prohibit the stay of all such persons for a longer time; and that our own citizens, except physicians, be hereafter prohibited from going to, or visiting places, near or distant, where the cholera is prevailing, unless there is absolute necessity for so doing; and that any person or persons offending against or violating any of the provisions of this ordinance, be fined in any sum not less than three nor more than ten dollars, for each offense. This ordinance to take effect from its passage."

This ordinance greatly angered the citizens of Lafayette. It was ridiculed for a long time.

#### The End of an Era

The cost of carving the canal from wilderness and the expense of the waterway's subsequent upkeep far exceeded the expectations and the funds set aside for the

project. Unlike neighboring states, most canal structures in Indiana were constructed from wood and they required constant repair. Indiana weather - floods in Spring, drought in Summer, ice in Winter - hampered canal traffic and reduced anticipated revenue. The State of Indiana faced a staggering \$15,088,146 debt burden before its twenty-fifth birthday in 1841. This resulted in the present provision in the Indiana constitution that forbids indebtedness.

Railroads gained popularity because they could run all winter and were not as subject to disruption of service due to drought and floods. One of the great ironies of history is that the slow-paced mule-driven canal boats transported the rails from foundries for the railroads, which closed the chapter on the Canal Era by the 1870s.

The "Keystone State" is said to have been the last boat over the Deer Creek towpath adjacent to the Deer Creek Dam. As the dam gave way, both driver and mules plunged to their deaths as the towpath bridge collapsed in 1874. As the water escaped the confines of the Canal, watercraft heavy with merchandise were stranded in the resulting mire.

Chief Engineer Jesse Lynch Williams describes this dam in his 1847 report as:

The next structure is Deer creek dam, erected for the double purpose of a feeder and of forming a pool in which the canal crosses this stream; length 170 feet; height 10 feet from low water; formed of cribs filled with stone, resting on a foundation of brush and trees; abutments built of wood and will require renewal in 1849. The dam may be considered a safe and durable structure. The pool of this dam forms the upper end of the Lafayette level, and the plan proposed of passing through this level a greater quantity of water for the canal to Coal creek, involves the necessity of adding 15-18 inches permanently to its height. Bed of the creek at the dam is sand.

The Deer Creek Dam during its existence had problems. Just a few years after its completion, the canal engineers raised its height



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

during a year of drought. The citizens of Delphi thinking this improvement was to benefit mill owners in Lafayette, went to the dam, and removed that portion just completed. Then they held a public meeting and passed a resolution on September 4, 1847, that said that they would "resort to physical force if necessary, to prevent a conversion of the water from this place to Lafayette, for the purpose of propelling machinery." Eventually the engineers raised the dam and no incident occurred.

In 1857 a culvert was built that had gates beneath the guard bank. Its purpose was to wash sand out of the canal.

Canal contracts related to Delphi's canal structures were reported in *The Wabash and Erie Canal Notebook II: Cass, Carroll, and Tippecanoe Counties* as follows:

On November 3, 1859, Deer Creek Bridge was rebuilt by C. W. Gibson, who was paid \$222.09.

On April 3, 1862, H. L. Kilborn received \$100.00 for further repair work on the bridge.

On March 2, 1863, J. H. Johnson received \$170.00 for timber he used to repair the Deer Creek Dam.

On April 25, 1864, he once again was given \$358.80 to repair Lock # 33.

On September 15, 1864, C. W. Gibson was paid \$76.25 for the completed work.

### Beginning Anew

On February 19, 1971, the first local meeting concerning the improvement and preservation of the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal was held at the Thomas McCain residence near the current Canal Park Annex. In 1972, the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. was formed to preserve the Canal in Carroll County and honor the significance of the Canal Era in Indiana's history. (Founders and charter members are listed in the front.) The founding

members recognized the importance of preserving this section as the only accessible portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal which still had water in it. The generosity and foresight of Peters-Revington, Inc., who donated the land adjacent to the canal, made the present park possible.

## CARROLL COUNTY WABASH & ERIE CANAL PARK

Canal Era Structures Moved to the Park  
Photos by Bob Schmidt



The Bowen Cabin

The Charles Bowen Cabin was moved to Canal Park grounds in 1987 and has undergone renovation and considerable restoration. The immense ash logs had been sided first with board and batten, then with clapboard siding at a later date. The house was modernized and occupied until shortly before its removal from the Bowen Farm. It stood for two years without benefit of a roof before having the second story replaced and roofed. In 1990, restoration began in earnest on the building.

It is decorated as a travelers' inn, complete with a huge cooking fireplace and boarding house tables. The limestone used in the fireplace is from a spring house along the canal route south of Delphi. Food was cooked in a deep, wide fireplace, in which the fire never went out. When unused, the fire was banked and it died down to glowing embers with a thick pile of ash, awaiting the cooking of the next meal. The flames were too hot and would burn food, so early meal preparation was done without the



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

luxury of the present fine selection of cooking utensils over hot coals. The glowing coals were dragged from the fire and placed beneath a trivet or "spider" pot. The pots on the Bowen Cabin hearth hang from a crane made by Lawrence VanDerVolgen, who crafted most of the iron utensils employed throughout the Canal Park with his blacksmith student, Jim French.

In the early 1800s, cooking pots were hung from the crane or suspended from hooks over the fire. Cooks also used an assortment of griddles, skillets, and bake kettles. A large kettle traditionally hung over the fire, containing the supply of hot water for washing and scalding. Water was carried from the source outside several times a day. Often a teapot was kept full of hot water as well. Beginning at sun-up, a woman's day typically began at the hearth. It has been estimated that, outside of childbirth, more women perished from cook fires than any other single cause.

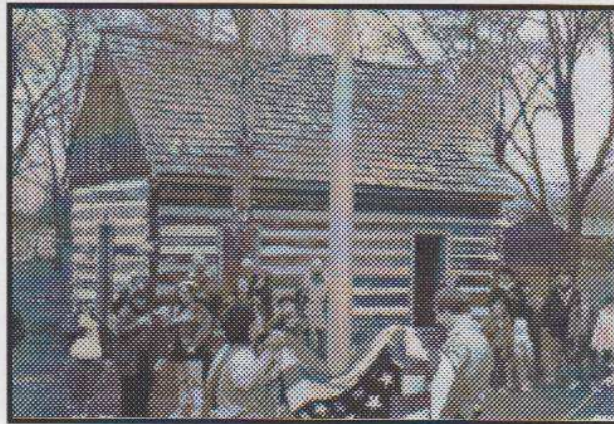
To a cook, the lack of an oven in the large cooking fireplace is immediately obvious. In general, baking ovens were located outdoors. A double brick beehive oven near the smokehouse could have served the baking needs of the family. It would probably have been a separate building, perhaps with an overhanging roof at the front to protect the food and those performing the baking during inclement weather. Often one oven was used by travelers and another for the family's baking.

The porch of the Bowen Cabin was enclosed by its former occupants and used as a kitchen and dining room. Notice how the logs were cantilevered or extended above each end of the former porch to form the porch and yield additional space upstairs. Partitions were removed during renovation and the current room was dedicated as a canal museum honoring the late Clarence Hudson, a past president of the Canal Society of Indiana and vice-president and board member of the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal in its seminal years.

Although the current pantry was not original to the Bowen Cabin, it has been a well-used storage area and a great delight to squirrels. It was formed by moving the stairs from a center location that divided the front room. A pantry in

such a cabin would have been useful for storing staples such as flour, cornmeal, sugar, dried herbs, and preserves. Cooking and baking implements which were not in constant use could be found in the small room as well. Most of the perishables would have been found in a root cellar which was off limits to the paying overnight guests.

Outside the Bowen Cabin is the Eaton School bell, donated by Dr. Reuben Craig, whose father attended and taught at the Eaton School in the early 1900s. The school was located in Carroll County, south of Delphi.



The Kuns Cabin

The Chester Kuns family donated their family's 100 year-old log cabin in 1981. It was originally located in the Flora area. Many of the family members are pictured in the photograph on the wall. Thirteen family members found shelter under the roof of this cabin with its sharply-angled staircase reminiscent of space-efficient European houses with spare proportions. Some of the girls were married in this cabin with the bride and groom standing at the base of the stairs. Occasionally, one of the Kuns family members or friends will stop by and provide a sketch of the day-to-day life as they reminisce. The upper level was the sleeping quarters for the children - boys at the head of the stairs and girls at the end of the room. Mr. Kuns' chair was positioned next to the stove, where we now store wood.

The lean-to kitchen was removed from the Kuns Cabin and has served as the refreshment stand at many festivals since its arrival in Canal Park. Other additions to the



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

structure were not moved to the Park. The lower main room was once divided and the section where the stove sits was a bedroom.

Stories handed down to us weave a picture of industry from sunrise to sunset during a typical week. Monday was wash day after a rest on Sunday. Bluing was often used to whiten and brighten white clothes leaving us with the terms "blue Monday" and the play on words "washday blues." Tuesday and Friday might have been baking days, as extras could be sold in town on Saturday. Mending, gardening, ironing, sewing, and house cleaning each vied for the precious little time allotted to each female in the household.

At a homesite such as this cabin originally occupied, it was common in the Canal Era for the residents to make their own butter and soap as well as process their own meat.

Warm milk from the cow was strained through clean cloths to remove hair and dirt, then poured out into large shallow milk pans and placed on shelves in the milkhouse to cool. After twelve hours of undisturbed settling, the cream, which had risen to the surface was skimmed off with a perforated skimmer. The cream was stored in the churn until enough was collected for a batch of butter. The task of churning could be done by children and older folks in turns until the cream had turned to butter and whey. The buttermilk left from the churning might be used in baking or to feed the farm animals. In order for the butter to be kept without refrigeration, all of the milk had to be washed away from the butter and the butter had to be salted. The washing of the butter took place in wooden bowls. Well-washed and salted butter could be kept in a cool place for several months. Prior to use, it would have to be washed again to remove most of the salt.

Pork was the primary source of meat in most Hoosier households. Beef, wild game, chicken, fish, and mutton also were eaten. Households that butchered their own animals traditionally slaughtered in cold months when refrigeration was guaranteed during processing. Bristles, hide, fat, and meat were all saved. The carcass was hung until chilled throughout and cut into quarters. Organ meats were processed,

scraps made into sausage, and the large cuts were soaked in brine "salty enough to float an egg." The submerged cuts of meat were checked and the scum cleared from the top of the barrels while the meat was curing. Meat could be thin-sliced and dried, dry salted, or smoked. If cured and stored properly, the meat would last throughout the year until the return of butchering season.



The Speece Shelter

With timbers preserved from the 1850 Speece Warehouse located at Carrollton on the Wabash, the Speece Shelter was built in 1982. The poplar joists and rafters from the warehouse were donated in 1977 by the estate of Josephine Blanchard, one of the Speece granddaughters.



The Robison Smokehouse

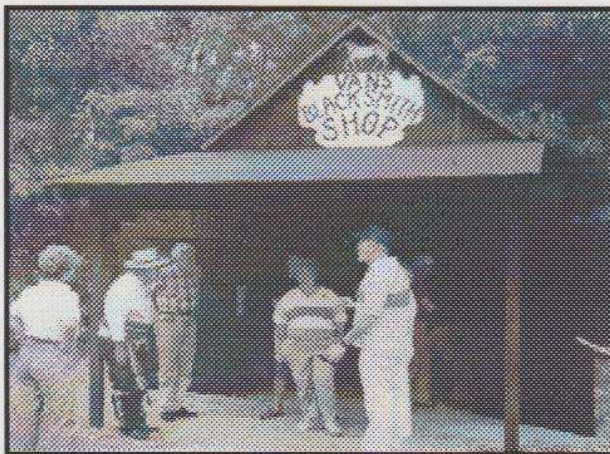
The current smokehouse is a replica built on site and donated by Lenard Robison. It is used as a refreshment stand at the Fourth of July celebration. The iron pot was donated to the Canal Park by Gary Parrett.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Large animals used for meats were generally butchered in the cold months of the year for lack of adequate refrigeration. Once the carcass was cleaned and sufficiently chilled, a variety of processes were employed to retard spoilage with varying success. Canning in brine, salting, and sugar-curing were common.

One method that is still favored is curing meat with smoke. This process required about two weeks. Various non-coniferous woods were used which furnished the meats with decidedly different flavors from fruitwoods to hickory. A slow smoky fire was kept barely alive in a shelter to protect the meats from unwelcome carnivores. The cuts of meat hung over the smoldering wood shavings, corncobs and twigs as the smoke flavored the meat. The meat was cured when it had a thick black residue coating it. Smoked meats could be left to hang in the smokehouse, or from the beams of a building with adequate ventilation. Smoked meat could also be stored in barrels of dry oats or bran until needed.



**Van's Blacksmith Shop**

The blacksmith's forge and shop were built on the grounds in 1990, in honor of Lawrence VanDerVolgen, who donated his time and talents as the Canal blacksmith. Many of the iron pieces adorning structures and used around the Park were wrought in Van's blacksmith shop at his home. The iron crane and cooking utensils used in the Bowen Cabin were designed by Helen Rider Van Der Volgen, who performed the open hearth cooking demonstrations, and crafted by her husband Lawrence and his capable student, Jim French.

Typical of the era, Delphi was home to many blacksmith shops. The crafting and maintenance of harness, wheels, and implements was too vital to daily life for great distance smiths. As railroads gained a foothold in the West, the demand for smiths increased as a result of the constant repair of the Iron Horse.



**Fur Trapper's Cabin**

In memory of Rick "Reb" Branch of Galveston, the Fur Trapper's Cabin, complete with furnishings and artifacts, was donated to the Canal Association by his widow, Phyllis Branch. Among the treasures within the Fur Trapper's cabin is a bison head mounted on the loft. Typically, fur traders stored their furs in windowless shelters so as not to invite theft.



**The Reed Case House**

The Reed Case House was donated in 1983 by Jim and June Davis, of Delphi, and moved to Canal Park from its Front Street location in downtown Delphi on July 22-24 of



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

1986. Porches and fireplaces were removed during the year of preparation, which culminated in the event of the century for the Delphi citizenry. Extensive tree-trimming and thousands of dollars worth of utility pole removal paved the way for relocation. Spectators lined the streets along the route in lawn chairs and on blankets as the behemoth inched its way to the Canal. A virtual impasse presented itself at the Washington Street stone bridge just yards from the waiting foundation. It was necessary for the truck to drive on the sidewalk of the bridge in order for the house to clear the stone sides of the bridge. Because of the sharp turn into the Park, the house had to travel past its destination and make a more direct approach. A grim inventory of the northwest corner of the building revealed extensive damage suffered when the house and trees along the route collided. Similar to the canal experience a hundred and fifty years previously, the cost of the endeavor nearly bankrupted the young organization's treasury. Carefully, the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. recovered from the financial burden and was able to look forward to restoration of the Davis' magnificent gift.

The two-story Federal-style home was built for Reed Case, the contractor for the local portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal. When he came to Carroll County, Reed Case lived in Pittsburg, but convinced that the future was better on the other side of the Wabash, moved to Delphi. He built this two-story frame house at 221 West Front Street in 1843-44. At the age of 34, he moved in with his growing family: his wife Mariah and their small children. Eventually, seven Case children blessed this home, although several did not live to adulthood.

After Mariah's death in 1847, Reed married her widowed sister, Huldah Glover Williams, and in 1853 moved his family to a two-year-old Greek Revival brick house at 312 East Main Street. He added an extension (the current back parlor and room above) to the poplar-sided Front Street house and operated it as an inn. Canal travelers frequented it because of its proximity to the canal port on West Main Street. It may have been at that time that some Greek Revival touches were added to its architecture.

The famous coronet player, Walter Rodgers was born in this house on Oct. 14, 1865.

### Inside the Case House

#### **Entry:** *Sponsored by Jack Wroten.*

The original house consisted of the center hall, with a large square room on either side on both levels. There was a door at each end of the hall. The break in the woodwork shows where the back door was located. The wide woodwork here is original and is made of poplar, except for the stair rail, which is walnut. Note the detailed paneling around the front door, a Federal style entrance typical of the period. The side lights were originally divided into eight panes each. The mortises for the mullions have been filled in but are still evident (three horizontal and one vertical). All of the woodwork originally was finished with a tiger-striped graining, with the flat surfaces light, and the bevels and beads darker. Graining was a method used to make ordinary wood appear more exotic and expensive.

Another technique for

making an ordinary house appear grander was the use of faux (rhymes with sew) marble painting such as that discovered as the original finish on the walls of the lower and upper hallway. A sample of the original can be seen under the slant formed by the staircase. The marble was reproduced in 1997 in the original colors by Terry and Fran Lacy, Delphi artists. They also repainted the "egg and dart" border, a popular pattern in the 1800s. It has been suggested by the art conservator who studied the wall and woodwork finishes in 1996 that the painting may have been done by an itinerant painter who came through Indiana by way of the Canal.

**Formal parlor:** *Sponsored by the McCain Family in memory of the McCain, Harley, Hubbard and McClure ancestors.* The formal parlor was seldom used by the family and was furnished with show pieces and family treasures befitting

their prosperity. The Cases were not exorbitantly wealthy when they lived here, but were prosperous. In the 1840s and 1850s, the parlor was reserved for use on special occasions or for receiving guests. Traditionally, children were only invited in for formal greeting. Here, the original woodwork had been removed before the house was moved to the Canal Park. The clues remaining indicated it was the same width and design as that in the entry, so was reproduced in the original poplar. The tiger stripe graining was used here, also. A sample of the original has been preserved on the back of the door. The fact that this is a two-panel door indicates that it was probably original to the house: multiple-paneled doors came along later. The fireplaces in the house had to be torn out in preparation for the move. They have been rebuilt, using original brick in some of the restoration. The mantel is original to the house but is from the west



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

parlor. It also may have been grained to look like a more expensive wood or even marble. The floors are the original wide planks.

In the McCain Parlor are found pieces of furniture, books, and pictures from the McCain, Harley, Hubbard, and McClure families, all of whom were involved in the lime business in early Delphi. They were related by marriage and were contemporaries of Reed Case. These furnishings are probably very much like Reed Case would have had.

The love seat, gentlemen's chair and lady's chair are pre-Civil War Victorian, brought to Delphi from Lexington, Missouri by Henry B. McClure. The Lincoln rocker was used by his wife, Catherine Painter McClure as a wheel chair when she was an invalid in later life. The McClures came to Delphi after a battle at Lexington during the Civil War. They thought that Indiana was safer than Missouri at that time.

The desk, loaned by Nicki McCain, came from David R. Harley and the swivel chair was from the Harley's Delphi Lime Company office. There are pictures of the company's lime kilns above the desk. The wrought iron lamp was from the home of Charley Harley (son of David R.) where it gave light for the piano. Cousins of Roseland McCain, Gerald and Charlotte Mikel donated the organ.

The Scottish picture, an engraving from a painting by Rosa Bonheur, and the Western landscape came from the estate of Isabelle Baum, who was a granddaughter of David R. Harley and Persus Jane Hubbard-Harley. The metal table lamp was given by the Ralph McCains of Missouri, also the carved picture frames made by Minnie McCain-Baum. Books are from the McClure, Harley, and Stirling families. The items in this room except for the organ and mannequin were inherited from

Catherine, Thomas, and Robert McCain.

The mannequin is wearing a hand-stitched silk brocade wedding dress that was worn by Sarah Schermerhorn, who was related to Reed Case. The brocade came from New York on the Canal. The dress was given by her great grand-daughter, Frances Demarie Miller.

Carpet, wallpaper, and curtains were carefully chosen to represent the period of the 1850s and 60s. Karen Bradshaw, Carolyn Pearson, and SueAnn Cornell did the painting and papering. Cleone Gruber made the curtains. The woodwork labor was donated by Wayne Rule and Dean Goslee, who meticulously copied the original. Ed Gruber and Bill Draper donated the labor to build the fireplace which had been removed when the house was moved from Front Street in 1986. Electrical work was done by Ed Gruber.

The room is presented in memory of the McCain, Hubbard, Harley, and McClure families, and as an example of the times of Reed Case.

**Double parlors: In honor of Ed and Cleone Gruber.** The front room of the double parlors is original to the 1844 portion of the house. The back parlor was added, probably around 1853. The huge hewn beams on which it is constructed are the same as those in the original house. An example of the upper beams can be seen in the small opening above the front windows. The flooring is the original wide plank boards. At the turn of the century - perhaps in an updating of the house around 1910 - these floors were covered with narrow oak flooring, which has been removed. At that same time the more narrow oak woodwork of the baseboards and trim around the windows and doors was added. The door to the entry hall was shortened and narrowed, perhaps to fit a

standard oak door of the early 1900s. During restoration in 1997, pieces of the oak woodwork from the front parlor were removed to replace missing pieces in the back parlor, and new oak was used to replicate the design in the front parlor. New wood for these two rooms was grown and sawed on the Hufty-Gruber farm, formed and installed by Wayne Rule and Dean Goslee.

The two front windows in this room and in the formal parlor had been replaced with modern "picture windows." Two windows have been returned to the original locations in each room, re-establishing the symmetry of the house's Federal style. The fireplace is in the original location by the mantel is not original. It is from a house that was along the Delphi to Lafayette segment of the Canal, which is said to have been frequented by canal travelers. The mirror and fireplace facade are decorated with heavy columns and cornice which harken back to the architecture of Grecian temples. All of the walls in the house were constructed of horsehair plaster, and extensive plaster repair was done in 1995. While the source of the plaster is not known, plaster made from Delphi lime was very high grade, easier to work, and in plentiful supply when the house was built.

On the wall are original oil portraits of Reed Case and his father William. The paintings are attributed to George Winter, an English artist who settled in the Lafayette area in the late 1830s. The portraits were donated by Mr. and Mrs. James Brackenridge. James is a descendent of Reed Case.

These two rooms are available to the public by appointment for meetings, receptions, and other small gatherings.

The handsome oak cabinet was specifically made to hold abstract information about each



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

piece of property in Carroll County. Markings on the back indicate it was made in Bringham in 1837. It has 500 pigeon holes, each originally marked with a unique county location. The cabinet is on permanent loan from the Carroll County Abstract Company, which was chartered in 1909. It was moved here in 1995 from the Courthouse where it had been since 1917. Previous to that, attorneys prepared their own abstracts. One of them was Reed Case Schermerhorn, grandson of Reed Case, who was president of the Abstract company from 1928 until his death in 1943.

**Kitchen:** *Sponsored by the Hildebrandt family.* This room was added after the original construction of the house, and probably after the back parlor on the west. It is likely that cooking was not done in the house by the Case family; neither fireplace was a cooking fireplace, so meals were probably prepared in a separate building behind the house. By the 1840s, stoves were gaining popularity and, because of the Canal, were accessible inland. The woodwork was very plain in this room, another indication of the room's age.

In a town home, such as this one, butter, eggs, and milk were often purchased rather than raised on site. Just two blocks from the Reed Case House's Front Street location was Market Street, which earned its name from the bounty of area farms and a variety of other goods being sold along this street. The process of "dairying" was often an important source of income and/or credit for the farm wife. In return for her surplus butter, eggs and cheese, the farm wife could get coffee, tea, spices, sugar, implements, fabric, thread and needles - items impossible to obtain from the typical Hoosier farm.

**Upstairs - small room:** The faux marble design with the egg and dart border continues upstairs. Small rooms such as this one at the center

front of the house were often used as nurseries or sewing rooms, or perhaps as a playroom. A study of the woodwork and walls revealed that this room is original to the 1843-44 house.

**East bedroom:** The east bedroom boasts the fanciest woodwork, with paneling under the windows. It was grained in a "bird's eye" maple finish. This bedroom and the one across the hall have smaller fireplaces than those downstairs. The walnut "press" or closet was one of a pair, each on either side of the fireplace in the west bedroom. The flooring is original plank boards. The cuts in the floor boards remain a mystery.

Remnants of wallpaper were identified by art conservator Rebecca Garland as being from the late 1800s. Her investigations led her to believe that it was likely that all the walls were papered originally, with the exception of the entry and stair hall. Wallpaper had come into favor as one of the most economical and easiest home decorating media by 1845. As early as the 1800s colorful machine-made wall treatments became available to the public. By the late 1850s, American companies were manufacturing roller-printed wallpapers. Garish and gaudy by our standards, they were embraced by a public delighted by the variety of colors and pattern choices.

**Office:** The north door leads to a small room above the kitchen, to be used as an office or a child's bedroom. Photographs document that this room was added after the west addition was built. It has plain woodwork and flooring. It may have never been heated, or heated with only a stove.

**West front bedroom:** This room also has a smaller fireplace, and the two presses flanked it. It was here that our art conservator discovered woodwork originally painted in two shades of blue. The flat surfaces are a light blue-gray, while the beads and bevels are a darker value. The wider boards used in the flooring are not the quality of those used in the rooms below, which is common in houses of this vintage. When the house became an inn, this room and the north bedroom probably were rooms for travelers, with men's and women's quarters separated by a curtain. The main bedroom, then may have been for the innkeeper.

**Back bedroom:** The flooring and woodwork indicate that this room was added later. A two-tone blue-gray finish was found on the door that was originally between the two bedrooms and which was cut down and placed in a new opening when the building was made into apartments. This two-panel door did not have beveled pieces framing the panels, so dark blue bands were painted around each panel to imitate the look of a beveled frame. Old photographs show that this room originally had more windows on the east side. A narrow old stairway leads from this room to the back of the double parlor. It is easy to suppose that when the house was used for canal workers and as a travelers' inn that gentlemen guests used the back stairway while ladies used the front stairs.

Rear view of Case House

Photo by Bob Schmidt

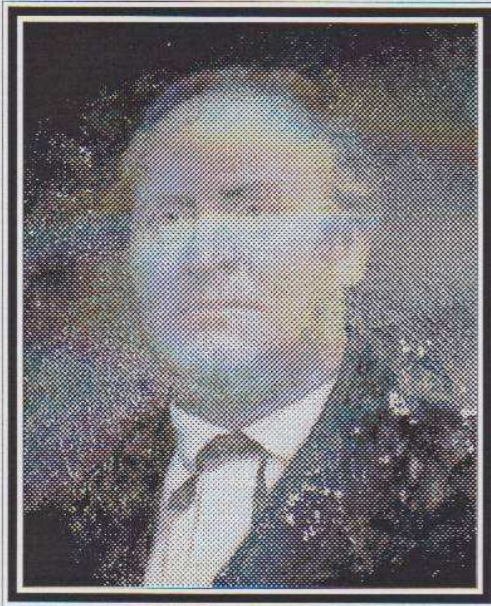




## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### Reed Case

1808 A Study in Service 1871



The above photo was taken of an oil portrait of Reed Case that hangs in the foyer of the Case House. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Reed Case's life was characterized by the three Fs—fatherhood, future, and faith. His fatherhood was seen in his five children all of whom followed their father in service to their native area and state.

Reed Case had humbler roots, but rose above them in his service to the Delphi community, and the surrounding area. He was born in Nelson County, Kentucky on January 9, 1808 (just one year prior to Abraham Lincoln's birth) to William Case. Reed's grandfather willed thirty-six acres he owned to William and in turn William named his son Reed as a tribute to his wife's family name.

In the summer of the year Reed was born William moved his family to Orange County, Indiana. According to the Odell history of Carroll County, this became the site of the French Lick Sheraton Hotel. The family temporarily retreated to Shelby County, Kentucky due to Indian hostility. They returned

to southern Indiana in 1810 and lived in Harrison County, then Washington County, then returned to Orange County.

At age sixteen, Reed Case formally entered the business world as a brick mason. He formed a construction company and moved to Danville, IN, to build the Hendricks County Courthouse. In 1824, nineteen year-old Reed married seventeen year-old Mariah Glover. Three sons and a daughter were the fruits of this first union: John S., James S., Reed, and Josephine.

He contracted to construct the National Road in Hendricks and Putnam counties in 1832, when he was twenty-four. At twenty-eight, he began his lifelong association with the Wabash & Erie Canal, first as contractor for the Miami County segment (1836), and then on the segment from Delphi to Lafayette (1838). The death of Valerius Armitage created an opportunity for completion of a construction contract of the Wabash & Erie Canal in the Falling Springs vicinity (1838), then in Delphi proper, with the construction of the sidecut or "slip" to the foot of Main Street.

His commitment to the future involved pioneering in the banking industry, with a bank and commerce enterprise he started in the early 1840s first with James Spears, then with James Dugan, later known as Spears, Case and Company. As he began a successful partnership with a fellow entrepreneur, James Spears, he probably never dreamed it would yield: Spears and Case packing facility, the Spears and Case Building, grain shipping, banking, lumber and farming operations, and supplies for desperately needed plank roads.

He administered a very diversified concern, venturing into the pork packing business, which, by the Civil War times had been processing as many as three thousand head of hogs daily, which were originally shipped on the canal. Those livestock were nurtured by the three to four thousand acres of



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

grain crops Spears and Case owned in both Pulaski and White Counties, and which can be easily seen as one drives around the present day town of Brookston, IN.

He furthermore served his adopted city by being chosen stock solicitor of the nascent Wabash Railroad as it was making its appearance in the Delphi area, was awarded the bid for the Delphi-to Rossville Plank Road, and saw action in the Civil War. He was active in the campaign to rout General John Hunt Morgan in his native state of Kentucky.

His faith was shown when he became a member of a local body of believers. He put his feet to faith by being a financial supporter of the Underground Railroad. The family's faith was both found and uplifted at the former St. Mary's Episcopal Church, located in the vicinity of both the grain handling operation and early-day slaughterhouse.

Following Mariah's death in 1847, thirty-nine year-old Reed married Mariah's widowed sister, Huldah Glover Williams, who was twenty-eight. Their marriage was performed by Judge I.B. Edwards in Bloomfield, IN on October 15, 1847. One issue, Charles G., was born of their marriage.

Reed Case's soul quietly fled this earth at the age of sixty-three on October 23, 1871, following two months of ill health. His front-page obituary in the Delphi Journal painfully recorded his passing. His grave is marked by a large monument with a statue atop in the Oddfellows Cemetery on Wilson Street / Carrollton Road less than a mile from Canal Park.

Among his land holdings were parcels in White, Newton, Jasper, and Carroll Counties. The land where Peters Revington and the Wabash & Erie Canal Park are located was once owned by Mr. Reed Case. He left more than wealth as his legacy to

future generations. Because of Reed Case and people of his caliber, Indiana was able to leap from impenetrable wilderness to productive farmsteads and industry within the span of a few years.

### Death of Captain Reed Case

It is our painful duty this week to chronicle the death of one of Carroll County's oldest and best citizens. At eleven o'clock last Monday night, Captain Reed Case after an illness of several months, quietly passed away. His death was not altogether unexpected, as he had been in ill health for some time. Mr. Case was about sixty-four years old. We cannot at this writing give an extended sketch of the deceased as we should like to, for the want of time, and can only say that he came to this county in the year of 1835, as a contractor on the Wabash and Erie Canal, and has resided here ever since. For the past twenty-five or thirty years he has been in the produce and packing business, in the firm of Spears, Case & Co. Many will regret to hear of his death, as he was esteemed by all who had intercourse with him in the relations of life. The funeral will take place today at 9 o'clock, from his late residence.

Carroll County Citizen  
Delphi, Indiana January-23-1897

Mrs. Huldah E. Case, widow of the late Reed Case, died in Chicago Thursday night at 10 o'clock. The remains were brought here last night and will be buried from the residence of Mrs. J. C. Schermerhorn today at 10 o'clock. Interment in Odd Fellows' cemetery.

### Reed Case Legacy

John Case (1840-1915) served as sheriff and city councilman simultaneously. He also was the Chief Engineer of the 1869 bridge across the Wabash at Pittsburg.

### John S. Case

John Stillwell Case, a twin son of Mr. and Mrs. Reed Case, was born in what is now known as West Delphi, June 8, 1840, and passed away Jan. 25, 1915, aged 74 years, 7 months, and 17 days. His twin brother died when eleven years of age.

Mr. Case was united in marriage to Miss Jennie, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. James R. Blanchard, Nov. 12, 1872. The marriage was solemnized by the Rev. Isaac Joyce, later Bishop Joyce in the Methodist church in this city.

After living on their farm west of Delphi for thirty years, they moved to Delphi residing in the old Blanchard home. They have lived in this city eight years. He united with the Methodists, during the pastorals of Dr. James G. Campbell and has been true to that faith until death. At the breaking out of the Civil war Mr. Case enlisted in the 46th Indiana Infantry and served until the close. He was as brave and patriotic man as were the blue. His record in the war is without blemish, and was a past commander of the post.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

For four years his health has been failing and for eight months he has been confined to his home and part of the time to his bed. The end came very peacefully Monday.

As the years came Mr. Case grew in devotion to the boys who wore the blue and every assembly of the G.A.R. post called out his deepest interest. He met with his post, the Boothroyd Post G.A.R. whenever possible. The failing months and hours of his life were spent under the constant care and attention of as devoted a wife as God ever gave to man. She has given every moment to make his closing days peaceful and happy.

He leaves a wife, one sister, Mrs. Josephine Schermerhorn, of Buffalo, N. Y. and a brother Captain James A. Case, of Milwaukee, Wis., and seventeen nephews and nieces to mourn his departure.

Funeral services were held Wednesday afternoon at three o'clock, Rev. C. L. Harper and Rev. Aaron Wood officiating. The pall-bearers were Ed. Rinehart, C. Robert Pollard, Wade Thompson, C.B. Lyon, S. W. Barnett and G. W. Julien. The "boys in blue" of Boothroyd Post G.A.R. participated in the services at the residence. Interment in the Odd Fellows cemetery.

She sent messages of love to many who were not at her side in her last moments. Her husband being called to New York, on business, was summoned home when she grew worse, but did not reach her side until too late. When the Eastward train due at 9:40 A.M. came, she rallied under the hopes of seeing him and said: "Oh, is that the train?: These were the last words. A few moments later the vital spark went out, and Fannie Case, beloved by all, was dead.

The funeral services occurred on Sunday, the 15th inst., at St. Marys Church, Rev. Mr. Clausen, of Lafayette, officiating. The remains were interred in the family lot at the Odd Fellows Cemetery.

**James Case** — served as his brother's partner in banking.

**Josephine Case Schermerhorn (1838-1928)**— was Reed Case's only daughter to survive childhood. She was well known as having both a delightful voice, pleasing personality and a will to serve. She organized a relief effort from her father's bank for the troops during the Civil War. Her marriage to Bernard Schermerhorn produced three children: a son on February 7, 1862, whom she named Reed Case Schermerhorn to honor her father; a daughter, Catherine (Brackenridge); and another son, John.

**Reed Case Jr**—served as head cashier in the short lived First National Bank following his father's death.

### OBITUARY

Died, on the 12th inst., after a lingering illness, Mrs. Fannie Case, wife of Reed Case. Mrs. Case was born in Peru, Ind. March 24th, 1851, and was married to Reed Case, May 6th, 1873.

Death, the dreaded messenger, under all circumstance creates an indescribable sadness and desolation when he enters the home circle and points his solemn finger at a loved one, and this sadness ever diffuses itself more or less throughout the community in which the bereaved ones reside; but seldom indeed have our people been so mournfully impressed with the presence of the grim Herald of the grave as in the departure from earth of Fannie Case. It seems but yesterday, when we saw her in the rosy morning of a noble womanhood stand before the sacred altar and in the marriage vows pledge her wealth of life, for wealth is was, to him who weeps for the idol that now is broken and shattered. Hope dwelt exultant in a happy heart, and the future, radiant with glorious promise, gave to earth the hues of Eden. No thought intruded then, that in so short a time she would pass before the same altar, in robes for the grave.—But life is a fragile thing—so easily broken; an attenuate cord—so easily parted; a bubble—glistening in the sunlight; a wreath of mist—dissolving in the viewless air; a name on the shifting sand by the murmuring margin of an unknown sea.

During her illness she was ever cheerful, and as the sad, sad hour of death approached, her resignation and fortitude was such as is seldom witnessed. Her parting with friends is said to have been most touching and impressive. To her mother, she said: "Why do you weep? I have no fears of death; the only thing that grieves me is leaving my child and others that are so dear to me." To a friend who mourned the loss of a child she said: "I will soon see your darling babe."

Josephine Case Schermerhorn, Loved and Revered by All, Answers Call of Her Maker

The last of an old distinguished family passed away on March 17, after an illness which lasted for five weeks.

Josephine Case, the daughter of Reed Case and Marie Glover was born at Falling Springs, near Delphi, March 29, 1838, the oldest of a large family and the last to survive. On June 22, 1858, she was married to Bernard F. Schermerhorn, a rising young attorney, and has always lived in Delphi except for the eighteen years spent in Buffalo, N. Y., with her son Reed. Of this union four children were born, Ingold Case Schermerhorn, Reed Case Schermerhorn, Josephine S. Fry, and Catherine S. Brackenridge.

She was preceded in death by her husband who passed away April 24, 1884, and her son Ingold C., who died in Nelson, B. C., in October, 1916. She is survived by the balance of her children and six grandsons, Joseph H. Brackenridge, William T. Brackenridge, Reed Case Brackenridge, Bernard F. Schermerhorn, Ingold H. Schermerhorn and John N. Schermerhorn and one granddaughter, Catherine Fry Asby.

Mrs. Schermerhorn was a woman of wonderful mentality and by her ready wit, unselfish nature and delightful sense of honor endeared herself to everyone.

Her funeral was held from the family residence, March 19, Arch Deacon White of South Bend conducting the rites of the Episcopal church of which Mrs. Schermerhorn had been a member.

The family home from which she was buried is the same house from which she was married, where all her children were born and her long beautiful life enjoyed.

The passing of a woman of such strong personality is a



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Those from out-of-town attending the funeral services were Mrs. I. C. Schermerhorn, Mr. and Mrs. Ingold H. Schermerhorn, Mr. and Mrs. B. O. Aspy, and Byron J Moore of Indianapolis and John N. Schermerhorn of New York.

### Reed Case Schermerhorn (1862-1943)

Although he spent part of his life in Buffalo, New York and Washington, D. C., Reed Case Schermerhorn was president of the Carroll County Abstract Company from 1928 on. During World War II he functioned as the head of the Red Cross in Carroll County. He departed this earth on April 1, 1943, at the age of eighty-one and is buried in the Odd Fellows Cemetery. His funeral service was at St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

### Catherine Schermerhorn Brackenridge (1868-1960)

Catherine Schermerhorn married Will Brackenridge from Fort Wayne who later functioned as the probation officer in Carroll county and was a member of St. Mary's Episcopal Church. Catherine was the mother of Reed Case Brackenridge.

### Reed Case Brackenridge (1907-1974)

Reed Case Brackenridge spent time in Washington, D.C. in the service of the Rural Electric Association (REA). In the 1950s and

60s, he worked with the local REMC. He was a contemporary of Thomas McCain.

Odd Fellow's Cemetery Records list the following Case burials:

Helen Fitzgerald.	b. 10-16-1831,	d. 10-31-1887
Sarah,	1- 2-1851	2-16-1919
Charles C.	6-27-1851	9- 9- 1912
Huldah	6-1819	1-21-1897
John S.	1840	1915
Jennie B.	1840	1921
Reed	1-29-1808	10-23-1871
Mariah	5-28-1810	2-23-1847
William H.	6-8-1840	4-27-1851
William		2-20-1847
Stephen	8-31-1830	7-24-1831
J. S. Case, Sr.	1810	1891
Fannie B.	1840	1921

following Schermerhorn burials:

Josephine Case	1838	1928
B. F.	12-1821	4-24-1883
Reed Case	1862	1943
Bernard P.		1931
Sarah	1861	1949
Ingold C.	1859	1916

An old advertisement shows Spears and Case shipping on the Wabash and Erie Canal. In 1844 the Troy and Erie Line used them in their advertisement as a reference for others seeking insured shipping. And in another advertisement in an 1844 paper says:

COTTON YARN & BATTING  
1,000 LBS. superior cotton yarn; 5 bales batting.  
SPEARS & CASE

## CARROLL COUNTY WABASH AND ERIE CANAL LAND ACQUISITION

### The Martin Property

When private property west of the Reed Case House became available for purchase in 1993, the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. bought the property to enlarge the Park and obtain the towpath for trail expansion. During the 1997 annual Earth Day observance, the trail from the Wabash & Erie Canal Park to the railroad was created by a group of Work Day volunteers.

### The Peters-Revington Access Road

The 1996 construction crew, headed by Bill Draper, carved out and topped with beautiful Delphi limestone, an access road encircling the parking areas in Canal Park, changing the official entrance in time for the 1996 Fourth of July celebration. The road diverts vehicular traffic from the Canal towpath, which serves as a pedestrian trail.

### Canal Park Annex

Delphi Limestone Company and its parent company, US Aggregates, donated land which



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

# Delphi as Reed Case knew it



The west end of Main Street with St. Mary's Church on the right; the Grain Handling Warehouse on the left. The brick building below on the corner was the scene of much activity during the Case era: it was the site of the early-day Spears and Case Bank, and it also saw activity as a rally center for Josephine's effort to support Carroll County troops during the Civil War—and justly so—her husband was one of their number.





# CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

## Delphi in 1999

Canal Park

Archaeological Dig  
Site of Warehouses

Wabash & Erie  
Canal

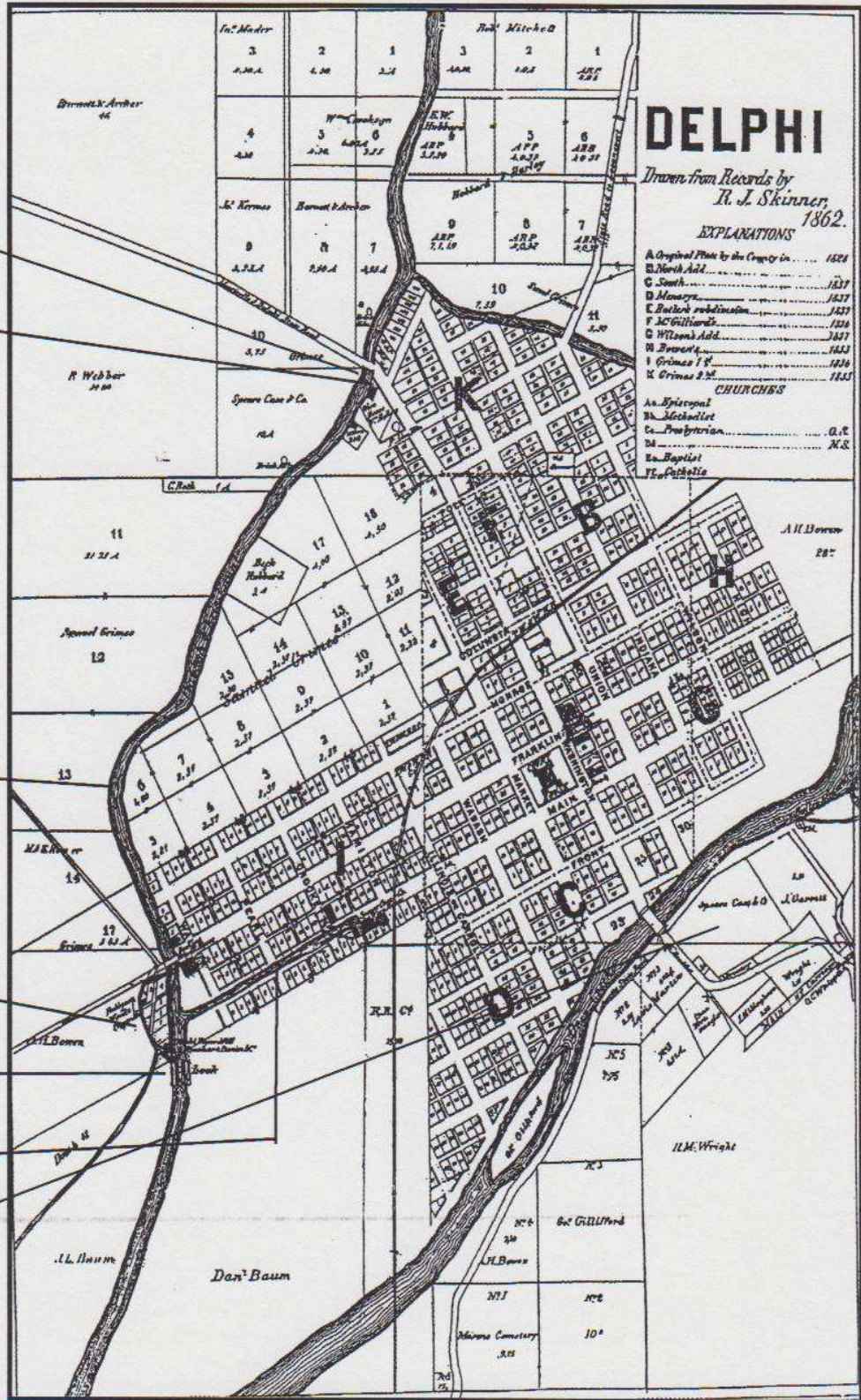
Archaeological Dig  
Site of Paper Mills

Lock No. 33

Side cut canal

Riley Park

Location of Wabash  
& Erie Canal Camp  
Field Oven off map  
just above where the  
canal crosses Deer  
Creek



## Delphi in 1862

Note the side cut up Main St. and the mill race with paper mills.



# CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

## DELPHI 1932 AERIAL VIEW

Wabash River

Wabash & Erie Canal

Canal Park

Side Cut Canal

Paper Mill Site

Lock No. 33

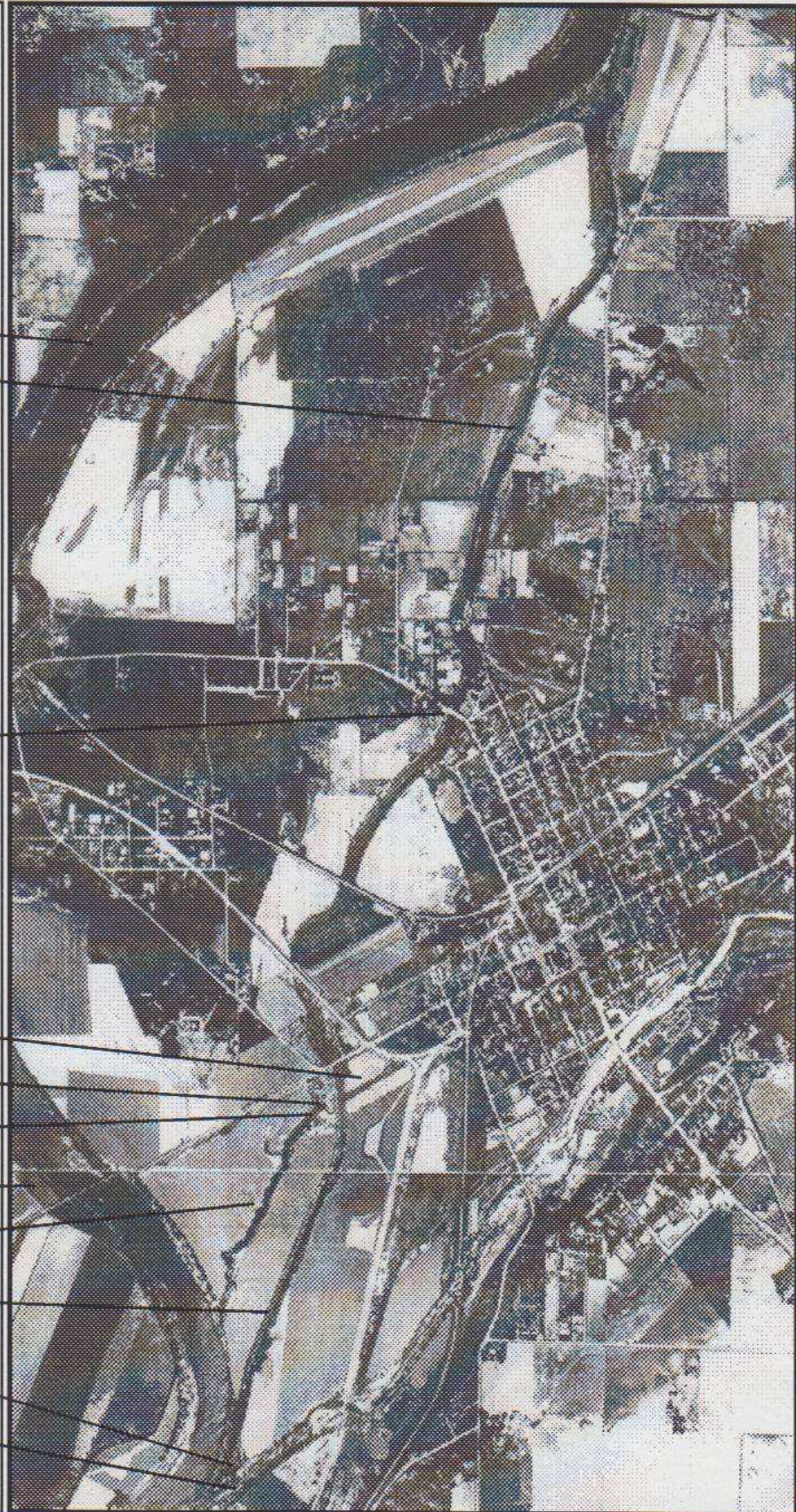
Wabash River

Mill Race

Wabash & Erie Canal

Sunset Point

Deer Creek





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

was dedicated in October of 1994 as Canal Park Annex. This naturally-secluded acreage at the end of Packet Avenue is a natural for picnics and quiet walks. Visible from the Annex is the Canal and the old belt railway bed.

At the time Delphi Limestone donated the site, a plan was announced to pump excess water from the nearby quarry into the Canal. Re-watering the Canal became a reality in 1997 with the completion of the 12" pipe from the quarry to the "tumble" at Founders' Point.

### Water in the Canal !

The existing portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal in Delphi is approximately two and a half miles long. It is the longest and only water-filled portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal which is publicly accessible in Indiana. Nearly bisecting its length is the 1904 stone bridge that allows North Washington Street passage over the canal bed. While canal boats never navigated beneath it, it did provide a unique challenge when the Reed Case House carefully traversed it in 1983.

In 1951, a flood control levee was built to protect the northwest section of Delphi, and the canal bed above it was returned to cultivation. With limited water supplied to the remaining canal bed, it became weed-clogged, neglected and abandoned. In 1995, through an agreement among Delphi Limestone company, the City of Delphi, and Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., Delphi Limestone agreed to construct the means needed to divert and release one million gallons of water per day into the upper end of the Canal to the City of Delphi.

Twenty-five years after the founding of the Canal Association, at 11:15 a.m. on Monday, March 10, 1997, Bill Draper, Ed Gruber and crew witnessed the first of the millions of gallons of water diverted by Delphi Limestone into the Canal near Founders Point.

### Founders Point

Over twenty-five years ago, on February 19, 1971, the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. founders had a vision for reclaiming, restoring, preserving, and protecting Wabash & Erie Canal sites and artifacts, and educating those unaware of the profound impact the Canal

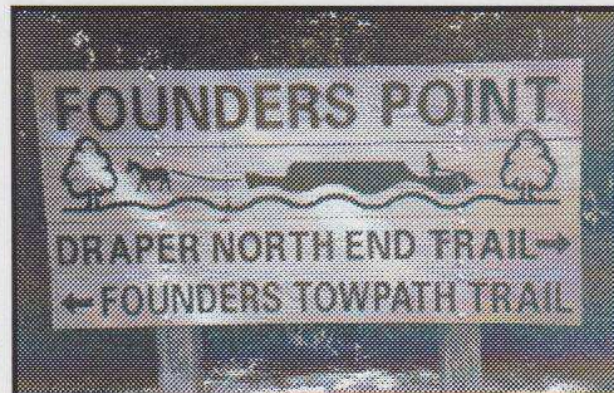
Era had on populating and civilization of this section of the United States.

In their honor, the area at the north end of the Canal next to the "tumble" where the water cascades into the Canal from the stone quarry has been christened Founders Point.

### Delphi Historic Trails (DHT)

The Delphi Historic Trails system comprises five miles of rural "open space" trails and over two miles of urban "street" trails. Trail development began in the early 1990s and has steadily grown in extent through many hours of volunteer efforts and grant money made available by the state.

The bold open space trails follow the early transportation routes of the Wabash & Erie Canal, the Interurban Railroad, the Belt Railroad, the Wabash River and Deer Creek. Towpath trails (as their names indicate) are remnants of the old Canal's route. Land for these trails has been given by generous, public-spirited donors to Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. In turn, Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. gave these linear parkways to the City of Delphi for inclusion into the City Park system, retaining possession of only Canal Park, where Carroll County canal restoration began.



Signs such as the above clearly mark the trails in Delphi.

Photo by Bob Schmidt

### Robbins Trail

Starting at Trailhead and crossing the suspension bridge over Deer Creek offers two choices on the Robbins Trail: the path to the left or right. The left path follows the trails listed below in orderly progression. The right path simply reverses the order. The Robbins Trail generally follows the beautiful banks of Deer Creek. It was named in honor of the landowners who helped DHT gain early popularity by allowing the trail to skirt their farm fields. The trail is 0.5 miles.



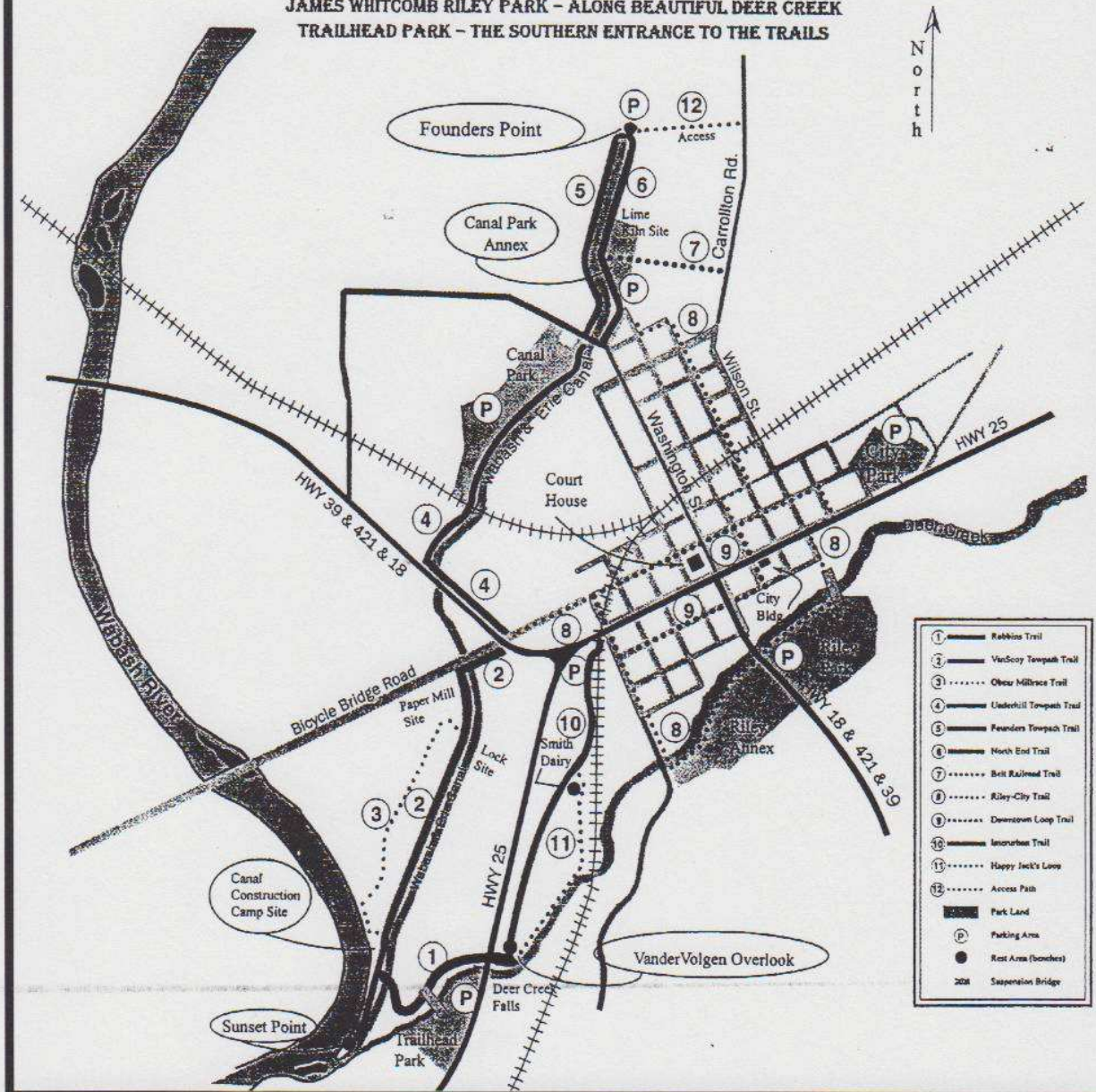
# DELPHI HISTORIC TRAILS

**FOR YOUR WALKING ENJOYMENT:**

THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL - REWATERED AND ACCESSIBLE  
 DELPHI HISTORIC TRAILS - SEVEN MILES OF HISTORIC EXPLORATION  
 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE - ENCHANTING FAMILY ADVENTURES

**OUR CANAL AND RIVERFRONT PARKS:**

CANAL PARK HISTORIC VILLAGE - REJOIN THE 1850S ERA  
 JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY PARK - ALONG BEAUTIFUL DEER CREEK  
 TRAILHEAD PARK - THE SOUTHERN ENTRANCE TO THE TRAILS



The canal construction camp as shown above was found by archaeologists. There they uncovered a huge brick field oven on which the meals for the camp were prepared. After thoroughly documenting the site it was recovered with soil. Also found nearby at the lock site was some of the floor timbers of the lock. At the paper mill site old buttons and buckles cut from old clothing were discovered. The fibers in the rags made the paper produced of high quality. The mills used canal water power and had a tail race into the Wabash River.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### VanScoy Towpath Trail

In 1990, Lloyd VanScoy donated a one mile section of Canal bed and towpath, approximately 15 acres, to be used as trails. It stretches from the junction of the Canal at Deer Creek and the Wabash River confluence (Sunset Point) to the stone bridge spanning the Canal on Franklin Street / Bicycle Bridge Road near US 421. The VanScoy Towpath Trail was constructed after the 1991 ice storm and topped with varying sizes of crushed Delphi limestone, which created one of the favorite walking paths in the Delphi Historic Trails system. The remains of a wooden crib lock were discovered in September of 1991 in the Canal bed not far from the northwest entrance to the VanScoy Towpath Trail. In 1995, remnants of paper mills along the Canal were discovered by archaeologist Wayne Bischoff. The following summer, the canal construction camp, cook shack and enormous hearth were unearthed. In 1997 the lock keeper's house and nearby dump were identified. The faint outline of a slip leading from long-forgotten warehouses and factories can be seen nearby. The trail is 0.9 miles.

It was at the confluence of Deer Creek, the Wabash River, and the Wabash & Erie Canal that a 170-foot long stone crib dam covered with wooden planks was constructed. The Deer Creek Dam was built forming Deer Creek Lake to navigate boats and allow water to pool behind the dam supplying water as far away as Lafayette. The often-repeated story associated with the Deer Creek Dam is the tale of the demise of both driver and mules when the structure collapsed in 1874. A separate uncovered wooden towpath bridge carried mules and drivers.

### Obear Millrace Trail

As Reed Case was an integral part of the development of the Wabash & Erie Canal in this region, similarly has local attorney, George Obear been instrumental in the acquisition, preservation, and ownership in perpetuity of the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal holdings. To honor his tireless and steadfast commitment to the Canal restoration, the Obear Millrace Trail which branches off of the VanScoy Towpath Trail was named for him and dedicated in October of 1997. This trail overlooks the Wabash River, then traces the millrace up to the paper mill site to join the VanScoy Towpath Trail

### Underhill Towpath Trail

When completed, this trail joins the US 421 crossing with North Washington Street. Along the trail is Canal Park, with its sleepy canal village and shops, Reed Case House restoration, blacksmith shop, and log cabins. The trail is 0.5 miles.

### Founders Towpath Trail

The west side of the tranquil, watered section of the Canal ends at Founders Point, where the "tumble" showcases millions of gallons of water in a sparkling waterfall from the Delphi Limestone Company's diversion pumps. The sight and sound of the rushing water, which is replete with colloidal minerals is both breathtaking and restful. The trail is 0.5 miles.

### North End Trail

This trail leads from Founders Point past the old lime kilns of the 1850s and on to Canal Park Annex before joining the Riley-City Trail. Limestone was burned in the kilns to produce plaster and whitewash. The walk parallels the canal for a glimpse of yesteryear. The trail is 0.5 miles.

### Belt Railroad Trail

Leaving the North End Trail and following the century-old Delphi Commercial Club path, the Belt Railroad Trail approaches the Carroll County Country Club. The most active of the commercial ventures along this route were the Harley Brothers Lime Kilns, which ceased operations in 1917, and the Ice Plant, which closed in 1950. The junction of this trail with Carrollton Road begins the Wabash Heritage Corridor Trail north to Carrollton Bridge. The trail is 0.3 miles.

### Riley-City Trail

Here is an urban trail, which follows picturesque, tree-lined streets and sidewalks to the boardwalk of James Whitcomb Riley Park, through the Riley Park Annex, to its junction with the Interurban Trail. Small-town charm, stained glass windows, and Victorian architecture delight the eye along this most scenic route. The suspension bridge leading to Riley Park, honoring Indiana's own Hoosier poet, offers a moment for reflection. The trail is 1.5 miles.

### Downtown Loop Trail

Connecting the outlying trail system with the bustling downtown, this walk follows the streets of the early residential and commercial portions of Delphi. Tea rooms, antique stores, and coffee shops beckon along the way. This trail is 1.0 mile.

### Interurban Trail

Walk along the path of the famous "singing wire." These narrow-gauge electric trains were far ahead of their time, but left the valuable legacy of electrifying rural areas following their demise in the late 1930s. The remains of a bridge abutment at the VanDerVolgen Rest Stop stands amidst a splendid scene along the trail. Take a moment to listen to the waterfall and rest along the banks of the Old Deer Creek. The trail is 0.7 miles

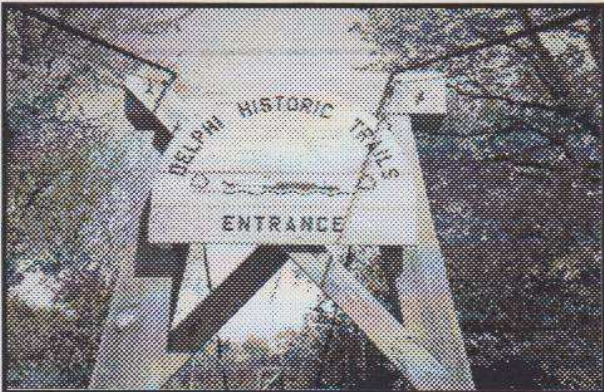
### Happy Jack's Loop

One of the most picturesque trails in the DHT system, Happy Jack's Loop leaves the Interurban Trail at the Smith Dairy site, passing by the site of Daniel Baum's cabin, the first court and school in Carroll County. Before rejoining the Interurban Trail at its junction with the Robbins Trail, the Loop winds along flirting with the tree-lined bank of the Deer Creek. The trail is named in honor of one of the tireless supporters of Carroll county Wabsh & Erie Canal, Inc., Jack Wroten. He is also the "father" of our annual July Fourth celebration. The trail is 0.5 miles

### Wabash Heritage Trail (WHT)

To the southwest, the WHT will eventually link with Prophetstown State Park. To the northeast, the WHT will link with the Carrollton river-crossing site and to Lockport, Burnett's Creek Arch, Georgetown, France Park, following the Wabash River and beyond.

Two suspension bridges in Trailhead and Riley Parks are a part of the trail system. Photos by Bob Schmidt





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES



### Archaeological Survey at Delphi

During the middle years of the 1990s, Wayne Bischoff of Michigan State University, conducted several tests of the Wabash and Erie Canal bed both inside and outside of urban areas. One was outside of Lafayette, IN and was by Great Lakes Research of Williamston, Michigan. Another was the archaeological digs along the Wabash and Erie Canal and sites near by in Delphi as part of his doctoral research.

He found that the canal bed in the Delphi area was heavily impacted by destructive events such as the replacement and rebuilding of the Washington Street bridge several times over the years, the dismantling of the Bolles' Warehouse in the late 1800s, the construction and repair of the railroad trestle across the canal, the dredging of the canal to improve its scenic value in the 1970s, and the cuts made to determine the depth of bedrock for the proposed canal park. He also found much silting to have taken place. This was common for the area. The Documentary Journal of the State of Indiana for 1855 relates this problem:

"The sediment brought down in floods, and held in solution while in the strong current, tends to settle as it meets the more quiet water of the pool. At the entrance and outlet locks of these slackwaters, deposits have been generally forming since the construction of the canal."

The dam at Pittsburg created just such a

slackwater pool. This added to the normal silting caused by water flowing from surrounding agricultural fields and from woodlands in higher elevations. According to Bischoff, "Flood waters and run-off enter the canal channel around the basin area, settle out in a random fashion in the current of the canal, and flow unevenly downstream toward Deer Creek.. The presence of lime kilns would have produced a great amount of limestone cobbles and sediments, which would also have flowed into the canal at this point. Part of the lime-manufacturing process, and that of brick manufacture, is the need for burning large amounts of wood, Ash, charcoal, mortar-like debris from the kilns, and limestone and brick rubble would, therefore, all be present within the canal stratigraphy at this location."

Through his research he found a document that notes that "in 1851, P.A. Glover advertised that he was buying hay, oats, corn, potatoes, butter, and a wide variety of other meat and vegetable products, as well as feathers, rags, beeswax and tallow. The location for this purchasing was 'at the Lock House on the canal a few rods below Rinehart and Bowen's new paper mill.' This advertisement was originally to be found in the Delphi Journal, a newspaper of the time, and is important in that it specifically mentions a lock house being located along Lock #33 on the Wabash and Erie Canal. The distance from the paper mill is also accurate for where this lock house would have been constructed."

Actually there were two paper mills at Delphi to which the canal furnished water. The water rents were \$900 per mill per annum. After the water passed through the mills it ran down a 20 foot wide and 12 foot deep tail race to the river.

George Robertson, built the first paper mill at the foot of Franklin street in 1845. In 1849 he sold half interest in the mill to Enoch Rinehart. That same year the mill went up in flames. Rinehart decided to rebuild it in 1850 and took as his partner C. A. Woods. Finally, after partnering with several others, Rinehart decided to run it on his own.

Running day and night Rinehart, Bowen and Co.'s mill produced fine quality paper that had a high rag content. It was sold as far as



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Indianapolis, Chicago and Cincinnati. The rags, often old articles of clothing, were brought back to the mill on the return trip of the wagons that delivered the papers. During the archaeological dig, piles of buttons and other fasteners were found that had been cut from the clothing.

Rags were often hard to get. The mill continuously ran an advertisement that offered cash for rags, beeswax, and ginseng. Records show that a canal boat out of Fort Wayne, IN delivered sixteen tons of rags to the mill. When the Pittsburg dam was blown up, the mill had no water power and ceased operation. This was a \$25,000 loss for its owners.

George Robertson and Armitage built the second mill in 1853. It was operated by John B. Caldwell and Robert Johnson. It too changed ownership several times until A. H. Bowen and A. T. Bowen, father and son, took it over. A fire destroyed it in 1877. \$6,000 of the \$25,000 loss was covered by insurance.

Other historical documents suggested a few residential out-buildings had been built on the west bank of the canal and a larger warehouse type building constructed near the loading basin for the lime kilns. Various historical maps show this basin to be located about 450 feet from the Washington Street bridge and extended northward. It was approximately 200 feet long.

Bischoff has discovered the location of the lime kilns using maps as a guide. They are near the north end of the basin. The lime kilns were built with square outer walls of cut limestone slabs that were 37 feet wide. The inner walls were made of brick and were in a 12 foot diameter circle. Limestone fill was placed between the two sets of walls. The inner walls became so hot that the bricks fused together and were glazed emerald green from the lime.

The lime kilns, located on the property of CSI members Roseland and Dan McCain, were used by the Delphi Lime Company which was organized in 1870 as a co-partnership made up of 200 shares of one hundred dollars a share. Partners were the lime firms of Hubbard, Harley, Daniel McCain & J. H. McCain, and others. During its first year of operation it produced 225,000 bushels of fine quality lime. The first

manager was David Harley, who was succeeded by Daniel McCain (ancestor or the current Dan McCain) in 1872 for 12 years. Its managers changed throughout the years. It was run for the owners during its latter years by C. E. McCain and closed in 1917.

Delphi Lime Company provided work for many men and had ten teams. The wood to fuel the kilns was brought by canal boat from Lockport which was located northeast of Carrollton. Some years as much as 4,000 cords of 4 foot wood was burned. The lime was sold in Illinois, Kansas and Missouri.

Some canal related artifacts found in various shovel tests and trenches in the basin area north of the Washington Street bridge were two white clay pipe fragments, two aqua bottle fragments, one plain ironstone base sherd, a leather ladies' shoe, two sawed down bones, and some iron and wood fragments, a rim sherd from a blue edged and scalloped plate, three sherds of an angular flow-blue plate, and a rim sherd from a polychrome handpainted vessel, probably of the Sprig II pattern.

Further down the canal bed near the place where Deer Creek enters the Wabash River, Bischoff discovered an intact canal construction camp dating from 1838-1840 which included a huge field oven where food was prepared for the canal workers.

### ~ Pittsburg ~

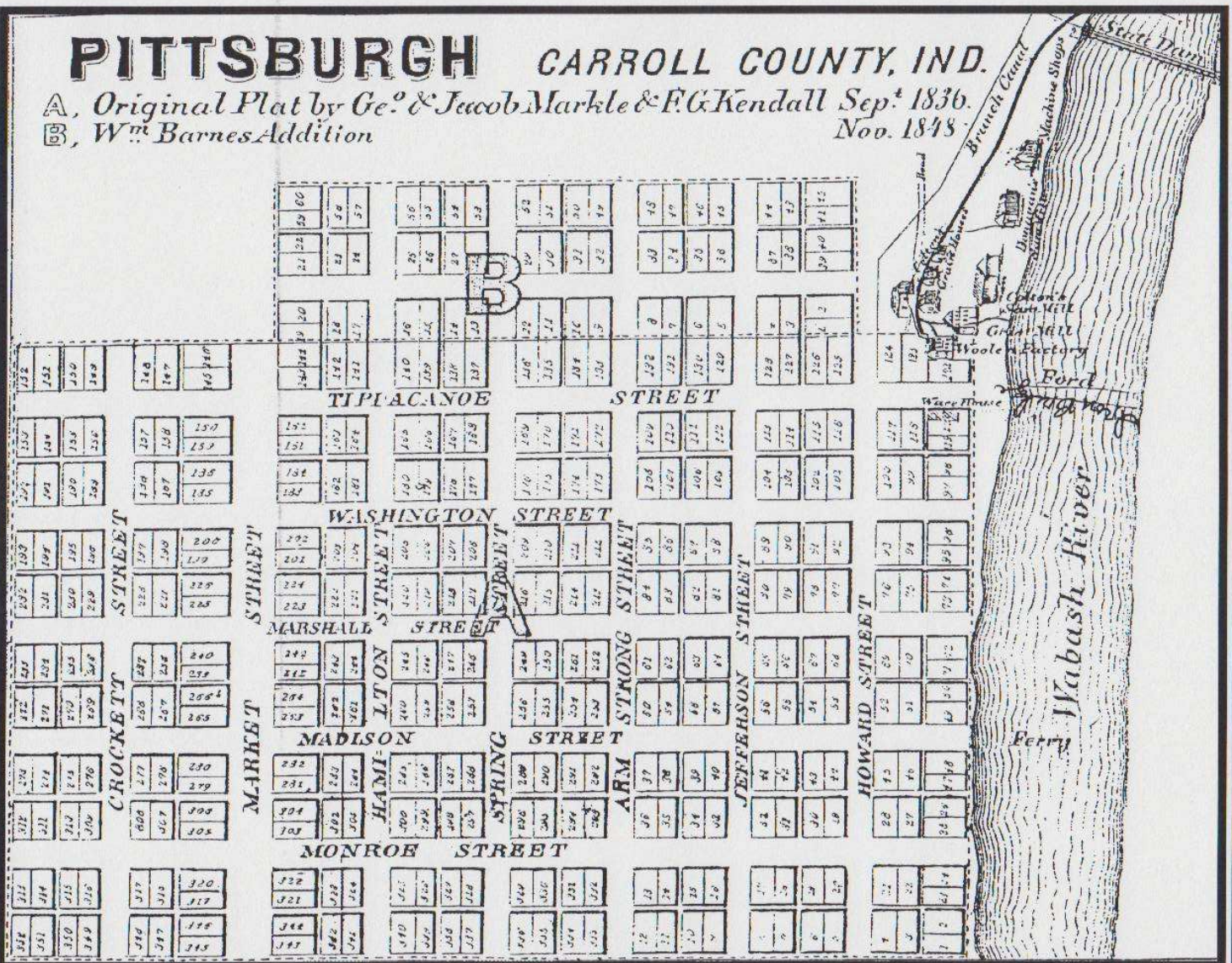
Pittsburg, platted in 1836, was an old river and canal port, but it was not on the main line of the Wabash and Erie Canal. At one time it was a rival of Lafayette being served by rafts, flat boats, and steamboats. During the heyday of the canal as many as 12 canal boats would load or unload at once at its docks.

When the canal was being planned, there was considerable deliberation as to where it would run. Southwest of Carrollton a huge bluff known as Ballard's Bluff stood in its path to Pittsburg. Yet Pittsburg citizens wanted it to come directly to their town. They even provided in the town platt for a public square and Market Street to be 100 feet in width. Others wanted the canal to cross to the other side of the



# PITTSBURGH CARROLL COUNTY, IND.

A, Original Plat by Geo. & Jacob Markle & F.G. Kendall Sep. 1836.  
 B, Wm. Barnes Addition Nov. 1848.



This map of the plat of Pittsburgh lists the date as September 1836 and the Barnes Addition was added on November 1848. A fording rock was visible when the river was low and it was safe to cross the river. When it could not be seen the ferry had to be used. Off of the branch (side cut) canal were located Colton's Grain House, Colton's Saw Mill, Colton's Grist Mill, a Woolen Factory, Dunovan's Sawmill, and Machine Shops. A warehouse was on Tippecanoe Street. The canal came off the upstream side of the dam. Later an iron bridge was added.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Wabash River by way of a slack water pool.

A dam was necessary to create such a pool. The citizens of Logansport considered their town to be the head of navigation on the Wabash. If such a dam was built, the town of Logansport would be cut off from steamboat navigation. Spear S. Tipton, a candidate for Cass County representative and the son of Gen. John Tipton, sent out a circular in which he stated, "If the Canal crosses the river at all, it should cross in a pool of a dam with a lock sufficiently large for the largest boats and with a chute to admit the passage of rafts down the river." He also argued that the rents received from the mills for water power would pay for building the dam.

The politicians of the day became embroiled in the matter. After the petition by Tipton and his followers was accepted, plans were drawn up for the dam. However, the plans did not include the steamboat lock. This angered the politicians so much that the legislature of 1838 drew up and passed a bill that required the canal commissioners to build the steamboat lock in the dam. This fired up General Samuel Milroy from Carroll County. He wasn't opposed to the dam, but he called the lock in the dam "useless." He said his group from Delphi would keep timbers and other building materials from being taken off Carroll County lands for the lock. He wanted Delphi and Pittsburg to be at the head of steamboat navigation.

The huge timber crib dam was eventually built across the Wabash River at Pittsburg in 1838 by Reed Case, Sr. and James Spears of Lafayette. It was about 600 feet long and 12 feet high. The steamboat lock located on its north side was completed in 1841. Chief Engineer Williams said it was the largest dam built in the state at that time and was built in record time. Canal boats could cross the Wabash on the slackwater pool at Carrollton and reenter the canal above Delphi. In addition, it was the chief supply for canal water for 70 miles until the feeder at Coal Creek was reached.

Shortly after the completion of the dam, it was necessary to raise it an additional foot. The first 230 feet across the river were rebuilt in 1849 with a double fall and horizontal apron. In 1856 the rest was redone using the same plan.

The canal being diverted to the opposite side of the Wabash River did not deter canal boats from reaching Pittsburg. Boats could cross the slack water pool and enter the town's side-cut canal labeled a branch canal on the map. The slackwater pool at the dam was tapped for water power. Thus it served two purposes.

Pittsburg grew to become a noisy, bustling, highly successful town. It had four grain elevators, three saw mills, a grist mill, a woolen mill, a chair factory, an organ factory, a wagon factory, a blacksmith shop, a cabinet shop, a cooper shop, a harness shop, a shoe shop and the largest tannery in Indiana. It even manufactured threshing machines.

Four newspaper articles reflect what life was like in Pittsburg.

6-12-1851

For the Journal

Mr. Editor:

The increasing importance of every sectional interest that may be manifested in, and directed to the improvement of those points of trade which concentrate the wealth of favored districts bordering on our western river, demands the cultivation of the facilities presented for rendering such interest sufficiently conspicuous to arrest the attention of the capitalist and manufacturer, who may be passing through in search of some situation where capital in trade can be safely invested. Pittsburg, its peculiar locality makes it as an advantageous point for commercial operations,—a sufficient guaranty for the importance attached to it, combines the grand elements that distinguish the commercial, from the manufacturing town. Superior adaptation to mechanical purposes in the abundant supply of water for the propulsion of machinery, and its position in the midst of a region of country noted for the fertility of its soil, the products of which so naturally tend to supply the consumption at home, and at the same time establish a never failing market for surplus products designed for transportation to other sections where the demands shall be greatest, and the prices best. Its situation is on the west side of the Wabash river, 475 miles from its confluence with the Ohio; 22 miles by canal, from Logansport, and 18 from Lafayette.

The present site of the town was located and surveyed in September, 1840, with a view to the consolidation of those elements of popular importance. Agreeably to the report of the Engineer's and the regulation, of the Board of Commissioners, for the superintendence of the affairs connected with the Wabash and Erie canal, there is a supply of water, produced by the slack-water dam, thrown across the river at this place; sufficient for twenty-five powers at least calculation, without affecting the navigation of the canal. The eligibility of this location induced the ready sale of lots, but the precarious circumstances of the proprietor, for a time, retarded the otherwise rapid growth of the town. Time, however, has developed the peculiar advantages which this place possesses in point of manufacturing interest, aside from its sectional position as a place of trade in corn and wheat, the staple productions of the portion of country by which it is surrounded. For the last two or three years particularly, the amount of corn stored at, and shipped from this place, amounts in the aggregate, to a sum that will compare well with any other town on the river.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

With each returning season, the interest and capital invested in manufactures, as, also, the produce trade, is manifestly augmented—during the present year the manufacturing facilities will be greatly increased. Among the machines at present, in operation here, may be enumerated, one Flouring, and two Saw mills; one Foundry, and connected therewith, a machine shop for Iron turning, finishing &c. Besides these, there is one Carding and Fulling mill; one Hub and Wagon manufactory; three Cabinet shops; four Blacksmith shops; one Tin and Coppersmith; one Chair factory; three Boot and Shoe shops, and two Coopering shops,—beside an abundant supply of Merchants, Tailors, Physicians &c.,—but no Lawyers; one fact speaks volumes in behalf of the peaceable, industrious habits of the citizens.

L.M.R.

6-26-1851                      For the Journal  
Mr. Editor;

I propose giving a descriptive view of the manufacturing interests of Pittsburgh, for the specific purpose of giving those interests a name and character in the annals of western enterprise, which shall entitle her to a station among others of extensive popularity. That there are superior advantages here for the improvement of capital, none who are acquainted with the peculiar locality of the place, will presume to question. In order to arrive at just conclusions, in laying out the ground work, in a manner just adopted to the comprehension of the reader, it will be most proper, perhaps, to commence at a particular point and proceed by definite divisions.

Proceeding down the canal, from the dam, the first thing of interest that will arrest the attention, is the Iron Foundry, of Josiah Russell, at which place is manufactured Merchant, Grist and Saw Mill castings; threshing machines, corn shellers and castings of improved varieties of pattern to suit; castings for horse-powers, ranging from one to eight, and wagon boxes, of a quality hard to beat any where in the United States. In addition, several sizes of cast-iron water wheels, of improved fashions. But before looking farther, it might be as well to examine the fixtures for melting the iron preparatory to moulding; the cupola is constructed wholly of cast-iron, which appears to be well calculated for answer the ends desired, by being more permanent, and consequently more durable, which, if I am capable of judging of such things, is necessary to success in that department of manufacture—the blast for facilitating the melting of the iron, is made by a fan of an improved pattern, situated on the outer part, but attached to the building, so that the blast furnished by it is really conducted, by means of pipes adapted to the purpose, to the cupola, in which the iron in process of melting by the agency of melting coal.

Connecting with the Foundry, is an extensive machine-shop, a building twenty-four feet by thirty-six, two stories high, in which on the lower floor, is situated machinery for iron turning and finishing, which consists of three superior iron finishing lathes, two of which are self-finishing engine lathes of capacity for doing steam engine work; cutting screws with square and bevel threads, and for plain or spiral boring of cast cylinders, &c. In another part of the room is an engine, by which the teeth of wheels are cut in the solid casting, or any require size, and with mathematical exactness! the neatness and facility with which it does the work is truly astonishing. Here, also, is done the finishing and fitting up mill, horse-power and threshing-machines irons; cast, iron-finishing and wood lathes. As a specimen of the capacity for manufacturing and finishing articles of this order, as well of the practical genius of the proprietor, there is here a machine for plain circular, eccentric, concentric and irregular turning, which for workmanship, and mechanical ingenuity, will compare with any other in the western country.—The upper story is used for making and storing patterns. In this department may be seen

an assortment of patterns equal to any made in the valley of the Mississippi. We shall conclude this, and take up another establishment in our next, and so continue till the whole is represented, it is by your will to present it. L.M.R.

7-10-1851                      For the Journal  
Mr. Editor:

Adjoining the building occupied as a machine shop, previously referred to, is another, twenty-four feet by thirty-two, two stories high—the upper portion of which, at present is used exclusively as a wood-work shop, where the wood-work for threshers, shellers, separators and other articles of machinery of similar quality, are manufactured. A portion of the lower room is used by the lathes, for different turning in wood—the remaining portion is occupied by the machinery of Messrs. Whipple & Bugby, for turning, trimming and mortising hubs, and for sawing out folly timber in circular form, to be used by them in their wagon and carriage establishment, situated in another portion of the town. The machinery is of the best quality and does every portion of its work with the utmost precision.

Pursuing our course a little further along, we come to the premises of Timothy Donovan, Esq., on which is in progress of erection, an extensive saw and lathing mill, which, from present indications, under the mechanical supervision of Messrs. Wilson Smith and George Campbell, we are strongly inclined to the opinion that the work will not only progress with expedition, and at the time exhibit a degree of mechanical skill, seldom surpassed in like structures, but when completed, will possess more than the ordinary facilities for cutting lumber by an improved application of water as a motive agent in driving machinery.

A few rods advance of this is the saw mill of Messrs. Bolles & Colton, which does good work—connected with it is a flouring mill, carding and cloth dressing machine, under the direction of the same proprietors. The amount of manufacturing done here is considerable, judging from the crowded state of business. To the right of this last in the extensive buildings for storing grain and other articles of commerce, belonging to the same firm, and in which has been stored, since the first day of August last, 70,000 bushels of corn, and 20,000 bushels of wheat, and a corresponding quantity of other grains, a large proportion of which has been shipped to Toledo, and other available markets. Just below the site of the mills at present, the proprietors contemplate erecting during the course of the season a large and extensive flouring-mill for merchant and custom work.

Passing along down the canal, we approach a large ware and grain store house, belonging to Mr. Donovan, in which has been stored during the past season, 12,500 bushels of corn, and 6,000 of wheat. Still farther along is the ware houses of Spears & Bro., and below, a grain store-house belonging to Col Gridley—in the former grain has been stored to the amount of 40,000 bushels of corn, and 18,000 bushels of wheat, and in the latter, 13,500 of corn. Besides the amount of corn stored as above, 13,000 bushels of corn have been purchased in this place and otherwise disposed of—making the total amount of grain bought, and shipped from this port since August last—of corn, 138,000 bushels, and of wheat, 38,000 bushels. The amount given above are reliable, having been gathered from the grain books or the different purchasers. At the lower end of this (Wabash) street, is the cabinet shop of Mr. Buckingham, long and extensively known to this community.

L.M.R.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

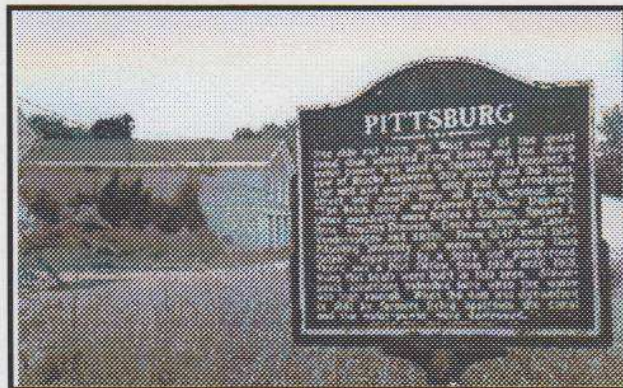
7-17-1851  
Mr. Editor:

For the Journal

Returning from an excursion down Wabash street, we observe—during a short walk up Howard—first, on the right and on the left numerous residences, some of which bear the marks of age, while others exhibit a higher degree of modern taste in the style of architecture and in the decorations of the yard and garden. Above Madison, on the right, the wearied traveler may partake of the hospitalities of the "Fountain House," under control of Col. Gridley, a gentleman whose long experience in this business causes him to be almost universally known to community, and then pursue his onward course to the destined haven. The next object which arrests our attention is the Tin, Sheet-Iron and Cooper establishment of Capt. Wallace, late of the city of Cincinnati, whose mechanical ability and industry most comment him to the favor of the public; and directly opposite to their concern, on the right, is the Boot and Shoe store of L. House. At an angle above, on the other side of the street is a shop occupied by J. W. Mills & Bro., Blacksmiths; the amount of work done here is considerable—a little further along is seen the Shoe shop of Geo. Alsop, one of the pioneers. On the same side of Howard and above Washington street, the observer may be pleased to stop at a building where Mr. Ballard is employed in the construction of Cook's Patent Reaping Machine, for the express use of the farmers, and will eventually, perhaps, occupy a place in their affections. There is nothing more on this street to interest the lover of mechanics, unless it should be several Mercantile houses, which of course add to the business facilities of our village. We will now pass through Free Soil, and bend our course down Jefferson street. Just here, on the right, appears the extensive Wagon and Carriage Manufactory of Messrs. Whipple and Bugby, where they make the wood work, iron-work, finish and turn into market from one to three wagons per week, and are prepared, from the appearance of things, to get up Buggies and Carriages of style and quality to suit the demand. The space between this point and Washington street are a few tasty residence. Having done considerable of traveling in this day's journey, and the weather extremely warm for a person of extensive corporosity to perambulate, exposed to the rays of a meridian sun, we shall for the time call a halt at the next shop and get our machines trimmed up for another reconnaissance—in the meantime the reader may feel disposed to go and do likewise.  
L.M.R.

since he owned most of its businesses. He would stock enough merchandise by canal to supply his businesses from the close of the canal navigation in the winter to when it would reopen in the spring. One year he had two hundred thousand dollars worth of merchandise in storage with another fifty thousand worth still on order. But, as often happens, he over extended himself and fell into receivership.

All the Pittsburg's industries could not operate for nine months in 1866 after floods destroyed a portion of the dam. The canal company paid Lane, Sampson, and Matthews \$30,000 for its repair. This was a minor blow to the town. The second blow came when the canal was closed to trade, but Pittsburg survived. A group of disgruntled citizens blamed the dam for flooding in the area and wanted to protect their bottom land. They donned masks and, with a mixture of malice and blasting powder, took Fate into their hands dynamiting the dam on February 9, 1881. This destroyed Pittsburg's cheap energy source and dealt the final blow. Businesses became worthless to their owners. The town went into decline.



The building on the upper left is a little of what remains of the canal era. The marker reads: Photo by Bob Schmidt

Pittsburg had three hotels. The Colton House was of colonial design with a porch centered on its front center and stood up the river from Pittsburg's mills. The Fountain House was elegant, offered fine food, drink and stables for the animals, and was about a block to the right of where the old bridge crossed the river. The Gridley House was located about a block to the left of the old bridge that was torn down in 1951.

At one point Pittsburg was pronounced the "coming city in Indiana." As many as 400 wagons waited to load their cargo aboard boats during the canal's heyday.

C. W. Colton basically ran Pittsburgh

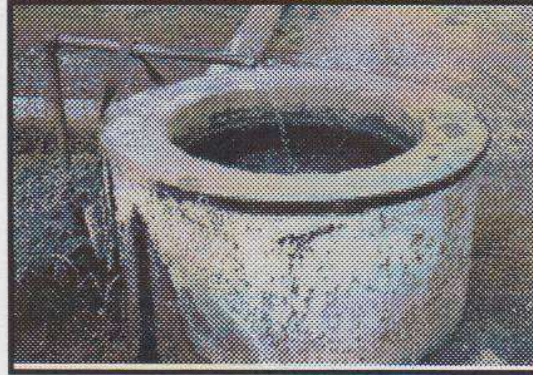
### PITTSBURG

The side cut from the West end of the great canal dam admitted canal boats and the cheap water power was used to capacity. It bisected a row of Blocks between this street and the river. The mill and warehouse sites and the riverbank street and wharfs have all been washed out. "The Brick Store" was Garrett A. "Doc" Depew's. Other merchants were Bolles & Colton, Spears & Bros., Timothy Donovan, Davis and Mudge. Later-Vandervolgen and Smith. From 1847 until 1856 Pittsburg probably did more business than Delphi, separated by a ferry and plank-road. There was a Post Office from 1838 until 1915. Many flat boats were built in this area. Steamboats sometimes unloaded here when the water was high enough. When the dam was dynamited in 1881 by farmers living upstream the canal and the water-power were destroyed.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Today, Pittsburg's main street has as a two-story brick building built during the canal era and a historical marker to recall the days of the Wabash and Erie Canal. When the railroad bridge crossed the Wabash, a person walking out on it and looking down into the river at low water could still see the foundation remains of the great dam. Unfortunately the railroad bridge has been torn down. There is also an artesian spring where people come from miles around to fill their jugs with spring water. This spring was running during the Civil War. A few homes, a church, and two restaurants known for their fish dinners are still there. One of the restaurants has a canal mural painted on the side of the building.



This artesian spring has been running since Civil War times.

Photo by Bob Schmidt



This was Lawrence Vandervolgen's collection of old photographs of Pittsburg. The one on the lower left was taken in 1885. The iron bridge crossed the Wabash river. The church in the top left picture still stands. Photo-Bob Schmidt





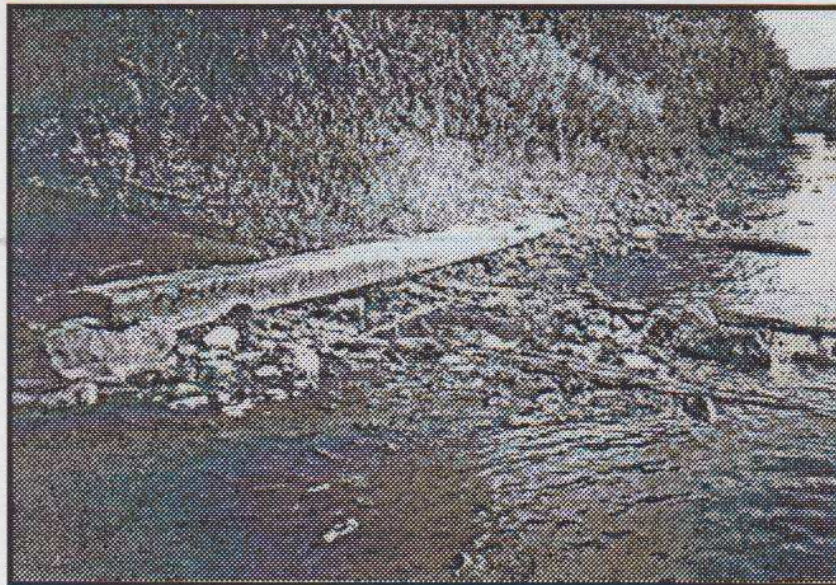
## Pittsburg Dam Past & Present

1881 View of the canal and locks on the left at the Pittsburg Dam.

Photo by Wolever



Dam across the Wabash River at Pittsburg that created the slack-water pool. The photo was taken from a hill in Pittsburg.



These pieces of timber from the Pittsburg Dam could still be seen in August of 1993. The photo was taken looking south from the railroad bridge which has since been removed.

Photo by Jason Wortman

### Pittsburg Dam 1838-1882

590 feet long

12 foot high from low water

Base of dam 48 feet wide

Timber cribs filled with  
stone

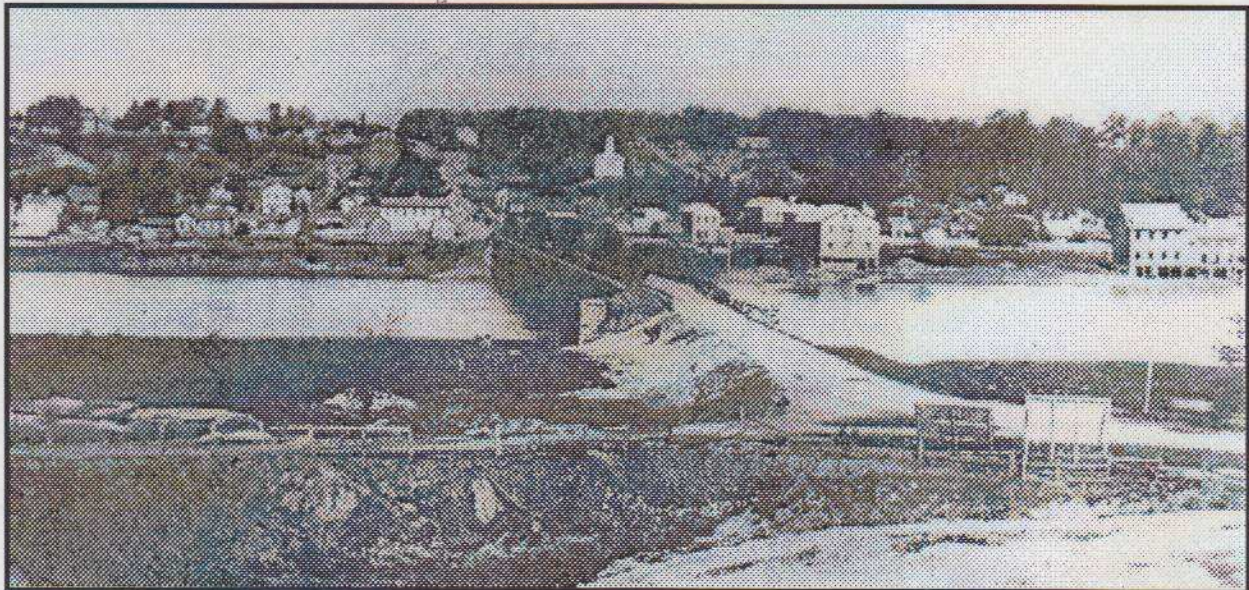
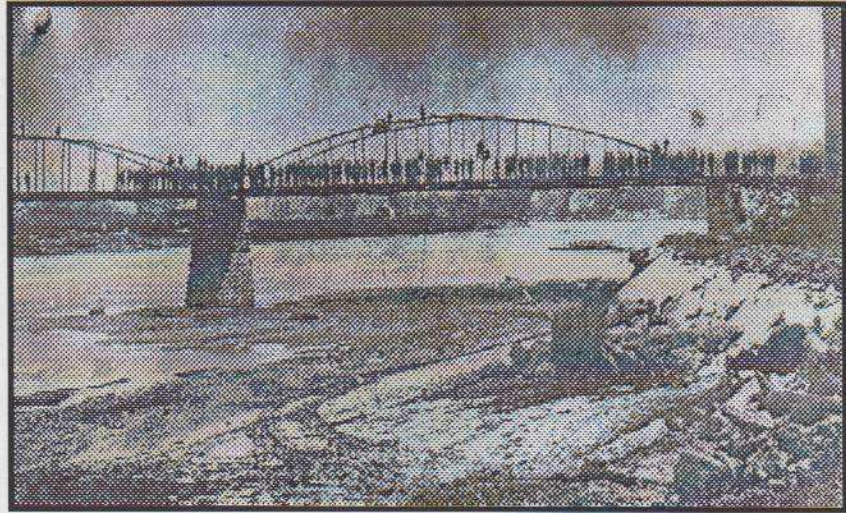


## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### PITTSBURG

The photo on the right shows the first iron bridge in Carroll County. It was built in 1868 across the Wabash River. Photo by JMB

This photo of Pittsburg was taken looking west across the Wabash River. Some of the mills along the side cut canal can be seen on the right.



#### When Pittsburg Was a Town by Michael Coomey

Pittsburg once was great. But here of late

It seems just fit for tillage  
People moved away and now today  
She's like Goldsmith's "Deserted  
Village."

It doesn't seem strange what wrought  
this change

Her renown must yet outlive her,  
It once was known the busiest town  
Upon the Wabash River.

With shipping locks and canalboat docks  
Where boats were loaded down  
To take exports to other ports  
When Pittsburg was a town.

Then Dee Depew had much to do  
At his corner grocery store;

Business did thrive, trade was alive  
At every tradesman's door'  
Then old Doc Prough kept on the go  
And salted money down.  
These were the times Doc made his  
dimes.  
When Pittsburg was a town.

Then Limber Jim, so tall and slim,  
Would oftentimes get dry,  
Put on his coat, take ferryboat  
And cross over to Delphi;  
Get boiling tight, get in a fight,  
And often get knocked down,  
Get run in jail! Till friends would bail,  
When Pittsburg was a town.

Then Diddy Mills oft times had chills  
Just after some big spree.  
He'd spend a ten as quickly then  
As some men would a "V."

A picnic flask is all he'd ask  
When fortune seemed to frown.  
Then with the boys he'd make a noise,  
When Pittsburgh was a town.

Monk Armstrong would sing a song  
All through the whole campaign;  
He'd brought relief to those in grief  
Who heard his glad refrain.  
But poor old Monk has too much spunk  
To heed misfortune's frown—  
He still sings lays of better days  
When Pittsburg was a town.

Published on March 18, 1906 in the  
**Sunday Star.**



# Tippecanoe County

## Past and Present

### ~ Americus ~

When the Wabash and Erie Canal was first planned it was to terminate at the mouth of the Tippecanoe River. Therefore, the town of Americus was laid out in 1832 as close as possible to that point by William Digby, a colorful, card playing gambler. He and others dreamed that it would become a greater town than Lafayette, Delphi or Logansport. Digby purchased about 80 acres of land. At first the lots sold rapidly at high prices. On December 20, 1833 a post office was established that eventually closed on October 15, 1902. A turning basin for the canal was located between Main street and the canal and between Lafayette and Basin streets.

Americus had the reputation of a haven for bootleggers in the 1920s. Where the present Americus Restaurant is located, there once stood a gas station that reportedly housed a still. As soon as prohibition was over, G. F. Hilgendorf opened a tavern on the spot.

The remains of the old Americus Inn located on the W&E canal still stood in 1991 when the Canal Society of Indiana toured the area. Shortly thereafter it was razed. It was originally the homestead of John Cunningham. It was a two story brick building measuring approximately 40 x 80 feet.

Tippecanoe County was established in 1826 and named in memory of the Battle of Tippecanoe fought between General William Henry Harrison's American soldiers and Tecumseh's brother, The Prophet, and his Native American band. It took place in 1811 near the Native American settlement known as Kithtipiekanunk or Prophet's Town. However, the name Tippecanoe originally came from a Potawatomie word which was given to both a fish and the river Tippecanoe in the early 1700s. Other county place names were given to honor those who came before. In 1717 the Canadian government authorized the French to build the first trading post within what is now the boundaries of the state of Indiana. It was called Fort Ouiatenon and was named for the Miami tribe, the Ouia, which we now call the Wea. Lafayette, the county seat, was named for the Marquis de Lafayette.

Tippecanoe County is rich in that it is composed of a rich till plain and a river valley. The Tippecanoe River flows into the Wabash River from the northeast. It is one of the state's largest counties of which over 80% of the land is farmed by perhaps 1,000 farms producing corn and soybeans. It has the 9th largest metropolitan area in the state composed of Lafayette and West Lafayette and one of the nation's most prestigious universities - Purdue. The university is the county's largest employer. Tippecanoe County also has over 100 manufacturers, over 600 retailers, about 150 wholesalers, and about 5 mining operations. Some of the larger employers are ALCOA, Eli Lilly and Co., Landis and Gyr, Fairfield Manufacturing Co. Caterpillar Tractor Co. and Subaru-Isuzu.

Located within the county are the Tippecanoe Battlefield State Memorial, Fort Ouiatenon Historical Park, and Prophetstown, a new state park.



Several views of the old Americus Inn on the Wabash & Erie Canal are shown on the right. Photos by B. Schmidt



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### ~ Lafayette ~

Lafayette was founded by William Digby, a boatman, who thought that locating a town at the head of navigation on the Wabash would be profitable. On Christmas Eve of 1824, he purchased the land from the government land office located in Crawfordsville. At that time the Marquis de Lafayette was touring the United States and as a French hero of the American Revolution was in the public eye. Digby decided to name the town for him. Three days after the town was platted, Digby sold all his holdings for \$240.

The town's only other connection to the rest of the state other than the river in 1825, was a stage line. It ran from New Albany through Salem, Bedford, and Bloomington to Lafayette.

In 1826 Lafayette was chosen as the county seat for the newly formed Tippecanoe County. Even though it had the advantage of being in the center of the county on a navigable river, it was probably the town fathers offer of about half of the original town plat to the county that determined its being chosen.

The infant town was laughed at by the much more developed town of Crawfordsville and called "laugh-at" and "lay-flat." But this did not deter the development of the town which first shipped by flatboat and then by steamboat after its appearance in 1826.

The Vincennes Western Sun & General Advertiser contained the following notice:

April 25, 1829 Arrived from Lafayette, on Friday the 17th inst. the steamboat Criterion, and departed the same day, for Shawneetown. The Victory arrived the 18th from Lafayette, and departed the same day, bound to Lafayette, and intermediate ports.

Lafayette was a raw little place in 1832 when the first shovel full of earth was dug in Fort Wayne to commence the building of the Wabash and Erie Canal. Paul Fatout described Lafayette as "...a non-descript clutter of log cabins and shacks, besides a number of frame houses, several hotels of dubious merit, and a two-story

brick courthouse on the square. So-called streets were like cow paths, full of stumps, deep in dust in dry seasons, muddy quagmires in rainy spells, short stretches of wooden sidewalks here and there. Hogs and cattle wandered about, flies were numerous, and the civic air had a heady tang of horse and decaying garbage." The people themselves were said to be "filthy."

Trying to upgrade the town's image, someone called Lafayette the "Star City" at which an Indianapolis newspaper editor jeered. All jeers aside the townfolk were full of expectations. The Wabash and Erie Canal was going to pass through their city. Three railroads were chartered though none were started. Steamboat traffic was growing and eventually reached 60 boats loading and unloading daily.

But it was the building and use of the Wabash and Erie Canal that made Lafayette's population increase from 2,600 in 1843 to 6,129 in 1850. Its canal port was the most heavily used port along the channel.

The Auditor's Report 1891-92 for the state of Indiana told how Canal Lands were granted and of their disposal.

"The land known as Canal land was granted by the United States to the State of Indiana to enable the State to construct what is known as the Wabash and Erie Canal, and is embraced in three separate grants. The first of these grants was approved March 2, 1827, and granted a quantity of land equal to one-half of five sections in width on each side of said canal for the purpose of uniting the waters of the Wabash River with those of Lake Erie. The second grant was approved February 27, 1841, and confirmed to the State the selections made for that portion of the canal which lies between the mouth of the Tippecanoe River and Terre Haute. The third and last grant to the State of lands for this purpose was approved March 3, 1845. To enable the State to complete the canal from Terre Haute to the Ohio River, there was granted to the State a moiety of the unsold lands in a strip five miles in width on each side of said canal, as likewise a further grant of moiety of all lands remaining unsold in the Vincennes Land District, with provisos. These three grants and the sections made under them embrace an area of 1,457,366.06 acres, as shown by the report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office."



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### The Wabash and Erie Canal

In 1835 a bill was passed by the Indiana Legislature for \$227,000 to extend the Wabash and Erie Canal from the mouth of the Tippecanoe River to Lafayette, a distance of approximately fourteen miles and twenty-nine chains. The following year on January 27, 1836 the Mammoth Internal Improvement Bill was signed by Governor Noah Noble. It provided for a railroad from Madison, IN to Lafayette via Columbus, Indianapolis, and Crawfordsville with \$1,300,000 allotted to construct it. The canal would soon have competition.

The W&E canal was opened to navigation to Logansport on April 20, 1839. Then during the summer of 1839, the state had incurred such debts that all of the mammoth internal improvement projects stopped throughout the state. The W&E was the only exception. The state legislature authorized treasury notes called scrip for 1 1/2 million dollars to continue its construction. These notes, better known as Blue Dog, Blue Pup, and White Dog, were little more than IOUs and almost lost their value as soon as they were accepted. In November of that year it was estimated that the canal could be completed to the Indiana/Ohio line by the first of June 1840 and to Lafayette by the first of October 1840.

According to a report by Samuel Lewis in the *Documentary Journal of 1839*, the channel was opened from the state line to Lafayette in 1840. The first canal boat out of Delphi was scheduled to arrive during a huge Whig rally. It had on board Colonel Gridley's military group and a fife and drum corps. The boat was grounded a little over a mile above Lafayette. Gridley's men marched through the mud amid pipers piping and drummers ruffling to attend the rally. Later that year several boats made the entire trip.

The ensuing winter was hard on the new canal. Freshets led to breachings in the canal bank at Birmingham Bluff and Wabash Town. These had to be repaired in the spring. At Birmingham Bluff the brush rip-rap that didn't hold was replaced by Georgetown stone transported down the canal. By May, 1841, the canal was back in operation and boats could travel as far as six miles past the state line. At last Tippecanoe County shippers could export their corn, wheat, and pork. The following

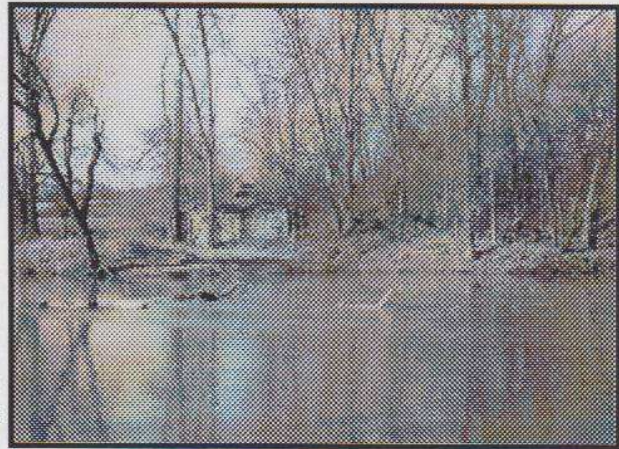
advertisement ran in the *Tippecanoe Journal* and *Lafayette Free Press* during the summer of 1841.



"The Wabash and Erie Transportation Company.

The subscribers will commence running at the opening of navigation on the Wabash and Erie Canal, a Daily Line of boats for passengers and freight from Lafayette, Indiana, to a point in Ohio six miles beyond the Indiana State line, making 146 miles.... Samuel L. Mahan, L. G. Thompson, and F. Comperel" (Comperet)

At Wild Cat Creek a dam 13 feet high and 170 feet long was built across the creek forming a slack water pool and fed water to the canal. Wild Cat Creek was the largest feeder within 100 miles providing 4,500 cubic feet of water per minute during the driest season.



Above: Abutment of Wild Cat Creek towpath bridge and Wabash and Erie Canal on the right. The dam that created the slackwater pool was downstream to the right. Note the towpath is on the East side of the canal.

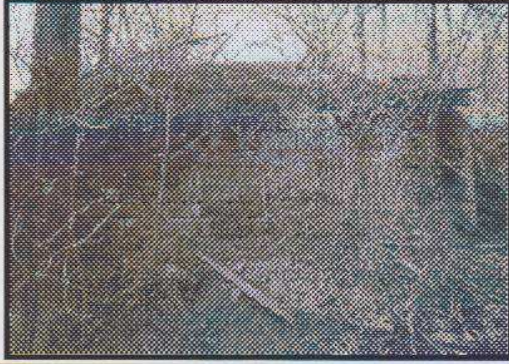
Below: A closer view of the above abutment. Note how time, ice, and roots are pulling the stones apart.

Photos by Bob Schmidt





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES



Wild Cat Creek towpath bridge abutment. Schmidt

At Wild Cat Creek the towpath once again changed back to the east bank of the canal until it reached 9th street in Lafayette. Then it once again changed back to the west bank by means of the "exchange bridge." A permanent wagon bridge was built in 1848 which included a walkway on its north side for the towing animals.

There was a natural depression a little above the "exchange bridge" in Lafayette. When it was filled with water it was known as the "Wide Water." It held water in reserve for the canal and also acted as an ice pond in the winter. When he froze over, the ice was scored, cut into blocks, and stored in buildings along its edge.

The section of the canal from Wild Cat Creek to Lafayette crossed gravelly soil that sucked up canal water as soon as water was let into the canal bed. The canal builders had to harness animals to pull small tree tops or bunches of brush up and down the muddy canal bed causing the bottom of the canal to "puddle." This mud was then allowed to dry and harden. When water was reintroduced into the canal this impervious layer kept the water from filtering out.

Finally in 1842, the state of Ohio completed the canal from six miles past the state line to lake Erie. Canal traffic between Lafayette and the lake began. The editor of the *Tippecanoe Journal and Lafayette Free Press* of May 11, 1843 wrote:

"The navigation of the Wabash and Erie Canal from this place to the Lake has fully commenced. A number of boats from the lakes have arrived during the week."

The first boat of travel all the way from Lafayette to Toledo was the Albert S. White named for a Whig who was both a Representative and a Senator from Indiana who is buried in Lafayette's Greenbush Cemetery. It was built in Lafayette and furnished in Fort Wayne. On September 15, 1841 the *Tippecanoe Journal and Lafayette Free Press* editor wrote:

The ALBERT S. WHITE, of Lafayette is a new and superb Canal Packet built at this place for the Wabash and Erie Canal Transportation Company. She was to leave port yesterday for Fort Wayne, there to receive her furniture, etc., and we venture the opinion, that when fitted out she will 'take the shine off' of any thing in her line to be met with 'in these diggins.' She is commodious, and her apartments so arranged as that there can be no danger of indiscriminate mingling up of male and female passengers and crew, as is sometimes necessarily the case in boats of bad construction."

### *Albert S. White* The Man

Among the most scholarly men who have attained eminence in the politics of Indiana was Albert S. White. His writings were copiously embellished with classical allusions, and his speeches were rich in references and quotations from the most noted thinkers and publicists of the world.

Albert S. White was born in Blooming Grove, New York, October 24, 1803. He graduated from Union College, New York in 1822, having for a classmate the Hon. William H. Seward, one of the most eminent men of his time. Mr. White studied law at Newburg, New York, and in 1825 was licensed to practice his profession. Soon after this he emigrated to Indiana and located at Rushville. After practicing law a year or so in that town, he removed to Paoli, where he remained but a short time, and then took up his abode in Lafayette. This was in March, 1829, and from that time until his death, Lafayette, and its near neighbor, Stockwell, was his home.

During the session of 1828-29 Mr. White reported the proceedings of the Indiana Legislature for the Indianapolis Journal, the first work of the kind done in the State. He did it thoroughly and well, as the files of the paper will attest. In 1830 and 1831 he was the assistant clerk of the Indiana House



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

of Representatives, and from 1832 to 1835 he was its clerk. During these years of service in the House he was brought in close contact with the leading men of the State, a circumstance which was of great benefit to him in his future political career. In 1833 he was a candidate for Congress against Edward A. Hannegan, and was defeated. He had neither the brilliancy nor eloquence of Hannegan, but he was the superior of that erratic man in education, culture, and in most of the qualities which go to make up the successful man. Four years after this he was elected to Congress from his district, defeating Nathan Jackson by a majority twice as large as the latter's vote. The year before he was on the Whig electoral ticket, and in the electoral college cast his vote for William Henry Harrison.

On the expiration of the senatorial term of General John Tipton, in 1839, Mr. White was chosen to succeed him. A protracted struggle took place over this election, the candidates being Governor Noble, Colonel Thomas H. Blake and Mr. White. It was not until the thirty-sixth ballot was reached that an election took place; on that ballot Mr. White received a majority of the votes. He was then a young man, but his training had been such as to acquaint him with public business, and when he took his seat in the Senate he was no novice in the duties of the place. He actively opposed the annexation of Texas, as he did every measure which was calculated to extend the area of slavery. He was of a conservative temperament, and usually voted with the moderate men of his party, but he was conscientiously an anti-slavery man, and always acted with those who strove to confine slavery to the territory it then polluted. He was active in securing grants of land to aid in the extension of the Wabash and Erie canal, and it was largely by his influence that such grants were obtained.

On the expiration of his senatorial term in 1845, Mr. White resumed the practice of the law, but in a short time he abandoned it and entered actively into the business of railroading. He was president of the Indianapolis and Lafayette railroad from its organization until 1856, and during three years of the time was also at the head of the Wabash and Western railway. He performed the duties of these places with ability, and to the satisfaction of the public and the roads.

In 1860, when the country had need of its strongest and most experienced men, Mr. White was again called into the public service. He was elected to Congress from his district, and having had experience both in the House and the Senate, he at once took high rank as a member. He was made chairman of a select committee raised to consider the question of compensated emancipation. Mr. White reported a bill appropriating \$180,000,000 to pay loyal men for their slaves, and \$20,000,000 to aid in the colonization of the freedmen. This measure was recommended by Mr. Lincoln, and supported by him with all the influence of his position, but the madness of the Southern people prevented its adoption. Had the men of the South been wise they would have accepted this proffer as a solution of the slavery question. Had they done so there would have been no war, and the devastation that swept over the Southern States would have been avoided. In

presenting the bill, Mr. White accompanied it with a report in which the social and political influences of slavery were elaborately argued. He contended that the white and black races should be separated, and the latter colonized in the equatorial regions of America. In his speech supporting the bill, he told the Southern members that if they did not accept the olive branch it would be withdrawn, and their slaves would be taken from them without compensation. The result is known. The offer was rejected and the slaves freed by a proclamation by the President.

Mr. White failed of a renomination to Congress mainly on account of his action in regard to the emancipation question. He was, however, appointed by Mr. Lincoln one of three commissioners to adjust the claims of citizens of Minnesota and Dakota against the government for Indian depredations. He discharged the duties of this position, as he did all his public trusts, honestly and well.

On the death of Hon. Caleb B. Smith, January 7, 1864, President Lincoln appointed Mr. White United States Judge for the District of Indiana. He had been in law practice so long that many doubted the wisdom of the appointment, but it proved a good one. He soon adapted himself to his new position, and had he lived would have proven a worthy successor of the eminent man who preceded him. But his term was of short duration, for, on the 4th of the next September, eight months from the time of his appointment, he died at his home in Stockwell, a town of which he was one of the founders. His death caused a gloom throughout the State, but its darkest shadows rested over Lafayette, where he had lived so long. A special train left there for Stockwell the Wednesday morning after his death, and soon returned with his remains. They were met at the Lafayette depot by an immense concourse of people, headed by the mayor, the city council, and the members of the bar. The procession moved to the Fifth-street Methodist church, where an appropriate discourse was delivered by Rev. John L. Smith, after which all that was mortal of Albert S. White was taken to the Greenbush Cemetery, and there interred. Subsequently, William F. Reynolds, a wealthy citizen of Lafayette, and a great admirer of Mr. White, erected over his grave a monument which still stands to mark the resting place of the scholar and jurist. It is of Bedford stone, and represents an oak tree, Thunder-riven, blasted, dismantled, its branches shattered by the storm, but enough of the trunk standing to show how loftily and nobly it towered toward the heaven. A pair of doves nestle on a broken limb, and an ivy vine clings and clammers around the root. On a scroll fastened to the tree is inscribed the name, date of birth and death of Mr. White, and a simple tribute to his worth as a man, a legislator, judge, lawyer, citizen, friend. The inscription is as follows:

### The grave of Albert S. White

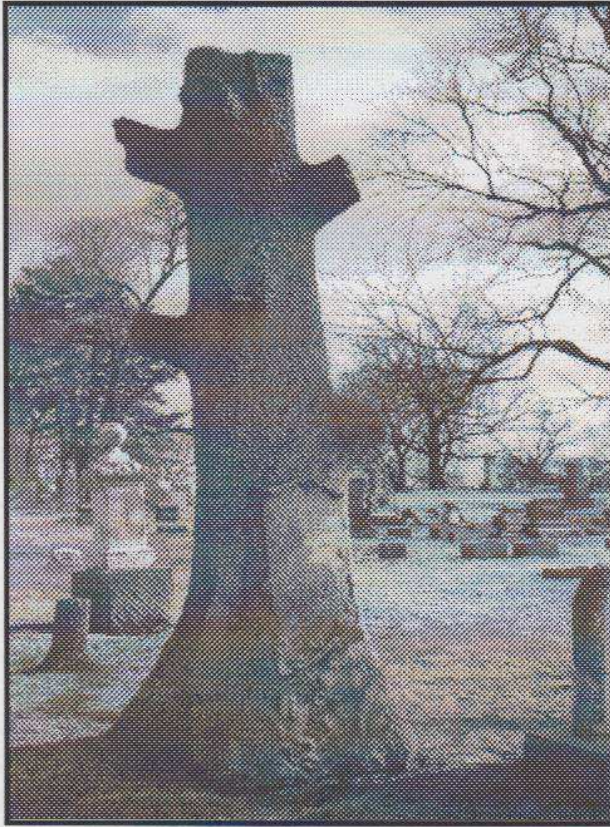
In all relation of life, admirable.

As a friend, sincere; as a citizen, public spirited; as a lawyer, honest; as a legislator, wise; as a judge, without reproach.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

It is a beautiful tribute of friendship to exalted worth.



This monument to Albert S. White stands in Greenbush Cemetery in Lafayette, IN. The first canal boat to travel from Lafayette to Toledo on the Wabash and Erie Canal was named in his honor. Photo by Bob Schmidt

In the *Fayette Observer*, of July 22, 1826, is the full text of an address delivered by Mr. White, at Rushville, on the Fourth of July of that year. It is a chase and elegant production, abounding in classical allusions, couched in the choicest language. It could only have been prepared by a scholar of great erudition, one familiar with the classic authors. In apologizing for the space occupied by the speech, the editor says:

"We pretend not to be very lynx-eyed in historical politics, nor very sensitive to beauties or deformities in rhetoric and belles-lettres; nor, indeed, to profess the talents or to exercise the privileges of reviewing public performances; nevertheless, we can venture to express our belief that the speech of Mr. White, fraught, as it seems to us to be, with many historical incidents that can not fail to be pleasing to those who delight in the story of 'the times that tried men's souls,' will fully compensate its readers for time and labor."

Mr. White was then a young man, fresh from college, and his address was somewhat sophomoric, yet its diction is such as to stamp its author as one who had drunk deeply of the waters of classical lore.

Mr. White had but little in common with the typical Western pioneer, and it is, therefore, somewhat strange that he should have reached the eminence he did. He never sunk his manhood nor lowered his self-respect by trying to get down to the level of every man who approached him. He was in no sense a demagogue, and never sought to carry favor by pretending to be what he was not. He was always dignified, was always a gentleman. The last speech made by Mr. White was delivered on the 1st of June, 1864, at the dedication of Crown Hill Cemetery. It was an elegant production, entirely worthy of its distinguished author. The following extracts from this address will serve to show the author's style:

You do well, friends, to leave for a day the busy pursuits of common life to plant these altars here. Your city is but little older than Jonah's gourd, but where are now the men who built it? Where are your Nobles, your Wallaces, your Merrills, your Coes, your Mitchells, your Coburns, your Stevenses, your Walpoles, your Footes, your Browns, your Morrisises, your Saunderses, your McCartys, and your Blackfords?

"Of some the public history of our State, and of others the traditionary annals of your city, will have preserved the memory, but though their virtues may survive, their persons will have been forgotten. Let the honored remains of such be transferred to these guarded grounds, and here, side by side, let them sleep with other contemporaries equally dear to memory. As time rolls round and the inmates of these grounds are counted by thousands; as strange guests are deposited here from the myriads of emigrants who will flock to our capital after its fortunes have been made, the story of the pioneer settlers will have a thrilling interest, and their graves a peculiar sanctity. In this respect your cemetery grounds will have a more classic interest than those of Mr. Auburn, Greenwood, Laurel Hill or Spring Grove, or even the famous cemetery of Pere la Chaise, which is said to contain the dust of Heloise and Abelard."

While Mr. White was in Congress Mr. Lincoln promised him the Lafayette post office for a friend, but after he left Washington the President changed his mind, and appointed Mr. James P. Luse. Mr. Luse was not Mr. White's candidate, and when word came to Lafayette of the appointment, Mr. White at once went to Washington to remonstrate against it. As soon as Mr. Lincoln saw him he knew his business and sought to mollify him before he had time to speak. "I see how it is, White," said the President, "but before you proceed to business I want to tell you a story. In one of our large towns in Illinois a new hotel was opened to the public with a splendid entertainment to a large number of invited guests. Among these came a big, lean man, who was supposed to be a guest, and at the table he made a tremendous havoc among the viands, eating with a voracity that struck everybody with astonishment. After dinner the man approached the landlord and said: 'I was not invited to your dinner, but I was very hungry, and came of my own accord. I have nothing with which to pay you for your bountiful dinner, and all that you can do in the case is to kick me out of doors, and I shall be greatly obliged if you do kick me out! I shall feel



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

in that case that I have paid the debt." "Now, White, I promised you that Lafayette appointment; I admit it. Just before I left Springfield an old friend, with whom I had often fished and hunted and slept, came to see me, and I asked him if I could do anything for him, but he said there was no office he wanted. Well, the other day this good old friend of mine came on, and, of course, was my guest; and before he left he asked me for the Lafayette post office for some friend of his, and I had to give it to him. You see, White, I admit I had promised it to you, but what could I do but give it to him? Now, if you will kick me out of doors, and go quits, I shall feel greatly obliged to you," whereupon the President turned his back to Mr. White, drew aside his coat tail, and asked for the kick. Mr. White used to tell this story, and add: "Just think of it! The President of the United States asking to be kicked!"

In person Mr. White was small and spare. He had a thin visage, a large Roman nose and a narrow chest. Physically he was weak; intellectually he was strong. Had his career in life depended alone upon his body he would have been a failure, but depending, as it did, upon his mind and heart as well, he was a success. He was one of the first men of the Wabash country and of the State, and his name will not be forgotten while learning and scholarship are cherished, and honor and patriotism revered.

The above sketch was taken from:  
Woolen, William Wesley. **Biographical and Historical Sketches of Early Indiana**. Indianapolis, IN: Hammond & Co., 1883, pp. 204-210.



### Lafayette's Businesses Boom

By 1843 Lafayette had grown to a town of forty stores, business firms, commission merchants and forwarders. Those catering to the canal trade were Lauman & Bansemer, which carried towlines made in Pittsburgh, PA and cordage for bow and stern lines; Dave Johnson's Livery Stable, which housed and fed canal horses; and Purdue and Fowler, which carried canal imported coffee, molasses, nails, salt and sugar. There was even a drydock where canal boats could be repaired at the turnaround basin.

Dickey, Doyle & Dickey ran a daily line of packet boats (caring both mail and passengers) that were scheduled to cover the distance from Lafayette to Toledo in 60 hours. Passengers paid \$7 for the trip and their meals. The packets were gaily painted. The horses were groomed and decked out in shiny brass harness.

The Troy & Erie Line had slower, heavier freight boats that guaranteed the shipment of merchandise from any eastern city to Lafayette or any other of the W&E canal ports. Lafayette in turn shipped several hundred wagon loads of produce daily.

Canal boats were also individually owned. Benbridge & Mix, forwarders, kept a weekly boat register that recorded the names of the boats and showed that at least 15 boats a day arrived or departed at Lafayette. All boat names reflected the interests of their owners and of the times: Defiance, Fleetwood, Henry Clay, Hoosier, Huron, Lafayette, Nathan Hale, Nick of the Woods, Red Bird, Wayne, Woodsman, etc.

It wasn't long after the opening of the canal to Toledo that Lafayette exported more goods and made more profit than any other town on the Wabash and Erie Canal. Its average annual exports were:

CORN...1,130,000 bushels  
FLOUR...21,000 barrels  
LARD AND BACON...4,260,000 pounds  
WHEAT...200,000 bushels  
WHISKEY...2,700 barrels  
BARRELS OF PORK  
HIDES  
TANBARK  
APPLES

Tolls and receipts were usually even higher than those at Fort Wayne.

The canal continued to be dug down the river valley as prescribed by the Act of January, 1836. The first section below Lafayette was advertised in 1842 and somewhat completed by 1845 when water from the Wild Cat Creek feeder and another smaller Wea Creek feeder was let in. Wea Creek was actually little more than the tail race from the Foresman Mill and could only supply 1,800 cubic feet per minute. In this section the gravelly bed absorbed the water quickly as had the section above Lafayette. The canal bed finally absorbed enough water and held water in it deep enough to float a boat loaded with stone as far as Wea Creek. This stone was used to line the banks at weak places.

The coming winter was hard on the canal. Breaks occurred that delayed the opening until the latter part of September 1846. The first boat reached Attica in 1846. The way the



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

newspaper described its arrival was so grand that it led to the Attica/Covington War on September 26, 1846 over the canal and water rights.

Canal and river men were a tough rugged lot. Lafayette had the same low moral character as other ports such as Fort Wayne, Huntington, Logansport, and Peru. Ladies-of-the-night were available as well as liquor. Popular saloons were George Ten Eyck's Exchange, which sat right on the canal at the foot of Main Street; the City Saloon, which was located uptown and was supposedly for middle class citizens of Lafayette advertising the "purest imported Liquors and Segars"; and Hoyt's Hacienda, which was an elegant spa to refresh the minds and bodies of the rich.

Fights broke out all the time. The newspaper reported one man putting another's head on a log, breaking his jaw and kicking him. Another reported a man staggering out of a canal bank saloon on a cold November night, stumbling onto a canal boat, lurching toward its stern, falling off into the canal, floundering about, then wading to shore all the while swearing aloud.

The town became so rowdy that the state legislature tried to establish a Boatmen's Infirmary to be paid for by a tax on the boat crews. It was so difficult to collect the tax that the infirmary never became a reality.

Some citizens thought that the town would be better off without the canal not only for the low life characters it brought to town but for health reasons as well. They cut the canal banks and later even blew up the Pittsburg dam across the Wabash that pooled the water to feed the canal.

Richard Beste, an Englishman, booked passage on the Wabash and Erie Canal in 1851 at Terre Haute to travel back to the East. In his journal he reported the conditions on the boat, the heat and mosquitoes, and described the passing landscape. He found the sandstone county around Covington in Fountain County attractive. Lafayette was not as large or prosperous as he had expected. When an elegant gentleman and lady boarded the boat the Beste family did enjoy their company. Northeast of

Lafayette the countryside was sparsely settled and much wilder. Beste felt the best he had felt for quite a while. He wrote:

"I never saw more magnificent timber than shaded the valleys through which we passed. Great sticks of plank oak shot up straight from the bottoms without a know or branch, until their heads spread out some scores of feet above, like the tufted summits of the Italian pine."

In 1858 a destructive flood washed out sections of the W&E Canal between Delphi and Attica. The canal engineers had built the canal to withstand flood waters like those of the flood of January 28, 1828, which had been the greatest flood known to the state of Indiana up to that time. The flood of June 1858 was even greater in Tippecanoe County with the Wabash River being two feet higher than in 1828. Wild Cat Creek became a raging torrent, cut a new channel around the east end of the dam destroying the east abutment and swept away the bridge. Only the west abutment remained.

Wea Creek also raged carrying away all but the east abutment. The aqueduct was 140 ft. long with three spans, two abutments and two piers. Its feeder dam which was about 200 feet long and was raised 4 1/2 feet above low water was lost too..

The canal banks both above and below Lafayette were breached and needed repairing before navigation could resume. The canal could not be operated from June 10 until August 26 of 1858. This happened at a specially bad time, since the railroads were threatening the canal.

Even with the Wabash Valley Railroad's operation in Lafayette from 1854, boat builders at Covington in Fountain County continued to build canal boats such as the John Purdue, H. T. Sample, and the David Webb in hopes the canal would continue.

On February 11, 1861, the day before his fifty-second birthday, Abraham Lincoln stopped at Lafayette for ten minutes and spoke to five or six thousand people gathered there. His train cars were switched from the Wabash Valley line to the Big Four tracks. Later in the day his train

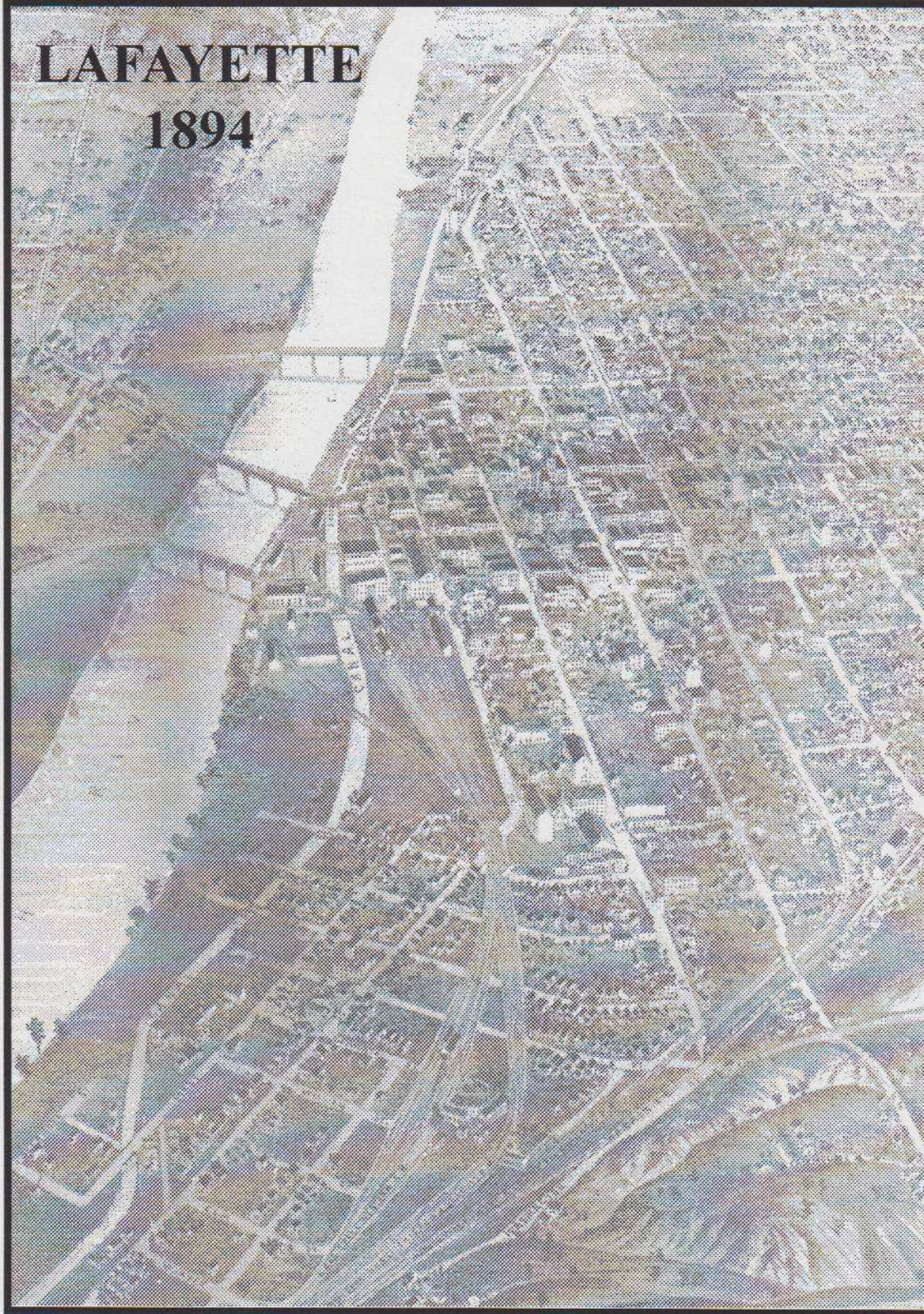






LAFAYETTE

1894





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

arrived in Indianapolis. He rode in a parade, went to the Bates House which was the headquarters for his party, and continued the following morning continued to his inauguration making en route two minute stops at Shelbyville, Greensburg, and a brief speech at Lawrenceburg.. Later Lincoln would choose Hoosier Caleb B. Smith as his Secretary of the Interior.

The Wabash and Erie Canal ceased operating as a transportation canal in 1875. The canals use as a transportation system had declined from the time the Wabash Railroad was completed in 1856. Within about six years canal transportation practically ended. The last boat to pass from Lodi to Toledo was the "Rocky Mountain" on October 26, 1872.

Then on August 3, 1875 after several days of rain, the Wabash River reached fifteen inches above the flood of 1858. It washed out many canal structures, tore apart the canal banks and navigation never resumed. Canal boats were left to rot strewn along the course of the canal.

### A Source of Power

Besides being used for transportation, the Wabash and Erie Canal was an important source of water power to mills and factories along its banks. In 1840 30 year leases were given to Hull and Spencer for a flouring mill, to Messrs. Clark and Bartholomew for a sawmill, and to Daniel Yandes for a sawmill, paper mill and flouring mill. The mills used overshot wheels. The 15 1/2 foot fall of water provided 267.8 cubic feet of water per minute to turn each mill stone. This was expressed as "Mill Stone Power" or "powers." The stones themselves were fourteen feet in diameter. Each stone was listed as a "run."

In 1871 the Hull and Spencer Flouring Mill or Lafayette Mill could use three "powers" on the upper fall of water, where it had two overshot wheels, and could also use the lower fall of water, where it had one overshot wheel, free of charge. The mill had three "run" of stone and paid \$150 a year for each "run" or \$450 in all. The mill was located across the canal from the end of Union Street, but since there was no bridge there, it had to be reached by crossing the canal at Salem Street and going south on the towpath. The mill changed owners over the

years but operated until 1887 using canal water. All its owners were influential in early Lafayette's development and their names are found in history books: Israel Spencer, Nathaniel Hull, Dr. David Jennings, Barnett Jenkins and Robert Breckenridge.

The Clark and Bartholomew Sawmill was about a square from the Lafayette Mill. It was reached by crossing the canal at Salem Street and heading north on the towpath. Its lease was given on August 1841 and was for the use of canal water for 30 years from January 1842 at \$250 yearly. The water ran one saw via a Parker or flutter wheel. The surface of the canal was 16 feet above the mill. The mill was to use only water on the second fall.

The Yandes saw, paper, and flour mills were located about one square south of Alabama Street on the west side of the canal and drew water for all three mills via a mill race that branched off into the paper mill on the west and the flour mill on the east. These waters then joined again in a basin and operated using the second fall of water from the saw mill on Sample Run. Leases were for the saw mill — \$250 yearly, the paper mill — 3 "powers" at \$162 @ yearly, and the flouring mill — three "Run" at \$162 @ yearly.

The saw mill was replaced by another paper mill which was replaced later by a flour mill. The last lower flouring mill was known as the Star City and had three run of stone producing 23 barrels of flour per day. It operated until 1871.

According to Jesse Lynch Williams (Chief Engineer of Indiana's Canals) **Report of 1846**, the Hoagland Woolen Mill was operating without a permit on the west bank of the canal at the foot of Green Street. Though there was a rickety bridge crossing the canal at Green Street, the mill was safely reached by crossing the canal at South Street and going south on the towpath. The owner, whose name was not given, supposedly purchased the privilege from Silas S. White as a lease for one "power" or 267.8 cubic feet per minute to operate a 16 foot wheel. The purchase of the lease and the notification of the opening of the mill to the public for fulling and carding was advertised in the **Tippecanoe Journal and Lafayette Free Press** of August 11, 1841.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Ownership of the mill changed hands. It burned down in 1876.

The flood of 1854 impacted the mills as well as canal transportation. The industries which used it for water power from then on paid for more than for the water usage. They maintained the portion of the canal which supplied their mill, the feeder dam at Wild Cat Creek and the canal from the creek through Lafayette. By 1875, the exorbitant total annual amount paid for hydraulic power by its users was \$1300. By 1888 all canal water powered industries in Lafayette no longer operated.

Following the 1875 flood, the canal was ordered to be sold. The sale date was February 12, 1876. Sections were sold separately. The Wabash Section brought \$505. The canal era was over for Indiana.

The Wabash and Erie Canal heyday was around 1852. It opened the Wabash valley to settlers, trades and industries and this success cannot be measured. However, it was not a successful financial venture. Its maintenance was a drain with the average yearly cost for repairs of \$262 per mile.

Through the 40-year canal era Lafayette prospered. The town became more orderly. Substantial homes were built, but hogs and cattle still wandered streets so deep with mud that only wagons pulled by four horses could pass down them.

Lafayette became a meat-packing and merchandising center. In 1833 Henry T. Sample built a slaughterhouse and shipped slaughtered hogs via flatboat and steamboat amassing a huge fortune. Later in 1870 a German immigrant named Leopold Dryfus opened a butcher shop which eventually became the Dryfus Packing and Provision Company. Other city fathers who became extremely wealthy men were Cyrus Ball, Adams Earl, Moses Fowler, Martin Pierce and John Purdue.

The Panic of 1873 halted Lafayette's population boom which had reached 13,000 by 1870. In the 1870s and 1880s production by industries fell. Something had to be done. Business leaders banded together and formed the Lafayette Land and Development Company

which bought land for a publicly financed belt railway on the east side of the town. In 1888 Lafayette installed a completely electrified system of trolleys. By 1920 the town was once again an industrial base and the population grew by more than 16%. But Lafayette still had the problem it had developed during the canal era. It was a "Wide-open" town with liquor flowing freely even during Prohibition.

The depression of the 1930s again dealt the city a harsh blow, but the town survived as the community pulled together. A 35-acre garden was organized by the Chamber of Commerce so families could grow their own vegetables. Sears, Roebuck and Company employees contributed a day's pay per month for relief. Other industries and school accepted wage reductions of 10 percent. Then federal aid was given after 1932 in the form of the Civil Works Administration, the Public Works Administration, and the Works Progress Administration gave jobs to thousands of people developing the airport, refurbishing the state fairgrounds, building a swimming pool and building a fieldhouse for Purdue.

### LAFAYETTE'S "RED" CANAL WAREHOUSE USED AS CIVIL WAR PRISON BARRACKS

The following information is compiled from an eight page manuscript located in the Library of Congress' American Life History Section collected and transcribed as part of the WPA Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940.

Between 10,000 and 15,000 Rebel prisoners were taken at Fort Donelson. Of that number 6,000 were sent to Indianapolis. However, the city was unable to accommodate this large number. Lafayette, Richmond and Terre Haute agreed to accept some of the captives. Lafayette received 800, including a small number of "contrabands" (slaves brought into the Union lines).

The prisoners, members of the 32nd and 41st Tennessee regiments, arrived in Lafayette on February 23, 1862. Union soldiers guarded the men as they walked along the Wabash and Erie towpath from the South Street Station to the "Red" canal warehouse on the East bank of the canal. Many of them were young men, some were just boys. Few were in uniforms, and most



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wore butternut jeans. Many had severe colds, 12 or 14 were seriously ill.

Two other buildings were put into service as hospital barracks: The Walsh Hall on South Street and Sample's porkhouse near the canal. Soon the majority of the prisoners were ill with "camp diarrhea," typhoid and pneumonia. The more serious of these were transferred to the city's 70 bed South Street Hospital.

A newspaper account, dated March 31, 1862, stated that 33 prisoners died while incarcerated at Lafayette. Twenty-eight were buried in Greenbush cemetery.

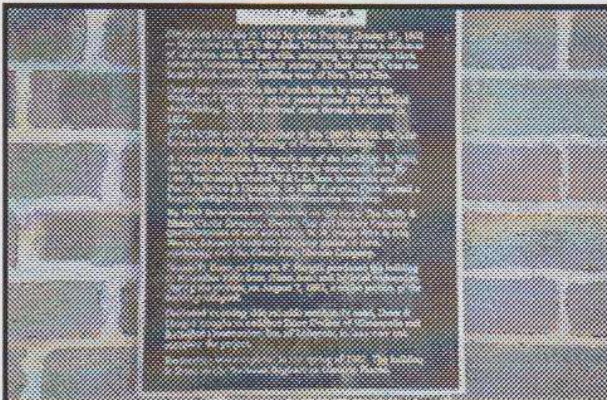
(At the time of the WPA Writer's Project the 'Red' canal warehouse, owned by W. K. Rochester, was still standing.)

### The Purdue Block

John Purdue, best known as the founder of Purdue University, arrived in Lafayette in 1839 and opened a dry goods store. His partner was



John Purdue built a block of buildings during the canal era which were the finest of the time. A portion of the Purdue Block has been restored. A plaque on the building relates its history. Photos by Bob Schmidt



Moses Fowler. The partnership split up in 1844, but Purdue stayed in the dry goods wholesale business and eventually became a multi-millionaire. Business was so good that in 1845 he began construction of the first business block in Lafayette. It had 12 business rooms filled with wholesale stores selling everything from boots and ready-made clothing (rare in those days) to hoes and hardware. "It was the largest brick business house west of New York City at the time," and attracted customers throughout the territory. Its was located on 2nd (Wabash) Street between South and Columbia Streets. 2nd Street was one of the two main streets close to the canal and the Wabash River.

John was one of a group of men who financed a bridge across the Wabash in 1847 that replaced a ferry. In 1869 after a four-year long debate seemed unable to decide where an agricultural college might be built from money received from selling lands granted from the federal government as provided in the Morrill Act of 1862, John said he would give \$150,000 of his personal wealth to such a college if it was located in Tippecanoe County, bore his name,

#### The Purdue Block

Erected on this site in 1845 by John Purdue (October 31, 1802—September 12, 1876) the John Purdue Block was a collection of 12 stores, each 22 feet wide, occupying the complete block between Columbia and South streets. At that time, it was the largest brick masonry building west of New York City.

Cargo was delivered to the Purdue Block by way of the Wabash and Erie Canal which passed some 100 feet behind this building. The first railroad came through Lafayette in 1851.

John Purdue sold the buildings in the 1860's during the time he was active in the building of Purdue University.

A variety of tenants have made use of the buildings. In 1850, the Northern Indiana Medical College was located here. By 1881, businesses included W. & L.L. Ross Mercantile and Purdue, Brown & Company. In 1885 Augustus Peret opened a buggy carriage and harness manufacturing company.

By 1925 there were six businesses on the block: The Duffy & Means Candy Company; Central Top and Battery Company (manufacturers of soft auto tops); W. W. Steele Wire & Iron Works; Johnson Hardware Company (dealer of farm machinery) and The Glenn Auto Electric Company.

Dennis D. Dunn and Edwin F. Hargitt purchased the building in November 1980 from Glenn Auto and initiated restoration. During the process, on August 7, 1981, a major portion of the building collapsed.

Dedicated to saving this valuable community asset, Dunn & Hargitt brought in architect Peter Goelzer of Minneapolis and Kettelhut Construction, Inc. of Lafayette, to take over and complete the project.

Restoration was completed in the spring of 1983. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

and he was on the board of trustees. He was the owner of a commission house in New York City at the time. What is today Purdue University was founded on May 6, 1869 and was built on 100 acres across the Wabash from Lafayette and west of the town of Chauncey. Thirty-nine students were admitted at its opening. Their numbers grew to 46 by the end of October and their were 64 applicants by June of 1875. However, of the 64 only 49 were able to pass the rigorous examination. On the opening day of the university's third year of classes, September 12, 1876, Purdue died and was buried in front of University Hall.

Over the years the Purdue Block changed owners. In 1925 it was made up of six business establishments. From the south corner to the north corner on the west side of S. 2nd Street were located the Duffy & Means Candy Company which made "Dolly Varden" chocolates; the Central Top and Battery Company that made soft cloth tops for autos; the W.W. Steele Wire & Iron Works that made wire mesh window guards, wire baskets, light structural steel work such as fire escapes, stairways, and folding gates; the Glenn Auto Electric Company; the Johnson Hardware Company which sold farm machinery and small hardware; and the Fred Reule Hardware Company which was the largest of its kind in the city at the time. In 1965 it housed the Thrift Clothes Shop, Glenn Electric, and a section was vacant but had been a fish house.

In 1981 the southern part housed Sgt. Preston's bar and restaurant and the north half of the block collapsed. Its owners wanted to eventually rebuild the structure that was listed on the National Register as a historic building. They winterized it by coating the walls with a waterproofing chemical to prevent moisture from seeping into them. They also placed scaffolding in the northeast corner to brace it. In 1999 only four of the buildings remain and are 154 years old.

### Moses Fowler House

One of John Purdue's business partners was Moses Fowler. He was born in Circleville, Ohio in 1815; at age 16 was an apprentice in a tanning business; and at 18 began clerking where he learned the basics of business management, how to deal with customers, and merchandising techniques. At the age of 24 he

moved to Lafayette and opened a dry goods store with Purdue in 1839. Fowler decided to go into business alone in 1844 and began merchandising. This eventually led to his becoming Lafayette's leading wholesale and retail grocer and a multi-millionaire.

Since Lafayette was the head of steamboat navigation on the Wabash River and was a shipping point on the Wabash and Erie Canal, Fowler could serve points over 100 miles distant from Lafayette. He would charter steamboats to bring sugar, coffee, and molasses up the rivers from New Orleans and shipped them by canal boat.

In 1851-52 Fowler built a classic Gothic Revival house decorated with ornate woodwork both on the inside and outside. The ceilings in the north and south parlors had moldings covered with gold leaf and done by Italian artists. Fowler brought the artists from New York via the canal. In 1940 the Tippecanoe County Historical Association purchased the house from Cecil Fowler, his son, for use as a museum.

Fowler played a key role in organizing and building a railroad line linking Cincinnati, Lafayette, and Chicago in the 1850s. It eventually became part of the Norfolk & Western. He founded and was a director of the Indiana State Bank in about 1860. It merged into the National State Bank of Lafayette and he became the president. He organized a meat packing house in Chicago in 1861 called Culbertson, Blair and Company.

In the 1870s Fowler donated \$40,000 to move the Benton county seat to a newly platted town called Fowler. His wife, Eliza Fowler, gave Purdue University \$60,000 for a building suitable for commencement ceremonies, public programs, and lectures and provided an additional \$10,000 for its equipment and furnishings. The building was named the Elisa Fowler Hall.

In 1885 Fowler founded and became president of the Fowler National Bank. He was a speculator in real estate and a "land baron" owning 25,000 acres in Benton and White counties. He had his own grain elevators along his own railroad tracks. He also had a herd of cattle in partnership with William S. VanNatta which ranged from 1,000 to 2,000 head and was shipped to Chicago or to the East. At his death



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

in 1889, he was one of Indiana's richest men. His estate passed to his widow, his daughters Annis Chase and Ophelia Duhme, and his son James Moses Fowler. Much of his land holdings were given to Purdue University as a kind of endowment. His children and their children have supported Purdue University throughout their lifetimes and many buildings bear their names.

### Canal Wharf Uncovered

In 1993 a project to relocate two sets of railroad tracks in downtown Lafayette to eliminate myriad grade crossings through the city and improve public safety uncovered remains of the Wabash and Erie Canal and halted construction of the project. A team of 9 archaeologists dug 11 test trenches in a 3 1/2 block area to extract evidence of the 19th century and determine the site's historical significance before the area was disturbed by the rail relocation. Further digging uncovered remains that appeared to be a bridge over the canal near the old Main Street bridge that crossed the Wabash River. Old illustrations from the era showed a small wooden bridge crossing the canal. Further investigation found newspaper reports that referred to a rickety wooden bridge that was in existence as late as the 1870s. The *La Fayette Journal* of June 28, 1872 said,

"The bridge over the canal on Main Street is in terrible condition. In addition to the floor all being worn out, the structure is itself very unsafe, and when a heavily laden wagon passes over, it sways backwards and forwards most terribly."

The archaeologists next step was to dig a 50 ft. by 20 ft. trench between Main and Brown Streets to look for artifacts to help document what life was like during the canal era. Soon there were 11 archaeologists digging and sifting soil for artifacts. Some items they had previously found were tobacco, coconut shells, a soldier's sword, broken dishes, and broken bottles.

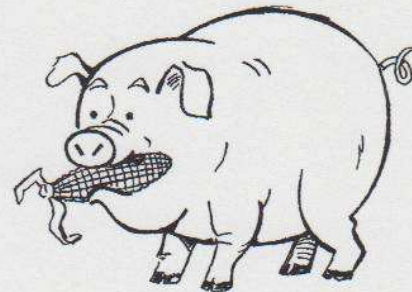
They discovered timbers in area bounded by Second Street, the Wabash River, Ferry Street and South Street that lined both sides of the canal creating a type of wharf. They were documented and photographed.



The timbers on both sides of the canal were covered with plastic to keep them from drying out. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Some people complained about the delay caused by the dig. Federal and State Laws require that sites of historical and cultural significance be preserved before they can be covered or disturbed in the course of a federal- or state-funded transportation project. The dig cost the city an additional \$460,000, less than 1/2 of a percent of the \$120 million relocation project. Some of the timbers were removed for preservation and were to be placed in the lower level of the old Big Four Railroad Depot after it was moved from South and Second Streets to Main Street to become the Amtrak Station. The rest of the timbers were covered with cloth and reburied which helped to protect the wood and mark its location.

**Pig bones  
found behind  
site of  
slaughter  
house on  
W&E canal  
in Lafayette,  
a major  
shipper of  
pork  
products**

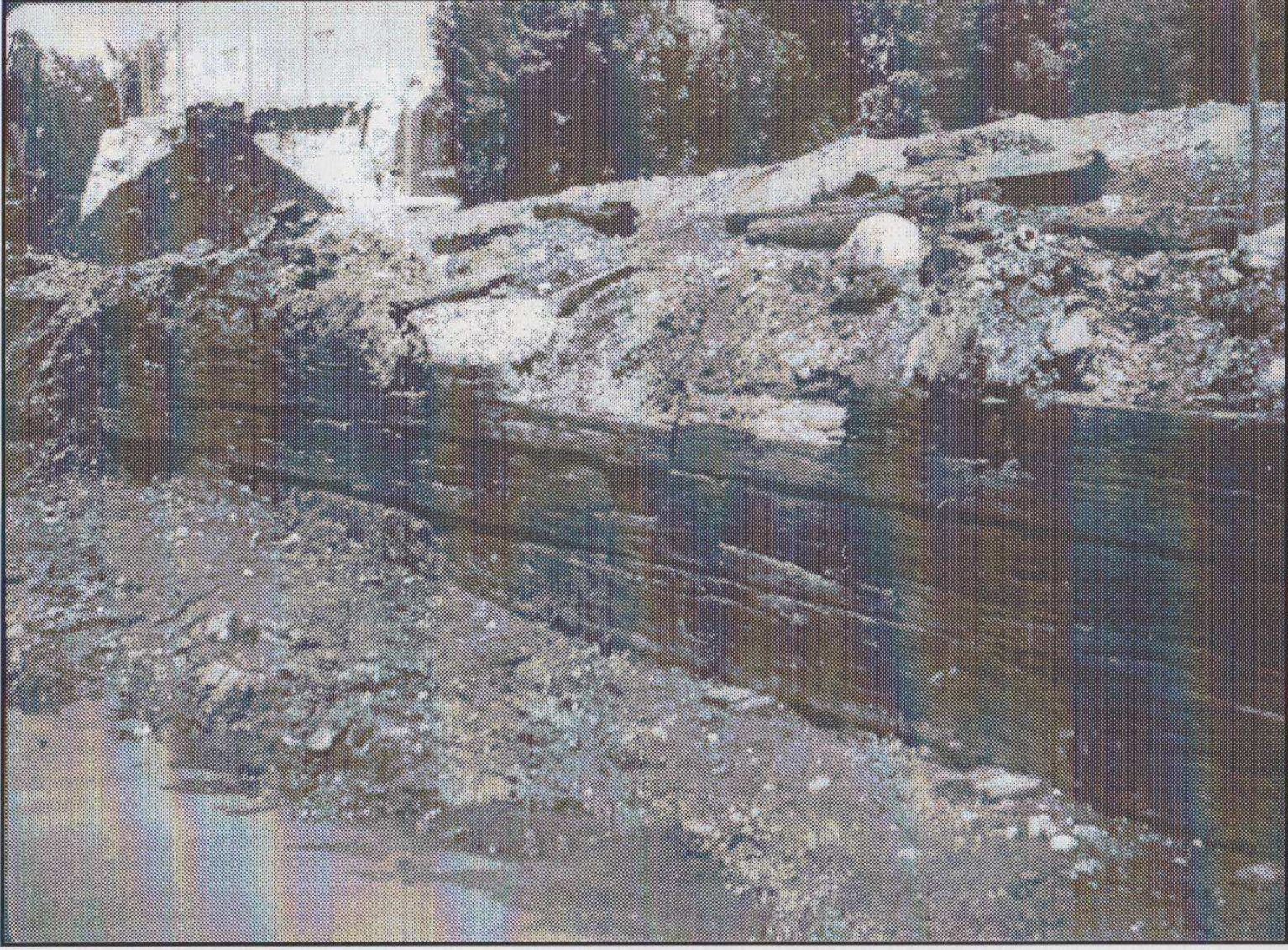


by Nate Tagmeyer

Canal life was revealed through the study. Pig bones were found in the canal behind a former slaughter house. Fragments of pottery, glassware, cutlery and personal items were found behind where once stood a boarding house. Cinders were found behind the site of a coal storage area. Some of the items fell into the canal. Others were put in it after it closed. People used it as a dump. Also found were a

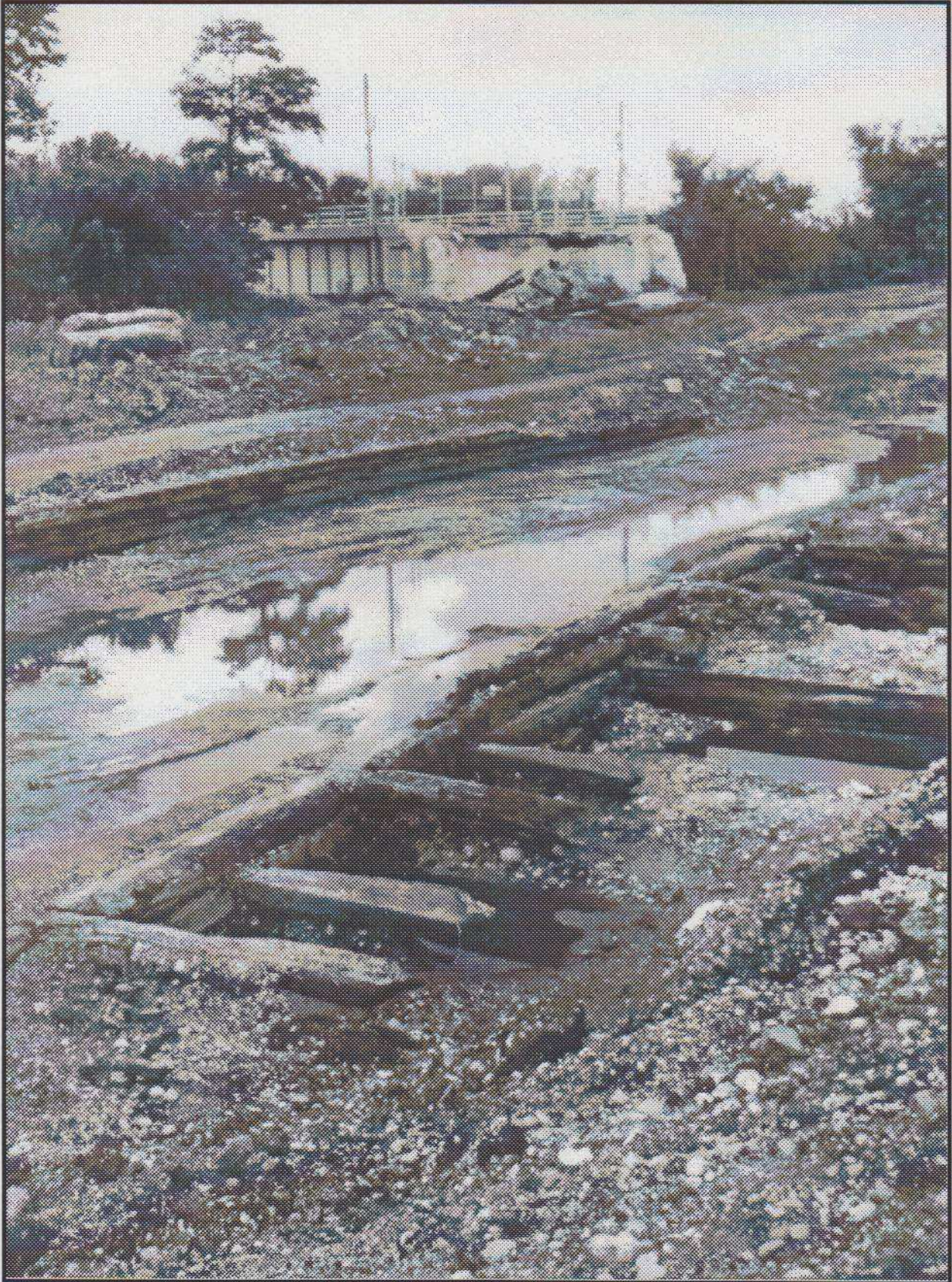


Picture of timbers uncovered in Lafayette along the W&E Canal (1993) furnished by Lafayette Railroad Relocation.





**CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES**



The cribs behind the side walls of the W&E canal channel were filled with rock and soil.  
Photo courtesy of Lafayette Railroad Relocation 1993.)



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

slender wooden clothespin, a mother-of-pearl handled pocketknife, a bone handled two pronged fork, a woman's shoe, an adjustable iron wrench, various sized iron nails, pieces of cups, saucers, bottles, and half a metal teapot.

Markings and writings on items are of interest. A medallion from the Total Abstinence Society of Ireland read, "I promise to abstain from intoxicating drinks." The brass backing of a thermometer had a mark at 98 degrees with the words "Blood heat" and at 112 degrees with the words "Fever Heat." These items were placed in the basement of the Tippecanoe County Historical Museum as they were found.

Many CSI members visited the site to view the work in progress and take pictures. When one stood on the Columbia Street bridge after a hard rain the canal bed was covered with water and one could almost imagine the heyday

of the canal. Some of the techniques used on the Gronauer lock, such as the use of soaker hoses to keep the timbers wet, were applied on the Lafayette project.

Right: This old wooden drain pipe appeared to drain water from the city streets into the Wabash & Erie canal.

All photos on this page by Bob Schmidt



Above: Some of the timbers that were used in building the cribs still had bark intact on them.  
Below: The top of the cribs were covered with planking.



Above: Many artifacts revealed daily life in canal times.  
Below: Several piles of shoes such as these were found.





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES



These before and after pictures are of the same area where the W&E canal timber lined channel and wharf were uncarthed and where the new railroad bed is now located in Lafayette. Photos by Bob Schmidt

After the archaeologists work was completed, the railroad relocation proceeded. The old historic brick-and-limestone Big Four Depot that was built in 1902 at Second and South streets was moved to Riehle Plaza in 1994. It was quite a site to see the 112-foot by 30-foot building, with a 7-foot overhang and weighing 550 tons being pulled at 5 feet per minute down the street on 24 platforms equipped with 96 wheels. The depot has a beautiful terrazzo floor, leaded glass windows, a telegrapher's office, and benches on which visitors may sit. Beneath the old building, which sits on a new foundation, is located the Amtrak Station.

The Depot was used as a train station until the early 1970s. It was partially renovated for use as offices for the relocation project in 1979. It was donated to the city in 1983.

Riehle plaza itself has entrances from either Lafayette or West Lafayette. The old river bridge has been paved with bricks, has benches that overlook the scenic Wabash River and is ideal for festivals.

Two different towers at Riehle Plaza capture the history of downtown Lafayette. One is a reminder of a tower at Centennial School. The other one is a reminder of a tower that was at the original Depot location.

The Big Four Depot forms the centerpiece for Riehle Plaza on the left. It is available to the public to rent. The brick lined river bridge connects West Lafayette to downtown Lafayette with its skyline visible in the photo below. This area was developed in conjunction with the Lafayette Railroad Relocation. Photos by Bob Schmidt





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES



Even after the W&E canal at Lafayette was no longer used for transportation, it had recreational value. This photo above taken in 1914 shows people hiking along the towpath and fishing in its waters. The photo below shows cabins lining the old towpath in Lafayette in 1915.

Photos by J.A.G. courtesy of Berky Davis



### Wea Creek

Just beyond Lafayette the Wabash and Erie Canal crossed Wea Creek. Wea Creek was dammed in a temporary way not using the timber filled cribs like the dam at Wild Cat Creek. Instead the canal contractor simply piled brush

and gravel across its bed. It was necessary to add to it at times to keep it the proper height. It was 200 feet long and raised 4 1/2 feet of water which was then introduced into the canal via a feeder canal. The feeder canal was 25 chains long and 15 feet wide at its bottom. Jesse Lynch Williams ordered the dam and feeder canal be



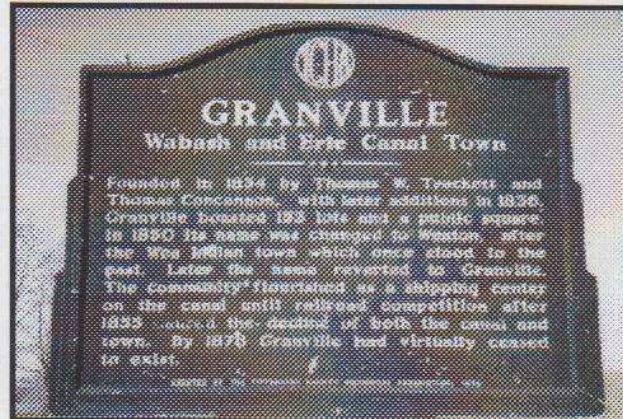
## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

raised in height one foot in 1848 in order to supply the large quantity of water needed over the long level between Wea Creek and Attica.

The canal had to cross Wea Creek, but it did not cross the slackwater pool created by the dam like it did at Wild Cat Creek. Instead Aqueduct No. 7 of 3 spans of 32 feet each, abutments, piers, and the trunk (flume) were all constructed of timber. Just after a boat crossed this aqueduct heading south it entered Lock No. 34 and was lowered 10 feet to the next level. The lock was a timber frame lock. Then at the level below the lock, the Wea Creek feeder canal water entered into the main canal channel.

The annual report of the chief engineer of that year says "the failure of the Wea and Shawnee creeks as feeders for the lower Division, and the consequent scarcity of water south of Lafayette" were a problem. Therefore Jesse Lynch Williams had the Wabash Dam and Deer Creek Dam raised 10 inches each. The annual report by the trustees of the canal in 1848 shows that after raising the Dams at Delphi there was sufficient water through the Lafayette Level and as far south as the Wea Lock. However, beyond Wea they were still having difficulty in providing enough water to keep the canal the proper depth. Besides the fact that the gravel canal bed absorbed water like a sponge, the Wabash flood plain became too wide to dam. Only creeks would be dammed and used as feeders as the canal followed down the Wabash.

### ~ Granville ~

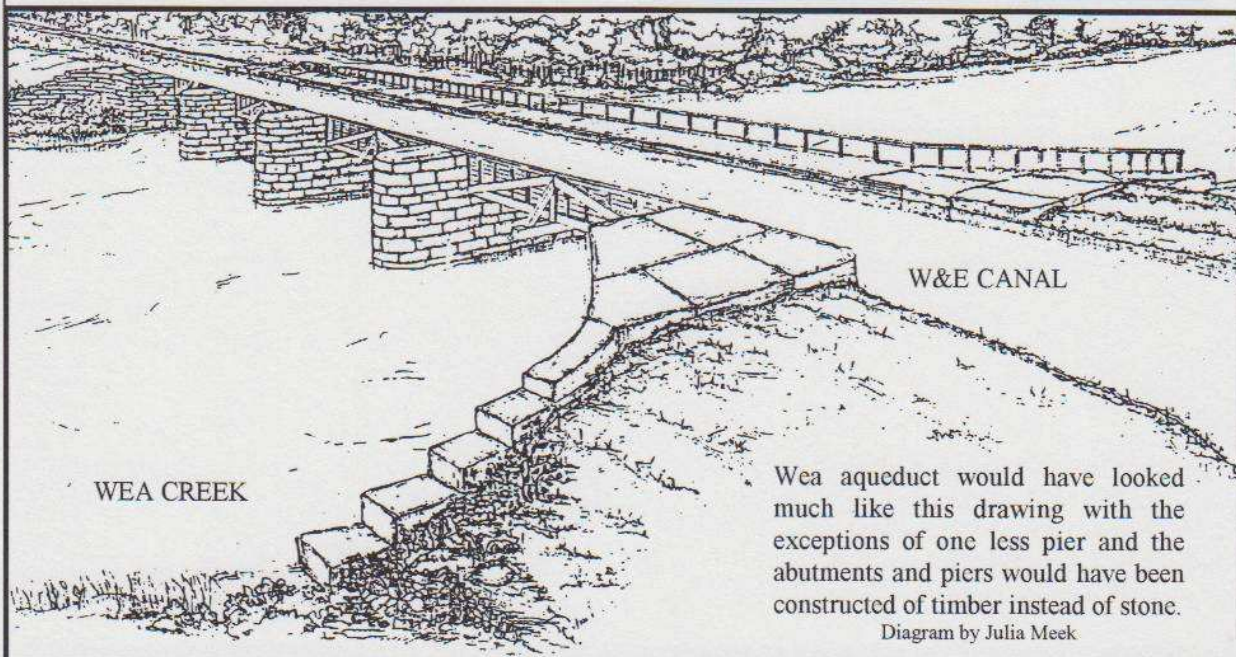


At Granville the Tippecanoe County Historical Association erected a marker in 1975. It reads:

#### GRANVILLE

##### Wabash and Erie Canal Town

Founded in 1834 by Thomas W. Treckett and Thomas Concannon, with later additions in 1836; Granville boasted 153 lots and a public square. In 1850 its name was changed to Weaton, after the Wea Indian town which once stood to the east. Later the name reverted to Granville. The community flourished as a shipping center on the canal until railroad competition after 1855 caused the decline of both the canal and town. By 1878 Granville had virtually ceased to exist.



Wea aqueduct would have looked much like this drawing with the exceptions of one less pier and the abutments and piers would have been constructed of timber instead of stone.

Diagram by Julia Meek



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

The Attica Daily Ledger of August 12, 1902 carried the following reminiscence of the Captain of the "Albert Ross":

"In 1853 I was engaged in canal boating on the old Wabash and Erie Canal, and held the distinguished position of captain of a line, or freight boat called the "Albert Ross." It belonged to Messrs. Standard and Currier of Attica, a firm that did business then in the room now occupied by the McDermond dry goods store, which at that time consisted of a brick room of only one story in height. This firm also owned a large distillery that stood near the Wabash Depot where a pottery now stands. The canal boat, which was a large one, was used to convey the product of the distillery to Lafayette and to haul back hops, empty barrels, merchandise, or anything of the kind - we always had a load going or returning. The crew consisted of four persons, captain, bowsman, steersman and driver. Some boats carried a cook in addition, but we generally ate breakfast at whichever town we started from and supper at our place of destination. Dinner consisted of hot coffee made in the kitchen of the boat and a cold lunch eaten in the cabin. We had a very nice cabin, kitchen and places to sleep, and the boat was not a bad place in which to travel by any means.

"It was the custom to allow any one we met along the tow path who wished to do so, to board the boat and ride a mile or two, and if they were acquaintances and happened to be on board at noon when we lunched, we would invite them to join us.

"There were four fellows who made a practice of boarding us near Granville. Their names were Abraham Rice, Timothy Driscoll and two other young men named Longley and Clark.

"The first time, three fellows came aboard. They had been fishing and were very polite and asked permission to ride a mile or two, which was granted. They were invited to lunch with us, and every thing went on all right until they discovered a whiskey barrel with a loose bung and pried it out. They had a narrow bottle, to the neck of which they tied a string, and this was lowered into the whiskey barrel, filled, pulled out and drank by one of the crowd. The process was repeated until they all became more or less intoxicated. The hands were all busy and did not observe that our guests were making free with the cargo until their rude, offensive manners revealed the fact. So when they came to their stopping place and wished to get off, their request was cheerfully complied with.

"On our next trip it was the same thing over again. On the third voyage they found things so congenial that they stayed with us until we got to Lafayette.

"As soon as we landed there and got the boat tied up and the horses stabled, I met a friend named Cy Grosvenor who invited me to stay all night with him, and I told him I would as soon as I got the boat unloaded.

"When this matter was disposed of, the hands drew their wages and departed with the Driscoll and Rice crowd, and I accompanied Mr. Grosvenor, who was at that time engaged in the marble business in Lafayette. I had a very pleasant evening with Mr. and Mrs. Grosvenor. They were both old acquaintances and we had much of mutual interest to talk about. During the conversation I learned that Mrs. Grosvenor was going down on the packet next day to visit friends in Attica. I told Cy to put her trunk and a baby carriage on the line boat, and I would take them to Attica for her, and she would thus have no baggage to bother with on the packet.

"This offer was accepted and the next morning Mrs. Grosvenor and her infant daughter Belle departed on the packet. Cy and myself loaded the trunk and baby carriage on to the line boat and I began to look around for my crew. Our load for Attica was strung along the dock waiting for the hands to place it in the packet, but they had failed to put in an appearance. After some inquiry, I learned that they had been drinking with the gang from Granville, and the whole crowd had been locked up for drunkenness and disorderly conduct. The team had been seized to pay the fines and costs.

"The team belonged to me and I could not understand how it could be made liable under the circumstances. I felt that I needed counsel, so I went to Mr. John Rose, the owner of the warehouse and the one to whom all our cargoes were consigned, and stated the case.

"Mr. Rose was a man of wealth and importance and had a great deal of business to look after. I felt some timidity about troubling him with such matters, but I could think of no other way. He was so genial and pleasant, however, that I thought I had never met a nicer gentleman. As soon as he understood what was the matter, he called his office boy, and sent him with a note to Judge Samuel Huff, a legal friend, requesting his attendance. The Judge returned and they sent for the city marshal, Jefferson Chizum, and soon satisfied him that none of the boat hands had any



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

interest in the horses, so he turned them over to me. An arrangement was also made with the marshal, that Mr. Rose guarantee the fine and costs which I was authorized to keep out of the men's wages. So they were set free and proceeded to load the boat. The gentlemen from Granville were permitted to remain in the calaboose, and Mr. Rose told me they were a very tough set and advised me not to allow them on the boat in the future.

"Without further difficulty we proceeded to Attica, and the three hands in course of time paid the fines. They felt so bad about paying out hard earned money so uselessly that they decided to let whiskey alone from that time forth."

### Fountain County Past and Present

The Treaty of St. Mary's was negotiated by Jonathan Jennings, Lewis Cass and Benjamin Parke with the Potawatomi on October 2, 1818, and with the Miami on October 6, 1818, ceding the territory, from which Fountain County was later formed, to the United States. Two Indian reservations were set aside as well. The Native Americans were removed in 1838 by Col. Pepper and General Tipton.

The Wabash River is the county's natural boundary on the North and West. It was once part of Montgomery and Wabash counties until the state legislature passed an act in 1825 forming Fountain. It was named after Major James Fountain. He was a Kentuckian who was killed in Fort Wayne in 1790 in the Battle of Maumee (Harmar's Defeat).

Fountain is one of Indiana's medium sized counties of 254,000 acres and ranks in the top third in land used for farming as over two thirds of it is under cultivation. The principal crops grown are corn and soybeans. Over 75 per cent of the farmers in this area live on their land.

Coal Creek and Shawnee Creek are the principal streams and both have covered bridges. Cade's Mill built in 1852 is 150 ft. long over Coal Creek. Rob Roy built in 1860 is 81 feet over Big

Shawnee Creek. Wallace built in 1871 is 81 feet long over Sugar Mill Creek.

The first settlers in the county were Peter Weaver and his son, Patrick Henry Weaver. They raised the first crops of oats and wheat.

The county seat of Fountain County is Covington. Attica is its largest city. Large coal, sandstone and limestone deposits are found throughout the county. The Kingman coal strip operation was located on one of Indiana's northern most coal fields. It was closed in the late 1950s. The huge sandstone deposits are most note worthy at Portland arch. Years ago wells were drilled in the lower part of the county and their saline water boiled to procure salt to sell at market.

Settlers came in two groups, those from Kentucky, Virginia and the Carolinas and those from Ohio, Pennsylvania and the eastern states. They settled in communities of relatives and friends. In 1824 a community was established at Coal Creek by the Church of God, a semi-religious group from Warren County, OH. They were followers of George Rapp and hoped their community would be like New Harmony, IN. The labors were shared by the members, but it only lasted about ten years.

In 1828 a saw mill was built on Coal Creek by Samuel Snoddy which was later replaced by a grist mill in 1867. It ground grain until 1946.

Fountain County's second largest town is Veedersburg. In 1829 Oliver Osburn built a mill on Coal Creek. Later in 1871 Peter S. Veeder platted the town. He and his partner, Marshall Nixon, opened the town's first warehouse and lumberyard. They also sold farming equipment. Veedersburg was known for its manufacture of bricks. The Veedersburg Paver Company had thirty ovens for manufacturing building tile and building and paving brick. It made the brick for paving the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Early roads ran east to west wherever there was a good ford across the Wabash River. Crops were floated on flatboats down the river. By 1828 steamboats made their arrival and a few crops were shipped on them. In the spring of 1828-1845 the Wabash was high enough to get



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

small steamboats as far as Lafayette. Crops were shipped out. Supplies and settlers were shipped in. Once the Wabash and Erie Canal came the roads began to be built north to south.

When Fountain County was opened for sale, Sandford C. Cox, a schoolmaster in Crawfordsville, wrote a diary that was expanded into a book in 1859 that described the land sales. In it he states that Crawfordsville was the only town between Terre Haute and Ft. Wayne. It had a land office with Major Whitlock as receiver and Judge Dunn as register. On December 24, 1824, he said land sales began and the town was full of strangers. However, little bidding took place because the settlers had arranged among themselves that if two wanted the same land they would consent to be bought off by the other. The one who purchased the land from the government then paid the \$1.25 per acre and the other took his second choice. The land was sold in tiers of townships beginning in the south. Those who had already settled there asked that they be allowed to purchase their land before the others saying there would be plenty of land for all.

When the Wabash and Erie Canal was being built in Fountain County many of the laborers died. Since the canal closely follows the river and runs through swamps and low lands, malaria and cholera became problems. The Irish laborers who came to work on the canal, after being forced out of Ireland by the potato famine, died by the hundreds. In Fountain County most of them were buried in the Maysville cemetery located on a plot of land in Shawnee Township on the Bodine farm two and one-half miles north of the village of Fountain.

It was necessary for the jigger boss to distribute large doses of quinine, calomel and "Blue Mass" to the workers along with the whiskey. He made his rounds three times a day and six times on Sunday. The plague was not the only threat for the Irish Workers who were just about equally divided from the north and south of Ireland from the counties of Cork and Ulster. They would bash each other's heads over religious differences as well.

At Fountain (Portland) the canal was narrow and canal boats could not pass each other. There the canal was blasted out of the

cliff and the rock put in the Wabash River to build up a towpath.

Canal warehouses were located at Maysville, Attica, Jamestown, Fountain, Covington, Sarah, Vicksburg and Silver Island. At Attica the dock was at the foot of Main Street and was a busy place for over 30 years. At Fountain the boats landed at the warehouse located near Main St. The remains of the canal and towpath are visible between the old Fountain County home and Fountain. The dock was located at the base of Crocket Street in Covington.

The canal was used to move food and supplies during the Civil War. The years between 1846 and the end of the war were the best times economically for the canal. It stimulated westward immigration and hastened the development of the Wabash Valley.

As the towns grew, faster transportation was needed. In order to connect the Big Four Railroad at Veedersburg to the Wabash at Attica and to reach the coal fields, a north and south rail line was constructed from Momence, IL to Brazil, IN. The line was known by many different names: The Dolly Varden, the Chicago and Indiana Coal Railroad, the Indiana North & South Line, the Brazil Division of the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railway, and the Chicago, Attica & Southern Railway. By the 1870s it was extended to Veedersburg. The village of Rob Roy was made a station.

Later in the 1920s the small town of Rob Roy had a still run by the Rice gang, henchmen for Al Capone. Citizens became suspicious when cars sneaked in and out of the hills. Officials rushed the place. Later the locals hurried in to look at the still. The sight of the dead rats and debris floating on the liquor vats did much to discourage drinking.

One of Indiana's great orators came from Ohio and established a law practice in Covington. His name was Daniel W. Voorhees (1827-1897). He served as a congressman in 1861 and was later a U.S. Senator. He was instrumental in getting funding to build the Congressional Library Building in Washington, D.C.

Indiana's state song "On the Banks of the



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

Wabash" was written by Paul Dresser. It is said that he was inspired to write it while sitting on the shore at Attica. Citizens of Williamsport will disagree and tell you it was written from their town.

Fountain County has a thriving manufacturing industry producing over \$100 million in products annually. There are about 36 wholesalers and 150 retailers throughout the county.

### Flint Creek

Just inside Fountain County's border the Wabash and Erie Canal crossed Flint Creek on Aqueduct No. 8. This aqueduct had 2 spans, 32 feet each, and had timber abutments and pier with a wooden trunk.

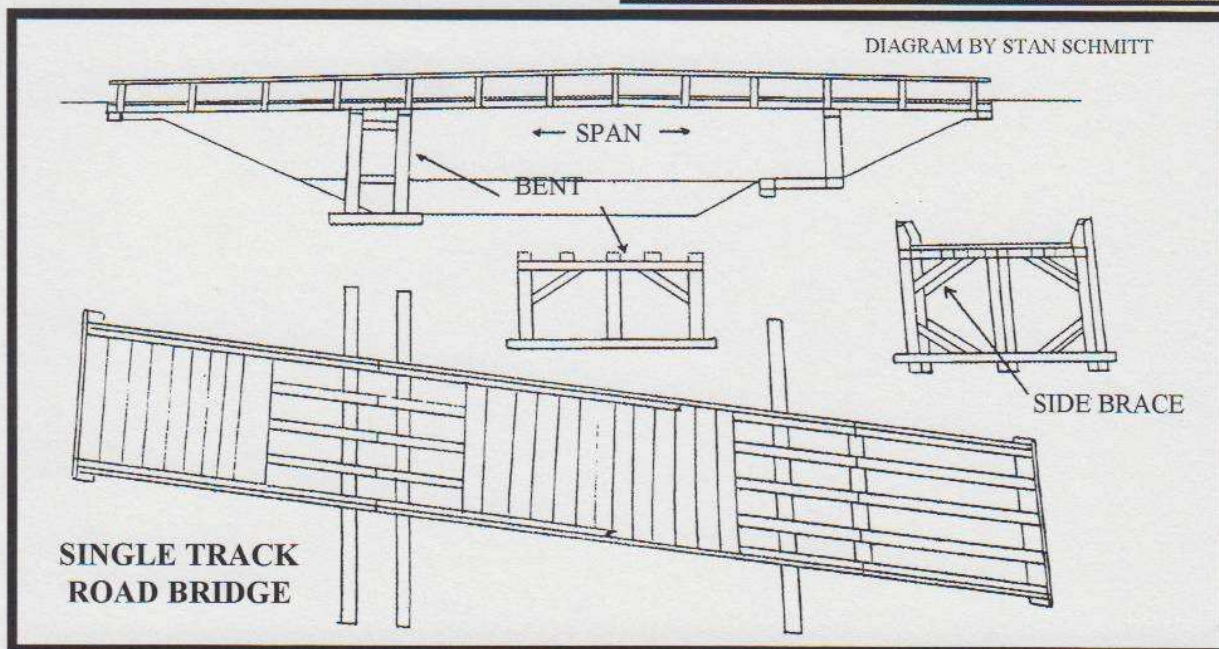
Today, at low water some pieces from the aqueduct may be seen in the bed of Flint Creek. On the south side of the creek the towpath and berm bank of the canal are clearly visible. The owner of the property has filled the canal prism with junk vehicles.

Road bridge No. 56 was built over the canal in this area. Below is a diagram of how such a bridge was constructed.



Above: This timber from the aqueduct is visible at low water. It has two notches in it. A cross piece is under the old tree trunk on the left.

Below: On the south side of Flint Creek the canal towpath is on the left and the berm on the right. Junk vehicles fill the canal prism. Photos by Bob Schmidt





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### ~ Maysville ~

Maysville, not to be confused with the Maysville also located on the W&E Canal near Washington, IN, had as its pioneer settler George Worthington, the son of Thomas Worthington, the third governor of Ohio. George visited Zachariah Cicott's trading post, thought the area needed a hotel, and talked it over with Cicott. They decided the hotel should be built across the Wabash River from the trading post. It was erected in 1825 and operated by Worthington until 1830. It was the first building in Maysville. Settlers came to the hotel via the old Native American trail or via the river.

Maysville soon had a population of over 800. Its dry goods store, bank, hotel, saloons, and exclusive grocery store were the first operated in Fountain county. The water from what is now known as Possum Hollow provided power to run a distillery, saw mill, and grist mill that shipped its flour.



**PORK WAS  
SHIPPED BY  
WAGON, THEN  
BY FLAT  
BOAT, AND  
LATER BY  
CANAL BOAT  
FROM  
MAYSVILLE**

Pork was packed by the Duncans and Youngs. The pork products and ground corn and wheat were taken as far as White Pigeon, MI and Chicago by ox-team and wagon. Almost to the time the W&E Canal was built, Maysville was the largest town on the east side of the Wabash River from Terre Haute. However, the construction of the millrace in Attica soon led to Attica becoming the center of industry.

Jesse Martin, a cooper, settled near Maysville and made barrels for the pork packers, millers, and distillers. He was so often paid for his barrels in pork, flour, and whiskey that he built the first flatboat in Maysville and took the products down river to New Orleans. He became a very wealthy man and represented Fountain county in the legislature.

Maysville was the site of a canal construction camp. Mrs. Donnelly contracted for the cooking for all the camps from the Fountain county line to Attica. One of her aids was Ann Crouch. Ann did the cooking in the camp at Maysville. There was another large camp at old Fulton where Flint now is located. Hugh Martin was the blacksmith for that camp. He sharpened the plows and shod the horses for the contractors. When some of the canal workers from the Maysville camp took their tools to Hugh Martin's forge to be sharpened and their horses to be shod, Ann went along to see Mrs. Donnelly. The two Irish young people met, fell in love and wed. One from the county of Cork and the other from Killarney.

When the canal would freeze over young people would skate along it. A young couple glided away one night from Maysville down the canal to Terre Haute to be married before her irate father could overtake the bride.

Many of these Irish canal workers made their homes in Maysville. When the Wabash Railroad came to the area, they helped to dig the cuts and make the fills along its route.

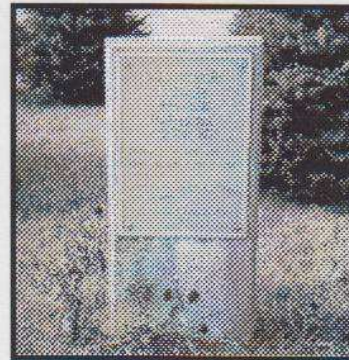


Photo by  
Bob Schmidt

What remains of Maysville today is a stone with a plaque on it that reads:

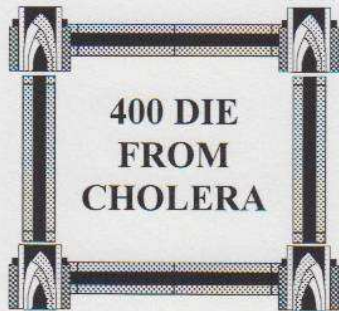
**Davis Township  
Maysville  
1825-1935  
Platted 1832  
Addition 1836  
Population 1840 - 800  
First Polling Place in Davis  
Township  
Many Years Largest Town South  
of Chicago  
Fountain County Historical Society  
1975**



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### ~ Fix Farm / Riverside ~

While the canal was being built in the late 1840s, Asiatic cholera appeared among the laborers and huge numbers of them died in the camps. Maysville was not struck as hard as the next canal camp that was located near the Fix schoolhouse (earlier called the Riverside Schoolhouse) between Maysville and Attica.



In the Fix area there were about 600 men, women, and children in the camp of which four hundred died of cholera. About two hundred of them were buried in the old graveyard at Attica. The other 200 were buried in a long trench that was dug in the marl bed near the camp. They were thrown into this trench every-which-way wearing the caps and boots in which they died. They were then covered with a soft lime or marl.

This cemetery was never marked and became a part of the Fix farm in 1852. It was within 1/2 mile of the "widewater" on the canal where canal boats turned around. Nearby was a farm bridge across the canal that provided access to the bottom lands of the Wabash River.

The Fix school was a subscription school. Its teacher was known to let the students go down to the canal to watch the boats pass. At recess during the winter, the children would don their skates and skate on the canal's icy surface. During the summer they caught mudcat, sunfish, frogs and turtles or swam in it. Soft shell turtles were made into a delicious soup. But all was not wonderful with the canal. The mosquitoes were so bad every fall that most of the people had ague and shook very badly. Once the canal was no longer used the ague and malaria almost disappeared from the Wabash Valley.

In order to be able to cross the canal, every farmer in the area built himself a raft. It was constructed by fastening two logs side by side. They used a pole to push it across the canal.

Merle Fix, at age 78 in 1997, told how he helped dig limestone from this burial area in the mid-1930s for fertilizer. At that time the government was sponsoring a program to pay farmers for fertilizing their land. The diggers thought they'd find some bones of the canal workers. They did not find any remains and speculated that the lime "ate them all up."

The farm has been in Cathy Fix Hiller's family for way over 100 years. The original log cabin is still intact. A sign placed in the front yard by the Indiana Historical Bureau and the Indiana Department of Commerce identifies the farm as a Hoosier Homestead Farm, owned by the same family for over 100 years. The land on which the cemetery lies has been sold from the original farm and is posted "No Trespassing."

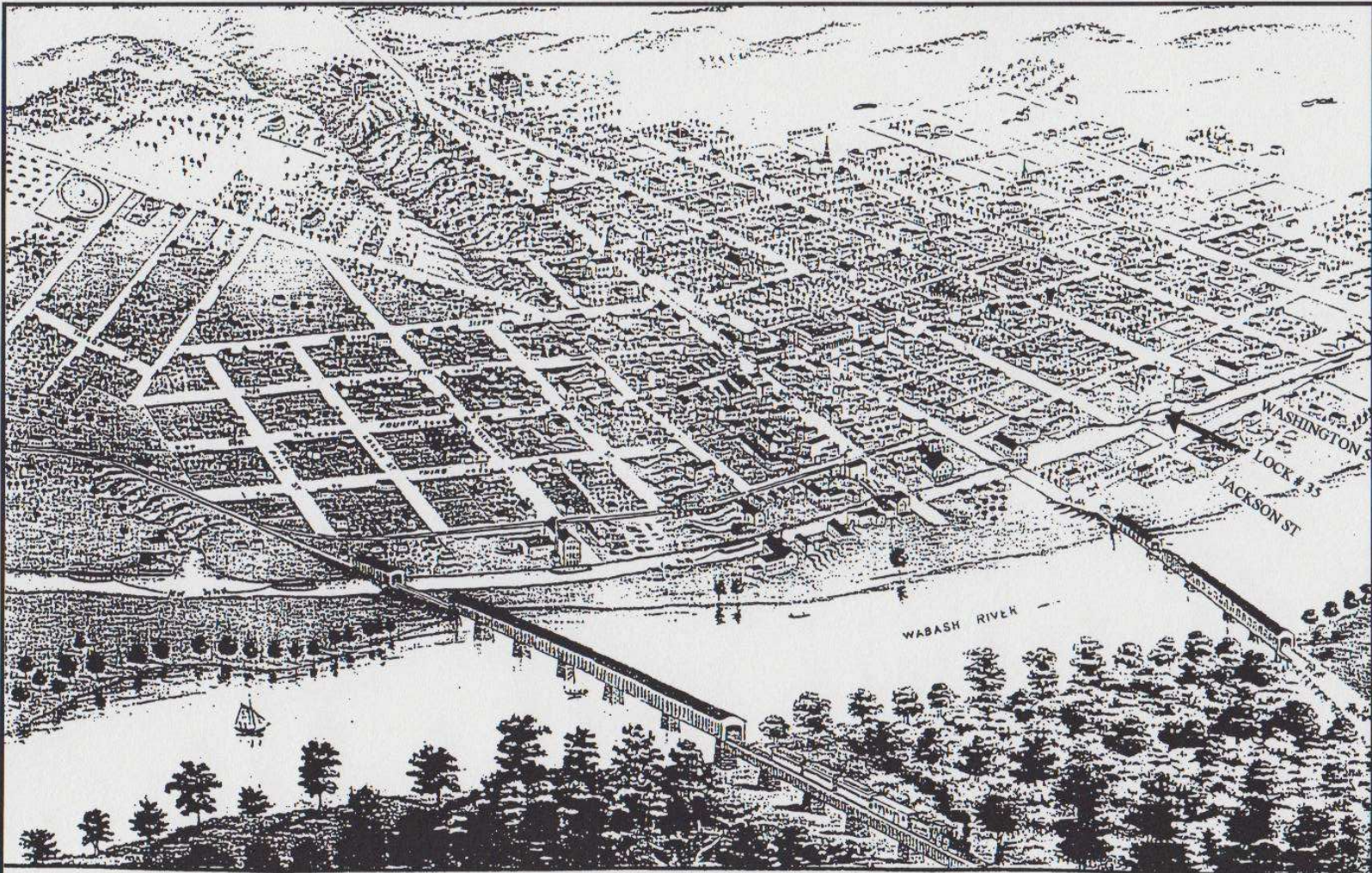
Left: The original log cabin on the Fix farm sits behind the frame farmhouse.

Photos by Bob Schmidt

Right: The cemetery for canal workers lies on a wooded hillside behind and to the left of the Fix Farm farm house.







BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CITY OF ATTICA  
FOUNTAIN COUNTY, INDIANA — 1869  
Looking Southeast

Drawing by  
A. Ruger

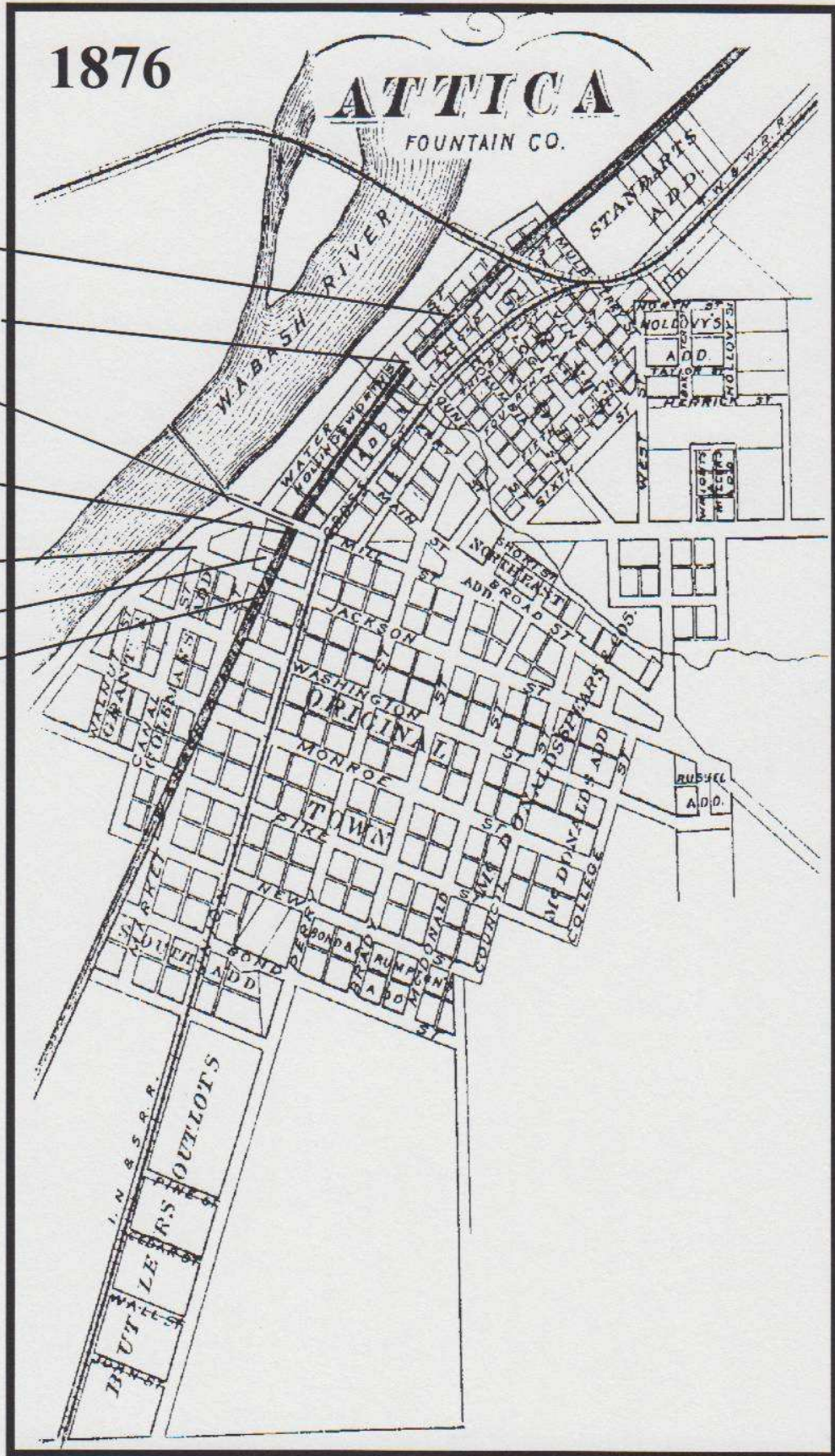


CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

1876

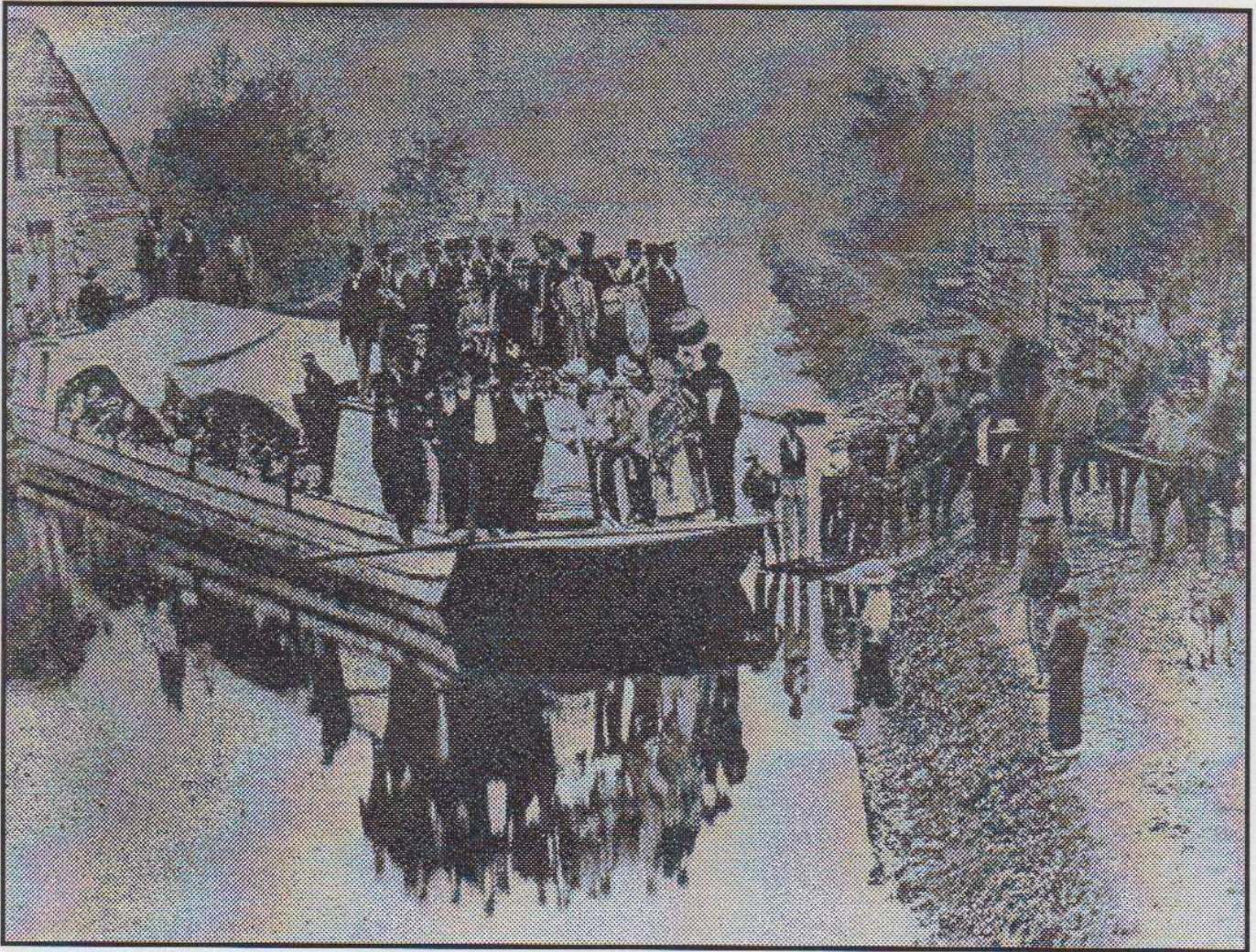
ATTICA  
FOUNTAIN CO.

- WABASH & ERIE CANAL
- YOUNT ST BRIDGE OVER W&E CANAL
- MILL ST. BRIDGE OVER W&E CANAL
- WHERE ATTICA WEDDING PARTY PICTURE TAKEN
- BRIDGE TODAY JACKSON ST.
- WIDEWATER
- LOCK NO. 35





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES



Ed Lippold and Lou Kopp were married on May 16, 1872 in Attica, IN. They celebrated their wedding with their attendants and friends aboard this canal boat. The picture was taken from the canal bridge on Mill St. looking south toward the lock. Two horses on the right are hitched in tandem ready to pull the wedding party along the canal towpath. The hoggee sits atop a third horse whose rear faces the canal boat. The Wabash River would be to the right of this picture. Sixty-eight people are on or near the boat and the four men in the distance are onlookers. A band atop the boat has a bass drum, snare drum, and four various types of brass horns. Boats were often rented for various party excursions.

### ~ Attica ~

Attica was built on the site of a famous Potawatomi settlement. At 206 Perry Street there once stood a huge oak tree under which Tecumseh, his brother The Prophet and the chiefs of the Kickapoo, Potawatomi, and Winnebago met in a great war council in 1807 and planned for the Indian military alliance that was crushed by General Harrison at the Battle of Tippecanoe on November 7, 1811. The tree became known as the Tecumseh Council Oak. The tree was felled in 1866 and its lumber used

to build the Frank Merrick house on Jackson Street. A marker on the Attica City Hall at Jackson and McDonald Street commemorates the meeting. Topenebee, chief of the Potawatomi, also lived on the Attica site. He fought unsuccessfully with the Indian defense both at Ouiatenon (outside Lafayette) and at Fallen Timbers (near Maumee, OH). He was one of the signers of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795.

The development of industry in Attica can be divided into three eras; the frontier period, the canal and first railroad stage, and this



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

entury's industrialization. At first essential articles for every day living were made for both individuals and the community.

Daniel Stump purchased the first land in December 1824 at Crawfordsville and filed the first plat on March 19, 1825 for Attica. He moved west and a second plat was made by George Hollingsworth in 1825. Hollingsworth operated a ferry poled across the Wabash.

The first establishment was a store supplying iron, steel, dry goods, hardware, salt, etc. that was built by William Crumpton. Crumpton was also the postmaster. Harmon Webb ran the first hotel which was a small log house facing the river on Main Street. Soon to follow were three taverns. Joseph Peacock had his blacksmith shop built near the river. From 1826-1827 a cabinet shop, Orin Arms' fanning mill that separated the chaff from the grain and a tanyard joined the growing town. Joseph Collyer built the first industrial business in 1830, a combined grist-mill and still-house. In 1835 a steam operated saw-mill and grist-mill were constructed by William Crumpton. Following years saw the addition of a machine shop, a planing mill, a stave and cooperage works, a wagon works, lumber yards, flour mills, grain elevators, a wooden utensil factory, and a drain tile works.

Quarries that furnished building and monument stone were started. Bricks were fired at Ravine Park and also at the end of the present day country club. Lime for mortar and building plaster was extracted from marl that was found in Ravine Park. The Yount Woolen Mill constructed a mill race in 1844.

Game such as deer and turkey that was plentiful for the first settlers was greatly reduced by the great snow of 1834. But prairie chickens were numerous. At times thousands would flock together and were easily killed.

A horse ferry was established in 1843 by Prescott and Conant Green (brother of Lon Green involved in the canal war). The ferries were the only way to cross the river until 1861 when a covered bridge was built. The bridge was destroyed by a tornado and replaced by a steel span bridge in 1866.

A stone quarry near Attica was a mile west of Riverside or a mile east of Fix schoolhouse (a subscription school). It was operated by Rev. James Killen and did a large scale tombstone business. Attica also has finely chiseled windowsills, lintels and door sills and wonderful old monuments in the graveyard. Some of the most skilled carvers and letterers were trained at the Killen quarry. It shipped the markers all over the state and brought more money into the vicinity than any other industry up until the canal. A stone quarry on one's property was considered a valuable asset. However, the canal brought in marble and its high polish was much preferred as tombstones. The quarry could no longer make a profit. Later stone was quarried at Williamsport across the river from Attica. Harry Brant operated the quarry and made the tombstones along with Luke Whicker in Attica.

A rivalry grew up between Attica and Rob Roy to its south.. Before the canal, Rob Roy was more prosperous than Attica having a number of stores, two large hotels, three pork packing establishments and other enterprises. Williamsport on the other side of the Wabash River also gave it competition. But once the canal came the merchants of these towns moved to Attica. Williamsport tried putting in a sidecut canal but the cost of repairs was so great that the locks eventually rotted down and the concept was abandoned.

The second developmental stage resulted in a business and industrial boom. This was brought about by the coming of the Wabash and Erie Canal (which replaced the steamboat on the river) and the first railroad that eventually replaced the canal boat. Before the canal, the cost to transport goods across the country was fifty cents a hundred weight. Four fifths of the price of a load of pork taken to Cincinnati was used to pay the transportation.

The stone for the aqueducts, locks and other purposes was quarried in the river bottoms. It was a very good quality of sandstone. Later in 1890, contractors from Lafayette saw the quality of the stone and decided to operate the quarry. It was found to be almost inaccessible so they took their stone from a quarry near Riverside to build buildings in Danville, IL and Lafayette, IN.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

The towns of Attica and Covington both lie within the boundaries of Fountain County and had been rivals since the dispute as to the location of the county seat as established in 1830. The Wabash and Erie Canal reached Fountain County during Indiana's big drought and the drought is what actually brought on what is known as the "Attica/Covington War." A marker has been placed at the lock entitled "Attica & Covington Canal Skirmish" since it was not an actual war. The story recorded in newspapers and passed down through generations is as follows:

### Canal War Saturday September 26, 1846

The opening of the Wabash & Erie Canal was badly needed to ship out surplus farm produce and to bring in supplies for the settlers. On the day water was finally let into the canal from the Wabash River at Wea Creek below Lafayette, it was found there was barely enough water to flood the canal as far as Attica and certainly none for the portion into Covington. As soon as the boats could wriggle toward Attica they would leave Lafayette, proceed a few miles and get stuck in the mud because there was not enough water.

One boat, the "Daniel Webster," finally was the first to arrive in Attica after being dragged by twelve horses from Maysville, a mile north of Attica where she was stuck. Several additional yoke of oxen were added to the six teams of horses to pull her into port.

Davis Newell, the publisher of the "Attica Journal," with tongue in cheek printed an exaggerated description of the boats arriving from the north.

"Boats beginning to arrive here, the Daniel Webster majestically sailed into port on Thursday."

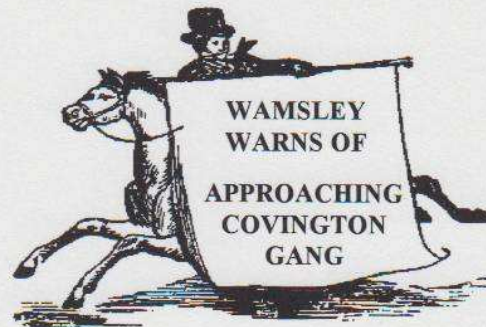
When this article was read at Covington, her citizens were mad because there was no water in their portion of the canal. They saw Attica enjoying the monetary benefits of being the western terminus of the Wabash & Erie Canal for the summer. They knew that the cost of shipping a load of pork to market from Attica had originally cost four fifths of its selling price. Now

**SHIPPING  
PORK  
BY CANAL  
WAS TWO  
THIRDS  
CHEAPER  
THAN BY  
RIVER BOAT**



canal rates were two thirds cheaper than the river rates. Attica's dockside and warehouse business doubled in a very short time. When the lock at Attica was opened and only a trickle of water came through the citizens of Covington suspected that Attica was closing off the flow of water to keep Covington from using the canal.

Senator Edward A. Hannegan of Covington just happened to be in Indiana instead of in Washington. He said he would accompany a local committee to Attica and use his influence and debating ability to induce the citizens of Attica to open the flood gate. The visit did not succeed. The committee returned home irate and ready to go back and open the flood gates themselves.



As the sun came up on September 26, 1846, 300 red-hot townsmen and farmers led by Senator Hannegan marched up the River Road carrying clubs. Jehu Wamsley saw the Covington army approaching from his home on a bluff above the road. He hurriedly grabbed a couple of shot guns, an old "yager," a pistol or two and galloped by horseback through the river and into Attica calling the alarm that the army was outside Attica. The Atticans quickly loaded a wagon full of men and met the Covington army





## WE WANT WATER DEMANDED HANNEGAN AND HIS GANG

midway down River Road. The Atticans were surrounded, captured, disarmed, and held prisoners while the Covington army forced its way to the lock at Attica. This lock (No. 35) from then on was named "Battleground Lock."

Up until this time the Atticans thought the "war" was funny. Businesses shut down so the townspeople could gather on the towpath to watch the excitement. But once the invaders managed to open the flood gates at Jackson and Washington Streets in Attica and let water into the lower section, they became alarmed. James D. McDonald was the leader of the defense of Attica. Ezekiel (Zeke) M. McDonald and several others mixed with the crowd in a friendly way. A Covington man knocked Mr. Herr into the canal. Zeke McDonald attempted to aid Mr. Herr but was struck in the head by a club. Henry Schlosser, John Leslie (Lesly) and others were slightly injured. Shortly thereafter McDonald vowed to make Hannegan responsible for the attack and later search him out. Thirty canal boats that were full of cargo and worth great sums of money were in danger of being stranded unless the Covington army could be stopped.

The Attica forces were soon joined by additional townspeople. Crews from the canal boats swarmed down hoping to save their boats. They attempted a rush attack to close the flood gates. When this failed they began throwing straw and hay into the channel above the lock hoping to plug it, which it did. Sorrowfully it was too late. In less than thirty minutes the boats lay every which way in the canal with their spilled cargoes in the mud. It looked as if Covington had won the battle. Ironically, neither side won. The

water that was let into the Covington portion of the canal was absorbed so fast by the dry canal bed that there was not enough water to float a raft. Attica's portion was also dry. They both lost the ability to reach eastern markets for a time.

A deputy sheriff captured a boatman who was in the fight and was going to take him to Covington. An attempt was made to get bail for the man uptown in Attica but was unsuccessful. While the deputy was searching for bondsmen and leading the prisoner around town, some of the Attica men attempted to make his team of horses run away. A Mr. Wamsley picked up a broom that was in front of one of the stores and began beating the horses. Ambrose Kiff stood in front of the horses and held them steady so they would not run. When the prisoner was placed in the wagon, the Atticans were outraged. Lon Green seized the bridles of the horses and tried to stop the wagon. An officer drew a revolver and said, "Get away from there, young man!" Lon, who always did what he was told to do stepped aside.

Six months later McDonald found Hannegan at the Brown Hotel in Covington. Hannegan was sipping a hot whiskey and reading a newspaper. McDonald saw him through the window, rushed in and said, "Ned, I swore I would whip you the first time I met you, for the dunking you gave me at the Attica locks," and hit him twice knocking him on his back. Hannegan retreated to his home and returned armed along with approximately forty friends who demanded McDonald be surrendered to them. The hotel landlord lied and said McDonald had gone. Hannegan's men left to search for him. McDonald escaped by way of horseback along the Crawfordsville road.

McDonald went to Attica to get an affidavit from Squire Samuel Coleman charging himself with assaulting E. A. Hannegan so that Hannegan would be forced to return to Attica. The constable, Frank Brady, was sent to Covington with a summons that Senator Hannegan appear before the J. P. and testify on behalf of the State. Hannegan failed to obey the summons and treated the whole proceeding with contempt. The feud was finally compromised when Hannegan came back from Berlin where he was the U. S. Minister to Prussia.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

For a long time Covington held all the political offices in the county until two Attican Democrats were elected in 1860; Billy Kerr was county clerk and William Trullinger was the sheriff. It was the railroad which helped to restore the towns' friendship. The people of Covington would come to Attica to take the train to points elsewhere.

Captain William Crumpton of Attica was blamed for not calling out the local militia and defending the lock. Others said it was Robert Hanna, one of the civil engineers, who should have stopped them. In a following issue of the *Attica Journal* there was an article that said the Covington people were ignorant of understanding that the upper levels had to be filled before the lower ones and accused them of assaulting peaceable and unoffending Atticans. It said that Attica wanted nothing more to do with them and "That the very air they breathed was contaminating and odious to Attica..."

To this the *Covington People's Friend* under Solon Turman said,

"To be banished from the presence and society of Enos Cannutt, Esq., proprietor, editor and devil, all himself of the *Attica Journal*, was indeed a heavy blow. Whether or not Covington would be able to survive this terrible deprivation was an unsolved problem whose answer was concealed in the mists of futurity,"

The Wabash and Erie Canal's arrival in Attica in 1847 hastened Attica's growth into a town. Its goods could be shipped to eastern markets. The stage companies and canal companies competed with one another building docks, six new warehouses, packing houses and stables. A harness, saddle, collar and whip factory was built by H. T. Bettice & Bros.

Attica was incorporated as a town in 1849. The first ordinance that was passed was to clean up the town because it was threatened by the Asiatic cholera. To raise revenue for the town, the two saloons were issued liquor licenses for twenty-five dollars a year.

In 1852 the St. Charles Hotel was built soon to be followed by the Revere House in 1853. The Revere House was named for a two-

story hotel built in 1837 that earlier stood on the same site and burned to the ground in 1844. Its name was later changed to Attica Hotel. It was known as "the traveling man's home away from home." and boasted of being the finest hotel in the Midwest. Many workers on the Wabash and Erie Canal made the hotel their home. It had bad luck in 1886 when the north wall was ripped off by a cyclone and had to be rebuilt. Then in 1908 fire destroyed the north wing roof just after the hotel had put in modern plumbing. The iron railing that graced the front of the building was donated to the World War I effort. Its heyday was 1920-1960 when it was known to be the best prime rib restaurant in the Midwest.

Mudlavia, located ten miles from Attica where therapeutic mud baths could be taken, also helped the hotel become famous. Bette, Davis, Bing Crosby, Al Jolson, and Alfonso Capone are some of the celebrities hosted by the hotel. It was last operated as a hotel in the 1970s. In 1993 the owners started restoring the building and hoped to reintroduce the prime rib dinners. Today it is once again a hotel and restaurant.

In the 1950s Vida Foxworthy, a chambermaid at the hotel, was murdered. Her ghost is said to have been seen by Maggie, the owner's dog who wags her tail at the ceiling; by a pool shooter who had his pool stick nudged in the game room; and by an advertising representative for a newspaper who had her back rubbed when no one was near her. The room in which the murder occurred was said to be twenty degrees warmer than any other room in the hotel during the winter of 93-94 when there was no heat on the second floor.

Two carriage manufacturers were started early in Attica's history—Fisher-Arbogast & Co. and Shipp's Wagon and Carriage Shop (later called Leif Buggy Co.). Farm implement factories such as Hess & Harvey Wagon Works and Smith and Peterson's Wagon and Plow Works, and other industries such as Sylvester Pump Factory, John Schuessler & Bros. Foundry and Boiler Shop, and Trullinger & Co. Drain Tile plant also went into business. One of the most important of all was the McDonald Pork Packing Co. which shipped by canal boat. Also the Attica Mills Co. was a flour mill along the canal located just below the locks. It used the water power of the

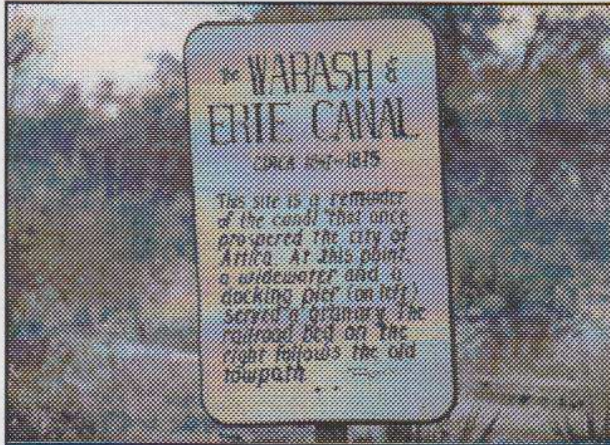


## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

canal to grind grain. The Jones Brother's Elevator was located just across Washington Street from the mill and could load directly onto canal boats by way of a long shoot. Old stone steps at the foot of Main Street marked the old canal boat landing site. Today a marker marks the canal at the Attica "widewater" and the foundation of an old canal era building can be seen. The marker reads:

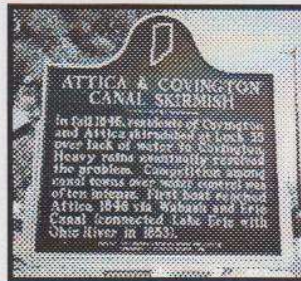


The old foundation stones of the granary can be seen in the picture above. Photo by Bob Schmidt



### The Wabash & Erie Canal Circa 1847 to 1875

This site is a reminder of the canal that once prospered the city of Attica. At this point a widewater and a docking pier (on left) served a granary. The railroad bed on the right follows the old towpath.

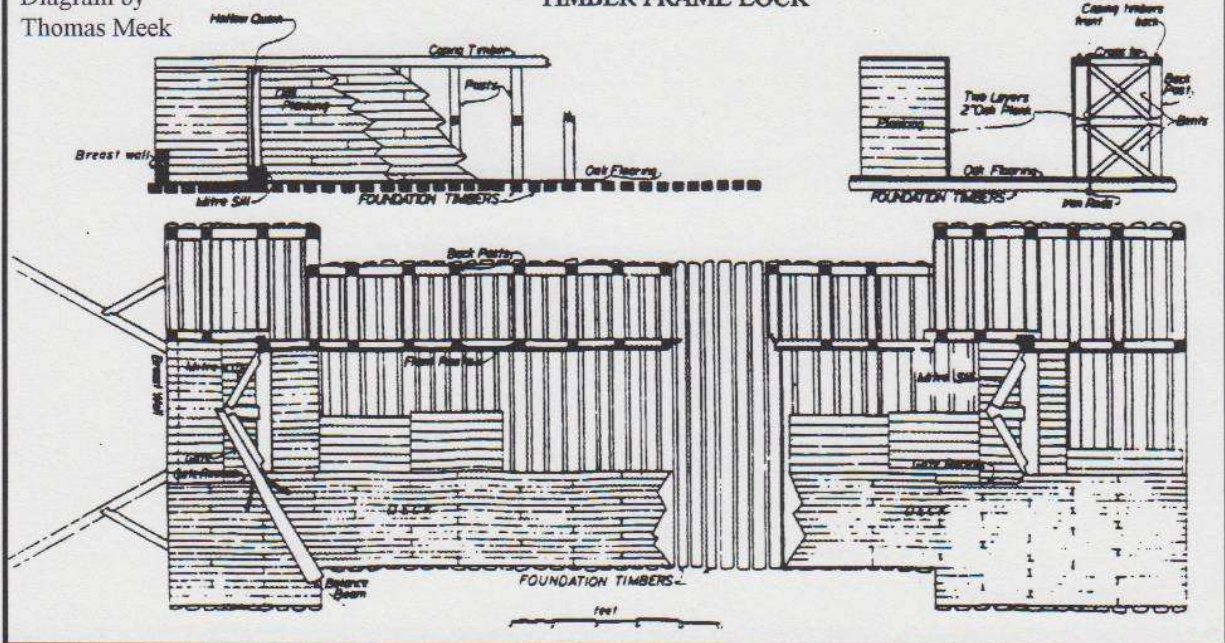


### ATTICA & COVINGTON CANAL SKIRMISH

In fall 1846, residents of Covington and Attica skirmished at Lock 35 over lack of water in Covington. Heavy rains eventually resolved the problem. Competition among canal towns was often intense. First boat reached Attica via Wabash and Erie Canal (connected Lake Erie with Ohio River in 1853).

Diagram by  
Thomas Meek

### TIMBER FRAME LOCK





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

The main street (Perry) changed from a street of log cabins to one of three story brick buildings. Many other small industries grew up during this period, each hiring fewer than twelve people. The Fisher-Arbogast company employed 30 workers and made 125 carriages a year at a total cost of thirty-three thousand dollars.

P. T. Barnum's circus came to Attica on canal boats and gave an exhibition a little way south of the Wabash Depot. Tom Thumb was part of the entertainment along with three elephants (one was a baby), an animal menagerie, a band and clowns. Also there is a remaining photo of a wedding party aboard a canal boat at Attica that can be seen at MacDonalds Restaurant along with other historical photos.

Just below Attica the great gravel beds gave the canal builders a lot of trouble because they would not hold water. To put more water into the canal, a feeder dam was built at Shawnee creek and the entire volume of water from that creek was fed into the canal. Col. McManomy of Covington and Douglas Trott were completing the approaches to the feeder dam and the waterway to the canal. On one Monday morning they found the Irish laborers coming late to work. A dispute arose. A huge Irishman, still tanked from the Sunday carousal, took a position on a scaffold on which they had been wheeling dirt. Mr. Trott wanted past the fellow and struck him with his fist knocking him off. When he landed at the bottom he broke his neck.

The sad news was sent to his wife who was a cook at the camp. She cried and cried. It was soon discovered that she was not grieving over her husband's death but the fact that he had nothing but a dirty shirt in which to be buried. Mr. McManomy had on a new shirt which he gave the crying widow. It was placed on the dead man and he was buried in a new shirt along the canal. The death of the Irishman was never investigated by the coroner or the grand jury. This is an example of how little value was placed on the lives of the Irish workers.

The canal met the expectations as a means of increasing production and facilitating transportation during the ten years it had no competition in the area. In 1850 the population

at Attica was 1,006. Companies such as E. Hemphill Wilson & Co., P.S. Veeder, Coleman & Lundy, Wm Worthington, and McDonald Spears & Co. shipped corn, wheat, oats, flour, pork, wool, and lard by canal boat.

9,400 hogs were packed in barrels.

Coleman & Lundy shipped 178,437 pounds of hams and shoulders, 10 barrels of tallow and 95

pounds of cured beef. Standart & Co. shipped 2,500 barrels of whiskey.



Near the final demise of the canal one young boy wrote about the last trips aboard the "Hoosier Boy," a freight boat, with his father. The boy's first trip from Attica to Lafayette carried a load of cordwood. It was hickory and sold for \$7.50 a cord. A few weeks later they took potatoes. The weather was cold so they covered the potatoes with straw. They didn't reach Lafayette until six at night and over night the potatoes on the top froze. The next morning they gathered up the frozen potatoes and hurried as fast as possible to unload the rest before they froze. They finally finished that night at five. They started back home at once, fearing the canal would freeze. They made it as far as the "widewater" at Riverside and had to abandon the boat. The boat stood where it was left for many years until it was finally torn apart for cribs and bins for their barn.

The last boat to clear from Covington to Lafayette was the "Goodman," on November 14, 1875. The last boat from Lodi to Toledo was the "Rocky Mountain" whose captain was David Webb. It stopped at Attica on October 26, 1872.

Soon boats were idly rotting in the sun. The canal bed fell into disrepair, docks were no longer used, stables were occupied by rats and mice, mules were turned out to pasture, and the boatmen found other occupations.

When the Toledo, Wabash and Western Railroad was being planned there was a question whether it would cross the Wabash River at Attica or Covington. Covington was preferred by the promoters and they asked Covington for a



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

\$5,000 donation. Covington refused and said the railroad should pay them \$2,000 for going through their town. After a much heated argument, Covington told the Wabash officials they could go straight to hell.

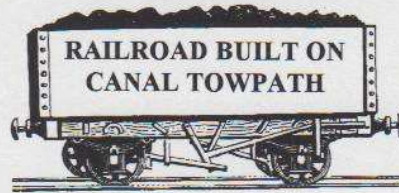
When the officials returned to Attica, they were met by J. D. McDonald, who asked how much money they would want to cross at Attica. He was told \$1,000. McDonald said he would give them \$1,000 to come to Attica and cross the river either at Williamsport or Covington. It eventually crossed the river at Attica; however, the citizens of Williamsport did not want the railroad in their town so it went north of the town. Later Williamsport had to move its courthouse and town up by the railroad costing the town thousands of dollars.

The Wabash and Western Railroad soon arrived in Attica (1858). Thousands celebrated when the first engine passed Attica. The engine was a small boiler with bands of brass around it. It burned wood (beech was preferred). The rail ties were made from large white oak and burr oak, which were split in two and placed two to three feet apart. The grades were often steep, such as at the "Stone Cut" east of Riverside, and often the train had to be cut in two to make it up the hill.

A blind man by the name of Alf Boots lived near the track. He raised tobacco and broom corn and made cigars and brooms. He easily sold his stock. The train crew would chip in their money, the front brakeman would hop off the train, buy the items and hop on the caboose as the loaded train passed. Later the tracks were better made, the trains went faster, and the canal was put out of business.

The Irish who survived building the canal went on to construct the railroad, dig its cuts and make its fills. A young Irish boy from Bloomington, IL at first carried water to the section hands at Attica. Later he used the shovel and worked his way up to the pick and the bar. After the war he was appointed an attorney for the Wabash railroad. When it had financial troubles, he became the receiver of the Wabash system.

After the railroad was built a wagon bridge was erected over the Wabash river in 1861. Thus put an end to the ferries.



The New Albany and Salem Railroad extended to Lafayette dividing the commerce of the area. In 1872 the Indiana North & South Railroad opened from Attica to Veedersburg connecting with the I.B. & W. Railway running east and west. This gave Attica two competing lines to Eastern markets. In 1881, the Wabash Railroad built a branch line connecting Attica and Covington. The line was built, as so often was the case in canal history, along the old canal towpath. The railroad track was laid across the Wabash River on stone piers built by Ahren & Bernhart from stone from the Stanis Bernhart Stone Quarry west of the Wabash.

Dr. John Evans (1814-1897) is probably Attica's most prominent citizen. He was born in Waynesville, OH, graduated from Lynn Medical College in Cincinnati in 1839, and moved to Attica with his wife, living there from 1839 to 1846. His patients usually paid him with grain or livestock which he shipped to New Orleans by boat and sold for cash.

His friends questioned Evans' sanity when, as a young doctor, he predicted that he would build a city, found a college, govern a State, serve in the United States Senate, and amass a fortune. His predictions turned out to be basically true. He was elected to the Indiana legislature in 1842. He introduced a bill that led to the Central Hospital for the Insane to be established in Indianapolis and was its first superintendent. He selected Evanston (named for him), Illinois as the site on which he and Orrington Lunt founded Northwestern University. He was an organizer for the Republican Party and campaigned for Lincoln. He was appointed by Lincoln as Territorial Governor of Colorado in 1862. When Colorado sought statehood, he resigned the position and was elected by Colorado to the U.S. Senate. However, President Andrew Johnson denied Colorado statehood and Evans never got to serve. He founded the Colorado Seminary which is now the University of Denver, donated \$200,000 to help start it, and later gave it a large endowment. He built a



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

railroad in Colorado and became its president. Colorado honored him by naming Mt. Evans, the highest peak in the U.S. that can be reached by auto, after him.

Another prominent man was George D. Hay. He was born in Attica in 1895. George worked to bring country music to the American public's attention. He was a reporter for the **Memphis Commercial Appeal Newspaper** and an announcer on Memphis radio station WMC during 1923-24. He then moved to Chicago and originated the WLS Barn Dance. November 1925 found George in Nashville, TN as manager of station WSM. He was involved in the station's programming and started a Saturday night jamboree called "the barn dance" which was later to become the "Grand Old Opry." He wore an old fashioned coat and flowing necktie portraying himself as the "Solemn Old Judge" and announcing the acts in a sort of chant while carrying his usual cigar. He had his performers dress in farm folk costumes. He wanted the Opry to be neighborly and friendly and find neighbors everywhere. Failing health in the 1900s caused him to become the Opry's figurehead. He retired from the Opry in the 1950s and passed away in 1968.

Between 1896 and 1909 Attica's leading manufacturer was the Sterling Remedy Company. It produced No-To Bac (a 30 day supply was guaranteed to cure the tobacco habit or money was refunded), Dr. Hobbs Sparagus Kidney Pills, and Gum-to Bac. George Ade, an Indiana humorist, was paid \$12.00 (later \$15.00) a week to write the company's advertising.

Today Attica's chief employer is the Harrison Steel Castings Company, which was started in Converse, IN as the National Car Coupler Company. It moved to Attica in 1906, changed its name in 1927, and diversified its products. It employs approximately 650 people. Attica's population is 3,841. It is the largest city in Fountain Co..

Attica's Ravine Park is located where the trails of the Kickapoo, Shawnee, Potawatomi, and Ouiatenon Indians once crossed the natural ravines. Logan Township's first settler, Casey Emmons, a tanner by trade, built his log home in 1825 on the grounds of what is now park land.

He made clothing and moccasins for the Indians. In the 1830s a distillery operated there. The many crystal springs in the area provided Attica's water supply until the 1900s. Also located there was a brick plant whose discarded bricks form additional mounds in the park. Later a chautauqua grounds replaced the brick plant. In the 1870s the park hosted county fairs and horse races. Annual chautauquas were held in the 20th century.



"Spirit of the American Doughboy" honors WWI soldiers on Attica Public Library grounds. Photo B Schmidt

One of E.M. Viquesney's famous "The Spirit of the American Doughboy" statues (1927 World War I memorial) stands on the grounds of the Attica Public Library. Another copy of this statue along with one of a sailor "The Spirit of the American Navy" is in Memorial Park in Fort Wayne.



The buildings above have been restored and are on the National Record of Historic Places. Photo by Bob Schmidt

The Attica Presbyterian Church was erected in 1849-1850 and is Greek Revival in style. Its steeple was removed when it was a



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

dance hall from 1907-1921. The First Church of Christ Scientists owned the building and held services in it from 1921-1984. The building was completely restored by John Cottrell in 1988-89 after which he turned it over to Historic Landmarks of Fountain County to manage. Adjacent to the church were two houses built by Norman S. Brown. They did not originally sit side by side. The littler of the two was built on Fifth Street in Attica (date unknown) and later moved to its present location near the large house.

Norman S. Brown worked on the Wabash and Erie Canal and later became a contractor-builder-farmer in Attica. Norman's son, William, was given the little house as a wedding gift from his parents. According to the records, William A. Brown was born December 25, 1833, died March 7, 1907, and not much else is known about his life in Attica. Mr. Cottrell is also restoring both of these buildings. Attica has over 200 places listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1994 Attica was chosen as one of seven "Hidden Treasures" in Indiana and was promoted by the Indiana Tourism Office during Tourism Week with a walking tour of the downtown.

Some of Attica's most architecturally important structures surviving from the canal era are the Greek Revival-style houses of the 1850s. The 1870s and 1880s brick mansions were of the Italianate-style. Both reflect the prosperous days of gracious living in the late 19th century.

### ~ Williamsport ~

Although Williamsport lies in Warren County instead of in Fountain County, it is included in this book for its influence and effect it had on the Wabash and Erie Canal in Attica and canal towns further down the canal. Its side-cut canal from the main line canal at Attica drained off much needed water for canal ports below Attica. The much needed water was either sucked up by the gravel beds over which the side-cut was built or was lost in the Wabash River.

The Warren County Canal Company was incorporated January 15, 1844 and given the power to unite the Wabash and Erie Canal with the Wabash River in Warren County. [Local

Laws, 1843-4 Ch. 16, p. 31-35.] Nothing came of this venture.

Williamsport was full of green-eyed envy in that Attica had the Wabash and Erie Canal. In 1848, Harrison and other citizens began talking about building a "side-cut" canal to enable Warren County producers to take their loads directly to the Wabash and Erie Canal. They established the Williamsport Canal Lock Company. A subscription paper was started to raise the necessary money to finance the project. William Kent led the drive with \$1000 and many others followed with amounts up in the hundreds. It took three years to plan and \$16,000 in donations to dig and construct. It was done by a man named Barcus.

The "side-cut" canal crossed the river bottoms just below Attica, to connect Williamsport with the canal and the outside world. When it was finished a celebration was held with a huge stall fed ox roast of which all residents for miles around were invited to attend and listen to the speeches of congratulations.

Then, Williamsport had the biggest growth in its history. Every business profited from the increase in trade. By the spring of 1853 the town had six dry goods stores, three large warehouses, one clothing store, a steam mill, a newspaper and numerous mechanics and manufacturers. It became known as "Side Cut City."

Due to the prosperity the side cut created, the town was incorporated in March 1854. Even though Williamsport had the side cut, Attica was more convenient and continued to draw the trade. The side cut lost so much water at the river in the gravel deposits below the "Wide-water," where the side cut entered the canal, that the side cut could not always carry boats.

Reports by the Chief Engineer and the Wabash & Erie Canal trustees to the Indiana General Assembly in 1848 show the water problems which existed and were being created by the introduction of side cut canals. These are included on the following pages with sections pertaining to the tour area in bold print. Regardless of the early reports warning against making side cut canals, they were built anyway.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES WABASH AND ERIE CANAL NOVEMBER 30, 1848

OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER,  
Terre Haute, Nov. 30th, 1848

To the Trustees of the Wabash and  
Erie Canal:

**GENTLEMEN:** In obedience to your requirements, I have the honor to submit my second Annual Report of the Wabash and Erie Canal, from the State line to the Ohio River, embodying such facts in respect to its navigation, the progress made in the construction of the unfinished part, and the general condition and future prospects of the work, as should be furnished from this department. First, in regard to

#### THE NAVIGABLE CANAL.

Boats have passed during the whole season from the State line to Coal Creek, a distance of 189 miles, with the exception of occasional interruptions from breaches, to which all canals are more or less subject. The supply of water has been ample, excepting on one division, which will be hereinafter more fully noticed.

The receipts of tolls during the years have been lessened from two prominent causes--first, from the deficient wheat crop of last year, which diminished materially the business of the canal during the early part of the season, and secondly, from the early fall rains which rendered the roads almost impassable after the month of October, checking entirely the receipts of grain, notwithstanding the abundance of this year's wheat harvest. In the aggregate, however, it is believed that this year's revenue will very nearly, if not quite, equal the estimate made twelve months ago.

The liberal reduction of charges upon the trade with Cincinnati, made by the Board, in conjunction with the Board of Public Works of Ohio, it is believed will greatly increase the trade between that city and the Wabash valley, through the Miami and Wabash and Erie canals, and will ultimately increase the tolls received from both works. During the last season merchandise and groceries have been brought by way of the canal to Lafayette and Covington, at prices so

little above the usual charges by way of the Ohio and Wabash rivers, as to promise at least a fair division of this transportation as far south as Terre Haute, especially when the saving of insurance and the greater certainty by the canal are duly considered.

The proper adjustment of the tariff of tolls on produce and merchandise, so as to derive from the canal the largest income, is a point of much importance, and will no doubt continue to receive a careful consideration. Believing that the Trustees would be aided in their investigation on this subject, as the guardians of this important channel of commerce, by an authentic account of the annual exports of the Wabash valley, by the river as well as the canal, I have continued during the past year my inquiries under this head, and through the assistance kindly rendered by gentlemen, engaged in shipping produce by the Wabash river, have been enabled to prepare a statement of the shipments of the leading articles of produce by that channel, during the season of 1848, which is herewith submitted, and marked A.

From this statement it will be seen that the river shipments of produce for the year, from all points above the South line of Vigo county, amounts to 31,951 tons, of which 26,168 tons were transported in flat boats, and 5,783 tons by steamboats. The whole number of flat boats loaded with this produce was 274.

The shipment of the like articles by the canal during the year, will be furnished by the collectors at the close of navigation, and in connection with this statement of river shipments, will exhibit the produce trade of the valley as far south as the point named. The direction of this trade, and of comparing the proportion of each article shipped by the canal and river, respectively, from that part of the valley having the choice of either channel of transportation.

The repairs and the rebuilding of decayed wooden structures, have been in progress during the season, in accordance with the general plan indicated in my two reports to the Board of Nov. 1st and 6th, 1847, with such modifications only as have been suggested by further observation and experience. Since the commencement of the trust, the timber abutments of the St. Joseph's dam, and the abutments of the two dams across the Wabash at the forks, and at Peru, have been rebuilt,

and will require no further expenditure for 10-13 years. The decayed parts of the five wooden crib locks at Huntington have been renewed, and the wooden frame lock at Lewisburg rebuilt. The embankment at the Portland Bluff, originally formed of rock without sufficient earth lining, and which from this cause, gave way so frequently during the season of 1847, has been rendered secure by an expensive lining of gravel puddle throughout its whole length of nearly a mile. **The gates of the steamboat lock at the Delphi dam, which had become decayed and failed entirely during the flood of November last, have been rebuilt. A permanent towing path bridge with a road way for the accommodation of the public has been erected across Wild Cat in place of the temporary structure originally built.**

The expenditure of "ordinary repairs," including pay of superintendents and lock tenders, with all similar expenses incident the repair service, during the year ending 1st November, 1848, amounts to the sum of \$34,058, giving an average for this item of \$174 66 cents per mile for the whole navigable line, including the St. Joseph's feeder. During the same time there has been paid for "extraordinary repairs," which term is used to designate the renewal of decayed wooden structures with any new work that may be added to the canal, the sum of \$13,967, giving \$48,025 as the total outlay in the repair service for the year. This falls short of the estimate for the yearly repairs, as contained in my report of 6th November last, by the sum of \$7,949, and is believed to be materially less in the average per mile, than has been paid for repairs on this canal during the past years, notwithstanding it includes the renewal of a full proportion of the decayed structures.

The abutments of the three dams across the Wabash, Deer Creek and Wild Cat, with several of the timber locks, will require renewal during the next and the following year, and much swell the expenditure for repairs.

The Board of Trustees at their meeting in November last, having under consideration the deficient supply of water between Lafayette and Coal Creek, adopted an order on this subject, a copy of which was soon afterwards furnished me, as follows"

"Ordered, That the Chief Engineer direct his attention



Of the business done upon the Wabash and Erie Canal, from the commencement to the close of navigation in the year 1848.

Toll Collection Points	LAFAYETTE			COVINGTON			LOGANSFORT			LA GRO			FORT WAYNE			GRAND TOTAL	
	Total	Total pounds	Total Tons	Total	Total pounds	Total Tons	Total	Total pounds	Total Tons	Total	Total pounds	Total Tons	Total	Total pounds	Total Tons	Pounds	Tons
Miles boats run	158,444			55,168			33,825			13,168			205,773			453,575	
Miles passengers	263,143			173,328			49,712			21,243			364,256			1,357,364	
Barrels of flour	27,590	5,997,630	2,394	1,132	245,844	123	21,110	4,586,878	2,230	692	151,564	97	26,145	4,104,644	2,032	76,854	17,111,729
Bushels of wheat	275,470	23,538,260	11,254	63,675	3,769,500	1,680	186,678	10,394,636	5,144	231,664	13,361,040	6,521	109,488	4,569,290	2,265	957,295	56,443,760
Bushels of corn	572,973	33,989,688	16,049	200,558	11,231,318	5,115	120,021	6,421,344	4,361	42,256	2,790,816	1,275	32,349	1,211,544	505	1,065,640	26,315,840
Bushels of oats	44,449	1,466,217	733	16,309	594,847	267	344	11,222	6	564	8,612	9	2,923	93,129	47	64,389	2,124,787
Bushels of rye	216	13,636	-	94	4,705	2	43	2,498	1	511	2,616	14	50	2,860	1	904	30,624
Bushels of barley	1,767	106,239	53	167	10,473	5	69	4,493	2	23	1,289	1	581	27,868	14	2,836	196,147
Bushels of seeds	3,633	221,700	111	534	52,060	16	1,205	73,420	26	7,663	446,182	230	1,185	71,700	36	14,360	898,900
Bushels of mineral ash	5,050	163,000	62	20,627	1,624,160	617				119	618					127	7,438
Barrels of whisky	2,325	581,750	491	379	97,850	49	420	150,500	76	267	160,450	26	2,136	760,600	360	5,377	2,090,250
Barrels of salt	6,318	1,893,400	946	1,946	562,630	261	8,320	1,149,840	575	2,617	614,300	307	61,743	18,522,900	9,551	75,878	32,763,600
Barrels of fat	74	22,260	11	6	2,410	1	62	18,600	9	74	23,400	12	1,366	372,000	190	1,468	448,600
Barrels of oil	52	8,660	3	1	300					7	2,100	1	266	63,600	43	316	94,000
Barrels of lime	3,912	732,000	377	3,527	181,250	91	30	6,000	3				33	37,000	14	6,752	368,250
Barrels of pork	15,265	4,581,500	2,236	269	65,760	40	6,630	1,295,000	297	2,020	785,000	323	3,623	1,359,500	634	26,577	8,781,700
Barrels of beef	3,229	1,178,000	111	1,149	36,967	52		421,500	212		318,000	129		175,400	22		3,322,100
Pounds of bacon	1,271,134		686		110,113	55		239,100	180		395,260	148		157,025	79		2,223,471
Pounds of live hogs											56,670	26					56,670
Pounds of beef and mutton		16,388	6														16,388
Pounds of salt and bristles		75,146	38														75,146
Pounds of deer and roon skins																	
Pounds of feathers		8,187	6														8,187
Pounds of wool		68,556	34		19,500	10											68,556
Pounds of cranberries											2,734	1		331,321	266		334,055
Pounds of merchandise		755,294	362		153,738	77		194,620	59		65,250	28		7,541,819	3,771		8,582,048
Pounds of sugar and molasses		139,589	62		1,661	1		15,250	6		4,162	2		1,336,306	603		1,397,893
Pounds of coffee		63,261	23					12,230	7		16,033	8		1,493,166	740		1,575,642
Pounds of tobacco		16,454	8		4,753	2		3,313	3		5,074	4		563,470	277		586,129
Pounds of glass ware and white lead		20,257	10		2,572	1		15,366	7		4,867	3		522,100	261		565,743
Pounds of iron, nails, castings, &c.		162,330	65		22,773	11		39,634	25		4,673	3		3,177,857	1,569		3,448,072
Pounds of furniture		863,226	62		26,530	13		27,274	14		39,767	20		927,861	469		1,196,923
Pounds of agricultural implements		13,112	6		4,420	2		4,450	2		4,203	2		73,694	37		89,241
Pounds of wood ware		1,637	1					150						8,630	23		102,297
Pounds of marble and mill stones		26,417	18		5,369	4					47,196	24		543,673	272		614,997
Pounds of butter		6,419	3					14,932	7		12,599	7		139,867	68		174,808
Pounds of cheese		43,969	22		2,507	1					2,319	1		65,036	43		134,631
Pounds of hides		36,236	15		494	1		3,174	15		7,498	4		4,515	3		42,899
Pounds of pearl and pot ash		24,267	12		7,693	4		38,215	20		9,616	5		401,417	200		481,917
Pounds of staves, hoop-poles, &c.		1,203,281	311		14,600	7		185,278	93		2,300	15		189,210	93		1,654,658
Cords of wood		27,236,100	73,315		75,000	36		425	2,125,000	1,060			1,569	9,145,000	4,923		39,875,000
Perches of stone		3,267	12,654					2,074	8,896,000	4,146			2,216	10,824,100	6,413		58,456,000
Feet of lumber		853,152	8,866,892	1,489	16,309	17,956	89	869,355	3,442,744	1,847			3,787	602,149	304		11,620,591
Number of tubs		32,000	17,234		6,000	2,491	1							45,000	15,400		94,330
Thousands of staves		301	26,000	45	2	600	1				94	28,200	14	5,273	1,851,300	926	1,970,500
Feet of timber		24,322	4,023,230	1,029													21,223
Number of posts and rails		11,015	460,000	290													11,015
Kegs of beer		410	41,000	81										423	42,200	21	632
Pounds of stone ware											16,149	8		85,638	42		101,787
Pounds of leather														217,384	124		247,394
Pounds of saleratus														79,602	40		79,602
Pounds of mowax and rosin														46,423	23		46,423
Pounds of miscellaneous		1,436,657	713		159,407	80		763,090	361		68,113	34		1,265,576	644		3,668,544

315,822,222 157,691

SUMMARY OF TOLLS COLLECTED - 1848



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

particularly to the question of the supply of water, and the probable effect of the side cuts and the locks connected therewith, upon the navigation of the main line; and that he report to the Board at their next meeting, or as soon as all the facts having a bearing upon this subject can be ascertained."

In obedience to this requirement the subject has received that careful attention, during the season, demanded by its importance.

In my report of last year, descriptive of the condition of the canal at the commencement of the Trust, the failure of the Wea and Shawnee creeks as feeder for the lower Division, and the consequent scarcity of water south of Lafayette, were referred to. It was then shown that the large deficiency could only be supplied by passing from the Wabash feeder at Delphi, a much greater quantity of water than was originally contemplated; and that in order to do this, the dams across both the Wabash and Deer Creek required a material addition to their height, while the cross section of the canal at the Wea Bluff, required enlarging to its full size as established by law. These

improvements in the canal, having been ordered by the Board, were made at an early period in the season. The dams were raised 14 inches, by permanent addition of timber, and during the dry season the pool of the Wabash dam was raised 10 inches, and of Deer creek dam 10 inches more, by a temporary fixture of plank, to be taken off in the fall as it should become unnecessary. By these addition to the height of the dams the superintendents were enabled, during the whole of the dry season, to keep full 6 1/2 feet water at Deer creek, the upper end of the Lafayette level; and has demonstrated the practicability of passing through this level and over the tumble at the Wea lock, as much water as it required, if carefully husbanded, for the navigation thence to Coal Creek at any season of the year. The great extent of natural basin or wide water between Wild Cat and Lafayette, with the fact that this portion of the canal was originally constructed by the State of enlarged minimum dimensions, aid us very materially in passing this increased quantity of water. So much more capacious is the canal above than below Lafayette, that the mills at that point have run during the whole of the season, with the exception of a few

days, without any injury to navigation below, having been permitted to draw off only the surplus water conveyed thus far through the larger canal, over and above what the canal below could by any means be made to pass.

The insufficiency of the supply south of Lafayette during the dry season, which has caused so much inconvenience to those engaged in transportation, is attributable to the almost entire failure of the Shawnee feeder, since the improvement of the country, and the impracticability of passing through the long level (18 miles) from Wea to Attica, the large quantity of water required at that season for this division of 46 miles in length. In the original construction of this level, its capacity, from motives of economy so doubt, was more rigidly than on most other divisions, confined to the minimum width of 40 feet surface, so that with the exception of two basins near the upper end, there is only a small portion having any extra width or depth beyond the dimensions fixed by the law. During the summer months, the very season when from the failure of the Shawnee feeder it becomes necessary to pass through the canal above, the largest quantity of water, its capacity becomes obstructed by a species of grass and other vegetable growth common to all canals in a soil like this.

The difficulty of passing the large quantity of water required for the lower division of the canal, through the level above Attica, was noticed in my last annual report, and as the only remedy it was then proposed to increase the descent by maintaining the water at the upper end of the level at 5 feet instead of 4 feet as originally designed. This suggestion has been carried out by raising the Wea feeder dam to the highest point admissible without injuring materially the valuable new mill on the creek at the head of the pool, belonging to the estate of Mr. Foresman. The water at the head of this level was maintained at 5 feet 4 or 6 inches during the dry season, and the grass was cut out as effectually as the nature of the case would allow, by means of scythes attached to the stern of a scow boat. But with this increase of head, amounting to 16 or 18 inches, and with the untiring efforts of the superintendent, he was unable to pass through this level as much water as would give full navigation to the counties below.

The Wea Bluff, which was thoroughly cleaned out to the full Canal

width during last Winter, has become again contracted at two or three points, by the washing in of sand from the hill. These deposits could not be wholly removed during the season of navigation, but will form a part of the Winter repairs. They have had no effect upon the question of supplying the lower division with water, inasmuch as they are above the point at which difficulty was experienced in passing the necessary quantity of water. As before stated, the Superintendents have been able at all times to pass sufficient water through this level, and to keep the Canal at 5 1/2 feet in the upper end of the Attica level.

The period during which it is found most difficult to keep up a full navigation on all parts of the Canal, extends in ordinary seasons from the middle of June to the latter part of September, embracing the term of 90 or 100 days, or nearly one half of the season of navigation. The streams received as feeders, do not reach their low water stage earlier in the Summer than this; and after the 15th or 20th of September, their flow is usually enlarged by what are called the equinoctial rains. But even though no heavy rains should fall at this season, their discharge is somewhat increased by light rains, and by the diminished evaporation. About the 1st of October, it is found, moreover, that the grass to a great extent disappears, a circumstance favoring the passage of water from distant feeders.

In order to furnish the Board with the fullest information, I caused the actual height of the water above bottom of Canal to be taken and registered daily throughout the dry season, both at Covington and Attica, and herewith submit a statement of these measurements, marked respectively B. and C.

From the register at Covington, which was kept by the Collector, it will be seen that the depth of water in the level above the lock at that place averaged, during the latter half of June, three feet six inches; during the month of July three feet one inch; throughout the month of August three feet, and from the 1st to the 25th of September, two feet ten inches. On the level from Covington to Perrysville, the average depth during the same period was two to three inches less.

From the register at Attica, kept by the Messrs. Colemans, from a



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

mark carefully fixed by the Engineer for this purpose near their warehouse, it appears that the average depth in the level above the lock in that place was, from the 13th to the last of June, three feet five and one-third inches; during the month of July, three feet two and one-half inches; throughout August, three feet and from the 1st to the 30th of September, three feet three inches.

Subsequent to the latter part of September no scarcity of water was experienced, the flow of Shawnee having been slightly augmented by the Fall rains, and the obstruction to the passage of water through the levels above the growth of grass, having by that time materially diminished.

From the clearances issued at the Collector's office, it appears that the average cargo which could be taken out by the boats from Covington, during three months of the dry season, was 1200 bushels of corn, or a fraction over half the usual cargo, from Lafayette to the Lake.

The want of sufficient water to float a full cargo on this portion of the line, detracts materially from the value of the Canal. Not only are its revenues lessened, but the producers of grain on both sides of the river South of Lafayette, must receive some three or four cents per bushel less than would be paid them, with a full Canal for its transportation. With some further expenditure in checking the more important leaks, and by adhering to the recommendations continued in my last Annual Report, as to the careful use of water on this division, there are good grounds to anticipate a better and perhaps a perfect navigation during the next season.

Under the order of the Board it remains to consider "the probable effect of the side cuts, and locks connected therewith upon the navigation of the main line."

The water drawn from the main line by the side cuts will be,

1st. The quantity necessary to supply the leakage and evaporation from the side cut Canals, extending from the main line to the Wabash river, one of which is 36 chains, and the other 66 chains in length.

2d. The quantity required for the passage of boats through the flight of locks at each side cut, descending from the level of the Canal to the river--the lift of the locks being ten feet.

3d. The quantity which will be lost from the Canal by leakage through the sides, floor, and gates of the locks.

The last named item of water will, in this instance, be the greatest of

the three, and will be considered first. The loss of water at the Perrysville side cut by leakage through the locks, is unnecessarily large, owing partly to the very defective construction of the lower lock. In the erection of new works, this defect could be in part avoided. The upper lock at Perrysville, however, seems to have been well constructed for a wooden lock, and when the water rests only against this lock (as is always the case except when boats are passing,) the leakage through these locks is believed to be no more than at the wooden locks generally on our Canal, and not greater than would unavoidable occur through the locks at the other proposed side cuts, constructed as they must be of timber. During the past season, I have, at three several times, in passing through the line, taken observations and measurements of the water actually passed by leakage at the Perrysville locks--the water at the time resting against the upper gates of the upper lock. The average of these measurements shows a leakage of a fraction over 500 cubic feet per minute.

The water drawn from the main line for the purpose of passing boats is more difficult to estimate, depending entirely upon the amount of business. The loss from this source it is believed would be inconsiderable. The unfavorable location of these side cuts, crossing the overflowed bottom at a right angle to the current, and the position of the outlet locks being such in both cases as to invite the formation of a bar at the entrance, would be likely to place these works often out of good repair, notwithstanding every reasonable exertion for their preservation. These peculiarities, with the probably increase of facilities for crossing the river as the country shall advance in wealth, will not doubt lessen the demand for water for the passage of boats. An allowance of twenty-five feet per minute for each side cut would be sufficient.

The consumption of water by leakage and evaporation from the side cut Canals will be about equal to the usual allowance of 100 feet per minute per mile. The united length of the two sides cuts, being a fraction over one and one-fourth miles, will draw from the main line for this item of waste 125 cubic feet per minute.

Estimating from the above data, the total waste of water from the construction of the two side cuts at Independence and Williamsport, may be stated as follows:

	Cub. Ft.
By unavoidable leakage through the two flights of locks per minute,.....	1,000
For the passage of boats through the locks,.....	50
Allowance for leakage and evaporation for 1 1/2 miles of Canal,.....	125
Total loss per minute,.....	1,175

This is equivalent to the usual allowance for 11 3/4 miles of Canal, and is 23 per cent, of the whole supply necessary for the line from Lafayette to Coal Creek, as that supply was estimated in my report of last year. The withdrawal of so much water from this division, so remote from the principal feeder, would seem to cut off the hope of furnishing for the main line a good navigation during the dry season.

### THE UNFINISHED LINE.

Accompanying my report of November 13th, 1847, a statement, in tabular form, of the length and probably cost of the various divisions of unfinished work, embodying a complete plan of operations, looking to the completion to Evansville in 1851, was submitted to the Board with a suggestion as to the time of letting each division. This plan of progress having met the approval of the Board, and the lettings having been ordered in accordance therewith, the line of active operations has, from time to time, been extended until it now covers the whole ground from Coal Creek to the crossing of the West Fork of White River, a distance of 96 miles. Experience so far shows that the scale of expenditure thus ordered by the Board, was well adjusted to the amount of labor that could be collected upon the work, and I can at present perceive no reasons which should induce any essential change of the future lettings from the time indicated for each, in the original plan. According to this plan, the navigation may be extended to Terre Haute (if the filling of the Canal be not too long delayed by the great extent of gravelly soil) early in the ensuing season; to Point Commerce by November, 1849, and to Maysville in November, 1850, furnishing at once to these several districts of country, as the Canal progresses, the benefits of a navigable connection with Lake Erie.

The estimates upon which the plans and the financial policy of the Board heretofore have been based, were those of Mr. Fautleroy, made in 1845, upon the general basis of twelve



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

dollars per month for common labor. Subsequent to that year, the circumstances of the country have been such as to cause an advance in the value of labor--the contractors during the last year having generally paid as high as fifteen or sixteen dollars per month. The higher price of agricultural products, the War with a neighboring power, but more than all, the simultaneous commencement of the numerous Rail Road lines throughout the United States, have had their influence in producing this advance. Notwithstanding this higher price of labor, the contracts made at the several lettings furnish good ground for the belief that, with a judicious management, and without the occurrence of any unforeseen disaster, the line from Coal Creek to the cross of the West Fork of White River, will not exceed in cost the original estimates.

In suggesting the general principals for our guidance in the location of the line, and giving plans for mechanical structures, I have sought to introduce the utmost degree of economy consistent with the safety and permanence of the Canal. It is believed, however, that the portion of the Canal constructed under the direction of the Trustees, will compare very favorably with that received from the State, in point of permanence and general utility.

In the recent locations along

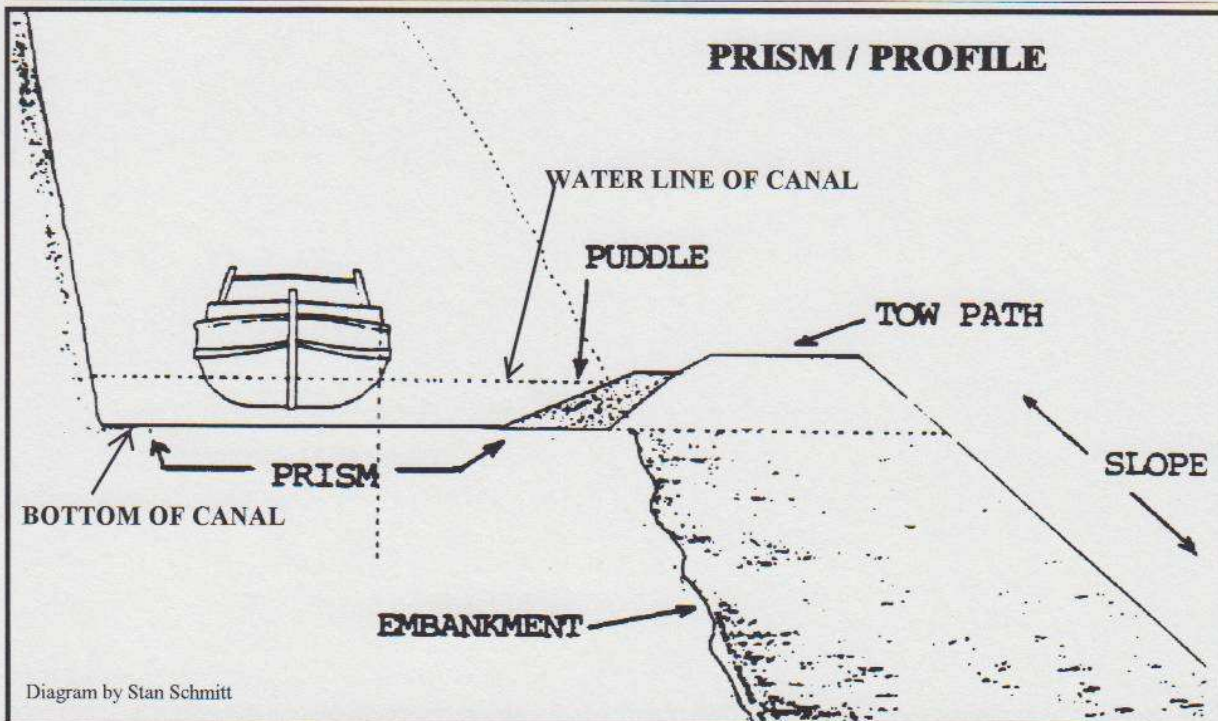
the vallies (sic) of Eel river and White river, wherever the line comes within range of their floods, the guard banks, at whatever expense, have been kept above the great flood of January, 1847, which was the highest by some three feet known to the oldest settlers. Excepting the unavoidable substitution of timber for stone in building the locks, and some of the smaller aqueducts, the mechanical structures are of the most durable kind. The two larger aqueducts over Sugar Creek and Raccoon, are being built as heretofore designed, upon a very substantial plan. The abutments and piers are of excellent cut stone masonry, and the superstructures, built with the most perfect workmanship, are to be enclosed from the weather. Over the first named stream, there are three spans of 80 feet each in the clear, and over the latter two spans of 90 feet each, giving ample room for the longest driftwood, which floats in such quantities in these streams during high floods. The dams throughout the line are upon the most substantial plan, and no expense or care deemed important to their safety, has been spared in their construction. The one over Coal Creek, answering the double purpose of furnishing a feeder and crossing the Canal in its pool, is 17 1/2 feet high and 202 feet long. It has been constructed with care and at great cost, and is believed to be a secure structure, notwithstanding the sandy foundation on which it stands. The Sugar Creek

feeder dam is nine feet high, and 227 feet long: it is believed to be a safe structure, although the bed of the creek at this point is composed of loose gravel and sand. The Eel River feeder dam, around which a new channel for the stream had been formed during the suspension of the Public Works, as described in my report of the 13th November, 1847, has been repaired, according to the plan therein suggested, by adding 82 feet to its length, and erecting a new abutment and guard lock. The total cost of repairs at this point amounts to near \$13,000. The dam across Pigeon Creek, 19 miles North of Evansville, has likewise been repaired with the embankment in the vicinity as suggested in the same report, at a cost of near \$5,000.

The locations and construction South of Coal Creek have been under the more immediate charge of Mr. William J. Ball, who, by his great zeal and industry, combined with high qualifications as an Engineer, has rendered the Trust most important service. His report, herewith submitted, will furnish an interesting and more detailed account of the operations and progress in this branch of the service.



Respectfully submitted,  
J.L. WILLIAMS,  
Chief Engineer.





## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

### ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE WABASH AND ERIE CANAL, TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF INDIANA. DECEMBER, 1848.

INDIANAPOLIS: JOHN D. DEFREES, STATE PRINTER 1848 2D10

#### REPORT.

To the General Assembly of the State of Indiana

In continuation from the last annual report of the Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal, they have now the honor to communicate that they have caused to be prosecuted the plan of operations upon the Canal which was therein submitted.

The work from Coal Creek to Terre Haute, a distance of thirty-seven miles, is now so nearly completed that the water will be let into the Canal down to the latter place by the first of next month, preparatory to the extension of navigation to that point early in the ensuing spring. It is but little upwards of a year since this division of Canal was put under contract, and labor resumed upon it, and it will be recollected that it includes two dams, one across Coal Creek, 202 feet long and 17 1/2 feet high; and one across Sugar Creek, 227 feet long and 9 feet high; also an aqueduct over the latter stream, 266 feet long, and one over Raccoon Creek, 197 feet long, and other heavy works, all of which were commenced within that time. Although the unusual floods which occurred last winter prevented the contractors from putting in the foundations of the heavy structures in season, and retarded the final completion of this division unavoidable until spring, it will yet be completed much earlier than was anticipated by the citizens living in the district of country through which it passes, but who will doubtless make arrangements, without loss of time, to avail themselves of the facility it will afford in transporting their produce to a ready market, and of realizing the commercial advantages which must increase in the same proportion. It is a result to be regarded also with a peculiar satisfaction on another account. It will greatly increase the revenue of the Canal, and furnish a very acceptable contribution to the means necessary to the further completion of it. The cost of this division will not exceed the estimates of the Engineer of

construction, submitted before the letting took place, except where changes have been made in the progress of the work, with a view to the improvement of the original plan.

On the twenty-fourth day of May last, another division of the Canal, extending from Terre Haute to Point Commerce, a distance of forty and a half miles, was put under contract at prices near the estimates, and the work has been pushed forward with great vigor, as is manifest in the heavy disbursements already made upon it is payments to contractors. This division, it is believed, will be ready for navigation some time next fall, and in anticipation of it, and to open the line further south as rapidly as practicable, another letting was had at Point Commerce on the 15th of November last, for the construction of the division of the Canal from that place to Newberry, near the south line of Green county, a distance of seventeen miles. At this terminus a dam is to be erected across the west fork of White river, 425 feet long and 11 feet high, with a river lock so constructed as to avoid any impediment to the river trade. The dam is made to answer both for a feeder and a crossing for the Canal to the eastern side of the river.

In the preliminary survey of the Canal route, made in 1845, the line was run about three-fourths of a mile west of the village of Point Commerce, and a side cut was surveyed and reported, extending from the main line to the bank of Eel River, opposite the village. Before making the final location of the work, a petition was received from the citizens of Point Commerce, praying a change of plan at this point, by which the side cut would be dispensed with and the main line brought a little nearer to the town. Finding from the surveys and report of the locating engineer, that the change of plan devised would not increase the cost, nor otherwise affect unfavorably the public interest, while it would better subserve the wants of this village, whose accommodation was manifestly the only object of the construction of this side cut, the Trustees ordered the Canal to be located in accordance with the petition.

The repairs on the southern end of the Canal, between Pigeon Dam and Evansville, embraced in the plan of the Trustees, to be made this year, have been made.

There has been (been) paid for construction, during the year ending the first day of December, instant, the sum of \$341,953 16, and it is expected that

throughout the present winter, as it was the last, the force now employed upon the canal work will be kept up. The present force employed upon the Canal is equal to 1780 men. There are 96 miles of the main line under contract, from Coal Creek to Newberry, besides the work at Patoka Summit. There remains 72 miles of the line, from Newberry to Pigeon Dam, to be put under contract to complete the entire line.

Although the Trustees have been urged to put some portion of the southern part of the line, between Maysville and Pigeon Dam under contract during the past year, and a good deal of anxiety was manifested on the subject at one time by the citizens of that portion of the State, they have considered that the best interests of the State, and the successful prosecution of the work to completion, would be most effectually promoted by an adherence to the plan which they had, upon mature deliberation, marked out, of finishing the Canal as they go, and not hazarding its final completion by scattering the funds provided for that purpose over too extended a line of work, without securing any practical benefit. This course is the more imperative, as the funds provided for the construction of the Canal is not only limited, but, to a considerable extent, is also contingent and uncertain. The Trustees are more than ever convinced of the propriety of the policy which they have adopted, in this respect, and they cannot doubt that the citizens of the southern counties, through which the Canal passes, are; by this realization of their hopes in the completion of the Canal. For the reasons stated in the last annual report, however, a portion of the rock excavation at the Patoka Summit, in Pike County, was put under contract at the last letting.

The Trustees refer to the report of the Chief Engineer, and the Engineer of construction, herewith transmitted for a detailed exhibition of the state and progress of the canal work at this time. For the purpose of carrying on the work agreeable to the plan of the Trustees, a further call has been made upon the subscribing bondholders, of twenty dollars upon each subscribed bond, to be paid on the first day of February 1849, and the balance of the advance of \$800,000 will be called in during the ensuing year.

The tolls and water rents of the finished part of the Canal for the



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

being an increase over the amount of the previous year, of \$20, 166 19; the expenditure for ordinary repairs, superintendence, &c., amounts to \$34,883 64. A heavy expenditure for extraordinary repairs has also been incurred during the year, and which will probably be necessary for some years to come, in consequence of the decayed and dilapidated condition of many of the locks and other structures, when the Trustees received charge of them. Under the head of extraordinary repairs are embraced the renewal and rebuilding of all decayed structures, built of perishable materials, but which on works of this kind, are usually built of durable materials, as distinguished from the ordinary annual outlays which appertain to the care and management of a Canal. A particular description of the structures on the Canal requiring renewal, will be found in the report of the Chief Engineer, accompanying the last annual report of the Trustees; and his report of this year will exhibit the extent to which such structures have been renewed.

This report, in connection with the reports exhibiting the state and progress of the work on the unfinished part of the Canal, will enable the General Assembly to form some idea of the large amount of work which has been performed by the Trustees, during the year, in the execution of the trust confided to them. It is to the Engineers, in every grade of that service, to whom they are principally indebted for this result for to a thorough knowledge of their respective duties they have added a zeal, energy and perseverance which entitle them to high commendation. None have higher responsibilities to encounter, and animated by a just pride of profession, they have proved themselves worthy of the confidence reposed in them by the Board.

It will be perceived that there has been an increase in the tolls of the Canal for the current year, which would have been still further augmented, but for the deficient wheat crop last year, and the early Fall rains which rendered the roads almost impassable, after the middle of October, as stated by the Chief Engineer in his report.

The Canal has been navigable during the whole season, from the State line to Coal Creek, a distance of 189 miles, and the supply of water has been ample, except on the lower division, between Lafayette and Coal Creek. On this division owing

to the short supply of water, boats could only carry out from one-half to two-thirds of an ordinary load of grain during a period of several months, covering what is known as the dry season; and this has given rise to the most serious complaints on the part of those engaged in the business of transportation on the Canal, and has certainly constituted a considerable drawback upon its tolls and usefulness. The situation of this portion of the Canal, was fully explained in the report of the Trustees, submitted to the General Assembly at their last session, and also the measures adopted by the Trustees have been successful towards removing them. These measures have been partially successful. The raising of the Dams at Delphi has secured the passage of sufficient water through the Lafayette level, and as far South as the Lock at Wea. The consumption of water on the long line of 46 miles thence to Coal Creek, is still found to be great, and including the waste of the Perrysville side cut, requires more than the Superintendents have been able to pass through a forty feet Canal. With some further expenditure in puddling the Canal, at the points of greatest waste, the hope is indulged that they may furnish a better navigation during the ensuing year. The Trustees invite the careful attention of the General Assembly to the facts and statements contained in the report of the Chief Engineer, as they constitute the data-confirmed as they are by the personal observation and enquiries of the Trustees--in view of which they have been constrained to decide, that the construction of the side cuts opposite Williamsport and Independence, in the county of Warren, lying within seven miles of each other, and both of them connected with, and (if made) to be supplied with water from this division of the Canal, would be attended with irreparable injury to the navigation of the main line; and the Trustees see no reason to hope that such side cuts can be made on that division, without such injury to the Canal, and they feel it to be their duty to express this opinion, in the most explicit manner, at the earliest moment after having carefully investigated and considered the subject, and sought for and obtained the requisite information.

With every disposition to meet the wishes and just expectations of those citizens who feel an interest in the construction of these side cuts, the Trustees have still to regard, as much, the interest of that class of the community engaged in the business of

transportation, and also of the farming interest generally, in those counties South of Lafayette, whose agricultural productions are diminished in value by every hindrance to the free and full navigation of the Canal. The trust, as they conceive, was created for great and beneficent ends, which are to be effected by means of it, viz.: the completion of the Canal to the Ohio River, and the establishment of a navigable communication thereby between it and Lake Erie, as well as the payment of one-half of the Public Debt of the State, principal and interest, for which it is pledged, and its ability to meet which is dependent upon the perfect maintenance of the main line, in which also consists its usefulness to the country through which it passes. The Trustees cannot for a moment lose sight of this in the execution on their duties.

Looking to the interest of Warren county alone, the Trustees are unable to perceive that their course is not the one best calculated to subserve it. Their great and leading advantage, in common with the other Wabash counties, consists in obtaining first an uninterrupted and full navigation throughout the main line. There can be no question but the value of the grain in the hands for farmers, on the West side of the Wabash, was diminished during the past season from the want of a full depth of water in the main line, to an amount far exceeding the cost of its ferriage across this stream. The Trustees are of opinion that the true interests of the country on the West side of the Wabash, in reference to this questions, and the interests of the Trust do not conflict. Both alike will be promoted by any judicious and feasible plan or mode on connecting the Canal with the fertile country West of the river, but with both a perfect and sure navigation of the main line is the paramount interest. While the Trustees feel no hesitation as to their duty in thus preferring the leading and more general interest, connected with the great purpose and end of the trust, to the apparent neglect of objects that are more local and subordinate, when the two obviously come in conflict, yet they freely own that they have been much embarrassed by these (apparently conflicting requirements of the law. The incompatibility of these minor provisions with the great design on the law, is attributable, no doubt, to a departure on the part of the Legislature, in the case of the side cuts and Locks, from its previous



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

practice, and from the general usage, in requiring unconditionally their construction, without the precaution of having first ascertained, by an authorized survey and report, the adequateness of the supply of water, and their general feasibility and utility. By reference to the Act providing for a general system of Internal Improvement, passed in 1836, under which the Canal from Lafayette to Terre Haute was prosecuted, power was given to the Board of Internal Improvements to connect, by lockage and other wise, the Canal with the Wabash River, between these points at places where the interest of the State and the convenience of its citizens would, in their opinion, be promoted by such connection; and they were also, by the same law, authorized to permit any county, or association or individuals, to tap the Canal, by side cuts Canal, whenever, in the opinion of said Board, the navigation of the Canal would not be injured thereby; thus effectually guarding the interest of the State and the navigation of the Canal, against injury from any such construction. The Trustees conceive that when called upon to decide, in cases of conflicting interests of this kind, arising under the law, they are under obligations to do what they conceive, the State itself would do, in view of protecting its own and the public interest, under similar circumstances.

The Trustees cannot find that these side cuts were ever undertaken by the State, or that they formed any part of the Wabash and Erie Canal, as surveyed and prosecuted by the State. A literal compliance with the letter of the twenty-ninth section of the amended Act, as insisted upon, irrespective of the other provision so the Act, would seem to require of the Trustees to make the side cuts, before completing the main line, regardless of the effects of such construction upon the navigation of the Canal. Such, surely, could not have been the intention of the Legislature.

A Profile or sketch of the Canal between Deer Creek (Delphi) and Coal Creek, accompanies the report of the Chief Engineer, exhibiting the state of the water.

At the meeting of the Board in Nov. 1847, a letter was addressed to the Auditor of State, requesting to be officially informed of the amount of scrip issued, and the amount outstanding July 1st, 1847, that they might know the exact liability of the

Trust, under the law creating it, to redeem those issues. The Auditor, in his answer, a copy of which is herewith submitted, stated the amount of scrip then outstanding for lands East, to be \$66,607.50, and of scrip for the lands West, \$83,330.; whereupon the Trustees adopted an order directing the Clerk of the Land Office at Logansport, to receive said scrip in payment of lands, at said office, until the amounts so stated to be outstanding, including all sums previously received since July 1st, 1847, should be redeemed, and that thenceforth no more should be received, unless expressly authorized by the Trustees. In a letter from that officer, bearing date the 1st of November last, the information is communicated, that the whole amount of scrip so stated to be outstanding, for lands east of Tippecanoe, had been taken in and redeemed. It is under stood, however, that since then more scrip of this description has been tendered at the Land Office, and was refused by the Officer, in compliance with his duty. The Trustees have not, as yet, instructed their Officer to receive this excess, for they do not feel at liberty to do so. What the actual amount is, over and above what is shown by the books of the Auditor and Treasurer of State, and how it came into circulation, they know not, nor have they any basis upon which to venture an opinion. If they are bound to receive it, where is it to end, and to what extent are the means of the Trust to be thus curtailed? It was legally and properly issued, it is presumed that the books of the Auditor and Treasurer would show it, and if it was not, or while the cause is a mystery, it cannot be expected that it will be redeemed at the expense of the Trust. As to the extent of the liability of the Trust, on this account, it at present rests upon the evidence furnished by the State.

In connection with this subject, is another, which the Trustees feel bound to bring to the attention of the Legislature.

A short time before the compliment of the scrip for lands east was received at Logansport, as above state, scrip of that description, to the amount of about \$600.00 bearing date August 27th, 1847, was tendered at that office, the fact reported to this office for instructions, and the Officer there directed not to receive it.

The Trustees took possession of the Canal July 1st, 1847, in pursuance of authority from the Executive, and the patent transferring the entire trust property, was executed

on the 31st of that month; and it is respectfully submitted whether such issues of scrip, by the State, after that period, can bind the Trust. If so, the State may at any time, now or hereafter, at its pleasure, thus increase the liabilities of the Trust. In a communication from the auditor of State, dated September, 21st, 1848, made upon facts derived from the Treasurer, it appears that this scrip was paid to contractors for work done on the Northport Feeder Dam, that payments in scrip to the amount of \$2,666.00 were made to contractors on that work, since July 1st, 1847, and that a part of this amount, probably six or seven hundred dollars, was dated August 27th, 1847, and the balance consisted of old scrip which had been redeemed and paid into the Treasury, but re-issued for the purpose. Now, the Northport Feeder Dam certainly forms no part of the Wabash & Erie Canal, but is located remotely from it, in the county of Noble; and the Act of Congress of March 2d, 1827, granting the canal lands to the State, expressly declare, that they are granted for the purpose of aiding the State in opening the Canal, and that they "shall be subject to the disposal of the State for the purposes aforesaid, an no other"; and the Act of the Legislature creating the Trust for the completion of the Canal, contains an express pledge that the tolls, revenues, lands and proceeds shall not be appropriated, except for the purposes of said Trust, until the same were fully complied with. In neither view of the case, then, was it the duty of the Trustees, as they are at present advised, to receive said scrip, but the old scrip, it is presumed, has all been again taken in.

The Trustees have further to remark, under this head, that while endeavoring to effect a settlement of accounts with the State, application was made to the Auditor for the balance of \$1,129.59 in the----(pages 124 to 130 omitted)

Respectfully submitted,  
CHARLES BUTLER, THO. H. BLAKE, A.M. PUETT, Trustees of Wabash and Erie Canal.

OFFICE AT TERRE HAUTE,  
December 9th, 1848.



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

In the Chief Engineers Report to the General Assembly in January 1853 about the Wabash and Erie Canal, Jesse Lynch Williams said the following about the side cut canals that had been built and the fight by Williamsport to keep its side cut open:

"While the navigation of the canal has been uninterrupted by branches, it will be perceived that the important division, between Attica and Terre Haute, has suffered for want of an adequate supply of water during the latter part of summer and early fall, when the waters of the feeder streams usually fail; and that this deficiency has been aggravated by the drain of the Williamsport Side Cut. The Chief Engineer, in the discharge of his duty to protect the navigation of the main line of the canal, took measures to guard it against the drain of the side cut, when the necessity occurred at the period of low water, by closing it. 'The stop planks were however forcibly removed,' he remarks, 'by order of the Directors of the Side Cut.' and the relief anticipated from this measure, to the boats navigating the main line, was prevented."

"It is out of the question for the Trustees to undertake the maintenance of the navigation of the main line of the canal by force; they will endeavor to protect it by means which the laws of the State furnish, and if these are found inadequate or defective to meet so high-handed an outrage, they will again appeal to the Legislature for such further acts as may be required. It is to be regretted that the great interests of the state at large, and the agricultural interest bordering upon the canal in particular, should be so seriously affected and injured by an interest that is entirely local."

"In former reports, the Trustees have communicated to the Legislature the facts in regard to this case, and the ground of their action. They will only add, that the waste of water, and the injurious effects of their side cut upon the canal, have proved to be fully equal to the estimates made."

The Chief Engineer's report of 1848 stated that "The consumption of water by leakage and evaporation from the side cut Canals will be about equal to the usual allowance of 100 feet per minute per mile. The united length of the two side cuts, being a fraction over one and one-fourth miles, will draw from the main line for this item of waste 125 cubic feet per minute."

"Estimating from the above data, the total waste of water from the construction of the two side cuts at Independence and Williamsport, may be stated as follows:

By unavoidable leakage through the two flights of locks per minute.....	1,000 cu. ft.
For the passage of boats through the locks..	50 cu. ft.
Allowance for leakage and evaporation for 1 1/4 miles of Canal.....	125 cu. ft.
Total loss per minute:.....	1,175 cu. ft.

The canal company was sued by Williamsport in the Fountain circuit court to supply more water to the side cut. The canal company was able to prove that they did not have enough water for the main canal let alone for the side cut. The Williamsport Side Cut's locks rotted and nothing was repaired thus ending the usefulness of the side cut canal.

### History of Williamsport

In 1828 William Harrison who owned land in Warren County hired Perrin Kent, a surveyor, and laid out Williamsport (William's Port). Four blocks of eight lots were laid out on Water, Second, and Third Street while Main extended in the center both southwest and northwest with Warren on the northeast. In June 1829 an act was passed relocating the county seat from Warrenton to Williamsport. Those who owned lots in Warrenton were permitted to transfer to lots similarly situated in Williamsport.

In July 1829 Thomas Gilbert laid out the first addition of four blocks of eight lots and one-half block of four lots to the southwest of the original plat followed by the northwest addition of Isaac Rains, twelve blocks of eight lots, including a public square, which eventually became the business district.

William Harrison was the first citizen of the town. He built a log house and a dock on the bank of the Wabash river at the foot of Main Street. He obtained a horse ferry boat which he operated across the river to and from his "port." Some say it was called "Bill's Port." He paid a license of \$5 annually to operate his ferry. Israel Canby operated the ferry for him. Some years later he opened a tavern and a grocery.

Sanford C. Cox was the first school teacher in Williamsport. Of the five families who lived within the town, only two had children large enough for schooling and the rest came from 2-3 miles around. Cox kept a diary and wrote wonderful descriptions about the early times of the area. James Cunningham, who was the county clerk and recorder, employed Cox at night to write up his office work since he was busy building a couple of flatboats to carry his crops to market in the spring.

Cox described the natural surroundings



## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

of Williamsport as follows:

"The natural scenery around the town of Williamsport is romantic and beautiful in the highest degree and well worth the pencil of an artist or the pen of the poet. A range of hills surrounded the original town, on the north and west, crowned with amphitheatre ranges of trees, whose tops gradually rose above each other in such regular graduations, that in the spring time when robed in green, or when attired in variegated hues of Autumn, they reminded one of a good comely mother, surrounded with her bevy of lovely daughters, bedecked with green, scarlet or yellow according to the age, taste or caprice of the wearer. A few clumps of tall pines are intermixed with these trees, along the steep cliffs that overhand the south bank of Fall Branch, a small stream that meanders through a narrow and fertile valley which lies on the north side of town. This little stream takes its name from a cataract where its pellucid waters are precipitated over falls some eighty or a hundred feet high, into a deep chasm, resembling the deep narrow bed of the Niagara River, which is born of the most stupendous and sublime cataract in the world.

"Near the falls is a deep chasm or fissure in the stone produced no doubt by an earthquake or some great convulsion of nature, along which pedestrians can walk in single file from the top of the hill through this subterranean passage to the foot of the falls. Any person fond of the marvelous, or desirous of being reminded of the dark valley of the shadow of death, can gratify their curiosity by taking a lonely ramble down this deep dark descent." (This fissure was destroyed by quarry men getting out the stone.) "The interest of this little Niagara is greatly enhanced during the summer and winter freshets, when the accumulated waters of Fall Branch leap and thunder over the rocks, throwing up foam and spray that forms a mimic rainbow above the heads of the aquatic shrubs and bushes that line the banks of the noisy streamlet, which laughs and leaps along in the sunlight a few hundred yards until it is lost in the placid bosom of the Wabash River which rolls its broad clear current along the eastern margin

of town."

"At the Falls, and in the hills around the town, is to be found some of the best sand and free stone in the state. A few huge specimens about the size of an ordinary courthouse can be seen lying around on the surface of the grounds in several places near the town, as if nature had placed them there to direct the attention of the rich quarries beneath."



Enos Cannutt published the **Warren Republican**. In an editorial column of the **Republican**, John Gregory said, "To destroy the sublime works of nature to obtain the value of the stone was about as wise as it would be for the owner of a valuable painting of one of the old masters to scrape all the paint from the canvas to obtain the value of the pigment." Yet the rock was blasted and removed eliminating the fissure.

Isaac Martin sold the first dry goods, William Search kept a boarding house, and after 1829 James Cunningham built flatboats. Dr. Jones H. Buell was the first resident physician, and others began selling "foreign and domestic" groceries. It was not uncommon to see Native Americans stopping for whiskey or tobacco in town. Other townsfolk included Welery Larch and Wild Cat Wilson. The town grew from 25 to 250 by 1840 and 350 by 1850.

Enos Canutt established the **Wabash Commercial** in 1848 and did much to place Williamsport on the list of important commercial centers in western Indiana. Thus in 1854 it was incorporated.

By 1856 regular trains ran across the

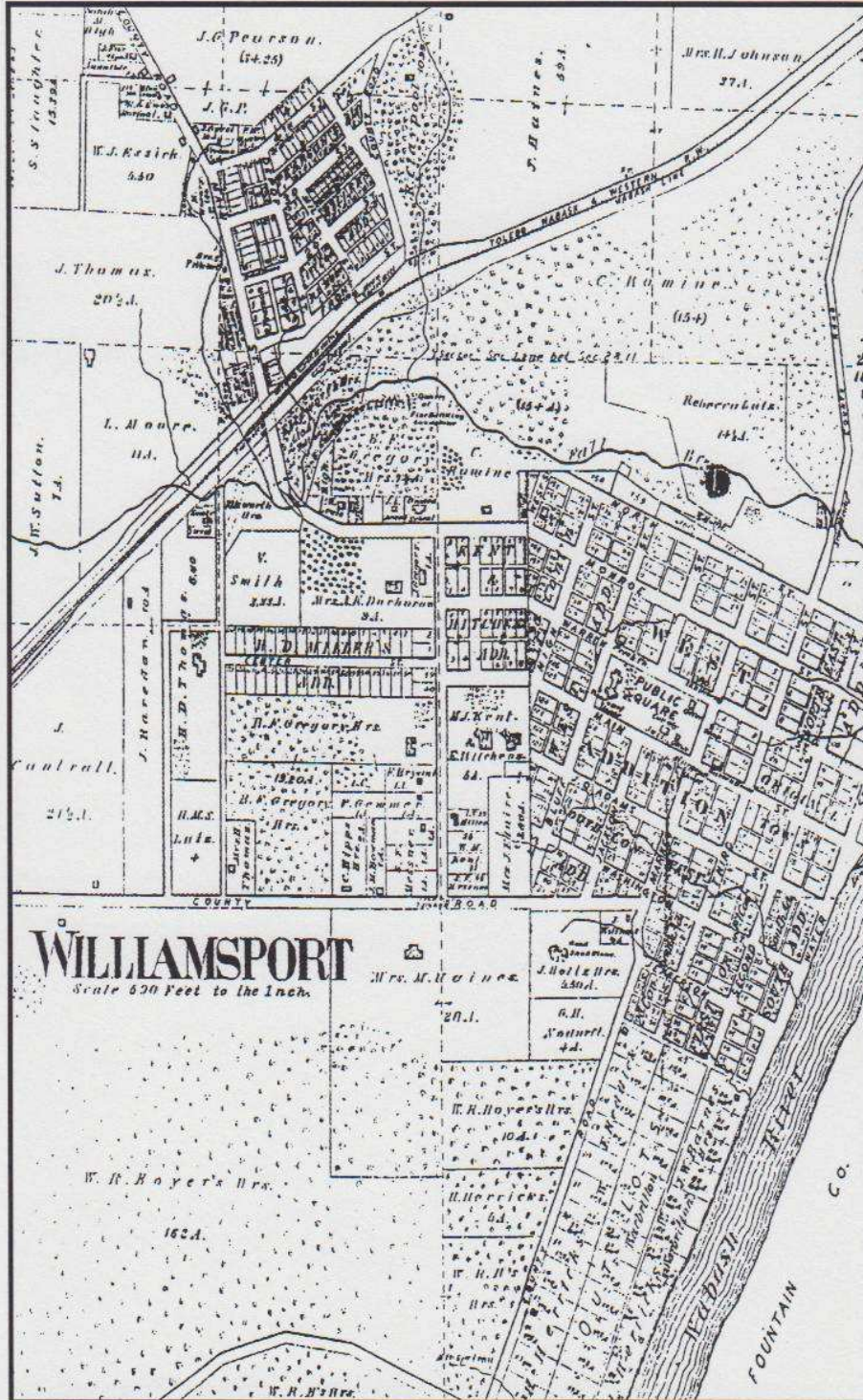


## CELEBRATING CANAL COMMUNITIES

county and the canal declined. The railroad was located north of the town because earlier the citizens didn't want it to pass through their town. William Kent laid out lots for a new town further north and the business interests gradually moved up near the railroad at the expense of the old town.

Williamsport failed rapidly after the canal fell into disrepair. It probably owes its existence today to the fact that it was the county seat for Warren County.

Today buffalo can once again be found in Williamsport. Patti Lee has established a sixty-five acre buffalo ranch where bison once roamed.



### WILLIAMSPORT ATLAS OF WARREN COUNTY, INDIANA

1877

J.H. Beers &  
Company

Williamsport owes much of its development to the side cut canal that was constructed off the main line of the Wabash & Erie Canal below Attica. The boats were lowered into the Wabash via a guard lock and poled across the river to Williamsport. The boats docked along the side of the river landing to load and unload.



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### CONSTRUCTING THE CANAL BED

This picture, which is part of a display outside the visitor's center at Piqua, Ohio, shows how canal men used slip scoops, wheelbarrows, carts, picks, shovels, horses and oxen to construct the canal bed. Note the oxen pulling a platform of heavy logs to compact the canal bed. The Great Miami River is in the background.

Photo by Bob Schmidt