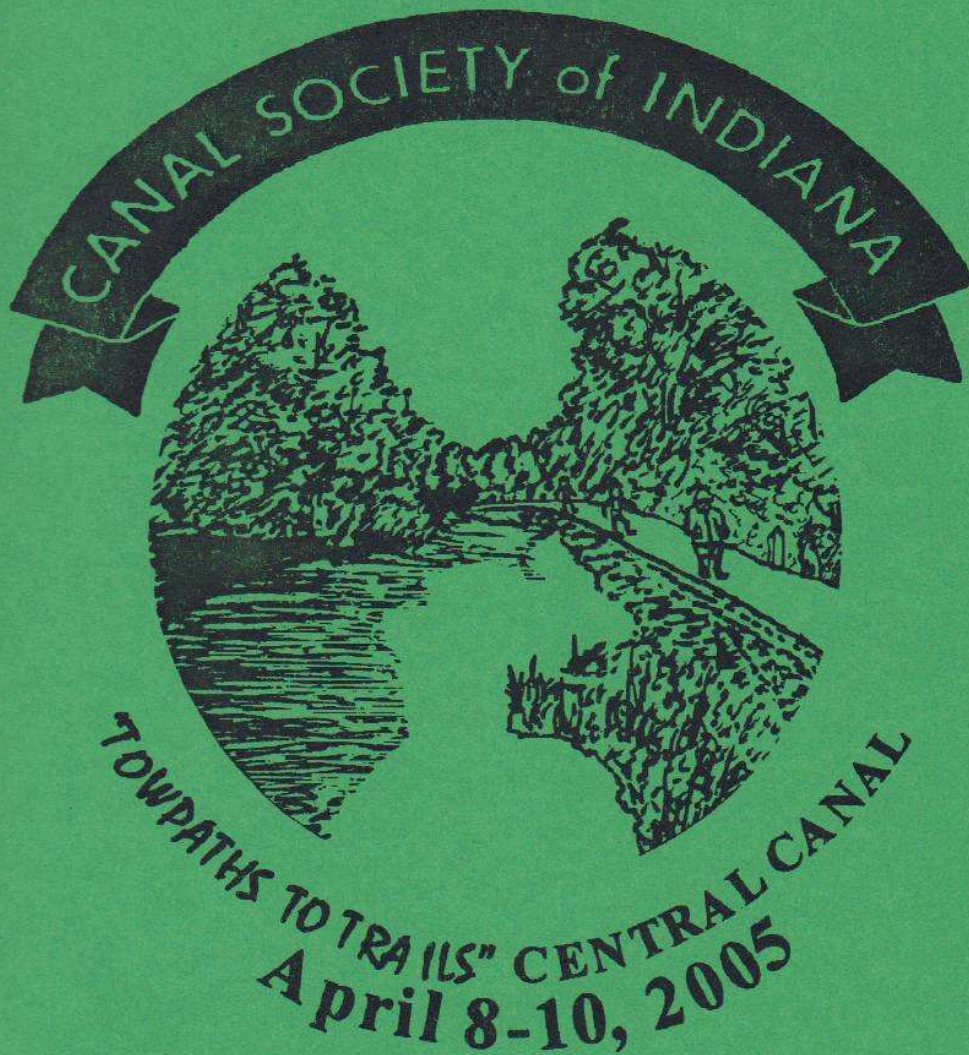
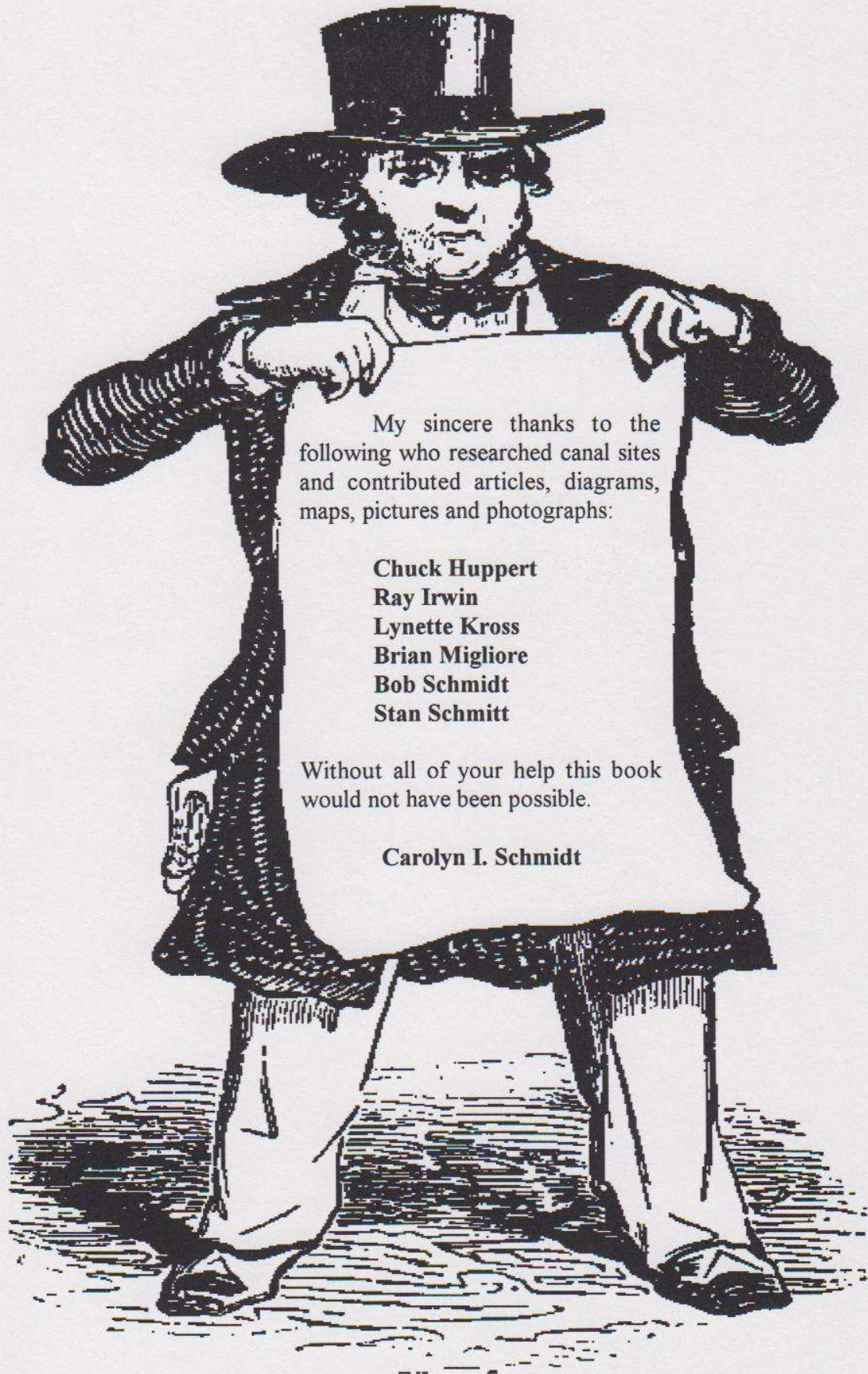


INDIANA'S OLD & NEW CENTRAL CANAL



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



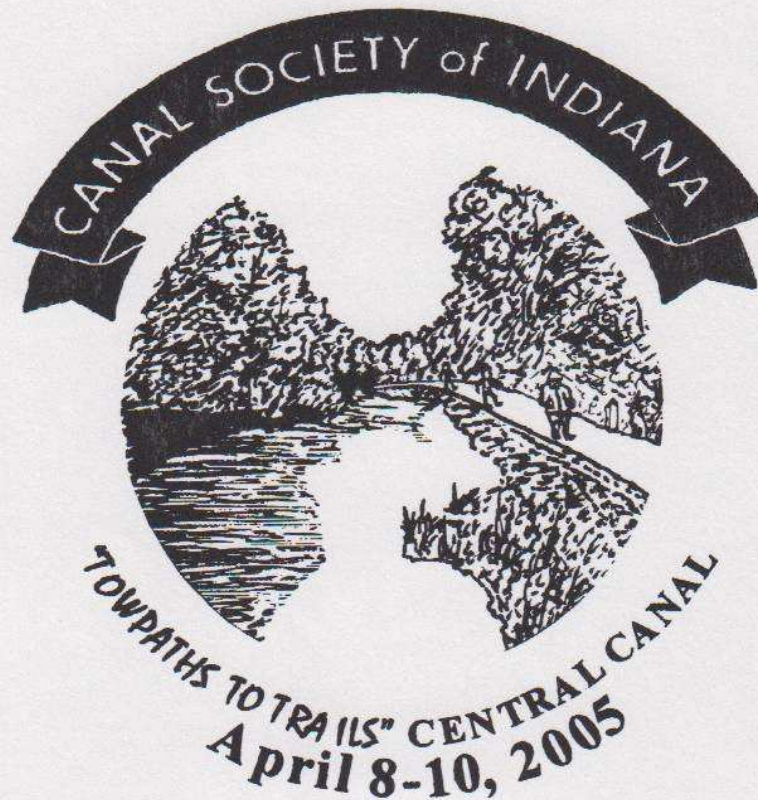
My sincere thanks to the following who researched canal sites and contributed articles, diagrams, maps, pictures and photographs:

**Chuck Huppert
Ray Irwin
Lynette Kross
Brian Migliore
Bob Schmidt
Stan Schmitt**

Without all of your help this book would not have been possible.

Carolyn I. Schmidt

INDIANA'S OLD & NEW CENTRAL CANAL



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FOREWORD

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS

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.

Having previously had several tours of the Central Canal focusing on what remains of the canal, it was decided that this tour should focus on what has been done in the 20th and 21st centuries to revitalize the canal — from towpath to trail. We learn the process involved in turning a canal that had become a liability into one which is now an asset through articles in this book and through speakers at our banquet from the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development and from Indianapolis Greenways.

We discover that using the Central Canal as a water conduit from the White River at Broad Ripple to the city's water purification plant kept the canal from being obliterated. We find that its being ignored for years probably helped save it.

We stroll the downtown portion of the canal seeing its memorials, fountains, museums, landscaping, and upscale housing. We hike the Greenways Central Canal Towpath Trail noting the use of old restored bridges for pedestrian traffic, landscaping, and mile markers. We see the Gronauer Lock, a timber-frame lock from the Wabash & Erie Canal in the Indiana State Museum. It was much like the Central Canal locks at Kansas and Senate Avenue.

We also see how this revitalization is promoted through brochures and website pages encouraging tourism. This knowledge can be used for other areas along Indiana's canals.

Although I usually ask canawlers to sit back, relax, and think back to the 1830s-1870s when horses pulled boats, I now suggest that you get out there, hike the trails and walk the walks. Better yet, ask questions about how you can encourage communities along our canals to put in towpath trails and save these remnants of our canal heritage.

Welcome aboard!

Carolyn I. Schmidt



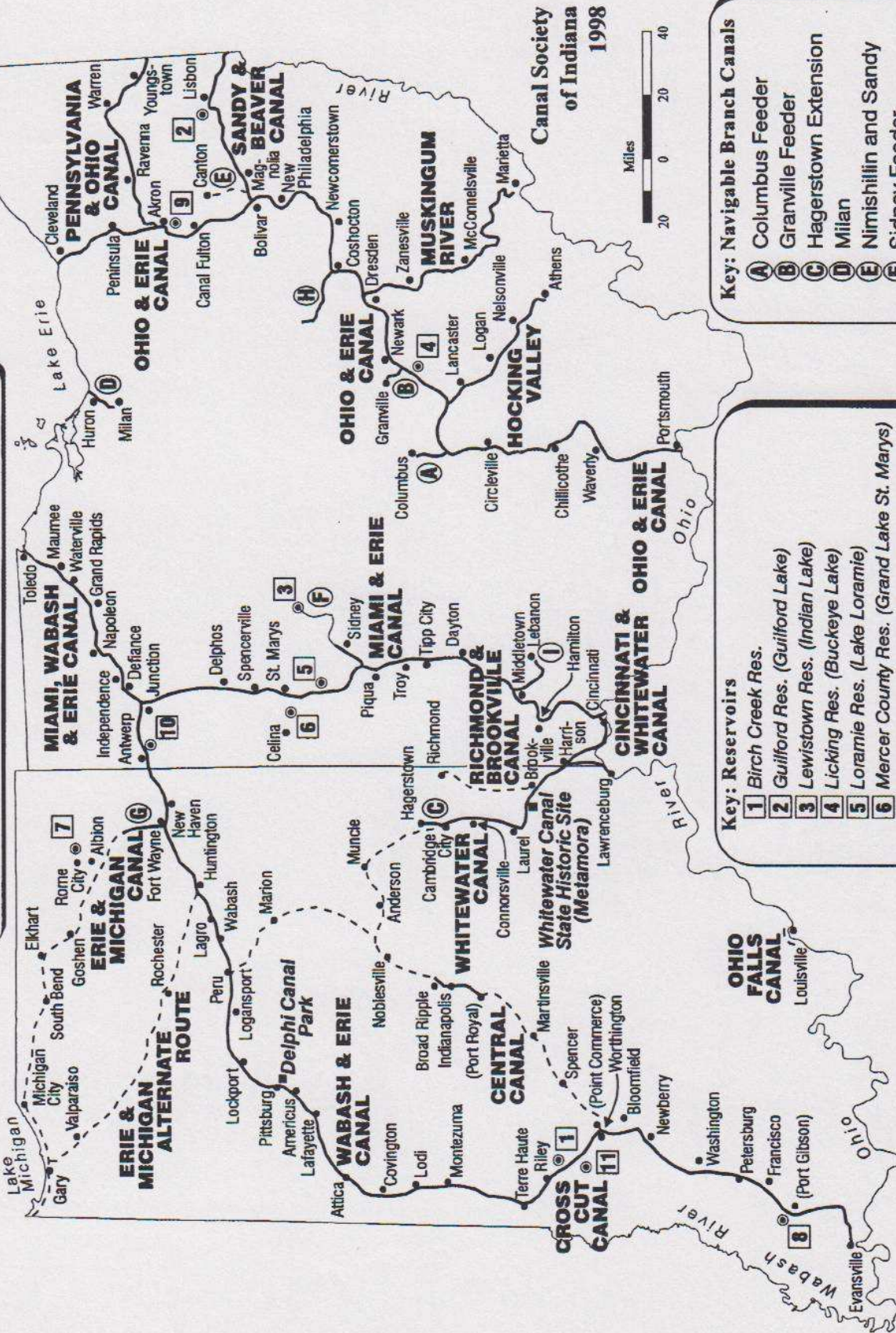
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TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

Canal Systems of Indiana and Ohio



Key: Navigable Branch Canals

- A** Columbus Feeder
- B** Granville Feeder
- C** Hagerstown Extension
- D** Milan
- E** Nimishilin and Sandy
- F** Sidney Feeder
- G** St. Joseph Feeder
- H** Walhonding
- I** Warren County

Key: Reservoirs

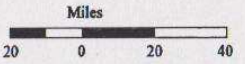
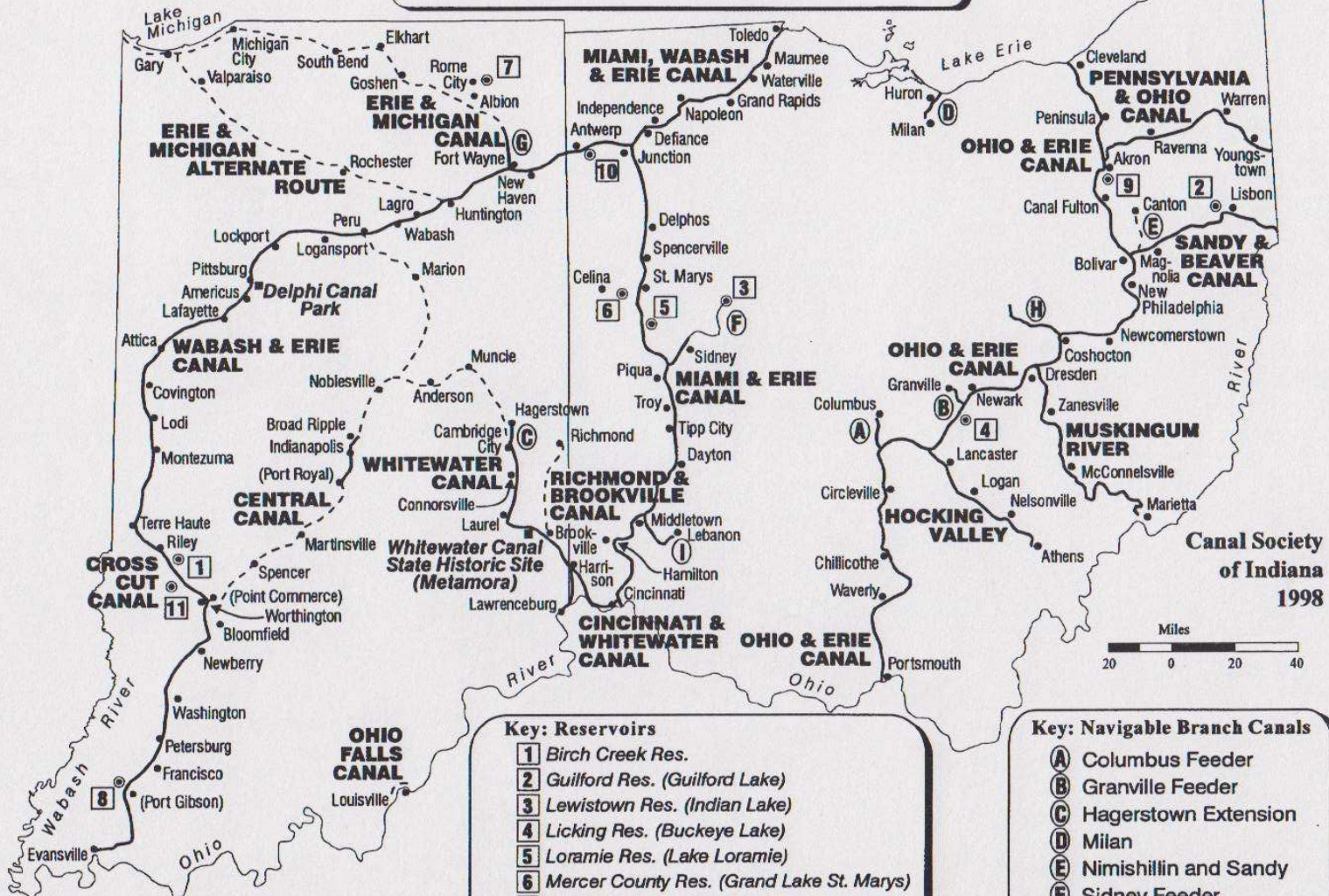
- 1** Birch Creek Res.
- 2** Guilford Res. (Guilford Lake)
- 3** Lewistown Res. (Indian Lake)
- 4** Licking Res. (Buckeye Lake)
- 5** Loramie Res. (Lake Loramie)
- 6** Mercer County Res. (Grand Lake St. Marys)
- 7** Northport Res. (Sylvan Lake)
- 8** Pigeon Creek Res.
- 9** Portage Lakes
- 10** Six Mile Res.
- 11** Splunge Creek Res.

Legend

- Canal or Canalized Rivers
- Canal Proposed or Incomplete
- City or Town
- ⊙ Reservoir
- Park

Prepared by C. McOmber, Cartographic Services, Department of Geography, Ball State University, 1998.

Canal Systems of Indiana and Ohio



Canal Society of Indiana 1998

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TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

The Central (Hydraulic) Canal in Marion Co., Indiana 1876 Baskin and Forster

White River Feeder Dam

Broad Ripple

White River

Central Canal
(A hydraulic canal by
1876)

Rocky Ripple

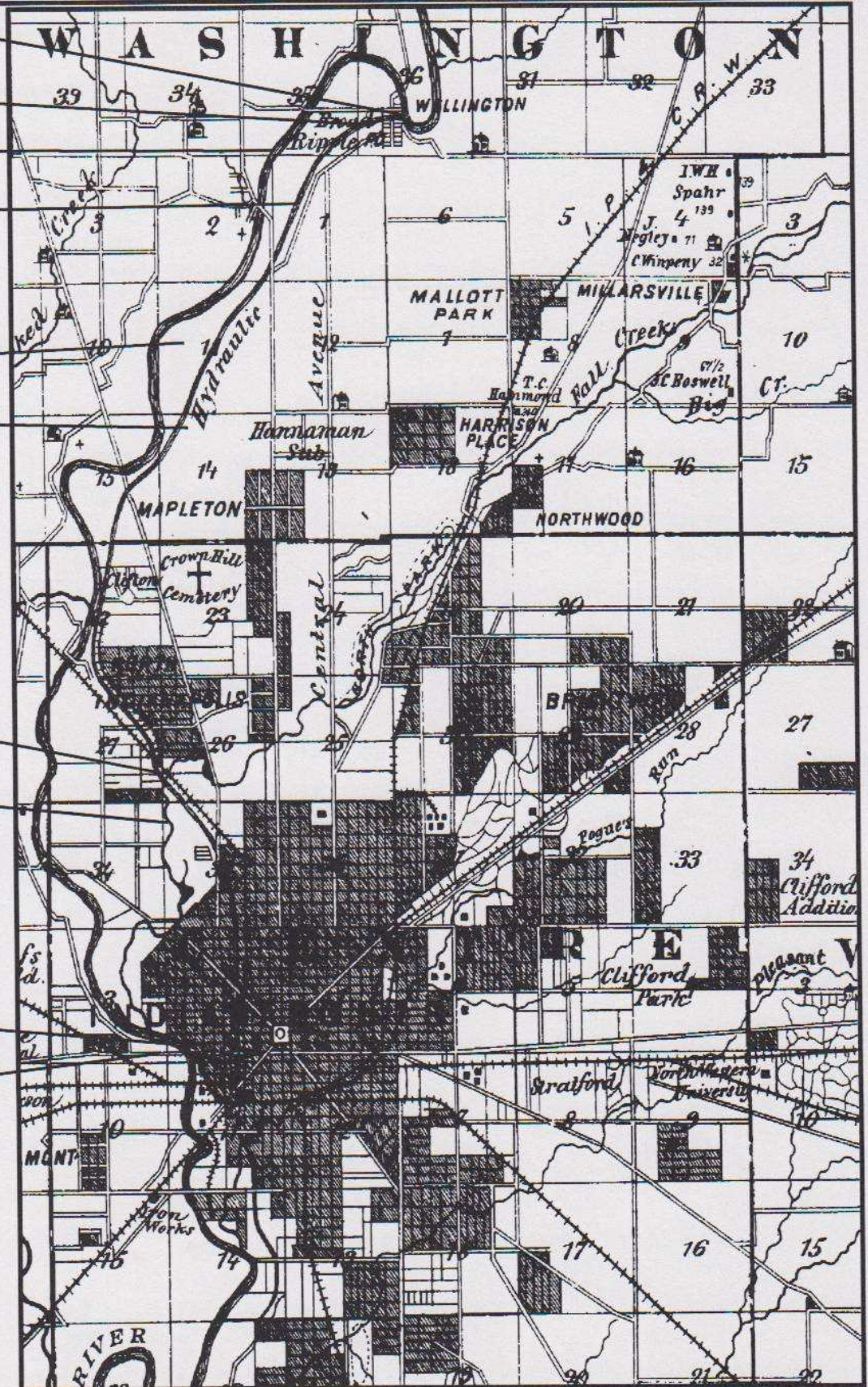
Butler University

Fall Creek Aqueduct

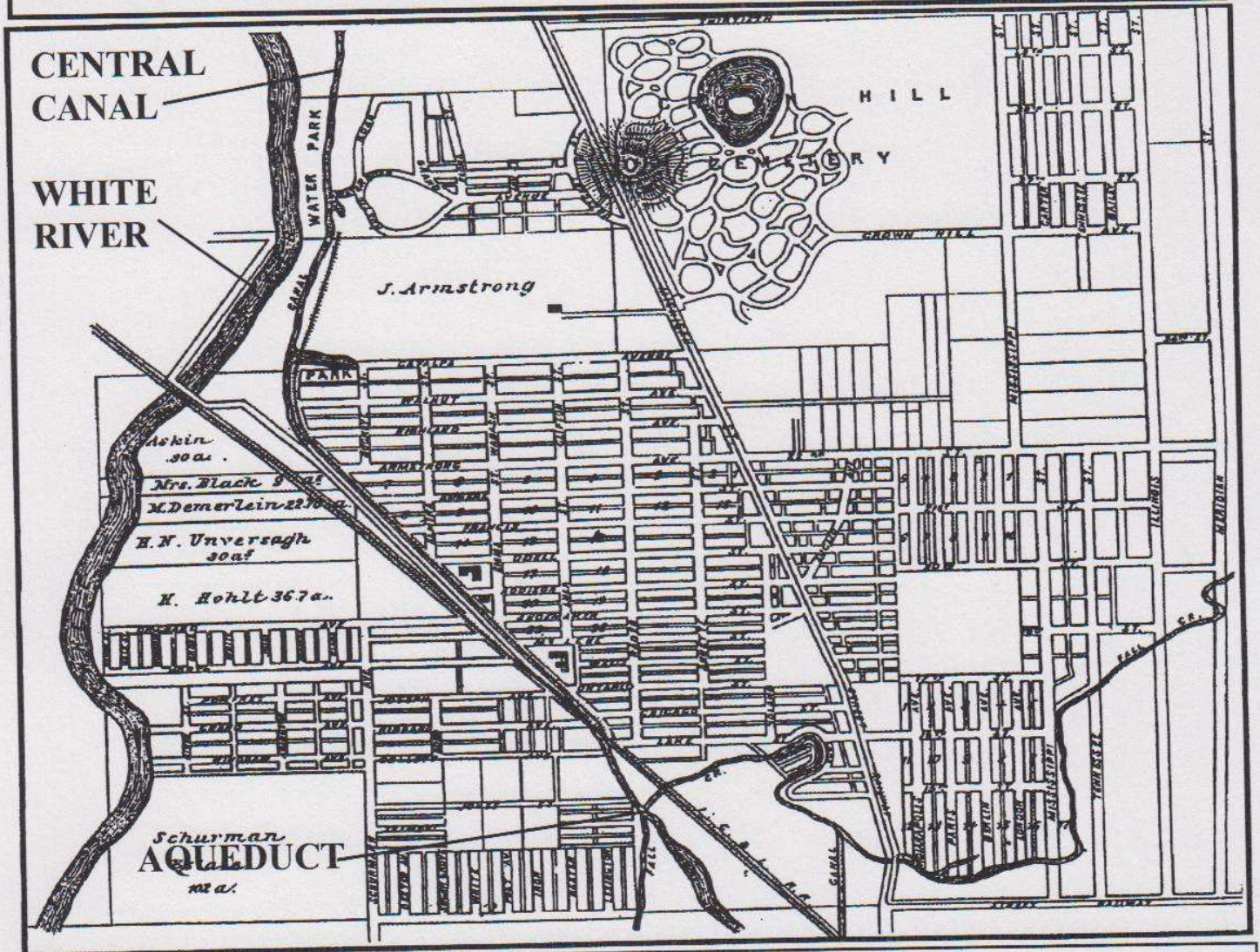
Fall Creek

White River State Park

National Road



TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL



**The Central Canal in North Indianapolis
1876 Baskin & Forster**



Boat leaves Indianapolis at 10:00 in the morning and returns at six in the evening. Good order at all times will be preserved. Fare one dollar. Persons visiting Broad Ripple are assured that good entertainment will be found by those desiring eatables, etc.

Advertisement of Robert Earl

ROBERT EARL'S CANAL BOATS

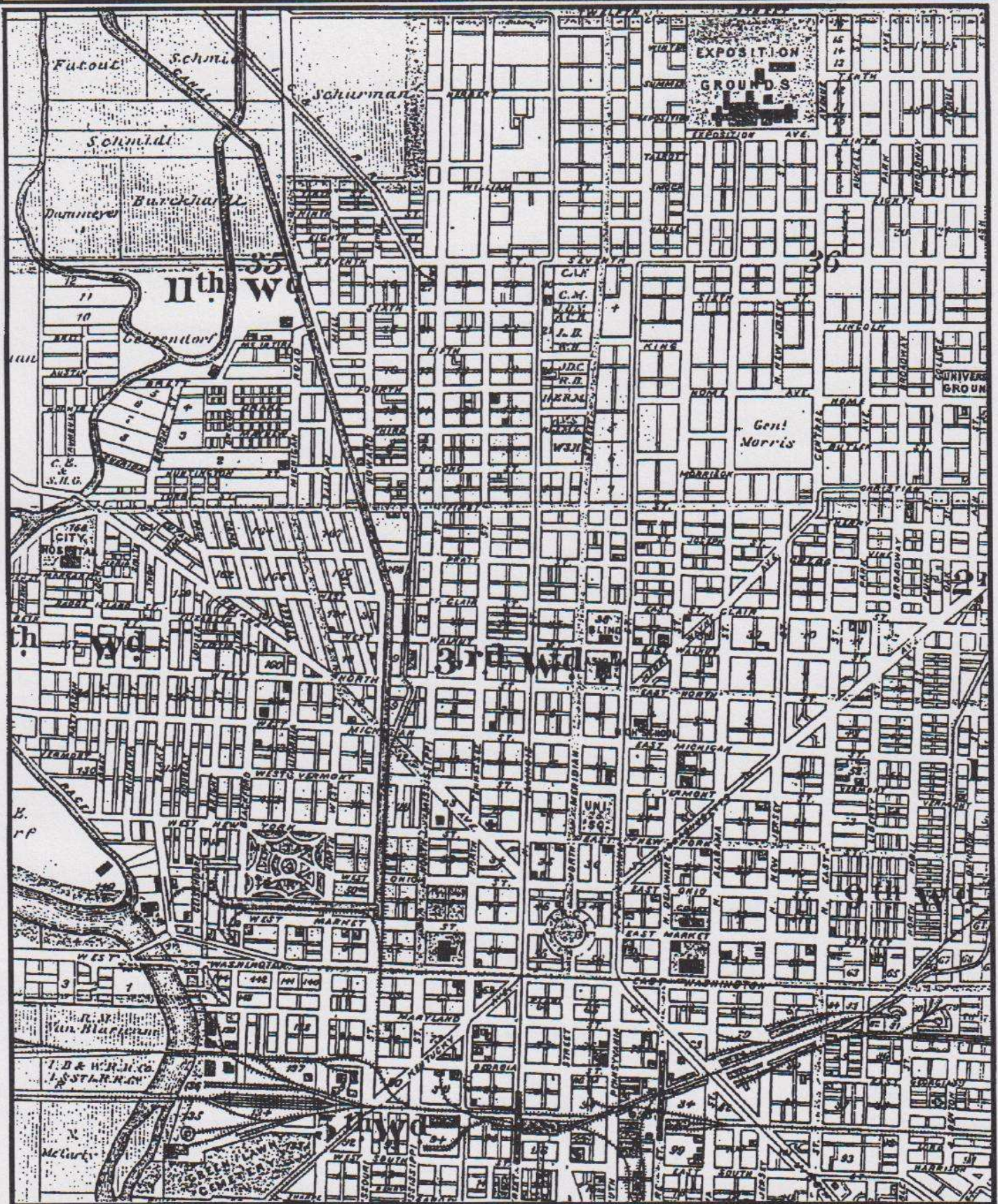
The only connection the settlers of Broad Ripple/Wellington had with Indianapolis before the completion of the Central Canal was a dirt road. They were elated when this portion of the canal was completed.

The "Silver Bell," an elaborately decorated, silver [painted, canal packet boat, was the first to offer service when this section of the canal was opened. It offered the fastest travel anywhere in Indiana at eight miles an hour.

Robert Earl soon had a line of canal boats pulled by mules walking along the towpath. He also built a flat-bottom boat, which he christened the "David Burr" for the commissioner of the Wabash & Erie Canal.

In 1844 during Polk and Clay's presidential campaigns, political parties were held on the decks of Earl's flat-boats. A heated political argument arose during one of these fishing trips. The patron thoughtlessly took a backward step and fell into the canal. This led to the rumor that "unruly people attending these political parties were thrown overboard."

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL



1876 Plan of Indianapolis by S. W. Durant, Civil Engineer, St. Charles, IL
The Central Canal crosses Fall Creek into town, turns west at Market St. and south to Pump House.

CENTRAL CANAL TIME LINE

1827

March 2, an act of Congress granted the State of Indiana 527,271 acres of land from the mouth of the Tippecanoe river at the Wabash river to the mouth of the Auglaize river at the Maumee river upon the conditions that the canal would be commenced within five years, completed within twenty years and the federal government would be able to use it free of tolls. This was to be the Wabash & Erie Canal.

1828

January 5, Indiana accepted the grant fully intending to fulfill the federal government's conditions. Another act authorized the construction of the canal from the navigable water of the Wabash river to the navigable water of the Maumee river. Canal commissioners were appointed nine days later to begin work on the Wabash & Erie Canal.

1832

February 22, A ground-breaking ceremony was held in Ft. Wayne, IN, on the anniversary of George Washington's birthday to begin what was to become the longest canal in the world — the 468 mile long Wabash & Erie Canal.

1835

January 27, Governor Noah Noble signed the Mammoth Improvement Bill, which included eight major public projects, one of which was the Central Canal. Compared to the other seven projects, it was the most expensive at \$3,500. Some disputed building this canal and were in favor of building a railroad, which was new technology at the time.

1836

Construction of the 24 mile long Indianapolis division from Broad Ripple to Port Royal of the Central Canal began. The Canal also had a northern division from Peru to Broad Ripple and

a southern division from Port Royal (Waverly) to Evansville, IN.

1839

June 27, Water was first let into the Central Canal at the feeder dam in Broad Ripple and filled the canal for 8 miles to Pleasant Run, a creek that empties into the White River in southern Center Township.

August, All improvement projects were halted due to Indiana's indebtedness of \$18,500,000. There being insufficient funds to finish constructing the canal, workers laid down picks and shovels.

1840

A report showed Indiana's cost for all canals was \$19,914,400. Only 231 miles were completed.

1841

February 12, A bill was passed by the Indiana State Legislature requiring the completion of the Whitewater Canal and the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad. No action occurred.

1844

Population of counties bordering the canals increased 97% due to canal commerce. At points along a canal as many as 400 wagons a day waited to be unloaded.

1850

January 21, Indiana ordered the Central Canal to be sold.

November 6, The northern division of the Central Canal was sold to Francis A. Conwell.

1851

A new state constitution was created. June 30, Indiana sold the canal to the Central Canal Manufacturing, Hydraulic and Waterworks Company of Rochester, NY.

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

1869

October 7, The Central Canal was sold for \$200,000. to the Indianapolis Hydraulic Co., predecessor of the Indianapolis Water Co.

1870

A portion of the Central Canal from Broad Ripple to Indianapolis became an important part of the Indianapolis public water supply, turned many different types of mill wheels and was a source of ice for storage and sale.

1881

April 21, The Indianapolis Water Company (5th owner) purchased the canal for \$500,000. The canal was used to power turbines, which pumped water from wells to Indianapolis.

1904

The Indianapolis Water Company began to use water from the Central Canal as a source for purification and distribution to customers.

1913

Heavy rains and a major flood washed out the Central Canal banks.

1960s

The Central Canal was forced underground for a short distance by the Interstate system.

1969

The Indianapolis Water Company discontinued using the Central Canal for a source of water power at its West Washington Street station and put the downtown portion (2.25 miles) south of 16th Street up for sale.

1971

The Central Canal was dedicated as an American Water Landmark by the American Water Association.

1976

The downtown portion of the Central Canal was donated to the City of Indianapolis.

1985

The downtown Central Canal was drained south of Interstate 65, lowered, rebuilt using concrete, and filled from a skyscraper's geothermal heating and cooling system. It later became known as the "Indianapolis Canal Walk."

1990

The Indianapolis Greenways Task force was created. Since then they have developed over 65 miles of trails in which the Central Canal Towpath is included. This towpath trail extends from the guard lock above the White River Dam at Broad Ripple to the junction with White River at 30th Street.

1992

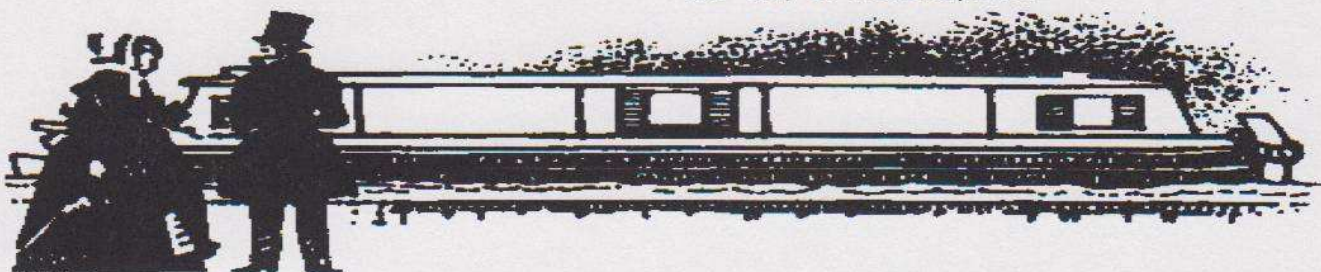
The Central Canal was breached behind Butler University and over 70% of Indianapolis' water supply was lost until the canal was repaired.

1997

The Central Canal was purchased by Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO later NiSource).

2002

April 30, The Central Canal was sold back to the City of Indianapolis.



**A BRIEF
COMMENTARY
ON INDIANA'S
CENTRAL
CANAL**

By Charles B. Huppert



The Central Canal towpath and prism north of Indianapolis, Indiana, is overgrown by trees today. Photo by Chuck Huppert

Indiana's Central Canal was conceived as the largest portion of the vast Internal Improvements Bill, which was signed into law by Governor Noah Noble on January 27, 1836. The Bill carried a \$10 million price tag and its largest single project, among canals, railroads, vehicular roads and improvement of the Wabash River, was the Central Canal whose 296 mile pathway consumed \$3.5 million of the total. The Central Canal was the longest of the canals planned to be built in Indiana. Of the eight different projects contemplated by the Bill, the Central Canal was outlined as follows:

"Central Canal, commencing at the most suitable point on the Wabash and Erie Canal between Fort Wayne and Logansport,¹ running thence to Muncietown, thence to Indianapolis, thence down the valley of the west fork of White River to its junction with the east fork of said river, and thence by the most practicable route to Evansville on the Ohio River: *Provided however,* The said Board of Internal Improvement may, if it shall be found most practicable and conducive to the interests of the State, select the lower or Pipe creek route in the line north from Indianapolis, than and in that case a Feeder shall be made to commence at Muncietown and communicated with said Central Canal at some convenient point on the

same, which feeder shall be of equal size and capacity with the main canal, and made equally convenient for the purposes of navigation and be constructed simultaneously with the said main canal, and in all other respects provided for in like manner with the same. For the construction of which Central Canal and navigable Feeder, the sum of three million five hundred thousand dollars is hereby appropriated."

The genesis of canals in the expanding northwest was a direct result of the 1825 success of the Erie Canal, which connected the upper Hudson River and the Niagara River north of Buffalo and on to Lake Erie. Thus the Great Lakes were for the first time connected to eastern ports and the Atlantic Ocean by water. "Canal Fever" soon became rampant in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana. If a Northwest territory state could gain access to the Great Lakes, there would be water transportation to and from the eastern markets. Constituents in those states thought that canals could provide the solution to the problem of isolation, which was holding up the development of land-locked areas. Railroads were in infancy and not generally recognized as a viable means of transportation. Vehicular roads were wholly inadequate. Rivers and

¹ At that time it was thought that the Wabash and Erie Canal would only have to be constructed to Logansport where the Wabash River would be navigable.

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

CENTRAL CANAL CONTRACTORS FOR THE NORTHERN DIVISION BROAD RIPPLE DAM TO STONE QUARRY AT BLUFFS (OCT. 4, 1836) DAVID BURR, THOSE IN BOLD WERE LATER

SECTION	CONTRACTOR
1	Burke & Ferree
2	Geryer, Young & Co.
3	James M'Cluer
4	Ferguson & Kimberlin
5	Edward Penderville
6	Devine & Sheridan
7	Thomas Fitzgibbon & Co.
8	James N. Pope
9	T. J. Matlock
10	James Sheehan & Co.
11	T. J. Matlock
12	S. & C. Connelly
13	Cassatt & Barnett
14	Barcus & Kinirk
15	George W. Stipp
16	John S. Matlock & Co.
17	Z. W. & C. Sutherland
18	A. Wilson
19	Elder & Smith
20	Ferree & Adams
21	J. Herrin & Co.
22	A. Murphy & Co.
23	Andrew Wilson
24	R. Calvin
25	J. S. Matlock
26	Robert Potter
27	J. Herrin & Co.
28	Drillard & Murphy
29	Thomas Moore & Co.
30	John S. Matlock & Co.
31	James Sheehan & Co.
32	Brown, Moore & Co.
33	Naylor & Alcorn
34	J. D. Farrell & Co.
35	Nichols & Matlock
36	Coffee & Ferriter
37	Naylor & Hiatt
38	John Burk
39	Schofield & Co.
40	J. D. Burt

41	Joseph M. Matlock
42	John D. Kuntz
43	A. Little
44	John P. Terry
45	James Smith
46	John P. Terry

CENTRAL CANAL CONTRACTORS FOR THE SOUTHERN DIVISION PIGEON CREEK DAM TO EVANSVILLE (NOV. 1, 1836), SAMUEL HALL

SECTION	CONTRACTOR
1	John G. Freeman
2	John G. Freeman
3	John G. Freeman
4	Perkins Allen
5	Perkins Allen
6	Murphy & Allen
7	Rowley & Sherwood
8	Rowley & Sherwood
9	Rowley & Sherwood
10	Rowley & Sherwood
11	Perkins Allen
12	William Walker
13	William Walker
14	Henry Ryner
15	Henry Ryner
16	Rowley & Sherwood
17	Rowley & Sherwood
18	Osborn & Castle

The Central Canal contractor "imported hordes of Irish workmen, who came with their soft, musical voices and powerful shoulders to add color and swagger to the town ...Hard drinkers as well as hard workers, the Irish had an ingrained sense of justice, were quick to take offense, and their brawls and fights became legendary. As the work progressed, lines of workmen's shanties rose on the canal banks to form a series of melancholy silhouettes against the evening sky. Set in the mud and sand and the piles of cleared trees and underbrush, these dreary little 'towns' were places of smoky chimneys, gray wash hung on sagging lines, bawling babies and thin, half-naked, dirty-faced children and work-worn women. Only on 'Smoky Row,' a row of dilapidated rental cabins in town, and 'Colored Town' on the outskirts of the donation would one find the same scenes and smells of poverty. Edward A. Leary, *Indianapolis: The Story Of A City*, 1970.

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

streams had been used by the predecessors of early pioneers, the Indians, as chief means of transportation. But, as stated by Benjamin Franklin, "Rivers are ungovernable things....Canals are quiet and very manageable." So it was only natural that the favored means of transportation were canals.

As early as 1827, Indiana began to long for a system of canals. During that year the legislature appointed a three-member Board of Canal Commissioners to investigate the feasibility of a canal system for the state. And, during the same year, the Congress provided a land grant for the purpose of financing the construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal. The Wabash and Erie originally was intended by the Congressional Act to be constructed from a navigational point on the Maumee River in Ohio, across the summit at Fort Wayne, Indiana, to a navigational point on the Wabash River. Later it was determined that the canal would be dug to the mouth of the Tippecanoe River, just upstream on the Wabash River from Lafayette.²

On February 6, 1835, an Act was passed by the Legislature directing the Canal Commissioners to employ engineers to locate the line of the proposed Central Canal, which was done by Jesse Lynch Williams in the summer of 1835. Then, after the approval of the mammoth Internal Improvement Act in 1836, construction began on the Central Canal. During 1836-37 forty-five miles were put under contract. The Central Canal was thought to be the most important of the improvements to be constructed pursuant to the Act because it would transverse the landlocked center of the state and connect Indiana's capitol to the world. Unfortunately,

construction of many projects approved in the Act were commenced simultaneously. Due to lack of funds, no one project received 100% financial support. Each project was started to satisfy political interests in various areas and of those areas' politicians who could claim they won a benefit for their constituents. Likewise, along the Central Canal, construction took place in many different areas. Of course, the Indianapolis portion would show the capitol city and the members of state government that their "wise decision" was reaching fruition.

Originally the Central Canal was divided into two divisions, northern and southern; later, into three, northern, Indianapolis, and southern. Of the three, the northern ran from the junction with the Wabash and Erie Canal to Broad Ripple, the Indianapolis from Broad Ripple to Port Royal (now Waverly in Morgan County), and the southern from Port Royal to Evansville.

Although contracts were let for all districts in all divisions, there was limited digging in the northern division. The ruins of the Canal can be found in Madison County from Alexandria to Anderson and the Muncie feeder from Daleville (in Delaware County) to Anderson.

In the southern division, only about 20 miles were dug in Vanderburgh and Warrick Counties during the first period of digging (1836-1839). Eventually the Central Canal was completed in 1853, from Evansville to Point Commerce (Worthington) as part of what became known as the Wabash and Erie Canal.

It was the Indianapolis Division, which received the most attention. Actually the

² The 468 mile canal, known as the Wabash and Erie in the 1850s and thereafter, was actually a combination of four canals: the Miami and Erie in Ohio; the original Wabash and Erie from Junction, Ohio, extended to Terre Haute, Indiana; the Cross Cut Canal from Terre Haute to Worthington (Point Commerce); and, the Central Canal from Worthington to Evansville. The aggregate of these canals became the longest canal built in the world but for a Chinese canal, which exceeded its length.

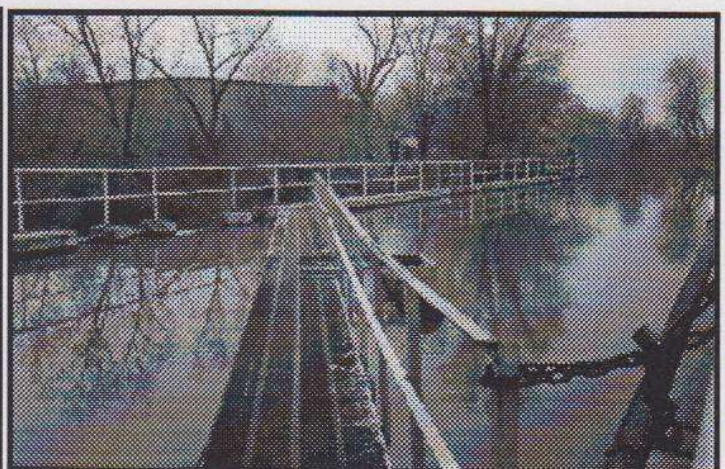
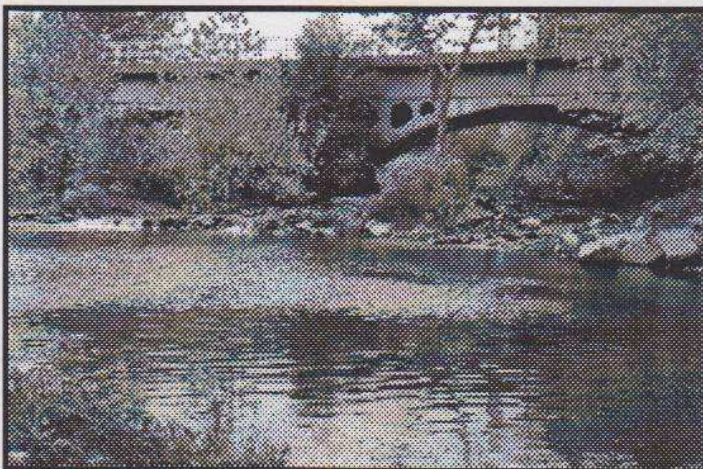
FALL CREEK AQUEDUCT



The iron aqueduct at the left was washed out in 1904. It was one of five structures that carried the Central Canal over Fall Creek in Indianapolis. The first aqueduct was built in 1838. The last steel and concrete aqueduct shown in the center was built in 1905. The canal water flows 25-30 feet above the creek over this span of about 360 feet. The bottom left photo shows how it appears today carrying water to the Indianapolis water purification plant. The bottom right photo shows the aqueduct in operation today with a walkway/boom across it that catches debris and channels it off into Fall Creek below the structure.



Top: Historic photo
Center: Postcard courtesy of the Indiana Historical Society
Bottom Left: Photo by Lynette Kross
Bottom Right: Photo by Bob Schmidt



TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

entire length, from Broad Ripple to Port Royal, some 24 miles, was dug. That portion in Marion County is almost the only portion that can be found and none is watered elsewhere. On June 27, 1839, water was first let into the Canal at the feeder in Broad Ripple. This source filled the Canal as far south as Pleasant Run, a creek, which empties into White River in southern Center township. In about 1873, the lower portion, from Market Street to Pleasant Run was sold; and after a sewer was laid in the bed on the Canal, railroad tracks were built over it.

Private ownership of the Canal had existed since 1850 when the legislature ordered it sold because revenues failed to meet expenses. After title had vested in several owners including the Indiana Central Canal Manufacturing, Hydraulic & Water Works Co., (1851) and the Indiana Central Canal Co. (1863), the Canal in 1871 was deeded to the Water Works Company, which failed 10 years later and was acquired by the Indianapolis Water Company.

From 1871 the water companies used the Canal to provide water power for turbines, which pumped water from wells to Indianapolis consumers. It was not until 1904 that the Indianapolis Water Company began to use water from the Canal as a source for purification and distribution to consumers. At that time the White River Purification Plant was constructed and water from the Canal was used both for drinking as well as for aquatic purposes. The point of obtaining water for purification was just south of Fall Creek after the canal had passed through an aqueduct over Fall Creek. The rest of the flow of the canal proceeded toward the center of Indianapolis and continued to be used by the Water Company as water power to its pumps at the West Washington Street pumping station.

The use of the Canal remained consistent during the next half century. Then,



About 70% of Indianapolis' water supply is taken from the Central Canal at this intake site and treated in the purification plant in the background. Photo by Bob Schmidt

in the late 1960s, part of the Canal was forced underground because an interstate road system was constructed through its bed. In 1960 the Indianapolis Water Company discontinued using the Canal for a source of water power at its pumping station on West Washington Street and thereafter made the "downtown " portion (south of 16th Street) available for sale.

In 1976 the Water Company deeded this portion of the Canal to the City of Indianapolis and in 1985 the Canal was drained south of Interstate 65. This portion of the Canal was then lowered and rebuilt using concrete for its banks, bottom, towpath and berm. It was filled from a skyscraper's geothermal heating and cooling system using ground rather than surface water. The concourse no longer appears as did the old canal though it traces its track.

Gone is the stone lock at Washington Street and the two wooden locks near Kansas and Senate Avenue (old Mississippi Street). Gone are the two boat basins on the northeast and southeast corners of West Washington and Missouri and the side cuts, one covering the two block section between Washington and Maryland over to Capitol Avenue (old Tennessee Street) and the other running westward along Wabash Street and making a

EXCURSION ON THE CANAL

INDIANA JOURNAL
August 3, 1839

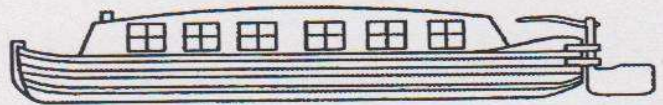
As one of a company which recently sailed up the canal to Broad Ripple, permit me to give you a short account of the voyage and its incidents, scenery, etc.

We left the lock at 8:00 A.M. being about thirty in number and soon passed Cottonville, the seat of the enterprising Mr. West. Here is one of the most delightful residences near the city, and highly improved; also one of the best mills (grist) and also a cotton spinning establishment in full and beautiful condition. Near this you also pass the beautiful and inviting residence of Mr. Blake—one of the most beautiful situations in the county. The country is flat on each side of the canal and but little improved, but susceptible of cultivation, and we soon passed over the aqueduct over Fall Creek. This I am told is in very perfect condition, and is really an object of curiosity. Here there is a beautiful pool containing water twelve or fifteen feet in depth, and gives one a faint idea of a lake; the width and depth would admit of a steam-boat.

Having passed the aqueduct the country is more elevated and the soil of a better quality, and I am told there is some of the finest tillable land on either side of the canal. The bluffs here on the right of the canal are high and remarkable, and furnish some of the most delightful sites for country residences to be imagined. The breeze on the canal is very comfortable and refreshing. Three miles from town we passed McIlvain's Bridge. Here the ground is a little rolling and beautiful. Shortly after this we passed near White River; and the prospect here is delightful; there is a view of the river for half a mile, and the banks are beautifully adorned with shrubbery and flowers. At 10 we passed the Michigan Bridge

near Pittsburgh, and had a remote but pretty view of Mount Pleasant, distant about one mile, and on the top of a beautiful ascent. The country is delightful and productive. The bluffs continued and (were) very remarkable. Six miles from town the bottoms on each side of the canal are extensive and productive, and the bluffs here terminate. Eight miles from town we passed Smith's Bridge near the Rocky Ripple of solid limestone, which would furnish a quantity of good building stone, and for other purposes. We soon reached Broad Ripple, which is caused by a dam thrown across White River a little below the mouth of the canal to turn the water into it. The view here is beautiful. Here is the most comfortable public house, kept by Mr. Earl, the enterprising and attentive owner of the boat. Here a number of the company spent the day delightfully, and partook of a good dinner and some fresh fish; others of the company amused themselves rambling on the banks of the river. In the evening we returned pleasantly and safely.

When we permit our minds to revert back to the first settlement of this country only about twenty years, when the country was one dense and wild forest, roamed by savages and frequented by wild beasts and serpents, which have taken place within so short a period, we almost fancy ourselves amidst a fairyland. It furnishes a strong argument for and striking illustration of the advantages of internal improvements, arts and arms, and sufficiently demonstrates the superiority of mind and of an intelligent people over barbarism and ignorance. I would here most warmly urge others to make a similar expedition this hot weather. They will find themselves amply rewarded for their time and money, and I will promise they will be politely and comfortably entertained by Mr. Earl, the enterprising and indefatigable proprietor. One of the Company



TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL



Water from the White River at Broad Ripple passes through this guard structure before entering the Central Canal and flowing toward the water treatment plant. Photo by Bob Schmidt



A portion of the Central Canal between Broad Ripple and Indianapolis appears much like it did in canal times and offers a serene setting for hikers and joggers. Photo by Bob Schmidt

loop north as a mill race and ending in a water basin south of Washington Street.

What remains of the watered Central Canal is the original portion from its guard lock above the White River Dam at Broad Ripple for about 6½ miles to the latitude of about 19th Street where it is dammed, preventing flow into the interstate culvert and into the portion, which is dry, and on to where it meets with the concrete portion at about St. Clair Street.³ The old watered portion includes a significant aqueduct over Fall Creek consisting of four 60 foot arches built as the successive fifth aqueduct in 1904-5.

This portion of the Central Canal is the only watered portion of Indiana's ancient canals, which display significant segments of canal towpaths.⁴ The towpath appears close to

what it was originally from the north end of Canal Boulevard, at Ripple Road (about the same latitude as 55th Street), some 1.6 miles to Broadway near Broad Ripple Village.⁵ This stretch of Canal, with the exception of bridges and streets, which have been erected over and adjoining the Canal, remains close to that which was dug in Indiana.

It is also interesting that the width of the Central Canal from Broad Ripple to Indianapolis was not constructed to Wabash and Erie specifications, namely, a 40 foot water surface width, 25 foot bottom width, and 4 foot depth. Instead the Broad Ripple to Indianapolis portion of the Central Canal was built with a 60 foot wide water surface, 40 foot bottom width and 5 feet deep. William Gooding, surveyor for the Canal north of downtown Indianapolis, suggested this change to provide more water power along the Broad Ripple-Indianapolis

³ The concrete portion has been extended and stops near the Interstate.

⁴ The Whitewater Canal in southeastern Indiana has a segment, which is watered for several miles but its towpath is covered by a railroad.

⁵ Today part of the Indianapolis Greenway follows the old towpath except where it crosses to the berm bank between College Ave. and Illinois St. leaving the towpath in its natural state. The towpath was covered with asphalt between Carrollton and College and then the parking deck once obliterated it from Carrollton to Guilford. It is stone from Guilford to Westfield Boulevard. Downstream from Illinois to 30th St. it is stone, but it has been widened to accommodate Water Company maintenance trucks. It still looks natural except for the straight sides.

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

route without having to increase the speed of the flow. The suggestion was obviously adopted and thus this portion of the Central Canal becomes unique, being the only 60-foot wide remnant of watered canal left in Indiana.⁶

As soon as water was let into the Canal at Broad Ripple on June 27, 1839, its use began. While it was never a financial success, the benefit the Central Canal played was that it played critical roles in the development of Indianapolis and communities along its path, which roles are immeasurable. As soon as the Canal's route was proposed, speculators seized upon the evident opportunities. The City developed to the north and west along the announced route of the Canal even before the digging began. When the water was let in three years later passenger service and freight service, between local merchants, began immediately and water from the Canal was used to obtain power.

Rita W. Harlan in her work **The Central in the City: The Impact of the Central Canal in Indianapolis, 1836-1900**, definitively described the impact the Central Canal had upon primitive Indianapolis. For example, the need for labor caused Indianapolis' population to grow significantly. German and Irish laborers immigrated with the promise of work to be found digging ditches.

After completion, transportation along the Canal was never financially productive for several reasons. The Canal was never connected at either end permitting transportation to other than local commercial areas, but its use as a source of water power was significant. Harland lists one woolen mill, one cotton mill, a linseed oil mill, two grist



This pump house on West Washington Street was once operated using Central Canal water, which turned turbines to pump water from wells to Indianapolis water consumers. It is now used as a visitor center for White River State Park. Photo - Bob Schmidt

mills, two saw mills and two paper mills, which immediately began using the Canal's water for power. Over the years the canal supplied water to a large number of businesses. Harlan lists thirty-eight companies, which used it as a source of ice during the winter for storage and sale in the summer months, a total of forty-two commercial uses. And, there were others. Boat companies rented recreational craft, the most noteworthy now Holcomb Gardens at Butler University. An enterprising man gave swimming lessons by dunking his students in the Canal from a long pole equipped with a system of straps and pulleys.

While the impact of the Canal may seem insignificant from today's perspective, one must remember that when the Canal was completed in Marion County, the population of Indianapolis was not yet 2,700 people. While this number quickly grew (8,000 in 1850, 18,600 in 1860 and over 48,000 in 1870), the impact of the Canal upon such a small population cannot be diminished. After all, the first railroad did not reach Indianapolis until

⁶ Indiana had another portion of 60-foot wide canal. The Wabash and Erie was constructed with a 60-foot portion between Fort Wayne and the State line with the thought that Ohio would construct its portion similarly. However, Ohio only constructed a 40-foot canal from the State line to Junction where it later joined the Miami and Erie. From there to Toledo, the canal served both the Wabash and Erie and the Miami and Erie and the canal was 60-feet wide.

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

1827, eight years after the opening of the Central Canal in Marion County. So, one can easily see how the hope and promise of the Central Canal was of prime importance to the citizens of the City who were concerned about its fledgling commerce. With a limited population, the constituents had reasonable hopes that this new transportation system would be the answer to their needs. Unfortunately the Panic of 1837, inefficiency and corruption combined to bring the end to the dreams fostered by the Internal Improvements Act.⁷ The linkage to the Ohio River and to the east via the Wabash and Erie Canal, the Great Lakes, the Erie Canal and the Hudson River never became possible. But the Central Canal provided an impetus for the development and an unexpected source of commercial water power, which fostered the industrial growth of Indiana's Capitol city.

Thus, Indiana's Central Canal stands in combined testimony of the confidence of Indiana's early fathers that a wilderness could be elevated into a productive State; that enterprise, manufacturing and commerce could be obtained; and, that man could build a water channel which ultimately, as an example of how a failed albeit commendable transportation project, would prove itself instrumental in nourishing a small infant capitol city into young adulthood. Today it remains. Its waters run adjacent to its towpaths, which give solace and recreation to thousands who come to enjoy its beauty; yet its utility continues to provide the life blood — water — for its city's needs. It is unique to Indiana both in scope and accuracy as that which was constructed 166 years ago.

⁷From Harlan, p. 14.

CENTRAL CANAL NORTH OF INDIANAPOLIS From Indiana House and Senate Documents 1840-41

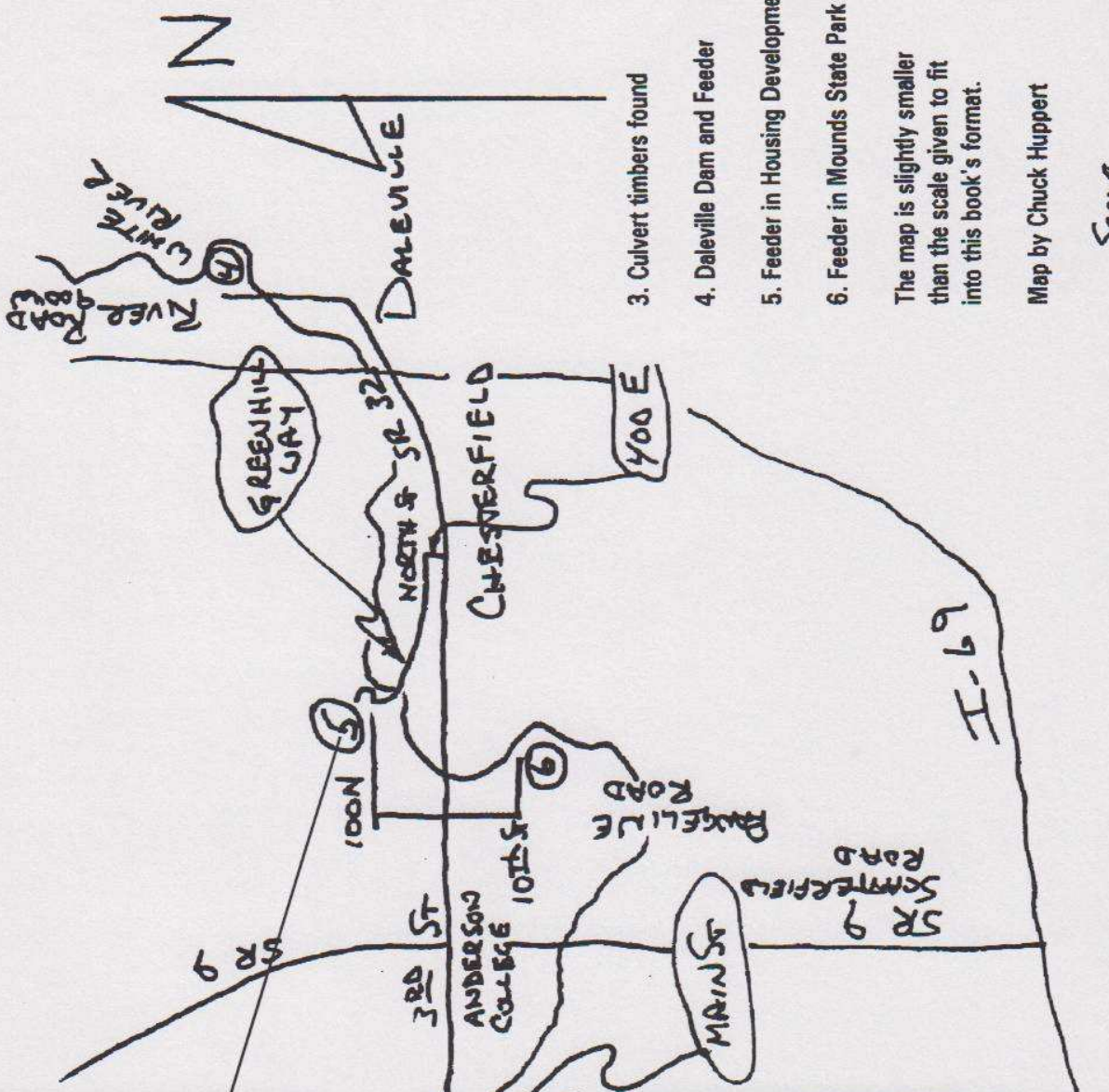
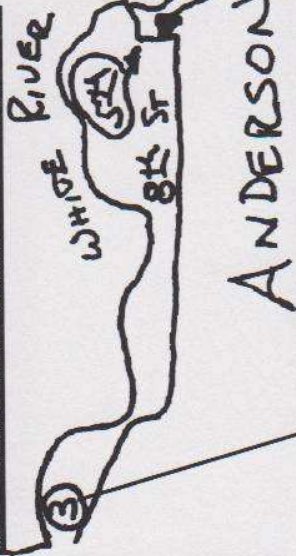
	DISTANCE IN MILES.	TOTAL COST WHEN FINISHED.	WORK DONE	WORK REQUI- RED TO COMPLETE.	
From Indianapolis to Broad-Ripple, -	9.03	\$237,548 37	\$237,548 27	Inc. basins for water power.
From Broad-Ripple to Stony creek, -	13.27	185,780 00	\$185,780 00	Not located.
From Stony creek to Dam at Wise's.	15.39	175,220 00	40,958 67	134,261 33	4 sections not let.
From Wise's to Dam at Andersontown,	7.93	111,352 00	41,726 67	69,625 33	Dam not let.
From Dam north to section 80, -	1.43	96,782 00	96,782 00	Crosses W. river—not let.
From section 80 to Kill-Buck summit,	8.75	148,355 00	86,223 24	62,131 76	Near Alexandria.
Total, main line,	55.80	943,037 37	396,488 85	548,581 43	

FEEDER FOR SUMMIT.

	DISTANCE IN MILES.	TOTAL COST WHEN FINISHED.	WORK DONE.	WORK REQUI- RED TO COMPLETE.	
From Dam to mouth, - - - - -	7.83	\$123,124 00	\$104,026 77	\$19,097 23	Ends opposite Anderson- [town.
Total, main line and feeder from Indiana- polia to near Alexandria, - - - -	63.63	1,066,161 37	500,488 62	567,678 66	

On the line between Noblesville and Kill-buck summit, there has been paid about \$8,000 for timber and other perishable materials.

In the completion of the White-river feeder to Andersontown, there would be a surplus of water after supplying the canal, for 8 or 9 months in the year, which would be sufficient, on the fall of 30 feet, to propel about 30 run of stones for this length of time in each year.



3. Culvert timbers found
4. Daleville Dam and Feeder
5. Feeder in Housing Development
6. Feeder in Mounds State Park

The map is slightly smaller than the scale given to fit into this book's format.

Map by Chuck Huppert

SCALE
1" = 1.23 MILES

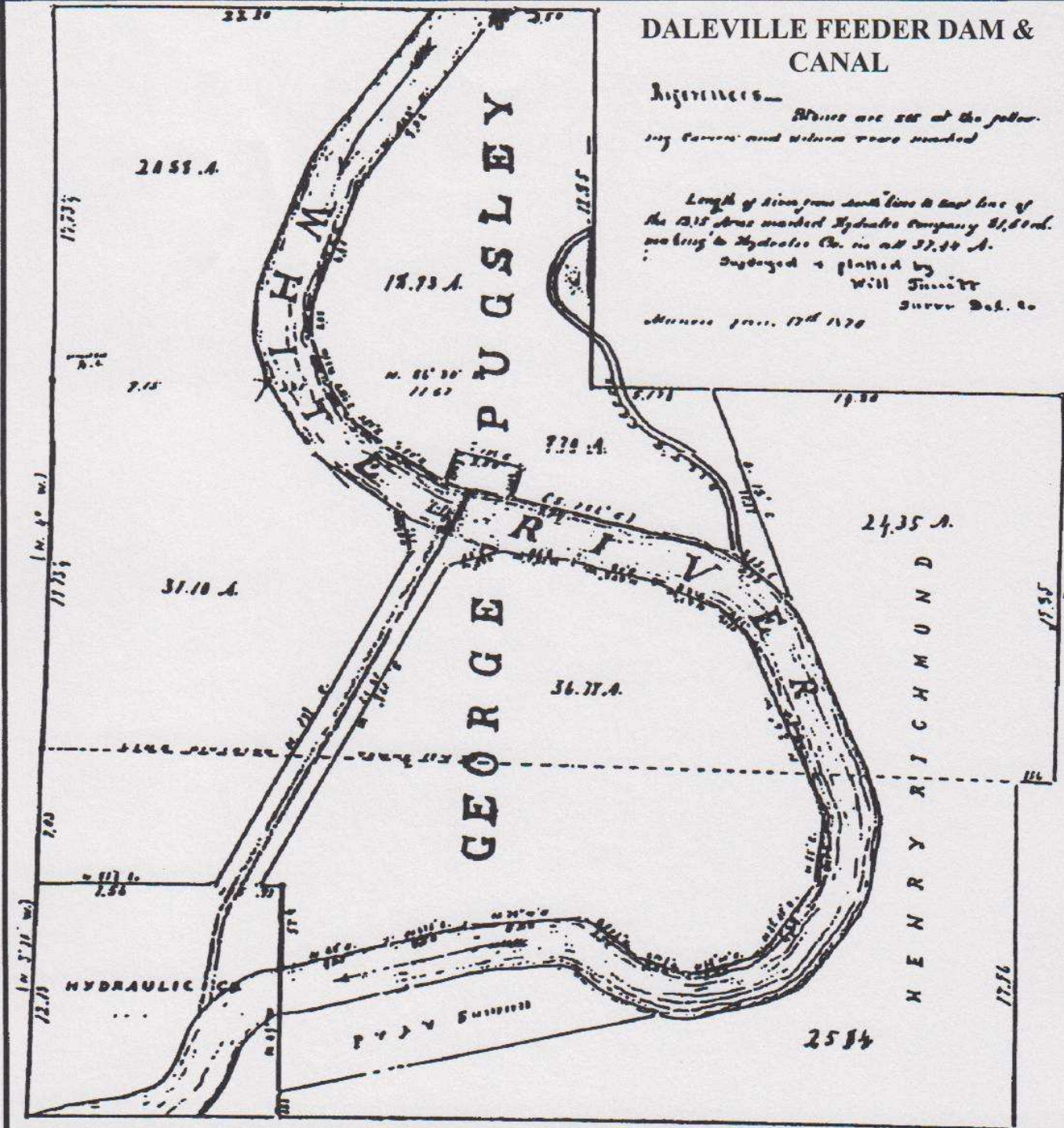
DALEVILLE DAM AND FEEDER

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

DALEVILLE FEEDER DAM & CANAL

References—
 Notes are set at the following corners and where they are marked

Length of river from south line to east line of the 12.15 Acres marked Hydraulic Company 21,512 ft. making to Hydraulic Co. in all 27,24 A.
 Suggested & planned by
 Will Truitt
 Surveyor Del. Co.
 January 17th 1870



Delaware county surveyor Will Truitt made the above map in January 1870 of the Feeder Dam at Daleville. It covers the southwest quarter of Section 31 and the northwest quarter of Section 6 in Salem township, Delaware county. The map shows the location of the Feeder Dam across the White River and the feeder canal line for the hydraulic canal.

A similar feeder dam was built at Broad Ripple in 1836-37 by John Burke, who supervised the construction job, which involved many Irish workers. It was built across the ripples in the White River just north of the settlements of Broad Ripple and Wellington.

FEEDER DAM AT DALEVILLE ON THE WHITE RIVER

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Thomas Meek, a founder of the Canal Society of Indiana and publisher of its first journal **Indiana Waterways** says:

"Another portion of the Central Canal, which was eventually completed and filled though never actually used, was the White River Feeder, which had been intended to supply water to the Summit Level of the Northern Division of the Central. The Summit Level ran north from Anderson in Madison County and through the town of Alexandria, about twelve miles away.

"In 1838 and 1839, a large amount of work was done on the Summit Section of the canal, seeing near-completion of the route between Anderson and Alexandria. Nearly finished also were the White River Dam near Daleville in Western Delaware County and the feeder, which ran along the north bank of the White joining the main line at Anderson.

"In 1840, following the financial collapse of the System, some additional funds were squeezed out of the Legislature to 'secure' the dam in hopeful anticipation of some financial miracle that would allow the completion of the canal. The miracle never came, however, and the project languished until 1850, when the Northern Division of the Central Canal was sold to private parties."

Meeks filed the following report after making a field trip to the Central Canal with Clarence Hudson, the first president of the society:

White River Feeder No. 1 near Daleville in Delaware County May 30, 1987

After Crossing the concrete bridge over the White River to Daleville in Salem Township on Indiana 32 "the feeder was visible at some distance to the East of the road as a large ditch, going away from the river in a Northeasterly direction." They stopped at the home of Jim Barrick, Rt. 2, Box 71 in Daleville. Mr Barrick "produced a photographic enlargement of a map, which he said had been made in 1870."

See previous page in this book.

"The original map is in the possession of the former owner of the property....He (Mr. Barrick) directed us to a causeway crossing the feeder from his property on the North side of the feeder to the cultivated field lying South between the feeder and the White River, suggesting that we cross to the far side where the going would be easier.

"When crossing the causeway, we could plainly see the canal ditch in both direction. At the causeway, it seemed to have been partly excavated, with the banks built up slightly, so that when full, the surface of the water would be at about the same level as the original ground level. The channel appeared to be about 40 feet wide at the top, and about 4 or 5 feet deep, corresponding closely with the dimensions of other Indiana canals and navigable feeders.

"We proceeded Eastward, to the left, up the feeder line along the edge of a corn field lying in the meander of the White River that was cut off by the feeder. A second causeway crossed the feeder about 150 feet East of the

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

point where we crossed. To the East of this causeway, a couple on inches of water was standing in the feeder. At the East end of the corn field we located, with some difficulty, a path leading to the river.

"Ruins of the feeder dam were found lying immediately at the intersection of the feeder and the White River. Visible ruins consist of a concentration of stones, ranging in size from pebbles of 3 to 6 inches diameter to 20 or so inches in diameter. This material was incorporated in the bank of the river, and appeared to extend in a fairly straight ridge clear across the river. Except near the sides of the stream, no stones broke the surface of the water. Water level was slightly higher than normal. Much of the submerged material appeared to be about six to eight inches below water level.

"Also visible were large timbers

protruding from the river bank near water level and under water. These timbers appeared to be the remains of 'cribs' or huge log-cabin-style boxes that had been filled with stones, providing the main structure of the dam.

"We looked for a guard lock or regulator near the intersection of the feeder and the river, and proceeded (West) down the channel of the feeder for some distance until standing water was encountered. No signs of such structures were seen."

When the Canal Society of Indiana visited the Feeder Dam during its "Tracking the Central" tour in October 1999, the site remained much as described in Meek's report

- Rocks that once filled the timber cribs
- Timbers in poor condition
- Ripples where the water crossed the remains

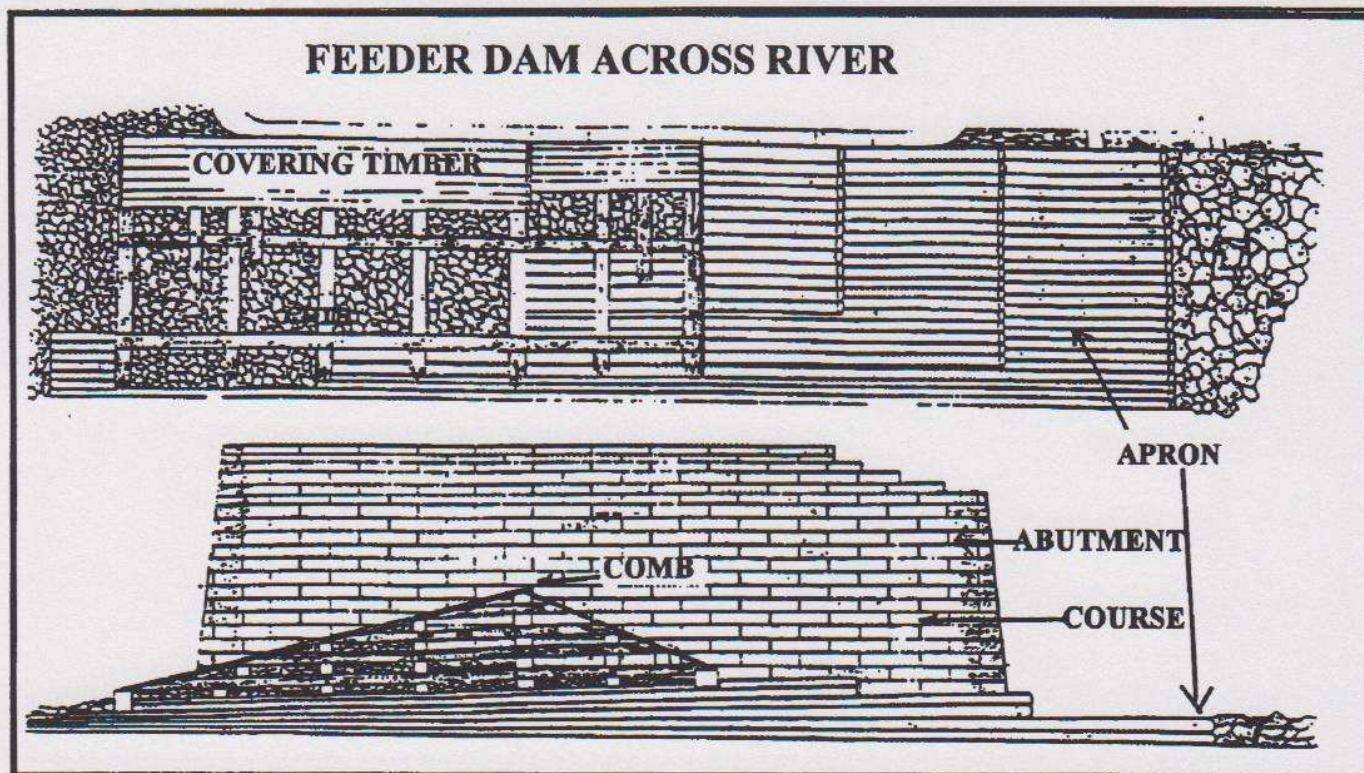
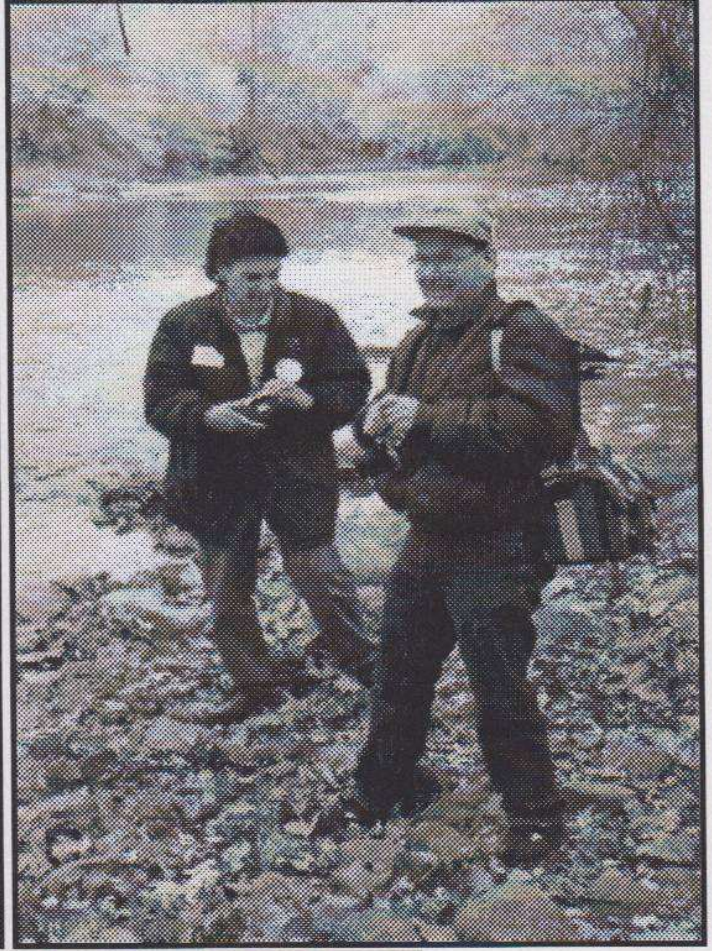
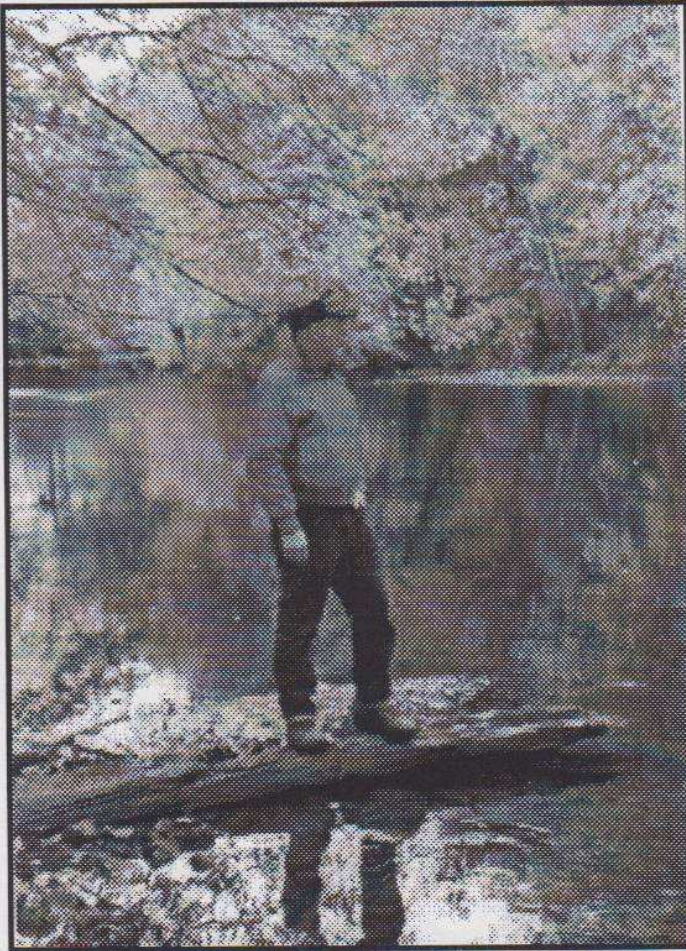


Diagram courtesy Stan Schmitt

The Daleville Feeder Dam Site as seen in October 1999



At the dam site Jerry Mattheis, left, Sue Simerman and Mike Thrall, right, found a few decayed timbers, rocks from the cribs, and ripples across the river where it crosses what remains of the Daleville Feeder Dam.

Top photos by Brian Migliore
Bottom photo by Bob Schmidt

WHAT BECAME OF THE CANAL IN THE NORTHERN DIVISION?

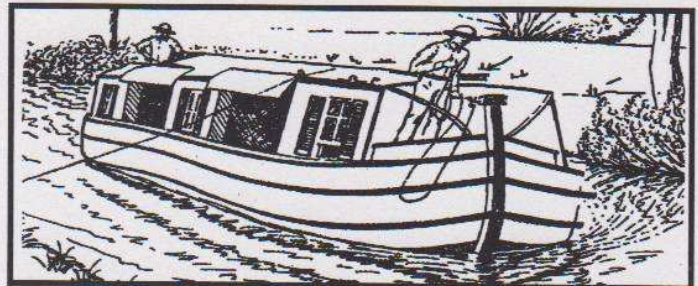
John L. Forkner in **Historical Sketches and Reminiscences of Madison County, Indiana** page 73 writes the following about Anderson, Indiana, in 1897:

The Anderson Hydraulic

"A number of years after work on the canal had been abandoned, certain individuals considered the feasibility of completing that portion of the work lying between Anderson and Daleville and using it for hydraulic purposes. Nothing came of the scheme, and it was finally dropped. In 1868, however, a number of public-spirited citizens began agitating the question of using the canal. Great interest was taken in the matter by the citizens of Anderson and vicinity as it was thought that the enterprise, when completed, would result in making Anderson a city of the first class. Public meetings were held at which speakers located mills, factories and other enterprises without number along the hydraulic. Anderson was pictured in glowing colors as the 'coming city' in the State. Finally on the 19th of December, 1868, 'The Anderson Hydraulic Company' was organized with capital stock subscribed to the amount of \$64,000. The city of Anderson subsequently subscribed \$30,000 and issued bonds for the amount. The board of directors chosen by the stockholders was comprised of the following persons: Peter Suman, William Crim, H. J. Blacklidge, N. D. McCullough, George Nichol, Samuel Hughel and James Hazlett. The board organized by

electing N. C. McCullough, president, William Crim, treasurer, and C. D. Thompson, secretary. The company proceeded to let contracts for reconstructing the canal and a large force of hands was soon employed on the work.

"The canal extended from a point opposite the village of Daleville in Delaware County to the city of Anderson, being about eight miles in length. To the disappointment of many the work did not progress as rapidly as had been anticipated and people generally began to lose faith in the benefits that would accrue after it had been completed. In the meantime the funds of the company had been gradually reduced and by the time the work had progressed far enough to turn in the water the announcement was made that they were practically exhausted. Water was turned into the canal from White River at Daleville on the 4th of July, 1874, but the banks gave way at several places and it became necessary to shut off the water. The places that had been washed out were repaired but again gave way to the pressure of the water when a second attempt was made to flood the canal. The stockholders had lost confidence in the practicability of the scheme and refusing to contribute further assistance, that which was to have been the glory of Anderson was abandoned. Eight thousand dollars were expended on this work. It was afterwards sold by the sheriff of Madison County to Edward H. Rogers to satisfy judgments held by him against the company for labor and materials furnished for its construction."



WHAT BECAME OF THE CANAL IN THE SOUTHERN DIVISION?

Canal was never built, this section eventually became part of the Wabash & Erie Canal that extended from Toledo, OH on Lake Erie to Evansville, IN at the Ohio River. This section experienced the same problems of damage by animals, leaks, silting in, closing down, and becoming a place to dump trash and a health hazard. Neglected canal boats soon sank to the bottom without even an attempt to preserve the valuable lumber in them. In those days lumber was one of the cheapest and one of the most abundant articles to be had.

Little seems to be known about what became of the dam at Port Royal. We have a few documents showing the bill for iron on the Central Canal. One is for the iron for the guard lock at Port Royal. The other is for Section 51 Ind. Division Central Canal for a guard lock gates and mitre sills. We do not know where section 51 was located. This needs to be researched. Copies of these documents may be seen on the following pages of this book.

During the years of 1863-65 the canal in Evansville was gradually filled up by dumping loose dirt and refuse into it. Later the bed was filled in with dirt and rock and Canal and Fifth streets took the place of the waterway. According to an article that appeared in the **Evansville Courier** on March 28, 1903, they had just found the gunwale of a canal boat stuck in mud on one side of 5th street in Evansville parallel to another one with a portion of a freight boat floor in tact. It was made of hand hewn oak. The article explained that boats, bridges and everything imaginable were dumped into the "ditch."

Approximately 18 miles of the Central Canal were built from Evansville to the Pigeon Feeder Dam (Dam contracted on May 27, 1837), which was located 13 miles below Port Gibson. However, since the rest of the Central

CENTRAL CANAL SOUTH OF INDIANAPOLIS

From Indiana House and Senate Documents 1840-41

	DISTANCE IN MILES.	TOTAL COST WHEN FINISHED.	Work done	Work re- quired to complete.			
		\$	cts.	\$	cts.		
From Indianapolis to Port Royal, . . .	15 60	839,433	31	221,433	31	18,000 00	0 locks to finish.
From Port Royal to Sand Hill, . . .	10 05	119,818	91	35,751	61	81,067 27	2 sections not let.
From Sand Hill to Martinsville, . . .	4 00	40,000	00	00,000	00	40,000 00	Not let.
From Martinsville to White River feeder, in Greene County,	71 00	1,000,000	00	00,000	00	1,000,000 00	Not let.
From White River feeder to Pigeon feeder,	73 00	1,602,000	00	279,000	00	1,298,000 00	Only the heavy jobs under
From Pigeon feeder to Evansville, . . .	20 00	239,092	00	239,092	00	0,000,000 00	Finished. [contract.
Total from Indianapolis to the Ohio river,	194 34	3,299,341	22	771,276	95	2,525,067	27

Bill of iron for Guard Lock at Port Royal

74 ft long of $1\frac{3}{4}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ in. } for straps I.S. bands
 328 ft — of $\frac{1}{2}$ in square } bolts &c
 62 ft — of $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ in }
 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ft — of 2 in by $\frac{1}{2}$ in. to make keys for straps
 20 ft — of $1\frac{1}{4}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ — for nuts of bolts
 96 ft — of $1\frac{1}{2}$ in diameter (to make 6 rods of 16 ft. each)
 16 ft — of 1 in diameter for handles to paddles
 1000 ft — of $\frac{3}{8}$ square for spikes
 14 ft — of $\frac{3}{4}$ square for clews
 — The above are the exact quantities —
 300 — Cut spikes — 6 in long — size & key as per drawing

Note — All iron must be best Juniata, and the Contractor in purchasing must make allowance for waste say 10 per cent —

A copy of the above given to Mr. Freyding — to send to Cincinnati for purchase —

Iron to be allowed as below

1000 ft	$\frac{3}{8}$ sq	=	470 lbs	floor
14 "	$\frac{3}{4}$ "	=	26.46	bolts nuts &c
	6 in cut spikes	96 lbs =	139.56	fastenings
36 ft	1 in sq	=	120.96	hollow gun fastenings
64 ft	$\frac{1}{2}$ in sq	=	53.76	clews at corners
			<hr/>	
		Total	810.68 lbs	

1863 in floor 186

~~1863~~
~~1863~~
~~1863~~
 8111 6
 — 139.5 —
 8111 6



BILL OF IRON FOR GUARD LOCK AT PORT ROYAL

Courtesy Miami County Historical Society, Inc.

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

BILL OF IRON FOR GUARD LOCK GATES AND MITRE SILLS
FOR SECTION 51 INDIANAPOLIS DIVISION CENTRAL CANAL

Iron
Bill of ~~Iron~~ for Guard Lock gates & Mitre Sills
for Section 51 Ind Division Central Canal

52 $\frac{1}{2}$ made thus  each requiring 30 in. bar $1\frac{3}{4}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
16 $\frac{1}{2}$ made thus  " " 30 " " $1\frac{3}{4}$ " $\frac{1}{2}$ "
4 Straps to go over ends of balance beams to be connected with
upper $\frac{1}{2}$ each requiring 5 ft of bar $1\frac{3}{4}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
4 Bands for bottoms of quoin posts 11 in. diameter in clear, each
requiring $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft of bar $1\frac{3}{4}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
Total length of this size 274 feet

144 Screw bolts for Quoin posts 13 in. long from head to nut,
each requiring 14 in of bar $\frac{1}{2}$ in Square
144 Screw bolts for Mitre posts 10 in long from head to nut, each
requiring 12 in of bar $\frac{1}{2}$ in Square
Total of this size 313 ft

Gate fastenings

16 Bars for Collars $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft — $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
8 Straps to fasten collars each requiring $5\frac{1}{2}$ ft of bar
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ — 44 ft
32 bolts to fasten straps 6 inches long $\frac{1}{2}$ inch sq
8 Keys 8 inches long 2 by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
300 Cut Spikes for Gates 6 in long
20 ft of bar for nuts for Screw bolts $1\frac{1}{4}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
6 Paddle Gate rods 16 ft long $1\frac{1}{2}$ in diameter
4 Bars for handles 4 " 1 " "
8 Shikes for Mitre Sills 21 in. long $\frac{3}{4}$ " sq
1100 Wrought Spikes for floor 10 " " $\frac{3}{8}$ " sq

Note

All iron must be the best Juniata & the Contractor
in purchasing must make allowance for waste

Courtesy Miami
County Historical
Society, Inc.

**THE INDIANAPOLIS
DIVISION OF THE
CENTRAL
CANAL
IN THE
20th & 21st
CENTURIES**

THE CENTRAL CANAL WALK

By Carolyn Schmidt

Over time the Central Canal became an economic liability. The area around it in downtown Indianapolis was little more than a slum and elsewhere the canal remained in a slumbering state. Even though Indiana University Purdue University of Indianapolis (IUPUI), the Eiteljorg Museum, a hospital, a park and buildings for the state government were located nearby, none of them utilized the Canal.

Ignoring the canal except for use as the major supplier of the City's water supply probably saved it. Many canals have been bulldozed shut in metropolitan areas and buildings placed atop them.

Perhaps it was the fitness craze in the 1960s that focused attention on the Central Canal. Hikers and joggers began to use the towpath more than in the past. Or was it the recognition the canal received when the American Water Works Association declared it an American Water Landmark on August 11,

1971? At the time only eight sites had received this distinction. Or maybe the time was just right to return the canal to an asset. Whatever the reason, wheels were put into motion that brought about a revitalization of the canal and its surrounds.

A portion of the Central Canal was put into a trust by the Indianapolis Water Company in 1972 for the City of Indianapolis to use as a park and recreational purposes to benefit its residents. On March 6, 1972 the City agreed that if it could meet certain stipulations within 5 years, it would be given title to the real estate free of trust.

A 22 person Waterways Task Force was set up that year by the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee, the leader of downtown revitalization in the 60s-70s. They were to plan for the best use of the Canal by the City. A grant from Lilly Endowment to the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation provided funding for a contractor to make a feasibility study of the Lower Central Canal. His work was overseen by the Waterways Task Force. When the results of his study were issued in July 1974, the proposed high excavation to lower the canal, reconstruction and redevelopment costs were not readily accepted by the local citizens.

On May 7, 1975 the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Metropolitan Development presented a preliminary "Canal Implementation" plan. On November 24, 1976 they took over the title of canal land from Market Street to the 21st Street intake valve.

Talk of lowering the canal continued. In light of it, the Indianapolis Department of Transportation designed a bridge over the Central Canal, which allowed pedestrians to pass under West Street from the State Office Complex to Military Park and IUPUI, when they widened it in 1983. That September, the Canal

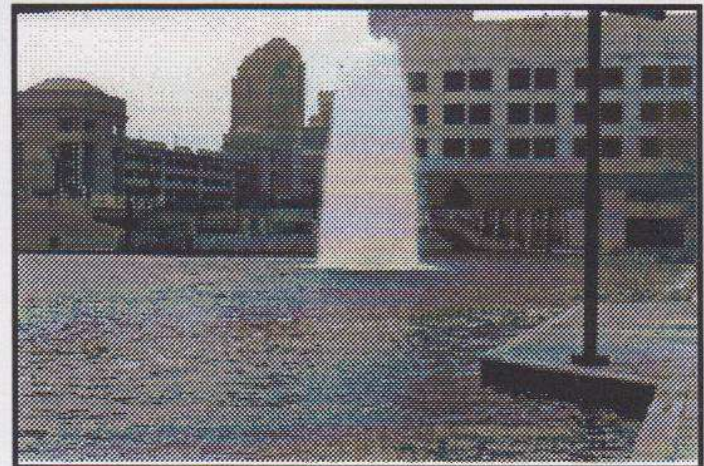
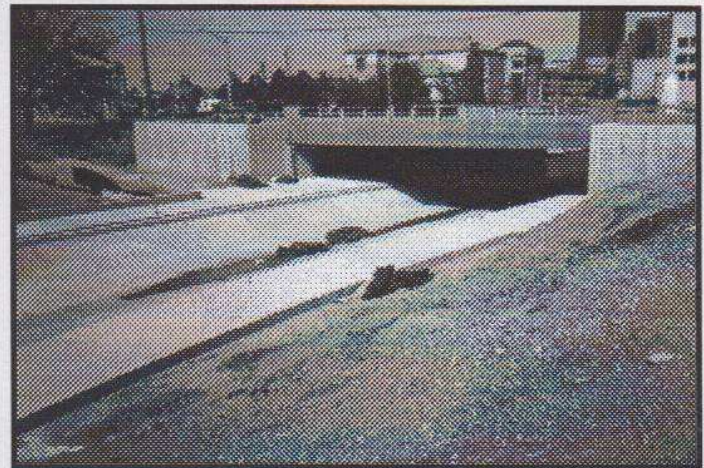
TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL



was declared a revitalization project along with the Northwest Redevelopment Area Project by the Metropolitan Development Commission.



Mayor William H. Hudnut and the Department of Metropolitan Development submitted a request for federal assistance from the Urban Mass Transit Administration on February 14, 1984. This provided money to lower the Central Canal from Military Park to North Street and perhaps as far as the Interstate. Design guidelines said the Canal must be linear in nature, the original center line must be maintained and a constant width of 50 feet be constructed from Ohio Street to 11th Street. The design only permitted deviation at Ohio Street, New York Street, Walnut Street and 11th Street.



The Department of Metropolitan Development's consulting team prepared a design guideline in 1985 for a "Central Canal

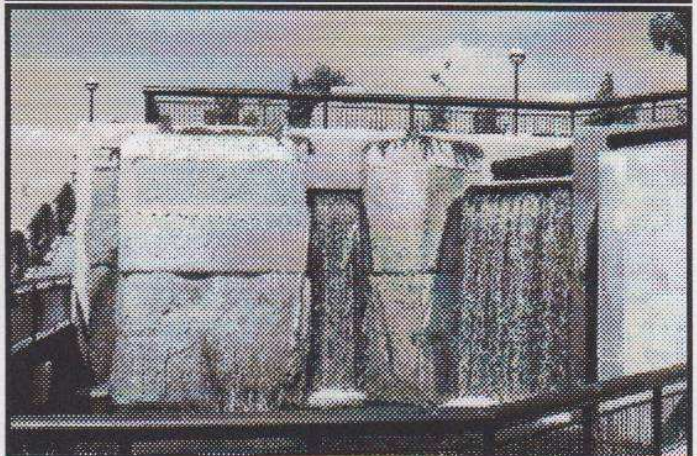
Above: These three photos, taken of the same stretch of the Central Canal as it turns to the west and the White River, show the excavation to lower the canal; building a concrete water course with sidewalks, pedestrian bridges and ramps; and the completed watered canal with lighting and landscaping.

R Top: By lowering the canal, the canal walk easily passes beneath vehicle bridges.

R Bottom: This basin and fountain were the first features constructed in the Canal Walk 4-phase project.

Photos by Bob Schmidt

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL



The new Central Canal Walk in downtown Indianapolis has artistic pedestrian bridges across the canal, cascading waterfalls and splashing fountains.

Photos by Bob Schmidt

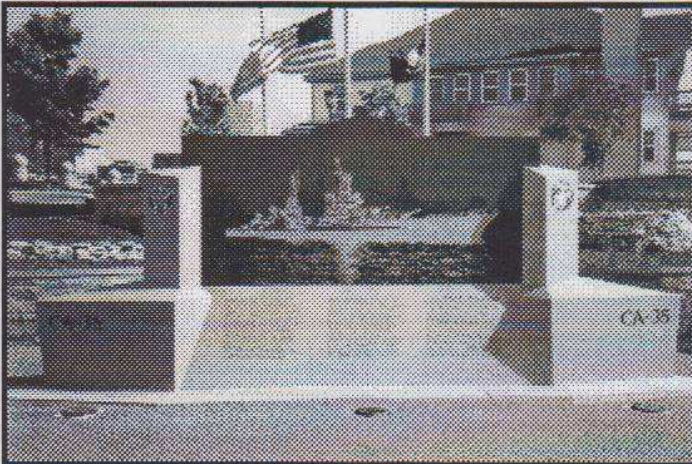
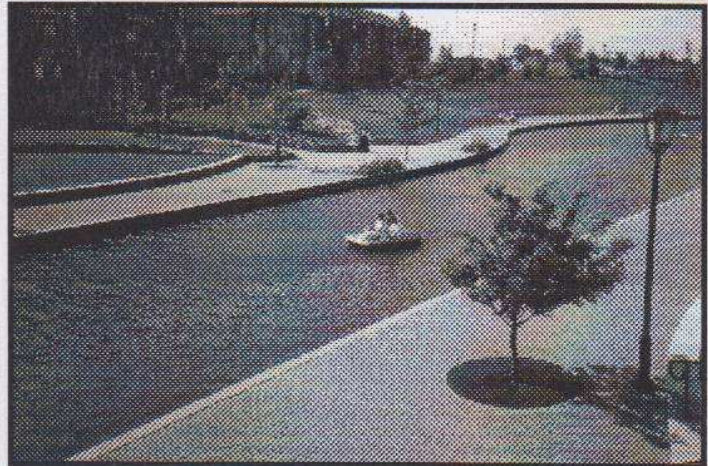
Walk" from Washington Street to St. Clair Street. Working through U. S. Senator Richard Lugar, the U. S. Congress authorized 7.9 million from the Urban Mass Transit Administration to begin construction. This funded what was the center point of the Canal Walk redevelopment — a canal pool and

fountain at West and Ohio Streets.

The Canal Walk was a 4-phase, 15-year construction project. It began in late 1985 and was completed in the spring of 2001.

Phase I of the Canal project began on

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL



The 1.47 mile-long Canal Walk from White River to 11th Street has the Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial on the south edge of Military Park and the U. S. S. Indianapolis Memorial at Walnut Street. Pedal boats can be rented at the Ohio Street Basin. Concrete walkways on either side of the canal pass the fountains, memorials, museums, and up-scale housing. Photos - Bob Schmidt

December 6, 1985. A 54-inch conduit was placed underground just west of the West Street Bridge for the overflow of excess Canal Walk water. This was a temporary measure until the new lower Canal conduit work was completed to White River.

Phase 2 of lowering the original Canal from the West Street Bridge to New York Street, excavating the Ohio Street basin located adjacent to the north State Office Building, constructing a new Canal water pump and piping system and concreting the Ohio Street basin was contracted to E. H. Hughes Construction on July 30, 1986. A second contract was awarded to Berns Construction for the lowered Canal's concrete sidewalks, and lighting as far as Michigan Street. That year Fire House 13 was built on the southeast corner of Ohio and West Streets. Sub-

contractors were Thompson Construction, Fransler/Smock Construction, Maschmeyer Landscape and Long Electric.

Phase 3 of building a pedestrian bridge at Vermont Street, a west side turn-around adjacent to the bridge, lower Canal concrete lining between Michigan and New York Streets and the new Canal area north of Michigan Street were contracted to E. H. Hughes Construction and Yardberry Landscape. The Vermont Street Plaza with its related water features and the Michigan Street and Indiana Avenue waterfall were built by Charles C. Brandt. The prime design and coordinating consultants to the Department of Metropolitan Development were Browning, Day, Mullins, and Dierdorf Architects, Wetzel Engineers, and Ratio Architects.

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL



Above: Canalside patio's offer refreshments. The Central Canal Walk has become a place for festivals and water parades.
Below: A wonderful view of the Indianapolis skyline is seen by walking along the canal. Photos by Bob Schmidt

Even before it was completed the Canal Walk received The Medallion Award for excellence in landscape design. This award was presented in 1999 by The American Society of Landscape Architects.

Phase 4, the final phase, included the St. Clair Street Basin and the Canal Walk to 11th Street. It was completed and dedicated on May 15, 2001.

Once completed the Canal Walk provides a wide beautiful pedestrian walkway on both sides of the canal, which is lighted at night and connects canal-side buildings. It

offers a place for the institutions along its path to have activities. Its unique setting attracts residents and tourists. The area is rich with interesting architecture, landscaping and sculpture. Sounds of water fill the air from numerous rushing to trickling waterfalls and fountains. Ducks dabble in the canal while fish swim around their feet. Concerts and festivals are held along its banks. Boat parades glide down its water at festival time. Business patio's offer food and drink. Peddle boats are rented for recreation. Up-scale housing replace slum dwellings. What was once an economic liability has become an economic asset.



THE GREEN EDGE

By Ray R. Irvin

Administrator Indy Parks Greenways

Fewer things in today's development industry make better sense than combining the needs for pedestrian and bike trails with the need to locate, maintain and sustain community infrastructure. Indianapolis, Indiana, has made great strides in accomplishing this combination.

Historically, since the 1912-1913 floods, Indianapolis declared most major streams, creeks and rivers as Flood Plains or Flood Ways on county land use maps. Additionally, the city made efforts to curb building in these areas and maintained the 1920 and 1930 levee systems through the Marion County Flood Control Board until the 1960's. Then under UNIGOV, the board disbanded and responsibility for the flood and levee structures shifted to the newly combined City/County Department of Public Works.

By working with the Department of Metropolitan Development and updating the comprehensive land use plan for all nine townships, we changed all Flood Plains (FP) and Flood Ways (FW) to a new designation of Linear Parks (LP) and Urban Conservation (UC). We then identified and defined the Greenways as being any dedicated linear space including waterways, old railroad corridors, and utility corridors that now represents 20 defined linear greenway corridors and infrastructure opportunities.

In 1989, a lift station on the north side of Indianapolis failed, dumping millions of gallons of raw sewage into Williams Creek and White River. That episode prompted the EPA to demand the building of an interceptor sewer system to serve the entire North Central part of Indianapolis. The 48-inch sewer main was co-located under the Monon Trail in record time, at a fraction of the cost of digging up streets

to locate the main sewer line. The list of co-located utilities has further expanded and includes fiber optic cable; cable TV; sewers; water, gas, phone and power lines; and live steam from the solid waste recycling burn plant.

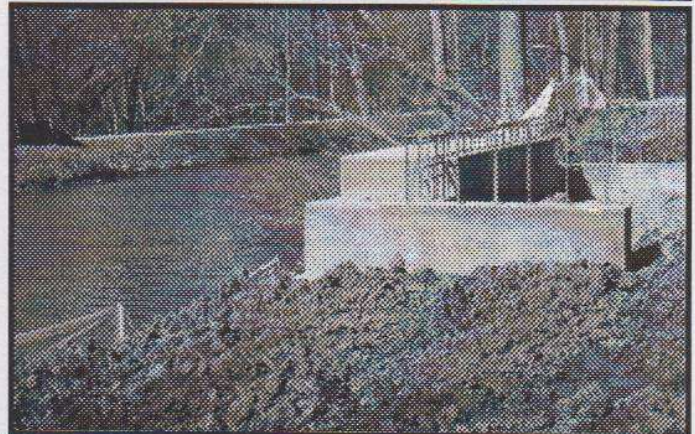
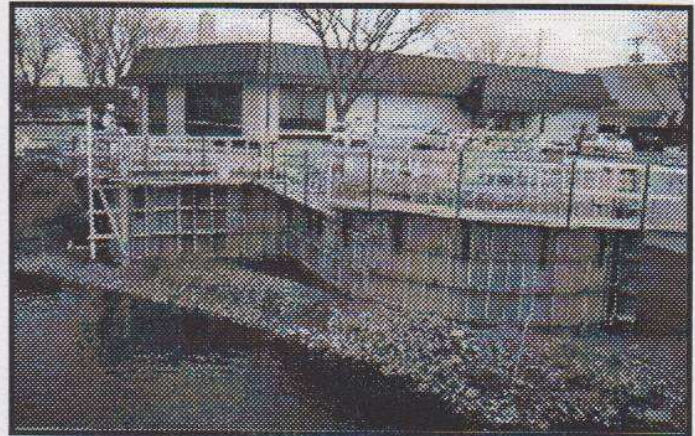
Also in 1989 the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce started their work on the GIFT (Getting Indianapolis Fit for Tomorrow) report. One of the first segments examined the ratio of population to parks. The report discovered that Indianapolis has a 20% park-land deficit compared to other similar cities and that park-land is a critical quality-of-life indicator. Since greenways promote parks by increasing park accessibility and preserving linear open spaces, Indianapolis' green linear space became paramount in improving the park-land deficit. Without increasing Indianapolis' park-land in the 21st century, we risked losing our communities competitive edge in a future of opportunities.

In 1990, the City/County Council, in an effort to address the GIFT report's park-land deficit issues, created the Indianapolis Greenways Task force to research and resolve these issues. They established a 16-member commission, appointed by the mayor, council and parks board, to oversee the development of a Greenways Master Plan sensitive to the 340 species of birds, 755 species of plants and 60 species of trees along this vast greenways system.

The City of Indianapolis over the past 1.5 decades has developed a substantial Greenways network and trails system, with win-win partnerships. And it has worked closely with the Departments of Metropolitan Development and Public Works, utility providers, neighborhoods, companies and the Greenways Foundation Inc. to meet our city's growing needs.

Today the Indianapolis Greenways

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL



CENTRAL CANAL BECOMES FOCUS OF BROAD RIPPLE AND GREENWAYS

- L Top:** The canal berm bank was removed and footing poured for an interlaced stone wall to support Greenways' Central Canal Towpath Trail at Westfield Boulevard and College Avenue in Broad Ripple during August 1998. Photo by Chuck Huppert
- L Center:** An unsightly parking deck had been built over the Central Canal in back of the businesses in Broad Ripple. P - Bob Schmidt
- L Bottom:** The parking deck was removed in April 1999 to open up the Central Canal into the village of Broad Ripple. P - Chuck Huppert
- Right Top:** A new pedestrian bridge abutment was erected on the canal bank east of College Ave. in February 2000. P - Chuck Huppert
- R Center:** Another abutment for a pedestrian bridge was built by the Indianapolis Museum of Art in February 2000. P - Chuck Huppert
- R Bottom:** A 2000 ton crane lifted this new bow truss aluminum bridge, which was made in Canada, in place over the Central Canal by College Avenue in Broad Ripple on May 20, 2000. It was dedicated on July 1, 2000. It was one of three pedestrian bridges placed over the canal. P - Chuck Huppert

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CENTRAL CANAL TOWPATH TRAIL



L Top: This antique Bowstring Bridge made by the King Iron Bridge Company of Cleveland, Ohio, in 1873 was removed from Lye Creek Montgomery County, Indiana, repaired, restored and relocated across the Central Canal at the Indianapolis Museum of Art in June 2000 for pedestrians to cross from the canal towpath to the berm bank. . P - Chuck Huppert

L Bottom: This antique Pratt Bedstead Pony Bridge, which was built around 1879 by the Wrought Iron Bridge Company of Ohio, was also removed from Lye Creek in Montgomery County about two miles downstream from the Bowstring Bridge, repaired, restored and relocated across the Central Canal just west of Illinois Street on June 22, 2000. P - Chuck Huppert

R Top: Pedestrian walkways have been built beneath street bridges that cross the Central Canal on the Towpath Trail. P - Lynette Kross

R Bottom: Mile markers placed along the Central Canal Towpath Trail help hikers, joggers, walkers and cyclists know how far they have come along the over 5-mile-long trail. P - Lynette Kross.

system consists of over 6,000 acres of dedicated Greenways on over 200 miles of linear space, along with 65 miles of dedicated trails. Additionally, 45 miles are being planned or constructed and another 75 miles will undergo construction in the near future.

Our trail system is well underway to connect over 125 major destinations throughout our county to hundreds of Indianapolis neighborhoods. Such destinations include 55 parks, along with schools, museums, a zoo, libraries, art parks, one college and two universities.

In addition, we have re-established an 1836 Canal Towpath and several historic bridges in our diverse collection (Circa 1872 to modern bridges) for pedestrian crossings and have continued to improve infrastructure that supports our trail system. We have also built pedestrian bridges over and under vehicle bridges along our Greenways system. As part of the mayor's vision for a vibrant cultural agenda for our city we are now studying a 10-mile Cultural Trail hub greenway in downtown Indy.

In 2000 the City/County Council gave the responsibility of developing and managing

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL

an all new county-wide bike route system to the Greenways Division. Currently we are working with the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to develop a regional bike route system. With the Monon trail connecting Hamilton county to the North, and other greenways connecting to surrounding counties, the system is starting to take shape. Marion county and the regional system feature numbered routes extending well into all nine surrounding counties as shown on the new comprehensive bike route map. We have also worked with the IndyGo Public Transportation Utility (city busses) to install bike racks on the front of all their fleet. We, along with MPO and IndyGo, are working to acquire grants for installing these racks. This would make greenways, bike routes, and bus transportation into a user-friendly system.

Our goal is to integrate the Greenways trail system into the 327-mile county-wide bike route system that we are currently redeveloping. Further, we will intersect the regional bike routes with the IndyGo bus routes. This will not only improve public transportation; it will offer new options to public transportation users, allowing them a portable, personal transportation opportunity that was previously unavailable. This new alternative will serve customers at a fraction of the cost and time associated with the public transit system.

As the Indianapolis area's population has rapidly expanded over the past decade, public transportation has become more of a community necessity. With a high demand for employees in the service industry, public transportation becomes more of a critical issue, especially with the looming fuel and energy costs that could easily overwhelm service industry workers and could quickly affect the local economies. Greenways can therefore have immediate results in this area of our economic community.

As our system developed, many new environmental, commercial, housing, art and nature opportunities began popping up along the Greenway Corridor. Greenways that once started as a recreational opportunity has in fact become an engine for community based economic development as reported in several research papers by IUPUI (Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis) researching usage, home values and the explosion of housing development and small business creations.

The Greenways initiative has also collaborated to created public art in blighted areas while maintaining the integrity and improving the environment throughout Marion County.

Effectively planned greenway systems for any city can rapidly develop into an important quality of life amenity. Greenways have become recreation and transportation assets that also serve and meet the community's liveability needs for 21st Century cities. A healthy green infrastructure that makes your city a competitive place can hold the focus for the visions we all have for our homes, our cities, our nation.

As part of the "Tracking the Central" canal tour by the Canal Society of Indiana in October 1999, canawlers hiked the Central Canal Towpath Trail near the 2.6 mile marker. P - Bob Schmidt



CANAWLERS
AT REST

**JOSEPH MARSH
DARBY**

b. February 27, 1819

d. March 21, 1907

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Photos of Joseph and Catherine from:
**Biographical and Genealogical History of Cass,
Miami, Howard & Tipton Counties, Indiana**



Joseph Marsh Darby was born in Butler county, Ohio, to Owen Darby of New Jersey, who was of English descent, and Mary Fritts Darby of Virginia, who was of German descent, on February 27, 1819. Owen and Mary were married in Virginia in 1799 and had 11 children — Joseph being the youngest. At the time he was born they lived in a log cabin and Joseph's cradle was a sugar trough. Unfortunately, Mary died when Joseph was 4 years old leaving him in the care of his father and older siblings.

Joseph's father married Hanna Bills in 1824 and the family moved to Fayette county, Indiana. They settled about eleven miles south of Connersville. A few years later they moved to a small farm seven miles northwest of Connersville on "homy ridge." There Joseph shot squirrels and woodpeckers, trapped quail, fished and swam in large and small Garrison Creeks, and assisted his father on the farm

In 1831, when Joseph was about 12 years old

Children of Owen Darby (b. July 13, 1782; d. 1844) and

Margaret Fritts Darby (b. March 3, 1783, to John Michael and Nancy Fritts; married in 1799 in Monogalia county, Virginia to Owen Darby; died January 2, 1822 in Ohio)

Sarah, born March 10, 1801 in Monogalia county, Virginia, died July 13, 1876 in Ohio

Hannah, born February 15, 1803 in Virginia, died April 12, 1877 in Indiana

John, born December 2, 1804 in Ohio, died January 11, 1860 in Indiana

Daniel, born June 10, 1806 in Ohio, died September 26, 1875 in Indiana

Samuel, born July 25, 1808 in Ohio, died September 8, 1870 in Indiana

Ezra, born June 10, 1810, in Ohio, died March 11, 1871 in Kansas

Squire, born December 1, 1811 in Ohio, died in 1854 in Indiana

Rowlen, born October 5, 1813 in Ohio, died in infancy

Thomas, born July 30, 1814 in Ohio, died January 14, 1888 in Converse, Indiana

Hester A., born May 4, 1817 in Ohio, died June 3, 1892 in Brazil, Indiana

Joseph Marsh, born February 27, 1819 in Butler County, Ohio, died March 21, 1907 in Jonesboro, Indiana

Hannah Bills Darby (married Owen Darby in 1823, Butler County, Ohio)

Margaret

Jane

Owen

Perry

Jedediah (died in infancy)

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his family moved to a small farm on Wild Cat Creek in Tippecanoe county about 10 miles from Lafayette. The land was timbered. Joseph helped grub, pick and burned brush and built fences. He spent some time on the creek. His father soon sold the land and never again owned land. They farmed a year on Wea prairie and another on Wild Cat prairie. They sold their corn at ten cents per bushel, delivering it to the hog pen. Hogs at the time were worth \$1.00 per hundred.

Living in pioneer areas, Joseph had meager chances for an early education. He attended subscription schools held in log school-houses. He was educated in farming by his father. He did "gouging" for his father and others during harvest through which he became a good reaper. By the age of 15 he was considered a "full hand."

When Joseph became 16 his father told him it was time he was on his own — "root, pig or die." He worked for one year at the "sugar grove" and "high-gap" located six miles from Lafayette for his cousin, James P. Ellis, Esq., a wealthy farmer. His wages were \$100, the highest wages paid the best farm hands. But when his father decided to move to Johnson county in the fall of 1835, Joseph accompanied him, even though his cousin begged him to stay.

Central Canal

Joseph heard they were building the Central Canal and hired on in the spring of 1837. His first work on the canal was for John Kuntz, an old German "Ditchman." Joseph found it a pleasure to work with Kuntz. They slept in a "pole-shanty" on slab-bunks, one above the other. Joseph worked on the section south of Indianapolis grubbing out trees, wheeling dirt, etc. at \$16 per month. Even though he was a short man, he was quick and ambitious. Being a good chopper he felled and scored the huge burr oak trees for the locks and culverts. When he counter-scored the trees his wages increased. He learned to hew and became one among the boss hewers on the line. It seemed his ambition and genius were clearing the pathway for him. He soon learned to do frame-work for those locks.

Joseph's next employers were Free and Burks. In 1836 he worked at the lock by Col. John Wishard's. There his wages were determined by the boss workman at the close of the fall work. He received \$1.75 per day. He had many memories of laughable incidents there, but they were not recorded. The following season he worked for them at the two locks just south of Indianapolis. He received the same wages as the boss workman—\$2.00 per day. The work was hard and the fare was poor, but Joseph's grit pulled him through.

Free and Burks then held the contract for the

"Feeder Dam" at Waverly in Morgan county in 1838. There 19-year-old Joseph was made superintendent of the timber and wood works. At times he had to order and direct 50 to 100 "wild" Irishmen in putting in the timber of the Dam. That fall he, along with many others, caught the malarial "fever," which ended his work on the canal.

When Joseph got well enough to ride, he lost control of a horse than ran away with him and threw him against a tree. His broke his left arm and his left leg was mashed crippling him for life. He wept bitterly when he learned he could no longer do manual labor wondering how he would be able to make a living. However, when his energy returned he remembered that once when he was caught in the White river that was full from bank to bank, he decided he had to swim or be drowned and he did it.

Joseph determined that since his education was quite limited, he would attend a county school taught by Moses P. Bradley in 1839. There, along with several other young men, he gained a sufficient knowledge of the common branches to teach school. He was examined by Judge Stevens, of Indianapolis, and received a certificate for teaching in public schools. For the following nine years he taught and attended school—first in Marion county, west of Indianapolis where he purchased an acre of land with a cabin and other buildings for \$100 at the age of 20. He gave the land to his father for his lifetime. (His father died in 1844 and his step-mother moved from the cabin in 1848. Joseph then sold the property for \$75.)

In the fall of 1840 Joseph went back to Butler county, Ohio, near where he was born. He taught school in the "Cottonrun" school house. Unfortunately while there he caught the measles, which affected his eyes and later led to several operations upon them. He then taught among the Pennsylvania Dutch at the "Seven Mile" house. This he found to be a novelty and pleasurable. This school closed in the spring of 1842.

Joseph then attended the Miami University of Oxford where he roomed with John Fegely, a German scholar. They entered as irregular scientifics. At the close of the term with George Junkin, D. D., president, they recited in Greek and Latin to Henry R. Josselyn. Darby had learned to read these languages to a limited extent.

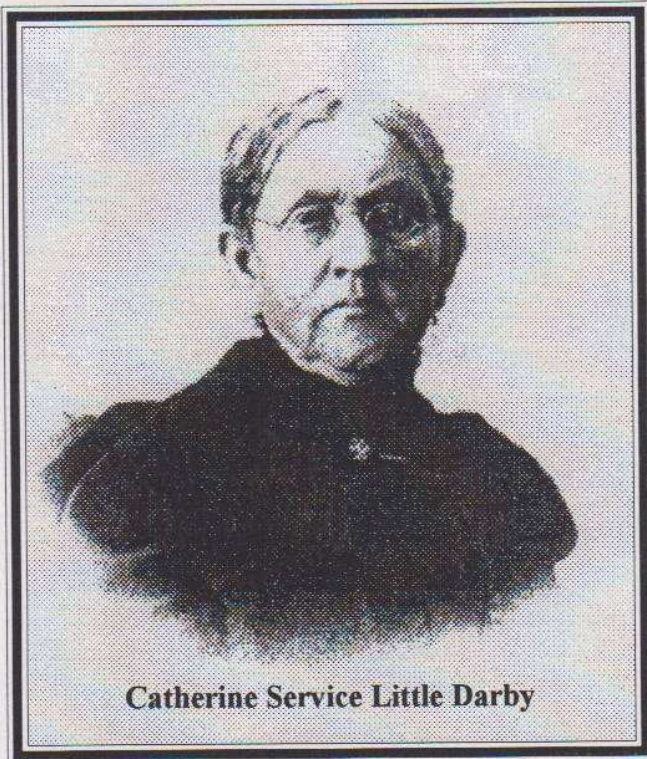
Then in the spring of 1843, Joseph attended a German school in "Hickory Flat" taught by his old roommate Fegely. There he learned to read and write the German language. He boarded with a rich old German farmer named Sowers and enjoyed the novelty of some well-prepared dishes. In the center of the table were sauerkraut, boiled or fried ham, sausage, eggs, noodles,

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potatoes, onions, etc.

Joseph then taught at Darrtown, OH, which is located four miles east of Oxford, for many years. This was followed by one term at Sommerville and then at Jacksonburg, his last place in Ohio.

Having saved money through his industry and economy, he bought an 80-acre farm located in Johnson county, IN, on the Bluff state road about twelve miles south of Indianapolis in 1847. He only paid \$7.50 per acre for a total of \$600 since little improvements had been made and only 16 acres had been cleared.



Catherine Service Little Darby

On July 22, 1847, Catherine Service Little, of Ohio county near Rising Sun, Indiana, married Joseph. Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on January 22, 1827, to David Little, who was from Georgia and of Irish descent, and Mary Morgan Little, who was from New Jersey and of Scotch descent, Catherine was the next to the youngest of their three daughters Ann, Catherine, and Mary, and three sons, Ebenezer, David, and (?). The Littles had been married in New Jersey in 1816. David, a school teacher at a select school, had died in Xenia, Ohio in 1836. Mary, born in 1798, later died at the Darby's residence on February 14, 1870 at the age of 72 years. They were Scotch Presbyterians.

In the spring of 1848 Joseph left teaching and, with scarcely enough money to move them, Joseph and Catherine moved from Butler county, Ohio, to the Johnson county farm in Indiana. There they labored hard for twelve years experiencing burning fevers and cold

chills common to the White river valley during the first few years. They were very economical. Soon the farm was well stocked with horses, cattle and hogs. During this time five of their children were born:

Virginia Florence - June 25, 1848
 Chalmers Irving - Feb. 16, 1851- died in infancy
 Alice Cordelia - Feb. 13, 1852
 Frances Loretto - Jan. 30, 1855
 Harriet Agnes - Jan. 29, 1858 - mar. Arminus Acker of Connersville

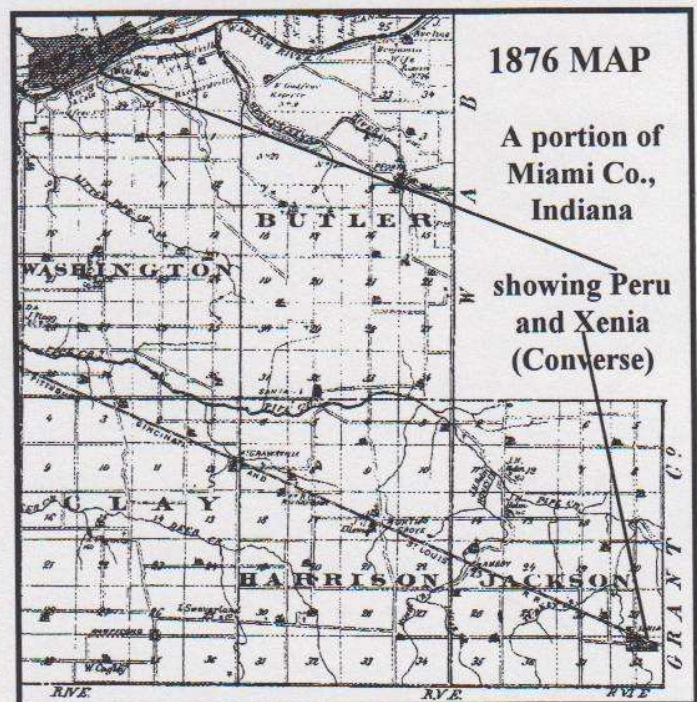
Later they had two more daughters:

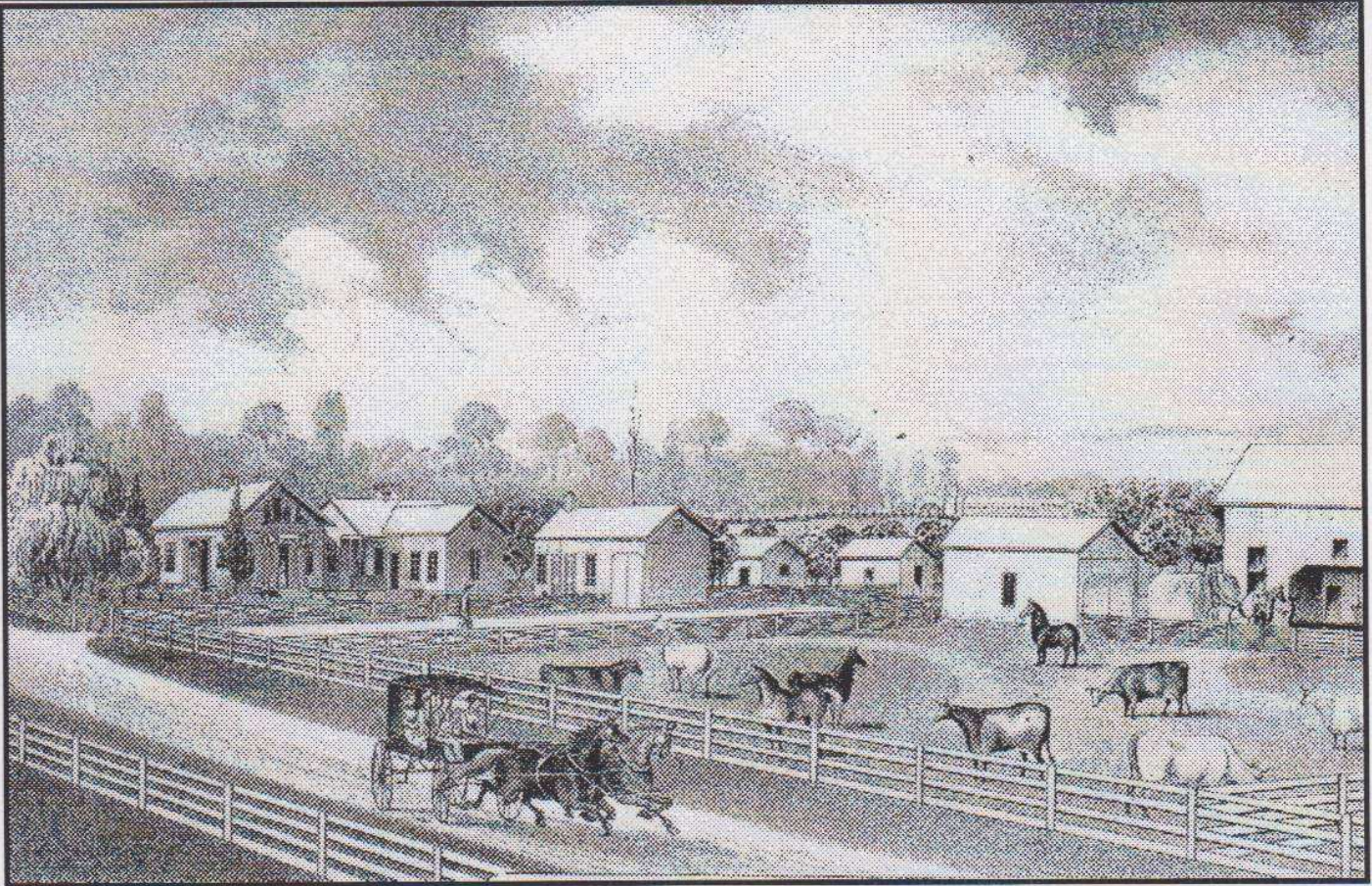
Clara Belle - June 20, 1865
 Estelle Mae - Oct. 22, 1868 - died Sept. 5, 1885

While on the Johnson county farm, Joseph subscribed \$250 stock to the Evansville, Indianapolis and Cleveland straight-line railroad. The railroad fell through and Joseph was not refunded anything. This opened his eyes to railroad building.

Twelve years later, after noting the inconvenience of the schools where they lived, Joseph and Catherine decided to sell this farm and move to a more suitable location. In January 1860 Jacob Paddack bought the farm for \$4,000. They also sold some of their personal property for \$1,000.

Before he sold to Paddack, Joseph had visited his two brothers, Daniel and Thomas, who lived near Xenia, IN. (Xenia, Indiana, changed its name to Converse in 1849. Today Converse is located in the extreme southeast corner of Miami county in Jackson township and the northwest corner of Grant county in Richland township.) In January 1860 he bargained for and bought two farms. The first one in Xenia had eighty little-





Residence of Joseph M. Darby
Section 32 Jackson Township, Miami County, Indiana
New Historical Atlas of Miami County, Indiana. Kingman Bros., 1877.

improved acres for which he paid \$2,300. The second farm of one hundred acres cost \$2,400 and was located two miles southeast in Grant county.

On March 1, 1860, Joseph and his family moved onto the 80-acre property. Before long they had it and the Grant county farm well stocked with horses, cattle and hogs. Although he tried raising sheep for two or three years, his notes showed him that there was no profit in sheep so he quit raising them. His delight was in the beautiful cattle that grazed on his pasture.

In 1864 Joseph added 44 acres to the homestead for \$1,400. This increased the 80 acres to 124 acres that were well supplied with water.

Things were going well for Joseph so he decided to by a store in Xenia and stock it with goods. Soon he found he had too many "fires" to keep going and sold the store to a man who was to make payments for it. The business failed for the man, he didn't keep up the payments, and Joseph lost over \$1,000.

Around 1874-75, since Joseph was getting older, he sold the Grant county farm for \$5,000 on payments making a profit of \$2,600. He quit cultivating his land himself and rented it out. Although his farming years were over and he never claimed being a No. 1 farmer, he had always done most of the labor himself and had kept as "square" with the world as possible. He felt that a man should be independent in living his life.

When Joseph's biography was written in 1877, he was 58 years old. Catherine was 50. They had lived 17 years on their Jackson county farm. It had the appearance of a first-class farm, with modern improvements. It was under a high state of cultivation.

Politically, Joseph never ran for any office nor ever wanted one. He said he didn't want any part in those "wire-working" conventions. He was content living on his farm with his family and reading his books. He cast his first vote for Martin Van Buren, who was running for president in 1836, and Col. R. M. Johnson, for vice-president. He voted for the Republican party at

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its organization helping to elect Abraham Lincoln. He was "stringently" opposed to slavery and to "secret orders," which he thought "were better adapted to despotic than Republican governments." He thought their obligations, penalties and foolish ceremonies lowered humanity. He also opposed whiskey, tobacco, and gambling, those habits and principals that degrade humanity. He supported those who elevated the human race. He later identified himself with the bimetalists and left the Republican party to vote for William J. Bryan.

When the Xenia (Indiana) Presbyterian Church was organized on November 12, 1870, by Rev. William Armstrong, who visited the town as missionary of the Muncie Presbytery, for the purpose of establishing a society, J. M. Darby and Catharine S. Darby were the first names on a petition for an organization of the church. For several years, Joseph was a ruling elder in the Presbyterian church. However, through his reading of history and science, his own observation of the world, his own reason as an intelligent man, and his dealings with men, he questioned both the authenticity of old and new Testaments of the Bible and doubted the "Divine" of the Christian Religion. He believed he and others had the right to read, examine, think and judge for themselves.

The Darbys saw to the education and mental improvement of their children, who received a liberal common school education and were supplied with an abundance on interesting literature. Joseph had the largest and most valuable library of any man in the township having acquired most of his books prior to his marriage. He also had a deep interest in geology and took pride in his large cabinet of rare rock specimens. He was most interested in the elevation and advancement in the intelligence of the human race.

Joseph Marsh Darby died on March 22, 1907. He was a highly respected man. The Marion, Indiana newspapers carried these obituaries:

Marion News-Tribune March 22, 1907 Jonesboro and Gas City

Joseph M. Darby of Converse, who has been residing with his daughter, Mrs. H. A. Acker, in Jonesboro for some time, died with hemorrhage of the brain Thursday morning at 3:30 o'clock. The funeral will be preached at his home in Converse at 2 o'clock Friday. Burial at the I.O.O.F. cemetery at that place. The deceased was 88 years of age. He had been in ill health for a few weeks and on Wednesday had a stroke of paralysis. The remains will be taken at noon Friday over the Panhandle to Converse.

The Marion Daily Leader March 22, 1907 Death of An Aged Man

Joseph M. Darby, a well known resident of Converse, died Thursday morning at 3:40 o'clock at the home of his daughter Mrs. Acker of Jonesboro after a short illness with hemorrhage of the brain. He was 88 years of age and had lived near Converse for many years. The body was shipped to Converse for burial by Undertaker Ward of Gas City. The cortage left the residence Friday morning.

Sources:

Ancestry.com 1860, 1870 and 1880 United States Federal Census. Joseph M. Darby, Jackson Township, Miami County, Indiana.

Biographical and Genealogical History of Cass, Miami, Howard and Tipton Counties, Indiana. Chicago, IL/ The Lewis Publishing Company. 1888

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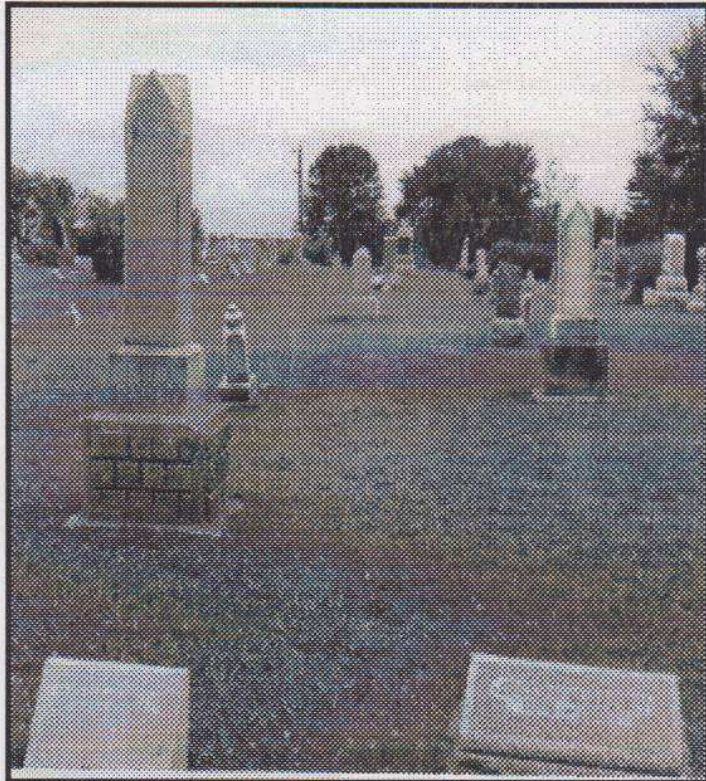
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Editors note: Researching Joseph M. Darby held several points of confusion. Although several atlases and history books contained his biography, they were written before his death. A search of cemeteries in Marion county, Indiana, for his grave came up empty. Checking a map closely, it was seen that today Converse is located where Xenia once was and extends into Grant county. Checking Grant county, the cemetery where Joseph was buried was soon found. With this information it was easy to find his obituaries in the Marion County Library. On the way to the cemetery there was a sign along the road noting the town name change.

Another somewhat confusing point came about with him residing in both Johnson township and Jackson township in Marion county, Indiana, with the names being similar. Hopefully this is made clear to the reader.

TOWPATHS TO TRAILS - INDIANA'S CENTRAL CANAL



A large **J. M. Darby** marker stands behind the headstones of Catharine and Joseph Darby. The headstones read:

Catharine S.
Wife of J. M. Darby
Died Dec. 9, 1885
Aged 68 Y 10 M 17 D

Joseph M. Darby
1819-1907

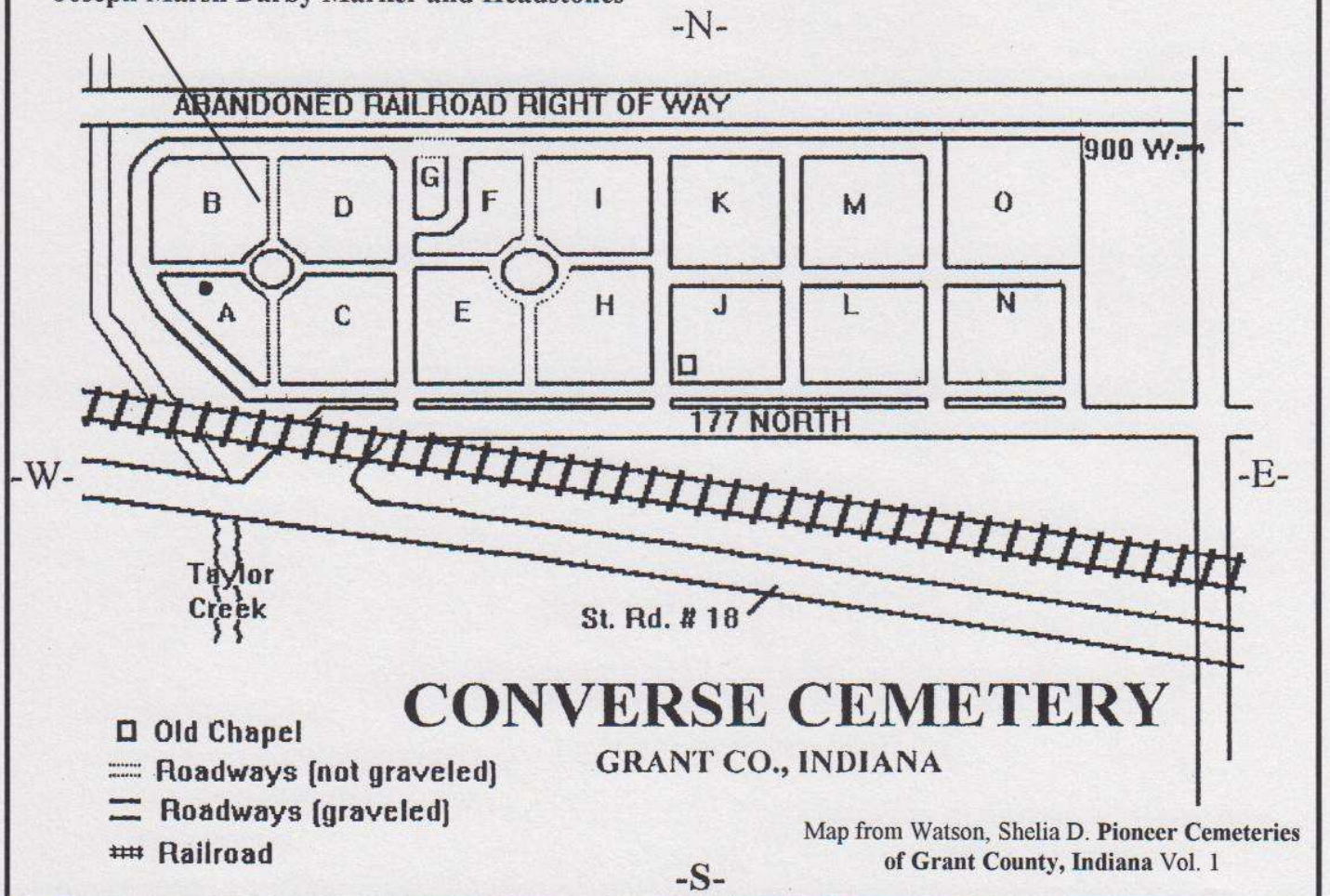
Not seen in the photo on the far left is a taller marker for **Mary Morgan Little**, the mother of Joseph's wife Catharine. And next to Catharine's stone the headstone for: **Estella May**, Setp. (misspelled) 5, 1885, 16 Y 10 M 13 D, Our beautiful May, How we miss thee at home

The first cemetery in Jackson township was laid out on the farm of Thomas Mason for the first burial of Thomas and Mary Addington's infant. Afterward it was known as the Xenia cemetery and was the principal burial place at Converse.

To reach the Converse Cemetery take S. R. 18 west from Marion, Indiana and just before reaching Converse turn right on 900 W, left on 177 north, right into cemetery and immediately left to the west end of the cemetery Section A.

Photo by Bob Schmidt.

Joseph Marsh Darby Marker and Headstones



Lt. Thomas Armstrong Morris

Thomas Armstrong Morris was the 3rd son of Morris Morris, Auditor of Indiana 1828-1844 and commissioner 1832-1835 overseeing construction of the state capitol building. Thomas graduated from West Point in 1834 and received a brevetted second lieutenant's commission. In 1835 the War

Department assigned him to assist Major Ogden and the engineer corps in constructing the National Road through Indiana and Illinois. The division between Richmond and Indianapolis was under his supervision. After resigning from the U. S. service in 1836, he became the resident engineer in charge of the Central Canal for Indiana. However, most of the actual canal surveying and construction supervision was done by Solomon Homan.

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