

WABASH & ERIE CANAL



Canal Society of Indiana

P.O. Box 40087

Fort Wayne, IN 46804

WABASH & ERIE CANAL



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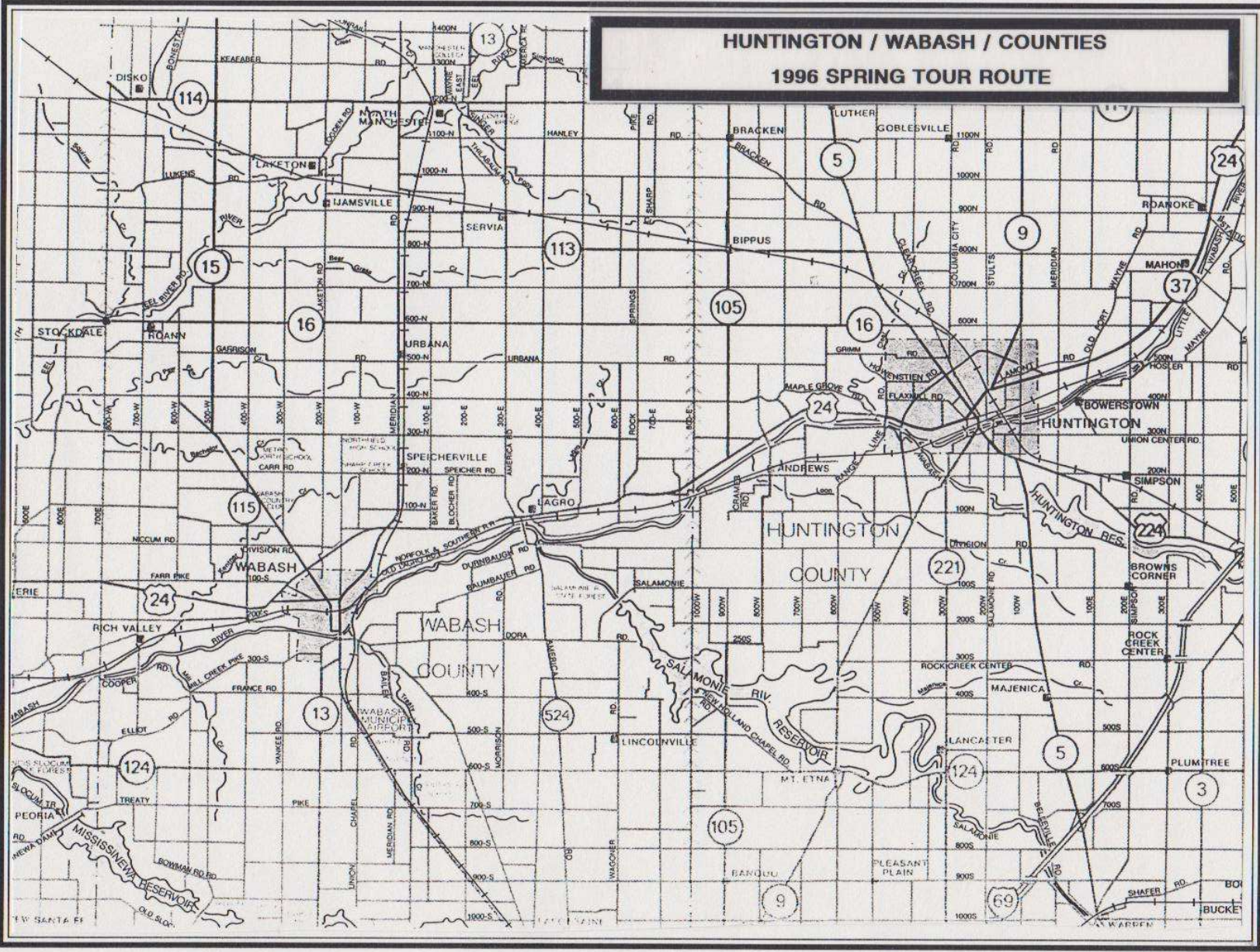
ED & CYNTHIA POWERS

BOB & CAROLYN SCHMIDT

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HUNTINGTON / WABASH / COUNTIES
1996 SPRING TOUR ROUTE



W & E 1847 REPORT

REPORT ON STRUCTURES CHIEF ENGINEER - JESSE L. WILLIAMS

(South of Vermilyea House, Allen County to East of Peru, Miami County)

----- ALLEN COUNTY -----

Aboite Creek Aqueduct No. 2 :

The next structure is aqueduct No. 2, over the river Aboite, of four spans, each 28 feet clear. The trunk is of wood resting on two abutments and 3 piers, all of good cut stone masonry. This structure is entirely new, having been rebuilt in 1846, and will probably require but little expense for 8 or 10 years to come.

----- WHITLEY COUNTY -----

County Line Road Bridge No. 12 :

Not far below the aqueduct is road bridge No. 12, nearly new. It may last 8 years.

----- HUNTINGTON COUNTY -----

Culvert No. 33 :

Culvert No. 33 , 12 miles west of Fort Wayne is built of wood, 10 feet by 18 inches -- submerged.

Culvert No. 34 :

The next structure is Culvert No. 34, a large wooden culvert over **Calf Creek**, of 2 spans, each ten feet wide and five feet high, of rectangular shape. The covering timber of this culvert has been exposed to the air since its erection in 1833 and must be partially decayed, still it has strength enough to sustain the weight, if the decay were now checked. I would therefore recommend that a dam be erected just below the culvert and made water-tight, so as to submerge the whole structure. This may cost \$100, but will be far more economical than a renewal of the whole culvert which, otherwise, will be necessary within 2 or 3 years.

Culvert No. 35 :

Culvert No. 35, is of timber, 10 feet by 18 inches -- submerged.

Culvert No. 36 (Roanoke) : (McPherrren's Creek today / Cow Creek has been diverted)

Culvert No. 36, over **Cow Creek**. This is a large wooden arch of 18 feet chord, semicircular. A structure of this size and shape could not be submerged, and the arch timbers have therefore been exposed to the air. Experience shows, however, that timber thus situated under a moist bank of earth, is not subject to rapid decay and it is believed that this arch may stand 3 or 4 years longer when it should be rebuilt of cut stone. The head walls will need some repairs within two years.

Lock No. 4 (Dickey Lock, Roanoke) :

The next structure is lock No. 4, 15 miles west of Fort Wayne. This is the first lock west of the summit, and terminates the summit level. It is 10 feet lift, built upon the wooden frame plan. It was renewed about 4 years ago, is now in good order, and will last probably 4 or 5 years longer without much expense -- gates will last 3 years.

Road Bridge No. 13 :

Not far below this lock is road bridge No. 13, which will last 6 or 7 years.

Culvert No. 37 :

Culvert No. 37, 10 feet by 18 inches, of wood -- submerged.

Road Bridge No. 14 :

Road bridge No. 14 at **Port Mahon**. This is a longer and more costly bridge than ordinary. It will stand 2 or 3 years but the planking should be renewed during the ensuing winter.

Culvert No. 38 :

Culvert No. 38, of wood, 10 feet by 18 inches -- submerged.

Culvert No. 39 :

Culvert No. 39, opening 10 feet by 18 inches, built of timber -- submerged.

Culvert No. 40 :

Culvert No. 40, of wood, ten feet by eighteen inches -- submerged.

Bull Creek Aqueduct No. 3 :

The next structure is aqueduct No. 3, over **Bull Creek**. It has one span of 28 feet, the trunk is of wood, and rests on two stone abutments. The trunk is built anew, two years since is in good order, and will last for seven or eight years. The masonry is not very perfect, but will probably stand and answer the purpose for several years to come. It is about five and a-half miles east of Huntington.

Culvert No. 41 :

Culvert No. 41, 10 feet by 18 inches, built of wood and submerged.

Road Bridge No. 15 :

Road bridge No. 15, 4 miles east of Huntington, is the next structure -- will need rebuilding in 1848.

Culvert No. 42 :

Culvert No. 42, 10 feet by 18 inches of timber -- submerged.

Culvert No. 43 :

Culvert No. 43, 10 feet by 18 inches of wood -- submerged.

Flint Creek Aqueduct No. 4 (Huntington) :

Aqueduct No. 4, over **Flint Creek**, one-half mile east of Huntington, is the next structure. It has one span of 28 feet -- trunk of wood -- abutments of stone, but of imperfect quality, yielding to the action of the weather. This masonry will doubtless require some repairs within two or three years. The trunk is nearly new and may last seven years.

Road Bridge No. 16 & No. 17 :

Within the town of Huntington, there are two road bridges crossing the canal, Nos. 16 and 17, both of which need rebuilding during the ensuing year.

Lock No. 5 (Tipton Lock)

Lock No. 6 (Burke's Lock)

Lock No. 7 (Davies Lock)

Lock No. 8 (?)

Lock No. 9 (Madison Lock)

Lock No. 10 (Forks Lock)

Commencing at the upper part of Huntington, and between that point and the feeder introduced from the Wabash, below the Forks, a distance of two miles, there are six locks, numbering 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, counting from the State line; each of which is nine feet lift, excepting Nos. 6 and 7, which are of 8 feet lift. One of these locks, No. 7, is constructed upon what is called the combined or composite plan; the walls of this lock are good, and the plank facing, having been renewed some four years since, will stand without expense for five or six years more, when it must be renewed. The other five locks may all be described under one statement. They were built upon the wooden crib plan, using undressed but strong and durable stone, laid on dry walls -- the face of the walls being made water tight by a lining of plank. The cost of rebuilding a lock on this plan, including the removal of the old structure, will be about \$5,000. The repairs proposed to be made during the ensuing winter, will probably cost \$150, to each of the five locks. Besides this, there is in all this flight of locks, one full set of lock-gates required to be built the ensuing winter, the other gates are all nearly new and will last perhaps four years.

Feeder Dam No. 1 (southeast end of Ehler's Island):

The next structure is the **Wabash** dam No. 1, erected across the river one-half mile below the mouth of Little River, generally known as the "Forks," for the purpose of a feeder. This dam is 220 feet long and 10 feet high, formed of cribs filled with stone resting on a solid rock bottom. It is in a safe condition excepting the abutments, which being built of timber, are much decayed, requiring renewal before the return of winter. The culvert and head-gates by which the feeder is introduced into the canal, has just been rebuilt and are in good order. This feeder is three chains long.

Road Bridge No. 18 (Range Line Rd):

Just below this dam, is road-bridge No. 18, which may last five years.

Clear Creek Dam :

The next structure is the dam across Clear Creek, through the pool of which, the canal is taken across this stream. It is 1?? feet long and 6 feet high, on a rock bottom. The abutments are of wood, and will need rebuilding within two years. The towing path across Clear creek, has been recently rebuilt and will last for seven or eight years, unless carried off by the creek flood.

Flood Gate :

A few rods below Clear creek, a flood-gate has been constructed in the towing-path which is opened during high water for the security of the canal. It is built upon "**English's patent**," with permanent stone abutments.

Culvert No. 44 :

Culvert No. 44, built of timber 10 feet by 2 feet -- submerged.

Culvert No. 45 :

(Now known as **Silver Creek** rebuilt of stone in 1862) Culvert No. 45, a large arch for the passage of **Woodword's Creek**, four miles west of Huntington. The arch is a semi-circle of 24 feet chord, built of timber. With some repairs to the head walls, this structure will last three or four years, when it must be rebuilt of cut stone.

Lock No. 11 (Chesebro Lock) :

Lock No. 11, is situated a few rods west of the above described arch. It is upon the wooden crib plan, of six feet lift, though the walls are of an equal height with an eight feet lift, as a guard against the floods of Clear creek. The four upper courses of this lock, with the entire set of gates and the hollow quoin posts, to require renewal during the ensuing winter. With this immediate expenditure, the lock will last till, say 1850.

Culvert No. 46 :

Culvert No. 46, 4 feet by 2 -- can be submerged for \$2.00.

Waste Weir :

The next structure is a long waste weir to discharge the floods of Clear creek -- a breast wall and sides built of timber, will last seven years.

Culvert No. 47 :

Culvert No. 47, of wood, 2 spans 10 by 2 feet -- submerged.

Waste Weir :

Waste Weir, 70 feet long -- timber breast and side walls, may last six years.

Flood Gates :

Flood-gates built upon "**English's patent**," with stone abutments.

Culvert No. 48 :

Culvert No. 48 is a rough stone arch of six feet chord, springing from abutments 2 1/2 feet high.

Road Bridge No. 19 :

Road-bridge No. 19, will require rebuilding in 1849.

Culvert No. 49 :

Culvert No. 49, of wood, 2 spans 10 feet by 2 feet -- submerged.

Culvert No. 50 :

Culvert No. 50, of wood, 10 feet by 2 feet -- submerged.

----- **WABASH COUNTY** -----

Culvert No. 51 :

Culvert No. 51, of wood, 10 feet by 2 feet -- submerged.

Culvert No. 52 :

Culvert No. 52, of wood, 2 spans, 10 feet by 2 feet -- submerged.

Lock No. 12 (James McDonald Lock) :

Lock No. 12, 8 feet lift, built of cut stone from the Salamina quarry. These stone are not sufficiently durable to answer in a situation so exposed as the face of the lock, and are beginning to fall under the action of the weather. With some repairs occasionally, the lock may be made to last a number of years. The gates will need rebuilding in 1850.

Culvert No. 53 :

Culvert No. 53, of wood, 10 feet by 18 inches -- submerged.

Lock No. 13 (Curley Hayes Lock) :

Lock No. 13, 7 feet lift, of cut stone. The description of lock No. 12, just preceding will apply to this. Gates will need renewal in 1850.

Road Bridge No. 20 :

Road-bridge No. 20, will last two years.

Culvert No. 54 :

Culvert No. 54, for the passage of Lagro creek, two arches, each 11 feet chord, built of stone. The stone are not of a durable quality, yet being less exposed than in a lock, this structure may be considered permanent for a number of years to come.

Lock No. 14 (James Kerr Lock) :

Lock No. 15 (Jim Ditton Lock) :

Locks Nos. 14 and 15, situated in the town of Lagro, each six feet lift, built of cut stone. The stone procured from Salamina quarry. In certain portions of the wall, the stone are beginning to decay. The locks being of small lift, will doubtless answer the purpose for many years. The gates of both locks need renewal in 1850.

Feeder :

Just below lock No. 15, the feeder is introduced from the Wabash River, by a **set of wooden culverts** and head gates, placed under the towing path, the culverts being under water. The head gates are in good order.

Feeder Dam No. 2 (at Wabash bridge) :

Wabash dam No. 2, erected for the purpose of this feeder, is situated immediately at the town of Lagro. It is 280 feet long, and 7 feet high, resting on a rock bottom, and formed of cribs filled with stone. The abutments are of stone, and the whole structure is permanent and in good condition, with the exception of a wing to the south abutment, which is of wood, and will need rebuilding in 1849.

Road Bridge No. 21 :

Road bridge No 21, just below the dam, will last 5 years.

Culvert No. 55 :

Culvert No. 55, of timber, 3 spans, 12 feet by 2 1/2 feet -- submerged.

Culvert No. 56 :

Culvert No. 56, of timber, 2 spans, 12 feet by 2 1/2 feet -- submerged.

Culvert No. 57 :

Culvert No. 57, of timber, 10 feet by 2 feet -- submerged.

Culvert No. 58 :

Culvert No. 58, of timber, 8 feet by 2 feet -- submerged.

Culvert No. 59 :

Culvert No. 59, of timber, 10 feet by two feet -- submerged.

Flood Gates :

Flood gates with stone abutments, in good condition.

Road Bridge No. 22 :

Road bridge No 22 -- nearly new.

Road Bridge No. 23 :

Road bridge No. 23. this will last two years; it is of extra length.

Lock No. 16 (Wabash between Cass & Miami St. - behind Wabash Plain Dealer Newspaper) :

Lock No. 16, in the town of Wabash, 9 feet lift, of cut stone. The stone of which this lock is built are very imperfect, and wholly unfit for lock masonry. By frequent repairs, this lock may be made to stand eight or ten years. The wing wall forming the tumble, has fallen down and must be repaired during the ensuing winter. Gates will need rebuilding in 1850.

Culvert No. 60 :

Culvert No. 60, a rough stone arch of 8 feet chord -- badly constructed.

Culvert No. 61 :

Culvert No. 61, a rough stone arch, 8 feet chord -- imperfectly built. This culvert and the one last described, are insufficient in capacity for the passage of the floods. Injury to the embankments frequently occurs from this cause.

Flood Gates :

The next structure is flood gates with stone abutments.

Culvert No. 62 :

Culvert No. 62, of wood, 5 spans, 12 feet by 2 1/2 feet -- submerged.

Road Bridge No. 24 :

Road bridge No. 24 will last two years.

Culvert No. 63 :

Culvert No. 63, an arch of 6 feet chord, built of rough stone; both the material and workmanship are imperfect. It may last 10 or 15 years, but is liable to fall at any time.

(STEARNS FISHER HOME - Assistant Civil Engineer)

Lock No. 17 (Near Richvalley under US 24) :

Lock No. 17, 6 feet lift, of cut stone. The quality of the stone and probable durability of the lock, are well represented in the description just given of lock No. 16; gates will last two years.

----- **MIAMI COUNTY** -----

Culvert No. 64, 65, 66, 67, 68 :

Culvert No. 64, of wood, 10 feet by 18 inches -- submerged.

Culvert No. 65, 12 feet by 2 1/2 feet, built of wood -- submerged when there is water in the creek. It is no doubt permanent for 10 or 15 years.

Culvert No. 66, of wood, 10 feet by 18 inches -- submerged.

Culvert No. 67, of wood, 12 feet by 3 feet -- submerged.

Culvert No. 68, of wood, 2 spans, 10 feet by 2 1/2 feet. The whole of the timber may be submerged by an expenditure of \$5.00.

Lock No. 18 :

Lock No. 18, six feet lift, of cut stone. Some not durable, beginning to yield to the action of the weather. With some repairs, may last 8 or 10 years; gates need renewal in 1849.

Culvert No. 69 :

Culvert No. 69, of wood, 3 spans, 12 feet by 2 1/2 -- submerged.

Road Bridge No. 25 :

Road Bridge No. 25, will last 2 years.

Culvert No. 70 :

Culvert No. 70, of wood, 3 spans, 12 feet by 2 1/2 -- submerged. / **(East Edge of Peru)**

"FROM THE FORKS TO PARADISE"

HUNTINGTON WABASH TOUR 1996

The Huntington Wabash portion of the Wabash and Erie Canal is very important historically in the way the land was acquired on which to construct this major waterway. It is a story of Native Americans pushed aside and moved off their land by immigrants, of our forefathers' foresight in opening up the interior for settlement, and of our ancestors' struggle with the elements, disease, and each other to build the canal.

At one time the Miami Indians owned all of Indiana and the western half of Ohio. Thus the Wabash River was their river. They named it Wah-bah-shik-ki, clear and bright. Their last homes were in Wabash County. The last great Indian battle in this area was fought on the banks of the Mississinewa River in December 18, 1812. Colonel John B. Campbell of the 19th United States Infantry, who had received word from Territorial Governor Harrison to settle a brewing dispute, wrote an official report. In it he stated that "Early in the morning of the 17th of December, 1812, I reached and discovered an Indian town on the banks of the Mississinewa inhabited by a number of Delawares and Miamis. The troops rushed into the town, and killed eight warriors and took 42 prisoners, neither of them warriors and the residue women and children. I ordered the town to be immediately burned, a house or two excepted in which I confined the prisoners -- and the cattle and other stock to be shot. I left the infantry to guard the prisoners. I burnt on this occasion three considerable villages, took several horses, killed many cattle, and returned to the town I had first burned." He also states that on the morning of December 12, about 1/2 hour before daylight, his soldiers were convened at a conference when "My camp was most furiously attacked by a large party of Indians, preceded by and accompanied with a most hideous yell." Thus began the Battle of Mississinewa which lasted over an hour leaving 15 dead warriors, eight dead soldiers, 42 wounded soldiers, and 107 dead horses.

The Battle of Mississinewa led the way to making the Indians agree to treaties that benefited the United States. Shortly thereafter a treaty provided for a mill to be built for the Indians at the expense of the U.S. government. It was built four miles southwest of Wabash in 1820 on Mill Creek. Soon other mills were built by settlers.

Fourteen years after the battle and after several smaller treaties were signed, the big treaty that opened all of this part of Indiana to white settlement was made at Paradise Springs in Wabash, IN.. In the Treaty of 1826 the Potawatomi and Miami ceded all of the land north of the Wabash River as far down as the mouth of the Tippecanoe River to the United States. This was later referred to as Wabash County's biggest real estate deal.

The first proposal, of a canal linking the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico by a short canal dug at the portage used by the Indians from the St. Mary's River to the Little River at Fort Wayne, IN., is usually credited to President George Washington. However, it was probably the French voyagers at the close of the seventeenth century who saw how a connection of these waters would make trading of commodities easier. Even General Anthony Wayne had considered the commercial as well as the military importance of a direct water route from Lake Erie, through Ohio, through the Maumee and Wabash Rivers, down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico.

Not much was done about such a canal until after the Treaty of St. Mary's in 1818 at which time the United States had gained possession of the Indian lands and a survey was necessary before the lands could be settled. Captain Riley was assigned to conduct such a survey. Upon arriving in Fort Wayne he determined that it would be practical to drain the wet prairie to the west of the fort and suggested that a canal between the St. Mary's River slightly above its junction with the St. Joseph River to the Little River could be fed by the swamp with water enough for navigation. These surveys were so well done that they were later used in the location of the Wabash and Erie Canal. Riley's surveys were brought to the attention of Edward Tiffin, Surveyor General, who in turn informed Congress which passed an act during the 1823-24 session authorizing the State of Indiana to "survey and mark through the public lands of the United States, the route of a canal by which to connect the navigation of the rivers Wabash and Miami and Lake Erie; and ninety feet of land on each side of said canal shall be reserved from sale on the part of the United States, and the use thereof, forever, be vested in the State aforesaid, for a canal, and for no other purpose whatever."

During the Congressional session of 1826-27 a proposition that was accepted by an act of the Legislature on January 5, 1828 stated that "to the State of Indiana, for the purpose of aiding the said State in opening a canal to unite, at navigable points, the waters of the Wabash River with those of Lake Erie, a quantity of land equal to one-half of five sections in width on each side of said canal, and reserving each alternate section to the United States, to be selected by the Commissioner of the Land Office, under the direction of the President of the United States, from one side thereof to the other; and the said lands shall be subject to the disposal of the Legislature of said State for the purpose aforesaid and no other." It also provided "that a Board of Commissioners be organized, to be known and designated as the Board of Commissioners of the Wabash & Erie Canal, and to consist of three

Commissioners, who shall be elected by joint ballot of the Senate and House of Representatives, and shall serve two years and until their successors shall be elected and qualified -- unless superseded....any two of whom shall compose a Board of Commissioners, and shall have full power and authority to act as such." Samuel Hanna of Fort Wayne, David Burr of Jackson County (later Wabash County) and Robert John of Franklin County made up the Board of Commissioners.

The Congressional Act of March 2, 1827 provided that the canal must commence construction within five years and be completed within 20 years. The commissioners selected February 22, 1832, the anniversary of George Washington's birthday, as the day to commence the building of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

Workers were needed to construct the proposed waterway. German and Irish immigrants were hired. The Irish came to America in search of a better life from the hard times and religious oppression of Ireland. The Catholics did not have political rights in Ireland until 1829 thus creating dissension between them and the Protestants. This dissension was brought along with them.

The Irish immigrants came on hundreds of ships to America in the 1830's to help build canals, roads and railroads. They could not afford to purchase the land that was selling for \$1.25 an acre, because they had to pay the \$12 it cost to cross the Atlantic and the \$8 it cost to get to Detroit. Not only were they moneyless and had to work off their passage, which was known as "working off the dead horse," but they had no tools and a minimum of clothing on their backs. The second wave of Irish came in 1845-47 because of the Great Irish Potato Famine. Through their back breaking efforts using picks, shovels, hammers, spikes, crowbars, wheelbarrows, dumpcarts, blasting powder and their friend "the mule," they opened up the interior for settlement. They toiled from daylight till dark covered in dust, burned by black powder, or knee deep in mud and water being attacked by mosquitoes and black flies in the summer and freezing in the blowing snow of winter. For their labors they received \$10 a month (later \$16 - \$20), coarse food, and rations of whiskey. The whiskey helped to keep the ague and malaria at bay and to dull their aches and pains. For entertainment they danced Irish jigs or fought each other if a German or Swede was not to be found. They worked hard, played hard, were noisy and fiery tempered, but they were often very eloquent. They died of "canal chills" and were buried by the thousands in mass graves. Others died from cave-ins, fights, mule kicks, or powder blasts and were buried in the towpath.

Those who lived and worked on the Wabash and Erie Canal in Indiana were offered from 40 to 160 acres of land as part of their wages. Many so called

"black Irish" sent passage money to their relatives and changed their lifestyle to become farmers. However, most Irishmen, being gregarious and not suited to farm life, sold their canal scrip for a few dollars and headed for the cities. There they became contractors, labor bosses, and politicians.

Ironically the Great Irish Potato Famine, which decreased the population of Ireland from 6 million to around 3 million through death and emigration, was beneficial in the United States for the building of transportation systems of roads, canals and railroads and in the expansion of manufacturing by providing an increasing supply of labor to do jobs that "no Hoosier or Yankee settler would do." This provided cheap labor in the North rather than having to use slave labor as in the South.

The Potato Famine was caused by a blight, fungus *Phytophthora infestans*, which caused the potato crops of fail in Ireland and the people to starve. Many people were turned out of their homes and lost their fields by not being able to pay their rent. Those that could came to America to work on the canals and railroads, but the poorest moved to stony little fields on the steep slopes of the sea cliffs and tried to grow lumper potatoes. They built crude shelters called "scalps" in ditches near the "lazy beds" of potatoes. Many that died were buried in mass graves or simply covered with stones. Those who came to America often met the same fate.

Editors note: *Today the blight prone potato that was successfully treated with metalaxyl fungicide is once again at risk. The blight has mutated so that the fungicide is no longer capable of controlling it. Researchers thought it was stopped and did not research the development of blight resistant potato varieties. Economic hardship and hunger once again are a threat especially in poor countries.*

The canal was commenced with a ground breaking ceremony in Fort Wayne on February 22, 1832. But by 1836 the board of commissioners had problems and Governor Noah Noble appointed another six member board to work with original one. It too had problems in that every locality wanted something done for itself first. That year the Indiana legislature passed the Mammoth Internal Improvement Bill signed by Gov. Noble January 27, 1836. It appropriated approximately thirteen million dollars (one sixth of the property value of the state) and mortgaged the resources of Indiana for fifty years. Projects for rail lines and roads were also part of this improvements bill.

By 1838 Governor Wallace, upon noting that the interest due from the state was \$193,350 and the taxation revenue only \$45,000 said, "If this condition does not startle us, it should at least awaken us." Even though the commissioners were reduced to three and only one piece of work was scheduled at a time, it was

too late. The state was bankrupt. The Panic of 1839 followed with hard times. Contractors wanted their pay and bond holders their interest. Four million in worthless securities came to light. Instead of the \$15 million the state supposedly had, only \$8,593,000 could be accounted for.

Those five mile wide strips on either side of the Wabash and Erie Canal provided for by the United States government is what really had paid for it making it the only asset of the state. Charles Butler, representing the bond holders, got a proposal passed on January 27, 1847 that had the canal taken by the creditors for security, the proceeds of which were used for payment against the overdue interest. It also authorized the bondholders to spend \$2,225,000 of their own money to extend the canal to the Ohio River in hopes that it would become more profitable.

Failure of the canal was caused by floods that damaged aqueducts and feeders, by live stock and perishable freight that was lost due to shipping delays, and a rate war with the railroad. The canal could not be operated year round like the railroad. During its season the railroad would undercut its rates and then make up the difference during the months the canal was not in operation. In 1876 the canal was sold for \$96,260. The bondholders received less than 40 per cent of their investment and the interest due them.

Perhaps the influence of the canal in the settlement of these counties can best be illustrated and compared to the growth of other towns along the rivers and the canal by the census of 1840-1880.

A question often asked is "Did the canal really fail?" The canal definitely had difficulties and was not the promised income maker it was intended to be. The Mammoth Internal Improvements Bill of which more projects were included than were ever feasible did not help and the state was bankrupt. That is what most people remember. However, the canal opened up the northern and central parts of the state to settlement by providing transportation to the area to be settled and a way to ship products to market on both the east coast and the Gulf of Mexico. It also helped settle lands beyond the Mississippi. The canal took settlers to the Wabash River and from there they crossed the prairie by wagon.

The canal provided water to turn mill stones during its use and after it was no longer a transportation artery. Later the railroads and interurbans used its level towpath along which to run their rails. Power companies purchased rights to run their power lines down the old canal bed. The Old Aqueduct Club was formed in 1912 for boys who were born before 1867, lived in the west end, and swam in the old St. Mary's Aqueduct in Fort Wayne. The canal's impact is still felt today by the establishment of parks such as the Forks of the Wabash and the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal Park at Delphi. Both of these parks focus on the old canal telling of its history and placing trails along its prism for recreational use by hikers and bikers. Finally, the Canal Society of Indiana was organized May 22, 1982 in the Frank Freiman room of the Allen Co. / Fort Wayne Historical Society. Its goals are interpretation, preservation, and restoration of Indiana's Canal Era 1832 - 1874.

COUNTY	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880
Huntington	1,579	7,850	14,867	19,036	21,805
Wabash	2,756	12,138	17,547	21,305	25,240
Allen	5,942	16,919	29,328	43,494	54,765
Carroll	7,819	11,015	13,489	16,152	18,347
Cass	5,480	11,021	16,843	24,193	27,609
Fountain	11,218	13,253	15,556	16,389	20,228
Miami	3,048	11,304	16,851	21,052	24,081
Vanderburgh	6,250	11,414	20,552	33,145	42,192
Vigo	12,076	15,289	22,517	33,549	45,656

**CENSUS DATA
1840 -1880**

HUNTINGTON COUNTY

Huntington County was named for Samuel Huntington, who was born in Connecticut in 1731 and was elected president of the Continental Congress in 1779. He was self taught in Latin and the law. He was active during the Revolutionary War in legislative and judicial affairs. He signed the Declaration of Independence.

When the land office was opened in Fort Wayne it announced that canal lands could be purchased on easy terms and that they were within easy reach of the a main artery of commerce, the canal. A large number of immigrants settled in Huntington County.

The canal section from Fort Wayne to the Little River in Huntington county was the first put under contract, but the contract was not fulfilled. It was relet in the spring of 1835 and completed by July. This included the cutting and grubbing out of a 64 foot path through the forest. Trees and brush were removed 15 feet either side of the swath and logs removed 20 feet of either side with no cutting to be higher than 1 foot off the ground. The canal was then dug, locks constructed and feeder dams built which brought river water into the canal.

The Wabash and Erie Canal and U.S. 24 crisscross each other from the northern county border to Roanoke. The highway crosses Calf Creek where once there was an arch built upon a timber foundation. Just recently the last foundation timbers have disappeared

Roanoke

At U.S. 24 and Second in Roanoke are the remaining timbers of Culvert No. 36 in Cow Creek. Beyond this was located the Dickey Lock which was probably the reason the town grew up there. Commercial Street ran parallel one block west of the canal. Roanoke was the principal trading port between Wabash and Fort Wayne before Huntington came into its own. The 1887 History of

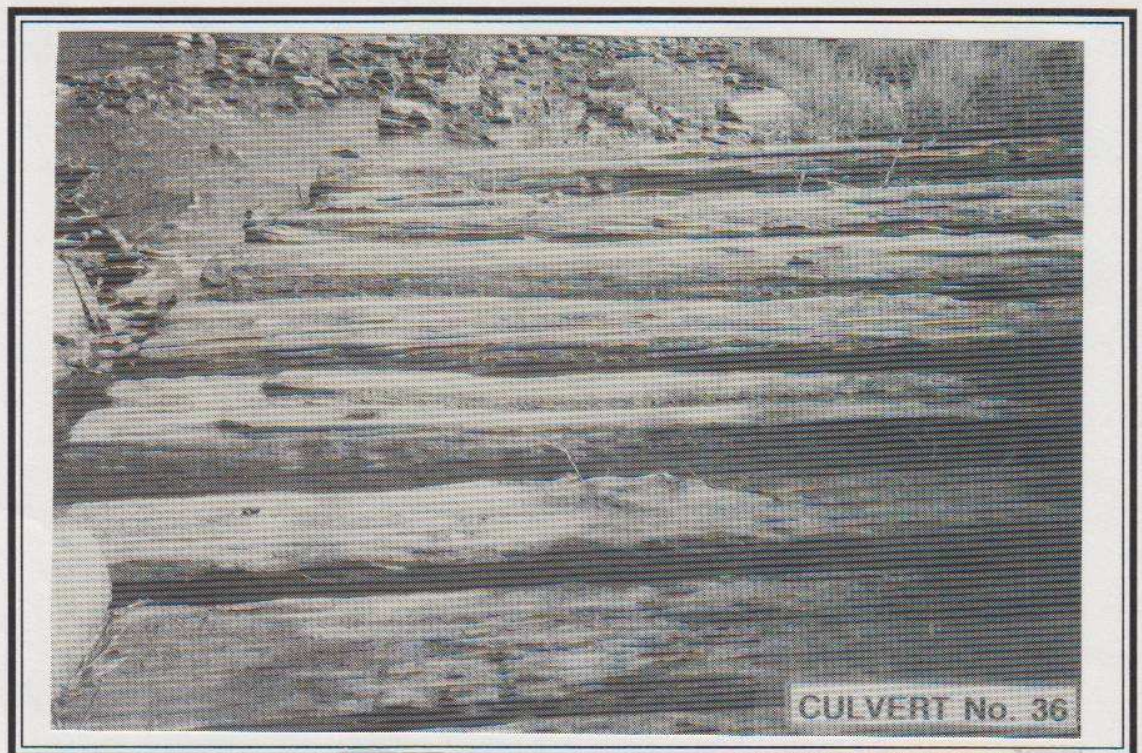
Huntington County says:

"Among the earliest comers to the place were a number of canal employees, and about the year 1847 a man by the name of Bilby opened a small store in a little frame building that stood near the lock on the east bank of the canal. Lemuel G. Jones, in 1848, purchased the building, and for about three years thereafter, carried on a fairly successful mercantile business, his principal customers being those who ran boats on the canal. Prior to engaging in merchandising, Mr. Jones erected a sawmill at the lock, and a couple of years later, built a large flouring-mill on the same spot, which began operations in the fall of 1848. The mill received its motive power from the waters of the canal, and for a number of years was the largest and most successful enterprise of the kind in Huntington County..."

Lemuel Jones was from Roanoke, Virginia from which he derived the name Roanoke for this new settlement. The land was owned by George A. Chapman who laid out the town in 1850. The first four lots of this plat bordered on the canal

Port Mahon

When one speaks of Port Mahon today, he is talking about a canal ghost town, one that stood at Mahon Road and U.S. 24. Archibold Mahon platted the town on June 20, 1853. He and his three brothers were living there at the time. The village was mainly populated with the Irish who worked on building the railroad. Samuel Mahon was in charge of the construction gang and is said to have influenced the



builders to place the railroad station at Mahon instead of at Roanoke.

The Wabash and Erie Canal serviced Mahon before the railroad. Canal boats brought in needed provisions to the little community and carried out passengers and products from the farms, kilns, woods, and quarries. Rafts of logs were also floated on the canal. The canal boats would stop at a tank in which spring water was piped. It was said to be the best water supply between Lafayette and Toledo.

The village entertained itself with cock fights, boxing matches, horse races along the tow path, square and other dances, and rat killing contests. Live rats were caught by the boys and kept until there were enough to have a contest. The boys were paid for the rats. Then a pit was dug that had straight sides and a few rats put in. Terriers owned by the locals and those from other towns were turned loose. Bets were placed on the dogs. Prizes were awarded to the dogs killing the most rats. At times the crowds for the contest reached 500.

The first business was a saw mill built to saw timber for the Wabash Railroad. Soon followed a flour mill, another saw mill, a combined grocery/saloon, a general store, another saloon, a drug store and a blacksmith shop.

Monroe Mahon ran a grist mill and distillery. He used the leftovers from the distilling process to feed hogs and fatten them for market. The hogs were owned by farmers with whom he divided the profits. Samuel Mahon operated a large railroad warehouse. Elam Mahon operated a canal boat on the canal when it was almost out of operation. He would carry light cargo and make short hauls. He also cut timber to burn in the Huntington lime kilns and also floated some of his logs to Fort Wayne. But the Wabash Railroad soon put the canal and Elam out of business.

The old W & E Canal was purchased by the Fort Wayne & Southwestern Traction Company from Huntington to Fort Wayne and called the "Canal Route." The power house was located in Huntington. It began operation in October, 1901. When the service

was discontinued the rails and parts of the cars were sold for scrap. A section in this book contains articles found in the Huntington Herald-Press in 1926 and 1929 that tell more of the life in this and the Roanoke area.

Aqueduct No. 3

At Bull Creek, west of Port Mahon, was Aqueduct No. 3. It had stone abutments and a 28 foot long wooden trough.

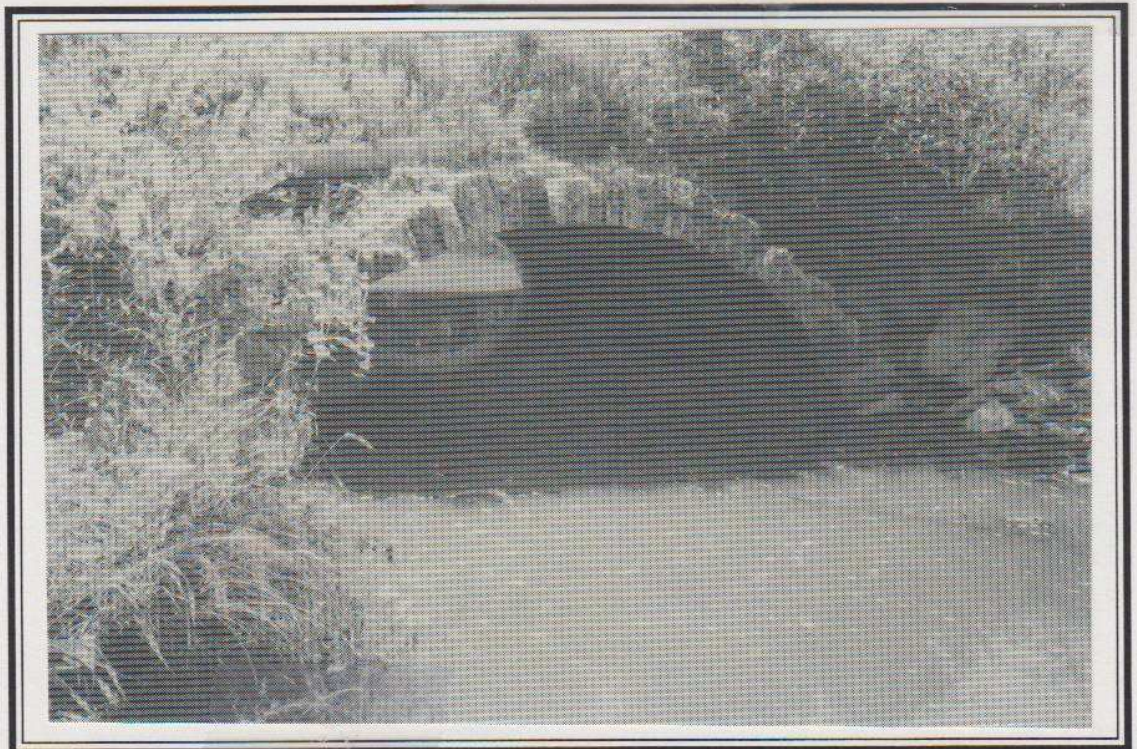
Once reaching the town of Huntington the canal crossed the Flint Creek Aqueduct, passed through locks 5 and 6, ran through the basin, and passed through locks 7,8, and 9. At the Forks of the Wabash it passed through Lock 10 and by the Wabash Dam. Further information about the Wabash and Erie Canal through Huntington and the Forks of the Wabash may be found in other sections of this book. Beyond the Wabash River Dam No. 1 is the dam over Clear Creek. Some of the timbers remain under the water of Clear Creek.

West of Clear Creek was a flood gate. Today one stone block can be found east of the creek and on the west side of the creek there remains five courses of dressed stone in the west abutment. The towpath nearby was built over an old Miami Village that was recently unearthed by archaeologists.

Silver Creek Arch

Culvert No. 45 over Woodward's Creek (better known as Silver Creek Arch) still remains. It was originally built of timber but was replaced by the beautiful structure that we see today. Silver Creek Arch is one of the Wabash and Erie Canal's remaining major structures. Farmers have cut around the west side of the arch to help with flood control.

SILVER CREEK ARCH CULVERT No. 45



The "Payment Grounds" at the Forks of the Wabash has the following legend associated with it and with the naming of Silver Creek. At payment time officials would come to the "Payment Grounds" carrying boxes filled with silver coin. They were closely guarded. One day while stopping for lunch a "hanger-on" named Ferguson saw that they were not being watched. He seized one of the boxes and hid it in the creek covering it with a stone.

Almost immediately the box was missed and Ferguson accused of stealing it. When he claimed innocence they threatened to drown him. Finally realizing they meant it, he confessed, the box was found and returned. Ferguson was let go with the understanding that he would leave the community. The creek was called Silver Creek in remembrance of that time.

Chesebro Lock

The Chesebro Lock (Lock No. 11) was west of the arch. Joseph Chesebro came to Indiana from New York to build this lock. It was of the wooden crib plan with a 6 foot lift.

Beyond the lock the canal had to squeeze itself between a high bluff and the Wabash River. It then exited Huntington County and entered Wabash County.

By 1871 the Wabash and Erie Canal was in trouble. An article which appeared in The Democrat, a Huntington newspaper, on March 9, 1871 reads as follows:

"One of the most important measures before the late legislature was that presented by Col Bird, of Allen county, asking for an appropriation of \$50,000 for repairing the Wabash and Erie Canal. This, with other needed legislation, was defeated by the bolting of the republican members. It is well known to all parties residing along the line of this Canal, that for some years past navigation has been seriously retarded, and frequently entirely suspended, in the very midst of the busy season, in consequence of its dilapidation. It is, also, well known that the earnings thereof, as account of its unfortunate condition, have been utterly insufficient to keep up repairs, and as a result it has been going from bad to worse, notwithstanding all efforts to keep it in proper navigable order. An appropriation from the legislature of \$50,000, together with the local contributions that could be secured for it would enable the managers to make all necessary improvements and place it in excellent boating condition with probable surplus earnings to make it a better channel than it ever has been.

"The counties bordering on this Canal appreciate the advantages they have derived from

cheap transportation resulting from its competition with the Wabash Valley Railroad, and the people of these counties will hardly be deceived by the artful insinuations of designing politicians that Col. Bird was not acting in the interests of those who are benefited by cheap transportation.

"Independent of the proposition to keep up the Canal for the benefit of the farmers of the Wabash Valley, and for all other interests profited by cheap freight, the question of fulfilling our obligations with the State of Ohio enters into the case. The fact that Indiana bound herself to the General Government and the State of Ohio to build this Canal 'and keep it open as a public highway forever for the use of the United States, on which all Government property should pass free', in consideration of a grant of land from the United States to aid in its construction, and the fact of Ohio coming to the rescue of this State when it was upon the verge of falling in the great enterprise, and constructing ninety miles of the Canal for Indiana, on precisely the same terms this State agreed to perform with the United States, which pledge Indiana has virtually failed in fulfilling, should convince any one disposed to do justice, that an appropriation by the legislature to put the Canal in proper navigable order would be honorable and just. The General Government and the State of Ohio performed their part of the contract. Every principle of honor and justice should prompt Indiana to respond to the request to perform her part also.

"The bill, asking for an appropriation for repairing the Canal, was not originated by Col. Bird, but sent to him for presentation to the legislature. It was referred to a special committee of which he was chairman, and adversely reported upon, but was so evidently a just proposition that it had passed the Senate when the republican members of the House bolted."

In 1874 Huntington County, which was covered by thick forests, used its timber resources and was famous for its plow handles, headings and staves. Its largest industry was the production of lime of which it shipped 400,000 bushels that year. At the junction of the Wabash and Little Rivers grew up the settlement of Huntington with a population of 3,500. The county also had the Salamonie River.

Today the county has become a major recreation area with the Huntington and Salamonie Lakes/Reservoirs. Its major products are electrical supplies, nuts & bolts, electronic harnessing, rubber products, cleaning agents, transformers, fireplaces, plastic giftware, shoes, cranes, brake linings, model clay, metal stamping, electric coils, and ice cream. It grows soybeans and popcorn as well as livestock.

ROANOKE PIONEER DAYS

PIONEER DAYS IN ROANOKE CANAL DAYS

Dr. S. Koontz wrote two articles for the Roanoke Review in 1921 that told about canal life. Below are portions of those two articles. The great 50,000 acre swamp, he mentions, was part of the Little River basin that was drained in July of 1886. A limestone ledge from the old inland sea was blasted away at Huntington removing a barrier to the natural water flow. Even today the low lands in the Aboite area often fill with water. Every few years the Little River, which today is merely a drainage ditch, needs to be dredged to keep the land drained and the swampy conditions from being reestablished.

In 1853, a boat landed at the lock of the Wabash and Erie canal about 50 yards southwest of the present interurban station in Roanoke. This boat came from the east and at Bethlehem, Ohio, it took on a family consisting of a father, mother, one sister and two brothers, the younger brother and the author of this sketch then being nine years old.

The boat came by way of Cleveland, where all goods were transported on a like steamer for Toledo where another transfer was made. The steamer left Cleveland at twilight and landed at Toledo at early dawn. In those days and for a long time thereafter all travel across the lake was by night--why this was so I never learned. At Toledo our goods were transferred to horse powered canal boat and we started on the last leg of our long journey and one week after embarkation at Bethlehem we landed at our destination. Other parties of the family started on a heavy laden wagon and made the trip in just the same time that our party did in spite of the more rapid transit across the lake by steamer.

The condition of the country from Fort Wayne to Roanoke was so indelibly stamped upon my youthful mind that it can never be erased. The beautiful farms, fields and homes that you now behold as you travel along the Little River Valley was then a dismal waste and swamp, consisting of black mire, stagnant water, old logs, trees, mosquitoes, snakes, frogs and ague germs. I doubt if the swamps of Nile can produce a more God forsaken and desolate stretch than was the Little River Valley, now scarcely more than a creek, in those days and yet, it would seem that in the creation it was designed that even this most despised portion of Indiana should donate their share of sustenance to the hardy race of early pioneers.

For here, wild geese, ducks and other water fowl swarmed in innumerable flocks, the river swarmed with fish.

In building the canal, which was done through our section during the years of 1834 to 1837, the survey was made near the edge of the water and near high land. The dirt which was all taken from the ditch with shovel, pick and wheelbarrow was thrown on the water on lower side, thus forming a levee that held back the water and served as a tow path on which the horses traveled while pulling the boats laden with goods destined for the inhabitants of the far west. These boats were the only means by which our meager crops of wheat, corn, cattle and lumber could be transported to eastern markets and a great source of convenience it proved to be, although somewhat slow.

The boats were drawn by two horses hitched to a heavy rope, probably two hundred feet long. This line was not fastened to the front of the boat as you would surmise, but well back of the center, thus giving full control of the boat top to the steersman as to the course he wished to travel. The horses always traveled very slowly and were changed at regular intervals. The extra team being carried along in apartments on the boat for this purpose. The boats traveled very slow, five miles an hour, so if a boat laden with wheat or other freight left the warehouse at Roanoke, it reached its destination at Toledo in from eight to ten days, this being the nearest market.

The canal service provided 3 varieties of boats. First the line or freight boats that were intended to carry freight and families with their cargoes of household goods and proved a very pleasant mode of travel as the passengers could occupy the deck during the day and when night came could retire to the cabin and go to their hammock suspended from the ceiling by means of strong hooks and slumber through the night as there was not a jar to disturb one's tranquility, if however, they could exclude the languages of the driver while urging his horses to increase speed. This unfortunately was not always selected from the choicest divine authority!

The second variety consisted of what was known as stone boats, intended to transport heavy freight such as logs, lumber, brick and stone.

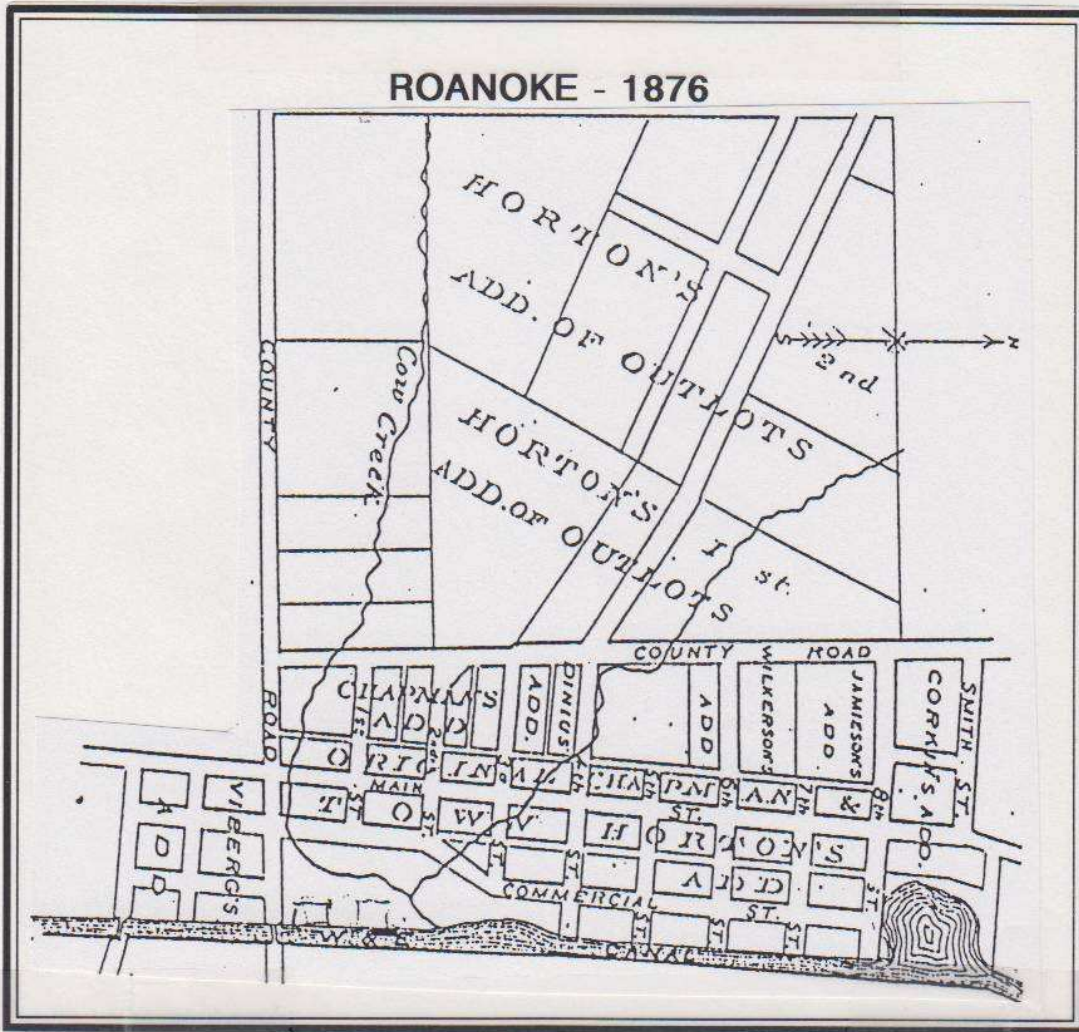
The third variety was the packet boats for travelers. These moved at a fair rate of speed as the horses traveled on the trot at all times and were changed at frequent intervals. These boats usually traveled at night, so you see that in twenty hours the traveler covered quite a distance.

When we landed at Roanoke, or what then was better known as the "Lock", we found a thriving frontier village of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty people. The town like the city of Rome was situated

midst its seven hills, all densely covered with a luxuriant growth of mammoth forest trees--oak, ash, walnut, hickory, beech, elm and maple and various other kinds, in the fruits of which the settlers were fully dependant, as if more interested than in their meager corn crops, for the fattening of their hogs depended largely on a bountiful crop of the various varieties of nuts, the most important of which was the acorn and the beech nut.

The town was inhabited by a sturdy variety of families from the east who had emigrated westward to find cheaper lands and homes. Many of whom we

recall, Marten Bash and Aunt Katy who conducted a dry goods and grocery store, Ruban Ebersole, the druggist at the locks who daily issued out quinine to those afflicted with plaque. At one time it was said that there were but two families in town who did not have from one to many cases to the dread disease. Daniel Welsh had a small grocery on the east side of the lock. His consisted mostly of the boat crews and Indians. T.V. and Frank Horton, who gave much of their time to land speculation and later on built a factory for the manufacturing of all kinds of woolen goods and for the time being did a thriving business.....



ROANOKE

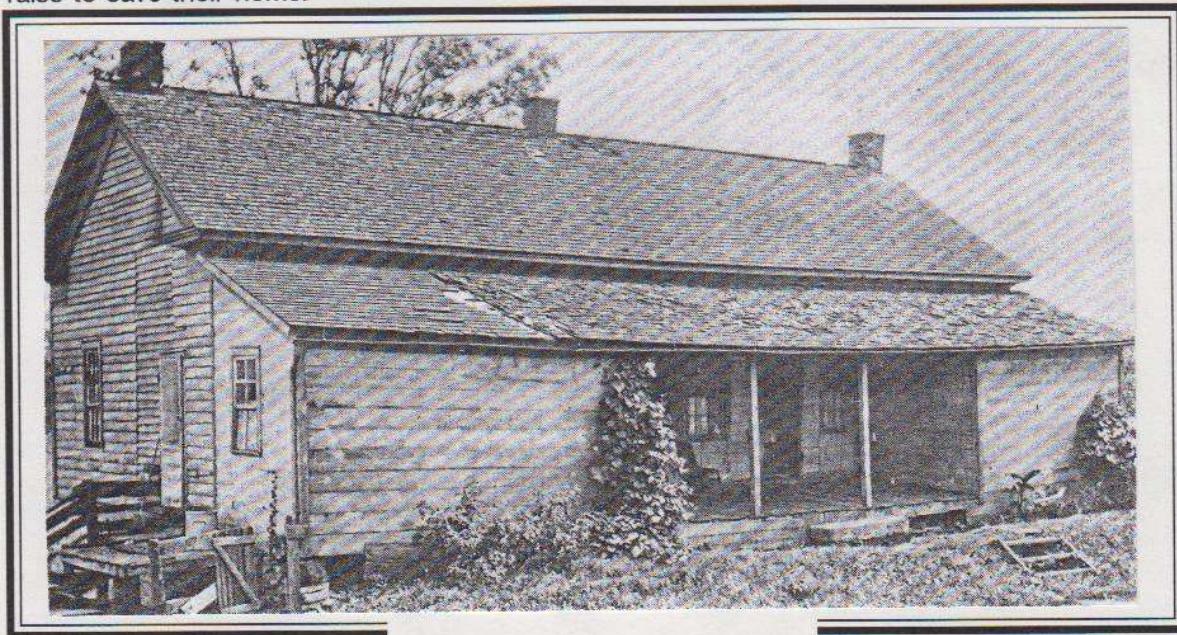
FAMILY'S HISTORY MIRRORS EARLY ROANOKE LIFE

The following article was written by F.S.Bash and appeared in the September 30, 1929 Huntington Herald-Press.

A strange and indescribable sensation goes tingling through the fibers of one's being upon suddenly finding himself face to face with someone he knew when he was a boy but had not seen for a lifetime. Such an experience came to me recently when Christopher C. Mulkins, an old Roanoke neighbor boy, dropped in to see me. His life has been devoted to fine art, the profession having called him into strange scenes and out among interesting people. Chris, as we always called him back in the old days, was born and reared on the Henry Mulkins homestead at the western edge of Roanoke (what is now 345E-950N at the west edge of Roanoke on Posey Hill). Their land joined ours, the north end of the Mulkins farm having been in timber and the west end of our tract also being a dense forest, their woods and ours lapping past each other when Chris and I were young. I can remember my very earliest knowledge of the Mulkins family. It was when my father and mother were showing me our woods and explaining the names of people who owned adjoining tracts. Pointing over the fence they said: "That belongs to the Widow Mulkins, whose husband died, leaving her with a family of children to support, taxes to pay and money to raise to save their home."

When I was a little older and could wander in the woods with other youngsters, I could stand at the line fence and imagine I could scent ripe winesaps and harvest apples over in the direction of the widow's young orchard where the first long buildings were located some distance from the road, which finally became known as Posey Hill. When I called attention to these recollections Chris confirmed my impressions, ripe apples and all. He said: "Yes, you have it right. My parents moved to Roanoke about 1847 or 1848 and bought canal land, having been attracted there by my mother's brother, Mr. Van Arsdol, and a half brothers, Uncle Tommy Hackett. My sisters Martha and Margaret and brothers Cornelius and Isaac C. Mulkins were born in Delaware County, but the rest of us, namely, John and my twin sister Lucretia and I were born there on the old homestead at Roanoke.

"Our cabin was in off the road so far," explained the artist, "that mother and the rest of us were always afraid at night if father had to be away from home, which was not often. I remember one night when our fears amounted to a real comedy. The door of our cabin was not fastened on hinges, but had to be slid sideways. It was dark outside and we were alone. We were sitting around the fireplace and all at once we could hear a strange noise just outside the door. Sometimes there was a rubbing and scraping against the door. Mother called up sharply and asked who was there? No answer came. Then she lined up us children so we stood in a semi-circle about the fireplace. This may have been done to serve as a screen to shut out the light from the little room. Then mother stood at the



ROANOKE CANAL INN

door and holding the axe aloft ready to deal deadly blows, shouted: "You better tell who is out there if you don't want to be killed!" Then there was a sound as if something might be licking the door and mother found it was our old white-faced cow that had found her way into the yard. But for a little while it was all very serious and we sure were scared."

"There was still another time when we were frightened by somebody rapping on the door after darkness had fallen. My father had been taken away on a trip to Indianapolis to make a payment on the land. Again mother grabbed up the axe, stood at the door and asked who was there. Our hair was standing on end when a voice from outside spoke these welcome words: 'Why, you wouldn't hurt me, would you Nellie?' It was father and he had returned from his long trip to the state capital. He was taken from us in 1855 as a result of milk sickness. I remember once seeing your father vexed at us and I never felt like blaming him for the way he gave us a piece of his mind. Our old bulldog was to blame. He was vicious and bloodthirsty when any of the neighbor's stock got over the line fence. One of your father's pigs had gone through the fence and old bull just about chewed it to shreds. It was indeed a pitiful sight. I knew that same dog to chase our fine old cow, grab her by the nose, pull her head down as she was running fast, cause her to lose her footing and turn complete somersaults. but, he was a good watch dog and I suppose that was why he was kept for years."

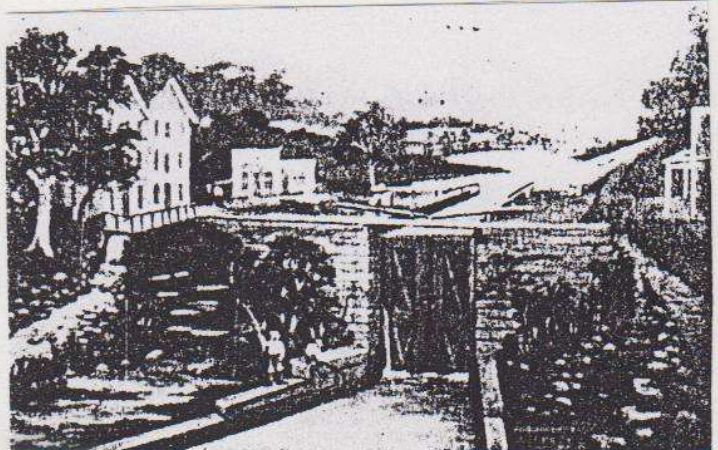
Chris here mentioned having just taken a look over the scenes of his boyhood at Roanoke, but says little remains that now looks familiar. The old school house, the playgrounds, the old trees he played under and friendly faces he once knew so well, all have vanished. In other words, "none were left who played with me so many years ago." Chris treasures the memory of his school days in the old seminary. The writer can remember seeing Chris at the blackboard, his wonderful curls being admired by the big and little girls. I can likewise visualize the embryonic artist on account of the melancholy droop and excessive slack of his trousers. They told their own story of being cut off in the legs and passed down to him from older brothers who outgrew them. As I remember it, the blessed mothers of that period could do nearly anything and do it well, with one exception. The homemade pants they constructed were never known to fit. But those distorted trousers only seemed to emphasize the fine work Chris could do with a piece of crayon on the blackboard. When the teachers were entertaining distinguished visitors there were always a few star students who were called to the board for sample work. Some responded in the history lessons, other in mathematics, grammar and geography. Chris would be asked to draw maps of different states. He did it speedily and beautifully. His brother Isaac C. was an expert penman and samples of his writing on the board looked like engraved script. Isaac was a soldier boy in the rebellion and for many years was a supervisor in the city school of St. Joseph, Mo.

But getting back to Chris. His entire life has been devoted to art in landscape and portraiture, in oil, pastel and other materials. He tells me that at the age of 24, he painted some pictures of the Mulkins homestead from memory and gave them to members of the family. The work was done some years after the old log house and barn had disappeared and frame buildings erected at a new site out on the road.

Historians grieve over the fact that many scenes of importance in the annals of the county have not been preserved. One such case is the Dickey Lock, the old water mill and bridge where the town of Roanoke was started. Chris declares he remembers the lock and mill so well that he knows he could paint it from memory in the most exact detail.

"Somehow," the artist went on to explain, "there were legends and tragedies connected with that old lock which I have never been able to dislodge from my memory. Do you remember the big Indian who lived in the reservation a mile or two southeast of town? His name has gone from me but I can see him as if it were but yesterday. He was a great fighter and had never been whipped until one day at the Dickey Lock he met his Waterloo most unexpectedly and from a source he had not dreamed of. I happened to be an eye witness to that encounter. Several of us boys had gone to see Captain Bolinger's boat go through the lock. The Indian was there, a man of giant build with the strength of an ox. His acknowledged championship made him overbearing, insulting, abusive and chesty. The two men were standing just inside of old Dan Welch's grocery at the edge of the tow path. Words passed between them and quick as a flash Bolinger hauled off and knocked the Indian flat on his back, then fell upon him and beat him unmercifully until the big fighter nearer dead than alive, wheezed Enough! It was whispered that what made the initial blow of the captain such a knockout was the fact that he had an iron weight from the scales in his hand. It was weeks before the Indian fully could appear on the streets again and when he did so, he was a changed man. He was through offering insults. His conceit had been taken out of him by Captain Bolinger, who was crowned a hero all along the line of the canal.

THE DICKEY LOCK



MEMORIES OF MAHON

The following story is from a series written by F.S.Bash for the Jan. 2, 1926 Huntington Herald-Press.

To some of us mortals there is a peculiar, alluring, almost uncanny feeling that comes with the contemplation of a vanished town. The world's prose and poetry have dwelt on scenes where once flourished an ambitious, lively hamlet which faded away and sank into oblivion. The very thought sets the mind to going in quest of a solution as to what might have resulted had fate's decree ruled otherwise. The town of Mahon once teemed with life and vigor. Its mills, stores, dwellings, saloons, sports and hilarity looming up big on the map of canal days in Jackson Township, this county.

There are personal reasons why I sometimes slow down my car while driving along what was once the main street of Mahon. I was born and reared only three or four miles further up the ditch and as a boy and young man saw the now deserted village in different stages of its rise and fall. Somehow, whenever I chance along that way I can not avoid musing over the old town's decay, which has seemed as complete as that of Sodom and Gomorrah of ancient times.

There may have been personal reasons why Oliver Goldsmith wrote his "Deserted Village," where "health and plenty cheered the laboring swain" and where "smiling spring its earliest visit paid and parting summer's lingering blooms delayed." Goldsmith's "lingering blooms" could apply to Mahon too. The town nestled along the sunny side of a hill against which warmth radiated and invited spring's earliest call. In my youth I rambled over the ridges or struggled against tall brambles or sicklegrass in prairie marshes skirting the village. Waterfowl frequented the lowlands and afforded good shoot, while the hill, back of Mahon, furnished upland game and good harvests of nuts.

But the town I am writing was started before I was born. In early canal days it was called Port Mahon and was peopled largely by sons of the Emerald Isle, who wore green, were mirthful and big hearted, convivial and cordial, but ready to scrap on the slightest provocation. Before the canal went dry, the residents believed Mahon would make her mark in the world and shine forth as a beacon in the firmament of brothers who came from the state of New York in the late '40's and bought land upon which to found a town which should bear their name. One of those brothers was Samuel Mahon, who, for years, was captain on a canal packet. One of the brothers was Monroe Mahon, who lived on land now owned by the Fusselmans. Another brother was Bill Mahon, who was a black sheep in the flock, for the reason that he liked to hunt, trap, live in the wilds, and mingle with the Indians, rather than

among white folks. One time Bill the trapper remained away from Mahon longer than usual. The Indians could give no information. Bill's boat was also missing. After a long search, his body, pierced by a bullet, was found lying the the bottom of the boat. Whether his death was an accident, a suicide or the deed of an assassin could never be solved.

Elam Mahon was one of the brothers whom I remember seeing when I was a boy. He returned now and then after locating elsewhere. There was much real estate in and around Mahon that was still owned by descendants of the family. Mrs. Virginia Allen, who was a Mahon, came from Jamestown, N.Y. as late as 25 years ago to visit Huntington friends and look after land interests. Mrs. Steele, whose maiden name was Mahon, often visited the DeLong family. But to return to Elam Mahon. He always attracted attention because of his stylish clothes, so neatly tailored. His glossy silk was a curiosity in Mahon. Elam was a fine skater and mingled much with society in Huntington, Roanoke and Fort Wayne.

Another of the Mahon brothers was Archibald. His name appears on the old plat of Mahon as "proprietor of the town." The plat is on record in the courthouse. It was acknowledged before Samuel Dougherty a justice of the peace, on June 20, 1853. The drawing shows a large open public square surrounded by lots, streets and alleys. It also shows the canal and Little River as well as a space near the river designated as "Cheapside." Main street is Meridian. It shows Hanna Street, State Street, Mill Street, Durbin "perpendicular" to State Street. I always knew there were some hills back of Mahon, but was not aware that any of the streets were "perpendicular."

Mahon had a depot during the early years of the Wabash railroad, while old settlers used to tell me Roanoke did not have even a flag stop. Roanoke people had to drink wormwood and gall by being compelled to bow down to Mahon every time they wanted to take a train. But when Roanoke's seminary, mills and factories all got to going the Wabash did a fine business at the point and erected a large depot, which stood on the south side of the track. Samuel H. Zent was the first station agent and remained there a lifetime until old age made it necessary for him to retire voluntarily. But I am writing of Mahon. Gone are her institutions, buried are her old-time glories, departed are her early settlers. Her dance halls no longer ring with the strains of "Old Dan Tucker" and "The Irish Washerwoman." Gone are her feats of strength and pastime joys. "Thy sports are fled and all they charm withdrawn."

One who might have been familiar with Mahon in its palmfest days, then left never to return, could not believe his eyes were he to go there now. May I cite an instance to actually prove the assumption just made? Eugene H. Baker was visiting at Morenci, Mich., and conversed with Eli Bailey, who was past 90. When Mr. Baker spoke of Indiana the aged man said: "I, too, once sojourned for a while in Indiana. It was when I was a young man buying oak timber for staves. The company assigned me to a section of country along a canal where the most wonderful oak timber grew that I ever saw in my life. My headquarters were at a town called Mahon. I have never been back but have often wondered if the place continued to thrive."

When told that not a single business of any kind was represented there now, the 90-year-old Mr. Bailey seemed puzzled and bewildered. He must have wondered if his stay at Mahon in the early days was a dream. To him Mahon couldn't be anything else but an entity right now. When asked if he remembered Roanoke, the next town up the canal, he stated that he had no recollection of ever hearing of it. The road through Mahon is to become a paved highway known as No. 7. When this is completed and the aged Mr. Bailey should be driving along where once stood the town of Mahon, he would be overwhelmed with surprise. Like Rip Van Winkle he would only see gaunt ghostliness written everywhere. Again would lines from Goldsmith serve to convince the aged man that his town had disappeared. "Sunk are the bowers in hopeless ruins all. Long grass o'ertops the smoldering wall. The bold peasantry, their county's pride, when

once destroyed can never be supplied. These, far departing, seek a kindlier shore and rural mirth and manners are no more.:

As I recall the Mahon of my youth, the village went strong for games, sports races, contests and amusements, but most of these I will write in a later chapter as told to me by one who grew up in the town. I shall here mention one attraction that drew well for a season or two. It was a cross Shropshire ram of enormous size that had been tantalized and encouraged to fight anything from a sawbuck to a human being. The animal belonged to Emanuel Erb., who lived on the side of the hill in the outskirts of the village.

It was sport for the Mahoners to watch a young man enter the ring and spar with the sullen buck for points until the animal became furious and kept its opponent moving so lively that his wind would finally give out and force him to climb the fence. But one day I was driving along that way with Ben Strock, my brother-in-law, who was something of an athlete. He said he believed he could go in the pen and out general the baffling, butting buck and give him all he wanted. Ben's plan of warfare was to employ a maple tree to play an important part in the scrimmage. I think, then, Ben kept near the tree and every time the big sheep charged Ben would dodge so the buck's head hit the tree like a pile-driver. After repeated collisions with the tree the sheep's head became battered and bloody. At last the puzzled animal gave a sorrowful bleat of defeat and retired from the ring.



If I may be pardoned for a personal reference, I might state that in my young manhood I often joined nutting parties of girls and boys who drove to Mahon, where, in the river bottom, abounded large harvests of "hardshells," while on the wooded ridges were shellbarks and hazelnuts. To me there comes a memory charm with the clearness of a Mars on a cloudless night. The occasion makes Mahon seem a little nearer to me than to folks in general. It was an Ohio girl of remarkable qualities who had come to visit relatives in my home town. She joined one of our picnic parties in the vicinity of Mahon. It was one of those calm, warm, smoky Indian summer days in an ideal Indiana October. Wild pigeons were flying back and forth from roost to feeding ground. While not out for game there was an empty shotgun in the wagon for emergency use. In the late afternoon the delightful girl from Ohio expressed a longing to be taught to handle a shotgun. How proud she'd be to bring down a wild pigeon. She had been showing a kindly interest in a timid, stammering young man in the party, but he had been advised by the girl's relatives that she was already spoken for in Ohio. This fact must, therefore, preclude all overtures for a more intimate friendship.

To gratify the sweet guest's desire to use firearms, an older sportsman, i in the bunch said he would outline ways and means which the girl could easily shoot a pigeon. He would walk some distance to newly sown wheat ground where the birds were almost sure to be feeding. He would flush the flocks one at a time, that would fly over a strategic open point on the ridge, where the girl and an escort could be in waiting. In the meantime the bashful swain referred to was detailed to act as escort and give his pupil instruction as to handling the gun, then slip loaded shells in to barrels and allow the Ohio lady to try her luck.

Very well. The shy young man went to his task with smothered joy and ecstatic anxiety. He instructed her how to shoulder arms, present arms, take aim and pull first the left and then the right barrel. But at first she had to use one hand to hold her eyes shut while sighting with the other and it was necessary that the instructor assist in supporting the heavy gun. This he could not do without encircling the fair one's shoulders with the long arms. In bringing the weapon up to position to sight correctly, Romeo's sunburned jaw came in contact with gentle Juliet's warm, velvety cheek. Both seemed actually shocked. She turned her face allowing her appealing, expressive eyes to meet his. They seemed to say: "Oh, if thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully. or if thou thinkest I am too quickly won. I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay so thou wilt woo."

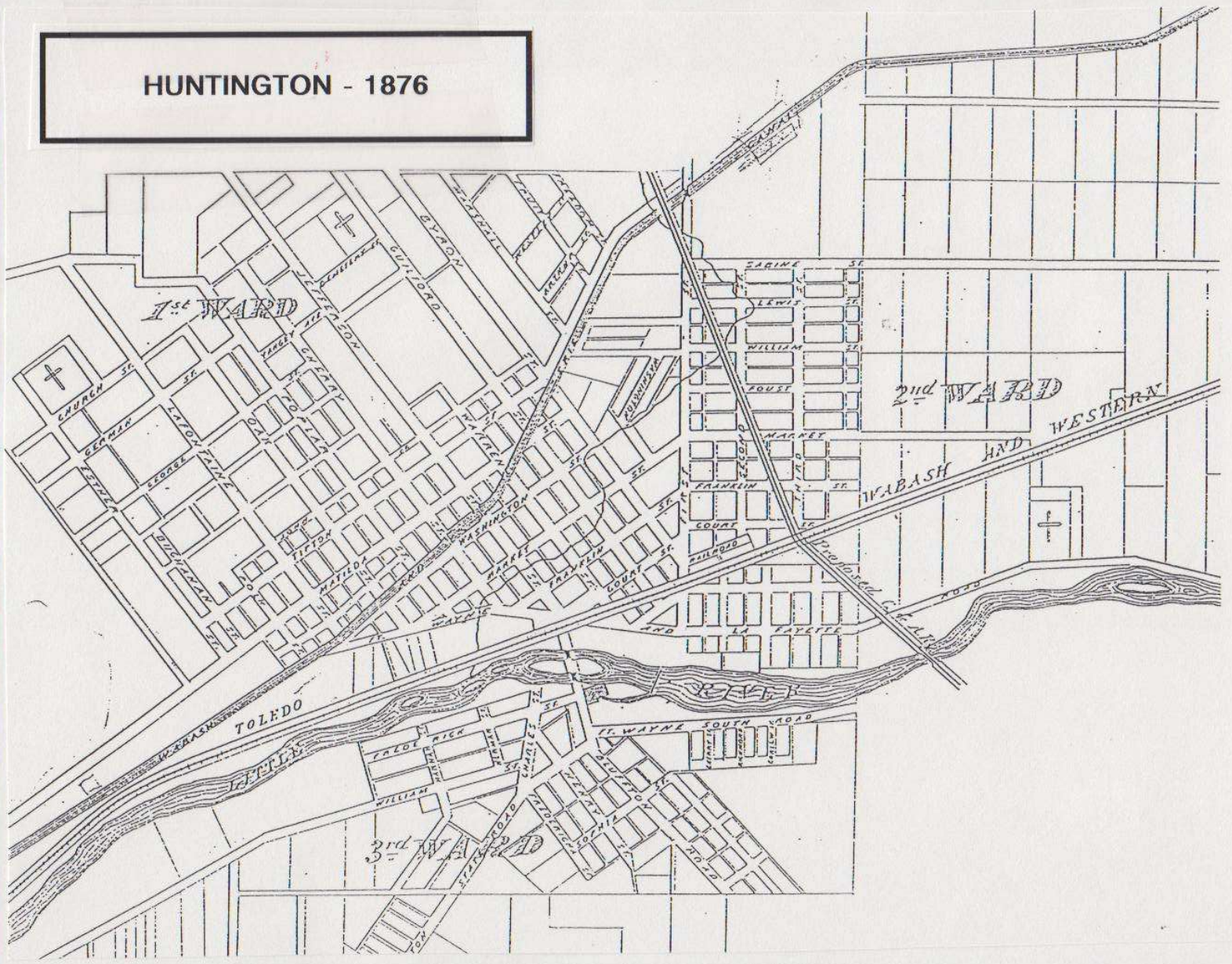
An angry voice broke the magnetic spell. The old pigeon flusher had come up unobserved. He fairly hissed these words: "Are you people plumb blind? Here I've tramped my old legs sore and managed to put up three or four different flocks that flew low right over your heads and I'll be hanged if you fired a single shot. I can't see where in Sam Patch you could have had your eyes!"

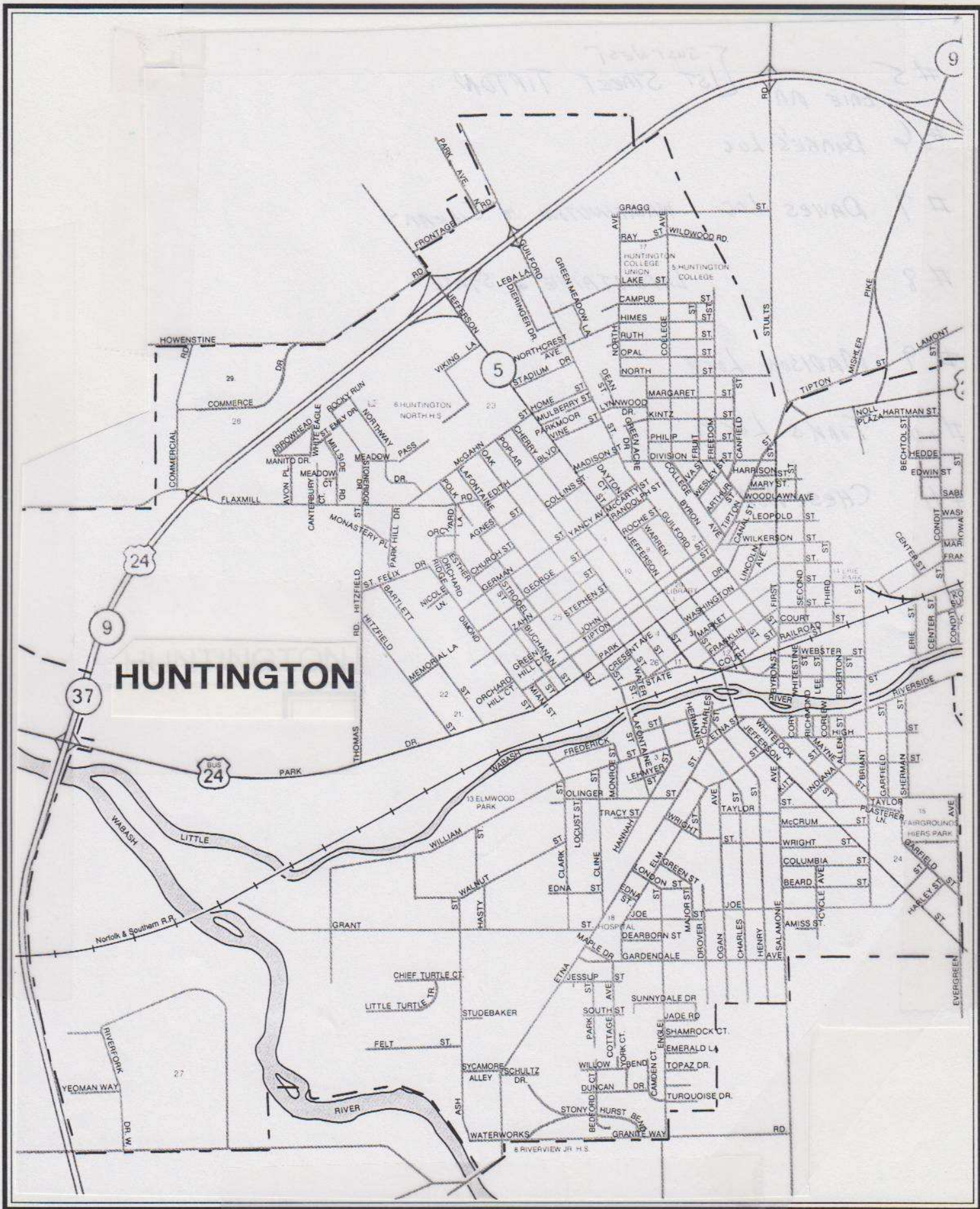
He was out of humor. The embarrassed young man was too stunned to make a sound. The cool-headed girl was more collected and innocently stated that she had gained a whole lot of interesting information about firearms and other arms, but somehow the matter of looking up into the air for pigeons had entirely escaped her. She was awfully sorry to have displeased him, but was grateful for the lesson, pigeons or no pigeons.

Next day the wonderful girl returned to her distant home in the hills and married within a year, proved herself a faithful wife and devoted mother.



HUNTINGTON - 1876





HUNTINGTON

The town of Huntington, also named after Samuel Huntington, grew up at the site of the Miami village, Wepecheange meaning "place of flints." It has also been called Flint Springs. The first white settlers came in 1831. That is the year when General John Tipton purchased the land. He earlier had been appointed by President Monroe the general agent for the Potawatomi and Miami Indians in northern Indiana. In 1831 he filled out the Senate term of James Noble and then was elected for another six years. He laid out Huntington by 1833 and set aside land for a county seat. This plan was accepted in 1834. Streets in Huntington and Lagro bear his name.

On May 1, 1834 the contract for the aqueduct across the St. Mary's River at Fort Wayne and for 18 miles of regular construction of the canal west of Huntington was let. The stirring of the ground as the canal was dug was said to have released cholera germs of which even the Jigger-man's "red eye" could not stop spreading. Scores of workmen died from the fever and were hastily buried. A report in the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette of 1938 stated that "such a cemetery was uncovered by workmen west of Huntington several years ago."

Natural canal building materials were available in Huntington. The area is underlined with limestone that creates such hardness to the city's water that Huntington is said to use more soap than any other like-sized community in the nation. This stone was quarried and used not only for the canal but was shipped by canal boat. Numerous limestone quarries and kilns were located in the vicinity. The first lime kiln was built in 1843 by Michael Houseman. Huntington had 31 kilns by 1875. But by 1900 Huntington's supply of limestone was exhausted. A huge sunken garden now beautifies one of the old quarries and a marker commemorates "Lime City" nearby.

On July 3, 1835 water reached Huntington from the summit at Fort Wayne. Captain Fairfield, master of the packet "Indiana" arrived at Huntington's upper lock (Burke's Lock.) A group of enthusiastic people from Huntington met the Fort Wayne citizens aboard the boat. Dr. George A. Fate brought a small cannon from Dayton, Ohio, and fired it. When the "Indiana" departed the next day it took the little cannon along.

On July 12, 1835 the canal was opened for commerce from Fort Wayne to Huntington. This is the same year a treaty was signed at the Forks of the Wabash and Little Rivers that agreed to the evacuation of the Miami Indians from the territory.

In Governor Noah Noble's message to the General Assembly on December 8, 1835 he states:

"The operations on the line of the Wabash and Erie canal, have been conducted, the past season, with energy and great success. The middle division, extending from the St. Joseph Dam to the Forks of the Wabash, about thirty-two miles, has been completed for about \$232,000 including all repairs to this time, being something less than the estimated cost by Mr. Ridgeway. Upon this portion of the line, the navigation was opened on the 4th day of July, on which day our citizens, in assembled thousands, witnessed the waters of the St. Joseph mingling with those of the Wabash, uniting the waters of the northern chain of Lakes with those of the Gulf of Mexico in the south. On this division boats have been running without interruption of a day, since the letting in of the water.

"The line from Huntington to Lafontain's creek has progressed with much spirit, and with the exception of the locks, is almost complete. Thirty-five sections have been finished and accepted, and without some preventing cause in the seasons of the next year, its navigation will be open by the 4th day of July next.

"The line from Lafontain's creek to Georgetown, about twenty-two miles, was put under contract in the month of September, since which most of the sections have been commenced.

"The large amount of additional duty imposed on the board and engineers, by the law providing for the new surveys, made the past season, one of great labor, and particularly to Mr. Williams, the chief engineer, whose presence was needed at so many points in planning and directing the field service.

"Economy and public policy require that an additional portion of the line from Georgetown to Lafayette should be placed under contract the ensuing year; and that the commissioners shall be authorized and directed to let out that part of the line east of Fort Wayne, when it shall be ascertained that Ohio has commenced that part which she has undertaken to construct.

"Owing to the great demand for landed property to supply the wants of the new population in the vicinity of the canal, the sales of the canal lands the past year have been unusually active. The sales since the last report of the commissioners have amounted to \$175,740.34. The experience we have had in converting those lands into available means and the rapid rise in the value of lands in that section of the state, will now justify the assertion that the unsold lands with the selections yet to be made, will be sufficient to complete the canal to its original termination, and that the people will never be called upon to pay any portion of its cost."

Flint Creek - Aqueduct No. 4

The canal entered Huntington from the east. A Mr. Bechtold lived near U.S. 24 viaduct east of Huntington. He made collars for the mules. At the intersection of First and Tipton was Flint Creek Aqueduct (Aqueduct No. 4). It had stone abutments and a 28 foot long wooden trough. Today Flint Creek enters the storm sewer under the highway by means of a stone arch culvert that looks very much like earlier stone canal structures.

Locks No. 5 & 6

Lock No. 5 stood beyond the aqueduct, west of the intersection of First and Tipton, where later the old interurban line went under the Erie railroad. Across from Flint Springs, Charles Thorn built as many as five boats at a time in his boat yard.

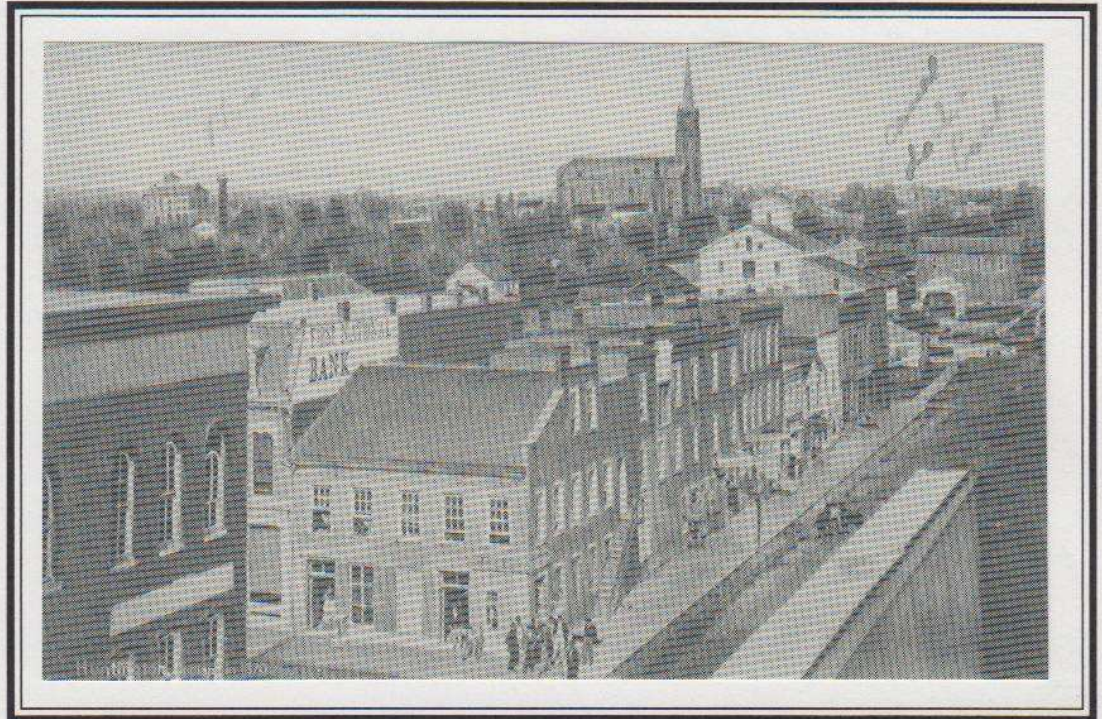
The canal followed Tipton Street. Burke's Lock (Lock No. 6) was located just south of the intersection of Tipton and Byron. John Burke was a member of the first Board of Commissioners of Huntington County.

The canal made a bend at Warren and Park Drive then followed a westward course through town. At the northwest corner of these streets and overlooking the canal, the first permanent hotel, the "Rock House", was built in 1835 by Gen. John Tipton. The old Huntington Library was later built there. The hotel was a social, commercial, and political center and housed one of the earliest public schools (1862-72) of the city.

There were only two ways to get into Huntington from the north in canal times. They were by crossing the two bridges over the canal. One suspension bridge spanned the canal near Jefferson just north of the corner of Washington and Cherry. It was replaced by a low swinging bridge. On the northeast corner of Jefferson and Washington was located the Davies Landing for the canal. The Elkhorn Hotel was built by the bridge on the corner of Jefferson and Washington facing the latter. It was operated by Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Weber who came to Huntington from Germany in 1838. The other swinging bridge crossed at Lafontaine. All other streets became dead ends upon reaching the canal.

Canal Basin & Lock No. 7

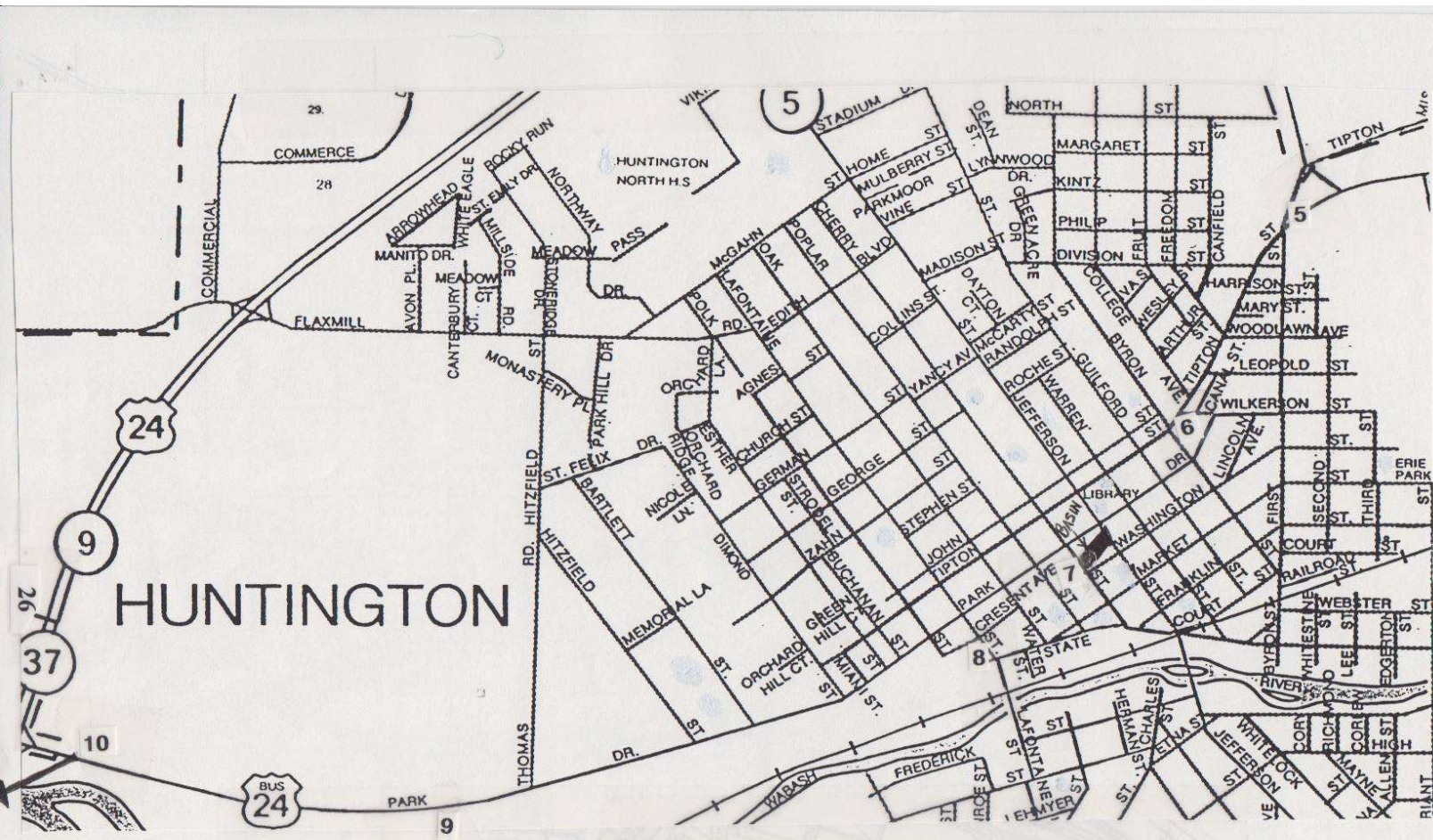
A basin for the loading and turning of canal boats was constructed between Washington and Park Drive at Cherry. On the basin's north bank a short distance west of Jefferson was located the D.L. Shearer & Son Warehouse. The warehouse was torn down when the Huntington theater was built and later the Uptown Tavern was there. Today's Jefferson Theater and Nick's Kitchen sit in the old canal. The basement of ~~Nick's Kitchen~~ is said to have a stone wall that is thought to be part of the basin. To the south side of the basin along Washington was a canal boarding house. The Davies Lock (Lock No. 7) was at the west end of the basin. A marker placed at the basin reads: "Canal Landing on Washington Street. The Huntington Landing started 120 feet west of Washington Street and continued to the lock at Cherry Street. The Wabash & Erie Canal was 4 feet deep and 100 feet wide at this point."



SAMUEL MOORE HOME CORNER - JEFFERSON & MARKET

CANAL BOAT IN BASIN - UPPER RIGHT
SHEARER WHSE. - LEFT OF BRIDGE ON BASIN

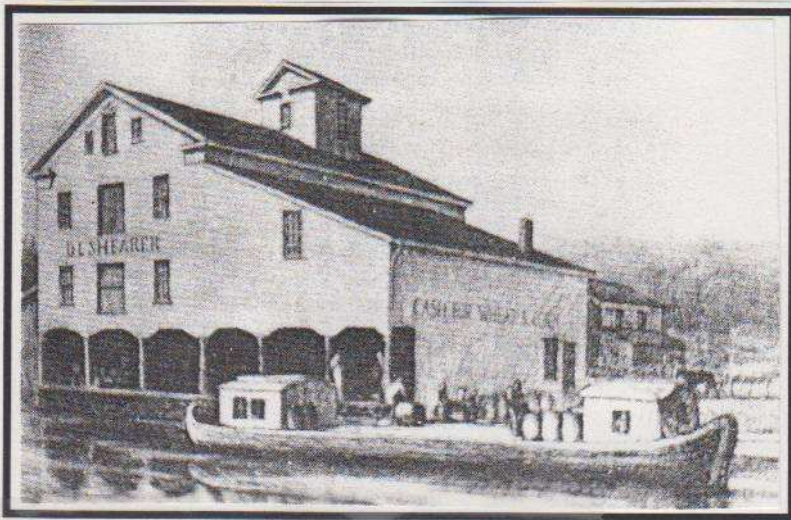
In 1844 John Kenower, Sr. built a brick home for Samuel Moore, a pioneer. It was Huntington's first brick building. It is located on the northwest corner of Jefferson and Market. This canal era home has been restored by present owners Drs. Willard and Eric Harman. Kenower also built four canal boats.



HUNTINGTON

HUNTINGTON LOCKS

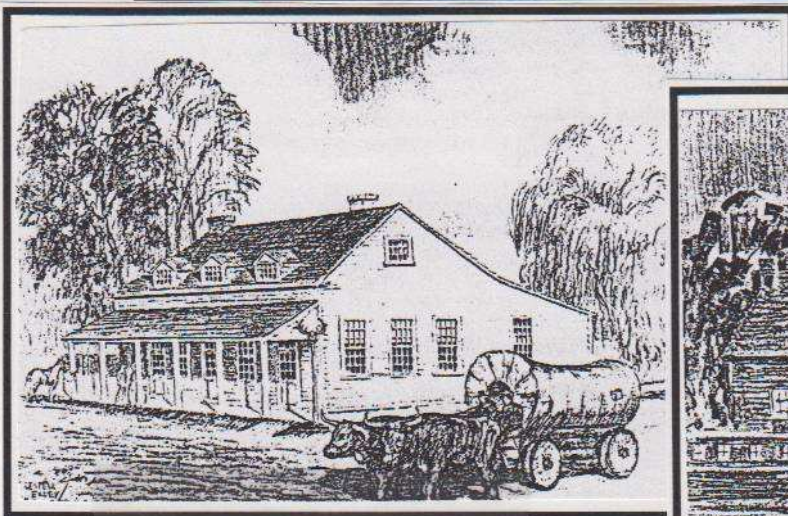
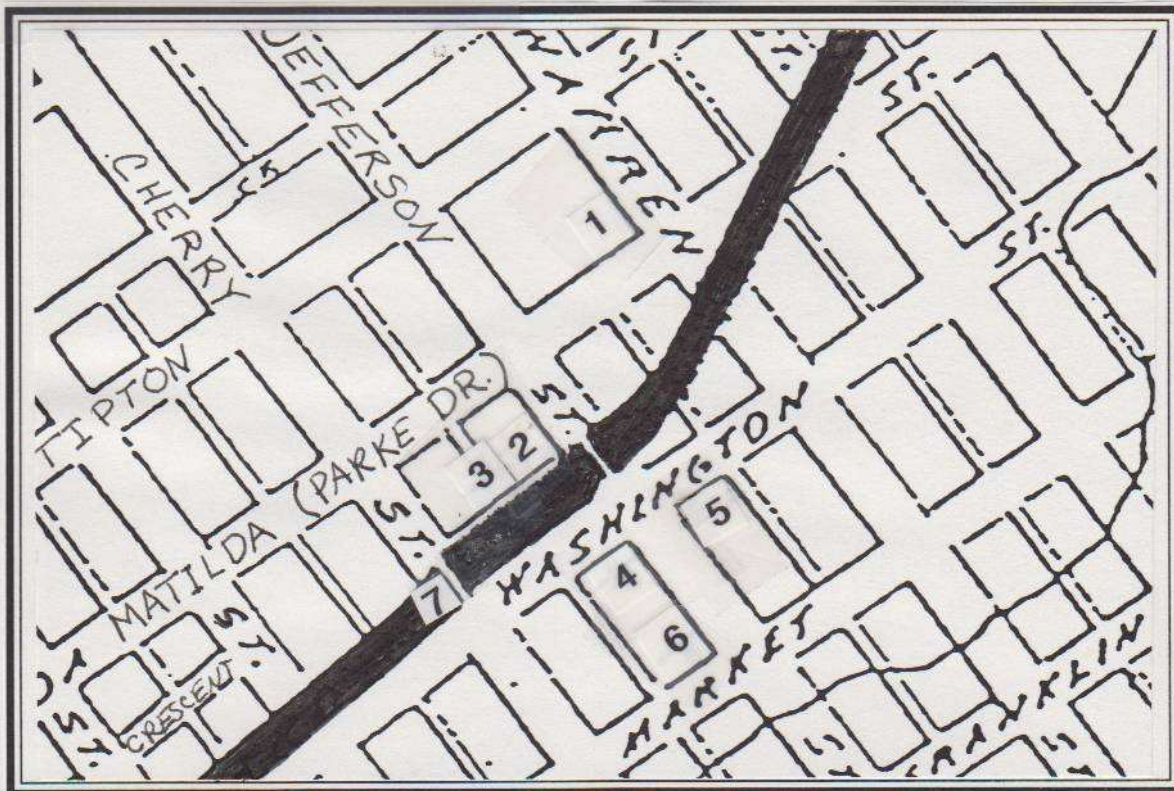
- LOCK No. 5 at 1ST & TIPTON
- LOCK No. 6 "BURKE'S" - BYRON & TIPTON / EAST PARK
- LOCK No. 7 "DAVIES" - WASHINGTON & CHERRY ST
- LOCK No. 8 at LAFONTAINE & STATE
- LOCK No. 9 "MADISON" - AT VICTORY NOLL
- LOCK No. 10 "FORKS" - 1/2 MILES EAST OF FORKS



HUNTINGTON CANAL BASIN

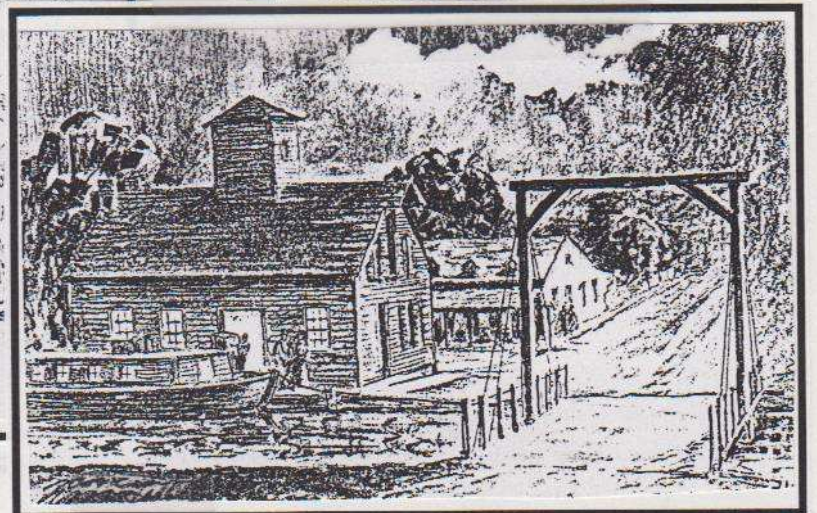
1. ROCK HOUSE
2. DAVIES LANDING
3. SHEARER WAREHOUSE
4. CANAL BOARDING HOUSE
5. ELKHORN HOTEL
6. SAMUEL MOORE HOME
7. DAVIES LOCK No. 7

3. SHEARER WAREHOUSE



5. ELKHORN HOTEL

2. DAVIES LANDING



Charles Thorn had another boat building yard on Canal Street (Crescent Avenue). There water from the canal backed up to the yard so that his finished boats could be launched by soap covered skids.

Locks 8,9 & 10

A bridge crossed the canal at Lafontaine. Lock No. 8 was located just west of Lafontaine and State. With all the locks and the basin Huntington was a town stirring with canal men and passengers. The sound of the canal horn or the steersman's "Lock be-l-o-o-w!" were often heard.

The Madison Lock (Lock No. 9) was located south of West Park Drive across from the present day Mt. Hope Cemetery. Nearby at 1929 West Park Drive across from Victory Noll stands the old canal inn built about 1840. It is located south of the the canal and between the canal and the Little River. It was owned by Lambdin P. Milligan whose home was east of it. In canal times the inn had a center hall that separated two large front rooms and led to the kitchen in the back. Upstairs were the sleeping quarters, two large 15' by 19' rooms, with one reserved for the men and the other for the women.

The Forks Lock (Lock No. 10) was located below the forks where the Little River joined the Wabash. Nearby was the payment ground for the Indians and the home of Chief LaFontaine. Another section of this book contains the history of the Forks of the Wabash.

Just a little beyond the Chief's house and the Forks Lock was a dam across the Wabash river not too far from the Rangeline Bridge. There the river water was sent through a square box to feed the canal.

The first boat to pass through the Huntington area was under the command of Daniel Holdren. He was about 35 years old at that time. Later in 1891 at the age of 83 he was arrested on a charge to provoke preferred against him by the son of Louis Shutt. The case was taken before Squire Cole.

When a Mr. Hackleman went to Fort Wayne to purchase land in May 1836 he described Huntington as follows: "This town, I think, had also been laid out by Gen. Tipton. It contained but a few houses, and among the principal men of the place were Capt. Elias Murray, and --- or

two of the Helvies. Passing Huntington, we learned that our best route would be up the tow-path of the canal, which would have been excellent traveling, had it not been made almost impassable by a recent rain. We found the country to consist of heavily timbered, low, level, wet land, and was made more gloomy in appearance by the continuous rain in the afternoon."

West of Huntington was "White City." It was made up of about a dozen houses no more than 12 to 14 feet square and no more than two rooms each. They were occupied by workers who labored in the grist mill that was located at the dam or by men who worked on the canal.

The canal brought prosperity to the white settlers. In 1844 it was estimated that four hundred wagons a day waited to unload in towns in the Wabash Valley. Sawmills (one of the largest during the canal era), flour mills, paper and oil mills were located around Huntington. Between 1840-50 population increases in counties adjacent to the canal was nearly 400 per cent or twice that in other counties in the state.

The Native Americans did not fare as well as the whites. The Forks of the Wabash, once the center of life of the Miamis, was left behind as they were herded onto canal boats much like cattle and moved to a reservation near Leavenworth, Kansas in October of 1846. More information about the Miamis background may be found in the Forks of the Wabash section of this book.

In 1840 Harriet Williams of Maine married Dr. Freeman Sawyer of Huntington and moved to town. She wrote letters back to her family which were published as Reminiscences of a Deceased Sister, by her brother in Vermont in 1843. She died in childbirth one year after

arriving. She boarded at Judge M'Clelland's. She wrote that provisions were "abundant and cheap" but that the road was impassable by carriages due to the heavy rains. She had to travel by canal "a mode I dislike." Her description of Huntington on Sept. 8, 1840 follows:

"The northern part of Indiana is nearly, if not quite, a wilderness. Huntington county is but recently settled. The town of Huntington, being the

seat of justice, is more populous than any other--the village itself is not very extensive, but there are many

1852 Annual Report - Chief Engineer

With the view of facilitating the passage of boats by every improvement coming within the present means of the Trust, arrangements have been made for inserting an additional paddle in the lock gates. This will be accomplished by the opening of navigation at most of the locks between Huntington and the crossing of the Wabash. On other portions of the canal, north of Terre Haute, the locks are so few in number and so far apart as to lessen the immediate importance of the improvement.

These additional paddle gates, with the large number of new lock gates under contract, the wooden structures to be rebuilt during the ensuing summer, as before described, will probably enlarge the repair expenditure of 1853 beyond the usual average.

farms under improvement at the distance of one, two, three and four miles. There are three stores and one grocery in the village, new schoolhouse, two hotels and catholic meeting house. One mile from us, there are mills and the chief's brick store. The jail is built of solid double logs--six inches between filled with flint stones. At present there is but one inmate, and he suffering confinement for theft...My husband has been appointed librarian...A number of families have removed here this summer and the prospects are improving. Wild animals do not venture within sight of the inhabitants. Wolves are heard to howl, more especially in winter. A few miles from us where dwellings are mostly in the thicket, they frequently prowl around--one woman, here on a visit, mentioned that about thirty wolves stationed themselves a short distance from her lodging one night, and she, herself, was very much alarmed. Huntington has been very healthy this season--agues prevail considerable, but there have been no cases of death for a long time. "The canal is near us, consequently, we see the boats passing and repassing..."

On Sunday, November 22, 1840 she writes: "...To-day...has been a day of confusion and tumult, as the Indians are collected from all quarters to receive the annuities. Whiskey is their favorite beverage--there is a grocery opposite here to which many have resorted today, and as the sale of the intoxicating draught was a grief to me, when reported in our town, formerly, how much deeper my feelings of regret witnessing it thus vended on the Lord's holy day...."

Upon arriving in Huntington in 1848, a Mr. Hawley bought five acres of land and built a home in the area of Division Street and College Avenue. He

HUNTINGTON SLAVE JAIL



planted the land with nursery stock he brought with him. There his children Wesley W. Hawley and Mary Hawley were born. His budding and grafting expertise helped make his nursery grow and he had to purchase more land. He is said to have claimed that "watching canal barges, mule drivers, packets and the state boat, gazing at operation in Charley Thorn's boatyard, as well as fishing the the canal" was the pastime for his children.

Alonzo Crandal, who was a former canal boatman and chief of police in Huntington, recalled in an old newspaper article that "bears frequently emerged from the fringe of woods bordering the canal in eastern Indiana and in western Ohio, frightening the mules on the tow-paths and adding to the woes of the pioneer transportation man." See the entire article mentioned above in another section of this book.

A freight boat carried a crew of two stern men, two drivers, a bowsman and a captain. The drivers and stern men worked six hour tricks. The boat was almost as long as the lock (90 feet) and was pulled by three to six mules connected to the boat by a tow line up to 200 feet long. The average speed was two miles an hour.

One of the packet boats (passenger boats) that plied the W & E Canal between Roanoke and Huntington was the "Mosquito." The mosquitoes through this area were so bad that they drove the passengers inside the boat. The mule driver was John Henry Warner of Roanoke.

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and the Huntington Jail

by Cynthia Powers

During the years leading up to the Civil War, passions on both sides were inflamed by the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. Signed into law by President Millard Fillmore, it "almost begged to be disobeyed." Slave hunters armed with the slightest proof, or none, could move freely in their search for runaway slaves. Federal commissioners had the power to decide whether the alleged fugitive was really the owner's property. The captured slave was allowed no defense. If the commissioner

decided to free the captive, he was paid \$5. But if he decided in favor of the slave owner he was paid \$10 "for the extra paperwork." Of course that looked a lot like bribery favoring the slave owners and his hired bounty hunters.

Another source of injustice was that not only fugitives, but free blacks were always at risk of being captured and sent into slavery. Angry Northerners would sometimes succeed in rescuing captured slaves adding to the resentment in the south. The "Underground Railroad" was an informal network of abolitionists, notably Quakers and Presbyterians, who helped escaped slaves flee to Canada, where they could become citizens like any other immigrant. Indiana's Levi Coffin, whose home in Newport, IN (now Fountain City) was called the "Grand Central Station on the Underground Railroad," was the model for a character in the novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by Harriet Beecher Stowe. That book was fiction, however, there were a few hundred court cases involving fugitive slaves that occurred between 1850-61.

One of the stops on the spring tour will be the sunken gardens in Huntington. Across the street from the gardens is a small, oddly shaped stone building with small holes instead of windows. It was moved to its present location from property owned by Lambdin P. Milligan, a southern sympathizer. Tradition has it that captured runaway slaves were held in this little jail, with food being pushed through the little slots.

So Indiana history has both traditions -- the underground railroad and its opposite, the bounty hunters. Later, in the 1920's, the Ku Klux Klan was influential in state politics. Present-day Hoosiers ought to be aware of their dual heritage.

Lambdin P. Milligan

Lambdin P. Milligan was a Huntington lawyer and a states' rights advocate. He was one of the most active participants in the Knights of the Golden Circle, a group of men so tired of the Civil War that they engaged in subversive activities. In the 1850's he constructed the stone jail on Frederick Street where he kept runaway slaves captured by bounty hunters until they could be returned to the South.

Milligan was arrested in 1864 under the charge of treason. Also arrested were Dr. William A. Bowles of French Lick, Horace Heffren of Salem, and Stephen Horsey of Shoals. A train was backed all the way from Indianapolis to the track beside his house at night since Milligan was so popular in Huntington and the arresting officials wanted no interference from the locals. He was taken to a military prison in Indianapolis and tried in 1864 before a military tribunal. Heffren testified that Bowles, Milligan and Horsey plotted to kidnap Governor Oliver P. Morton and use him as a hostage during an insurrection that had been planned for on August 16, 1864. All three were convicted and sentenced to hang.

Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, pardoned Milligan at the last minute. Before the hanging could take place some of his friends hustled him and the others out of Indiana. An angry Milligan took the case to the U.S. Supreme Court which ruled that a military court had no jurisdiction except in cases where martial law prevailed. The decision stated that an emergency does not create any additional power to cope with that emergency and that a civilian could not be tried by a military court as long as civil courts were in operation. This landmark decision of 1866 is known as *Ex parte Milligan* and is considered one of the most important decisions ever made by the Supreme Court.

Milligan's home was along the canal a little east of the canal inn that was once owned by him. The inn is located south of the canal to the north of Little River. His grave can be seen in Mount Hope Cemetery.

A steamboat, "Buffalo," was tried on the canal and left Huntington September 25, 1862 for Toledo. Its cargo was wheat and flour. Its captain was Captain Morgan.

Mr. Fred Ahischwede, whose father had a stone quarry near the canal, where later the Schacht Rubber Manufacturing company plant stood, sold lime as a young boy along with his friend James Fulton for 40 cents a barrel. The lime kiln was part of his father's enterprise. He remembered taking a canal boat in 1868 to Fort Wayne from Huntington. He went to visit his uncle, Gus Reiling, a locksmith who lived on the banks of the canal. They left Huntington at 6 p.m. one day and arrived in Fort Wayne at 11 a.m. the next day traveling all night. It took from 15-18 hours to make the trip. He stepped off the boat and into his uncle's shop. Reiling made all the locks for the Huntington county courthouse and jail.

Mr. Ahischwede remembered that the factories were to the north of the canal. Plow handles were made by George Griffith on Poplar Street. Nearby was the Hoover turning lathes that turned poplar wood into bed, chair, and table legs. At Black's coopers shop barrels for whiskey and cider were made from oak with hoops of hickory. A manufacturer of furniture, sashes, and doors was on West Park Drive and North Lafontaine Streets. The owners were Jacob Kenower, Henry Kase, John Kase and William Kase.

Mrs. Minnie Schultz recalled watching boys jump from the LaFontaine bridge onto canal boats below. She decided to try it one day. She waited to be sure the boat was beneath the bridge but when she jumped she landed in the water. She was pulled aboard the boat with a large hook ^{hook} was taken to town. She ran back home along the tow path and got a royal spanking. In winter the canal would freeze. She had a scar on her head from skating on it. One winter Charles Beck was trying to get a pail of water from under the ice beneath the Lafontaine bridge. He fell in but was rescued by

some boys. They placed a fence post across the hole and pulled him out.

The last boat on the canal was owned by Max Baumgartner. He started a trip west by canal but the water was so low that he got stuck east of the bridge that crossed the Wabash on Rangeline Road. The boat lay there to rot or be carried away as firewood.

Around 1918 when workmen were laying steam lines to the Huntington school they cut through several of the locks in the town. They dug up rotted timbers under East Matilda Street which is now East Park Drive.

Huntington was the home of John R. Kissinger. He was a private in the U.S. Army and allowed himself to contract the Yellow Fever so that Dr. Walter Reed could experiment on him. His health was impaired and he had to walk with crutches. Hewas pensioned by the Government. Dr. Reed said, "In my opinion, there has never been a higher exhibition of moral courage in the annals of the Army of the United States, than that exhibited by John R. Kissinger."

The Sunday Visitor is one of the most widely circulated Catholic newspapers in the world. It is published in town.

Central College was chartered in 1897 but changed its name to Huntington College in 1917. Huntington College is run by the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

Today Huntington's most famous son is Dan Quayle who, though born in Indianapolis in 1947, grew up in town. Quayle graduated from DePauw University in 1969 and got his law degree at Indiana University in 1971. He worked in the pressroom of his father's newspaper, the Huntington Herald-Press in 1967 and the newsroom in 1968 as a summer reporter. He served in the Indiana National Guard from 1969-1975.

Dan and his wife, Marilyn, opened Quayle & Quayle, a law office in Huntington in 1974 and he also was general manager of the paper. He was elected to Congress is 1976, to the U.S. Senate in 1980 and reelected in 1986, and to the Vice-Presidency of the U.S. in 1988. The Huntington County Court House south steps were the site of the first presidential rally with Vice President George Bush and Senator Dan Quayle on August 19, 1988 announcing their ticket. The law office was used as his official Indiana residence during his congressional years. His grandfather, Eugene Pulliam, published the Indianapolis Star and the Indianapolis News. A museum has been set up to honor Quayle in Huntington.



**Bush / Quayle
Courthouse Rally
Huntington - 1992**

CALVIN FLETCHER JOURNAL

FLETCHER'S TRIP FROM HUNTINGTON TO FORT WAYNE BY CANAL

Calvin Fletcher was a lawyer from Urbana, Ohio, who came to Indianapolis to practice law. His practice covered a period of twenty years. During this time he rode the fifth judicial circuit which covered ten of Indiana's central counties. He also was a land speculator, a banker, and a prosperous farmer. His farming interests soon superseded his practice of law. He was religious and concerned with education for himself and his eleven children. He kept a diary of his life from which the following excerpts are taken.

1835

29 [June] Monday. Pleasant. Preparing to go with Messrs. Hand & Stansbury to Ft. Wayne to celebrate 4th of July.

30 June. Mrs. F.(Fletcher) taken very unwell. Doubt the propriety of my leaving home. She has a fever. Send for Dr. Coe who says he thinks I best go. Mr. Hand calls & says he cant leave with us--must attend to other buseness. Write to Messrs. Joe & Drake & prepare to leave with....At 9 o'clock called on Col. Stansbery who boards at Mr. Hendersons. He is the chief of the Engineer corpse in this State detailed by the W (war) dep (department) to run several routes for Railroads, a gent. about 30 formerly imploid as a surveyor with Messrs. Moore & Shriver in the survey of the Wabash & E. canal. We left at 10. Mrs. F. desires me to go but I apprehend she is liable to a severe attack. Very cool. Waters getting down. Corn about waist high in my lot. Garden corn tassling & tasseled. We proceede after an agreeable ride to Pendleton. Very cold--I fear frost. Had a fire made up for us. Called on by Messrs. Silver (who had a hay making at his farm where we passed) Shanklin Mershon & Noble.

July 1st. Some frost. Very cold but no injury to vegetation. Left P. (Pendleton) at sunrise. Rode with a ... to Andersontown. Breakfasted at A. with Andrew Jackson. Great complaint of the people of A. that the feeder to W R (White River) passed North of the town on the other side of River. Left A. at 9 o proceeded up Kill buck 10 miles on the road direct to Marion. Over took Surveyors of Canal route. Passed on to Palmers on the summit level & arrived at Marion about Sundown. There found a Dr. Trask from Vt. & staid with him over night. Could not procure grain for horses. Dr. had a pleasant family. Breakfasted.

2nd July. & proceeded to Lagro on the Wabash. Cool but pleasant. No flies. Arrived at Lagro about 2 P.M. Found Mr. Findly of Richmond candidate for Congress. Messrs. Burr & Hugh Hanner [Hanna] also arrived. Here we dined & fed & at 3 oclock left for Huntingdon & overtook Genl. Tipton & we all proceeded

upon the line of the canal now in progress in the construction, to within 6 miles of Huntington where we staid overnight. Mrs. Burr & Hanner with their childrin came up. Slep with Col Stansbery.

July 3rd. We left & proceeded with Genl. Tipton along the canal line to Huntington at the locks East of that place. [locks 5 - Tipton lock] The canal is finished to Ft. W (Wayne) 25 Ms. Here we Breakfasted. Met with a millitary company commanded by Capt. Fate a Dr. residing at H (Huntington). I Breakfasted at Helveys. [Flint Springs Hotel 1831 by the Helvey brothers] At 10 we left the lock accompanied by 2 boats beside the one we were in one loaded to the very top with Deer & fur skins. About 50 ladies & 100 gentlemen. Saml. Hanner [Hanna] Esq. on the part of a committee of arrangements at Ft. W. was present & accompanied us. At first the boat grounded inasmuch as the water had not been let in from above--but we soon glided along. It was with inexpressible delight to all the company (among whom were all the engineers Col. Burr &c) [etc.] to glide along upon the Waters that by nature were & had been by the Great Architect from the beginning designed & used to run into the St. Lawrence now by art & science made subservient to the purposes of commerce in the great valley of the Wabash making their way to the Mississippi.

We dined at Vermillias [Jesse Vermilyea] 10 ms. from Ft. Wayne. Left V.'s & soon met J. [Jesse Lynch] Williams principal Enginear who had been up for 2 nights to watch the embankments of the canal. Arrived within 5 or 6 miles of the place of destination & met several companies of Gents. from Ft. W. and within a 1/2 mile a company of melish [militia] who marched us into town the canal not being compleated with 1/2 m. I was invited by Mr. A. [Allen] Hamilton with Genl. Tipton to spend our time with him as we were all...out among the neighbors.

[July 4]. The morning of the 4th was ushered in by salutes. At 9 the companies of milish & all interested formed & marched to the canal where 5 boats were prepared to carry the company up to the St. Joseph feeder 6 miles accompanied with music. Cols. Spencer & Bourie were the officers of the day. At the feeder dam all debarked. Col. Burr made a speech & Genl. Tipton gave a toast &c [etc.] & the boats were turned back at 12 & we arrived at Ft. W. at 2. Went to the court house. Mr. McCulloch [Hugh McCulloch] delivered a good oration. After which a dinner was had and after that toasts.

July 5 Sunday morning. Left in canal boat with the company that came up from Huntington & arrived at H. at 9 o cloc P.M. Genl. Tipton & myself staid at Capt. Murrys. [Elias Murray, Tipton's real estate agent.]

July 6. Left Huntington at 9 & with Genl. T. arrived at Col. ...at Miamis town [Peru] at Sundown.

July 7th. Arrived at Genl. T. at 9 oc [o'clock] A.M. Breakfasted & went to Logansport. Done some business & left there at 3 P.M. and came to Stipps or rather Stocktons at Wilcat.

8 July. Left Stocktons & came to Michgan [Michigan] town. Breakfasted at Mrs. Johnson. Arrived at McQuedys at 2 P.M. where there was a show. Found 200 people. Mr. Quarles who rode home with me where we arrived at about dark.

July 9. Ben engaged at my office. Cool. James Hill & Wm. are at work hauling hay from old Mr. Fletchers. Our bees have commenced robbing each other. Mrs. F. in better health than when I left home. Corn in the garden silked.

July 10. Cool. Moved our bees. James & Wm. Hill gone to the place to help get hay &c. Wrote McCarty at Philadelphia relative to our land. Told him we ought not to buy any land above congress price & no more than we could keep 5 years that lands in 6 miles of the W. & E. canal 2d rate better than those 1st rate 20 ms. distant that I did not wish to involve myself that I would go in \$6000 if I could have 2 years to pay without that I could not go in &c.

References to the canal and the Irish war:

[July] 15. Dr. Cook from Pendleton here. Bo't 5 Shares of bank stock of him. Very cool--to cool for corn to grow. Plouging (ploughing) my corn 4th time. Old Mr. Fletcher making hay. Wrote T.D. Gregg Rariden. Read of the Death of Chief Justice Marshall--also the unfortunate Southgate Noble who once lived with me--threwed himself over board from a steam boat.

Wm. Oliver (Irishman) came in from the Wabash to get arms to Keep down an inserrection among the Irish which is expected. Mr. Pratt leaves tomorrow for Danville.

July 23. Capt. Mury [Elias Murray] & Johnson Sheriff of Huntington Co. came in with 8 irish prisoners from the Wabash canal to lodge them in a safe jail. A Mr. Monroe took tea with us. James & Wm. Hill started for the Wabash to deaden some land on the canal belonging to McCarty & myself.

Some of the references to internal improvements.

Saturday 18th July 1835. Cool morning but warmer than yesterday. Very pleasant. Mr. Esty of the house of Blachly & Simpson called. Paid him \$100. collected. Had a meeting of agricultural society. Messrs. Palmer Morris & McGuire to report proceedings &c. This our first effort.

Mrs. Mears & Williams (Jesses wife), Miss Sergant & Bennet took tea. Had some conversation with Mr. W. in relation to internal Improvements. We fear our next Legislature will be greatly divided & distracted. We both agree that our State is so far committed that it will be a great disgrace to fail in the grand project. We

think 7 million may be safely invested for the Eastern middle middle & Western canals--one railroad--&c.

Monday Augt. 10 1835. Pleasant. Nothing worthy of note. Visited Govr. Noble with Mrs. Fletcher. Spent the day conversing on the subject of internal improvements into which the state is about (as is hoped to enter). There are several Railroad routes surveyed by the order of the last legislature. The extension [of the] Wabash Canal to Lafayette White River canal--from Indianapolis to the Wabash certainly practicable--from here to the River Ohio not certainly so--White Water canal already surveyed but the part thro' Ohio possibly can't be used as their last legislature seem to be hostile. Railroads have charters that require...subscriptions. Now the difficulty seems to be this--If the various projects contemplated by the surveys should be attempted the present state of the country does not demand it nor will its resources warrant the undertaking. Indeed the Govr. & myself agree in this that canals are the best because the capital to be expended in their construction to be left in the country. Railroads for machinery & iron will carry the money out of the country 2/3 or 1/2. Canals will grow more permanent--Railroads will wear out in 10 to 15 years. We are fearful that unless all can be undertaken none will be accomplished. His next message on the subject should be penned with care.

Wedensday [Oct.] 14. Very pleasant. Streets crowded with people--movers--emigrants. Judge Demming arrived from the East. Speaks of commencing a system on internal improvements. Says we are 10 years ahead of what he expected before he went East. Democrat came out this day containing two numbers on the subject written by Jesse Williams Engineer in order to prepare public mind. The Editer says we can go \$10 million.

Thursday 15 Octr. 1835. This day Examined the subject of the liability of persons taking gravel out of the bed of the River &c.

Very pleasant. Govr. Noble called on me. Had further conversation in relation to internal improvements. He has just received a line from the Madison R.C. to procure the apperatus & assistance to survey from M. to Nepolian to intersect the Lawrenceburgh road in consequence I presume of the unexpected high estimate of the direct route. It is a favorable indication of the union of the two points. The route for a canal down White River to terminate at Evansville seems to be favorable & if the practicability of uniting the waters of Eel & the Wabash in Vigo County can be ascertained I look upon the whole project of internal improvements in this state to be the most interesting of any in the union & one that is more deserving. There will not be thirty miles in the state without a water communication or railroad.

Thornbrough, Gayle. The Diary of Calvin Fletcher Volume I 1817-1838. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Society 1972.

A CANAL STORY

The following article appeared in the Huntington Press on Sunday, October 16, 1921 and gives an account of life on the raging canal.

Crandal Tells of Days When Men Battled Weather and Each Other on Old Canal

In the days when a man was just as good as his two fists, his feet and his teeth, and no real man would stop to use a knife or gun on a fellow man, A. A. Crandal of Huntington was driving a canal boat team through Huntington to Toledo, and sometimes from Toledo to Cincinnati. Many a load of salt was shipped to this part of Indiana--then the wild and woolly west--in the boats that were dragged mile after mile, day and night, by the team of the then youthful Crandal.

There were days of hardship and fun, honest and hard toil, pleasant and sometimes gentle recreations, but sometimes of stormy battle with the elements and fiercer fights between man and man.

"The canal boat crews were peaceable men?" he was asked.

"I say they were not", declared Mr. Crandal. "Sometimes they would fight like wolves. There was a big fight right where the Press office stands, and it got ended before it started."

Double-Barreled Fight

"How's that--ended before it started?" he was asked. And he told the story--a sort of double-barrelled story--of the overthrow of three bullies.

Crandal's boat, the Northern Light, was ready to come through a lock up east of Fort Wayne. Captain Johnson was in command, and Jonas Crandal, an uncle of A. A. Crandal, a young man, rather light of build but with massive shoulders and arms and very supple and strong, was manipulating the wickets. Another boat, an Ohio craft, a trifle too late to claim the lock first, was near. It was a fighting outfit, with a crew noted from Cincinnati to Toledo and from Toledo to Lafayette for its beefy bullies that had felled every man who dared stand up to do battle.

One Bully Gets Wet

One of the bullies walked up the path from his boat, and ordered Jonas Crandal to let the bull's boat through first, threatening to whip him if he refused. "It won't cost you a nickel", said Crandal, never stopping his work. The bully started to make his word good, but he had no sooner approached Crandal than he landed in the water.

The other bully was asleep on the boat. The crew awakened him, and, still rubbing his eyes, he

walked out to clean up on the young man who was taking the lock away from the boss boat of the canal.

A battle started. Crandal was a left hander. This was an advantage. On the other hand, he was much smaller than his antagonist. Crandal had a handicap from early in the fight, for a member of the opposing crew threw a rock. It struck Crandal in the back and knocked the breath out of him, and until he got his wind back all he could do was dance around.

Boy Crying Mad

Newt Crandal, another uncle of the Huntington man, was then a stripling sixteen years old. When he saw the rock thrown and witnessed its effect on his brother, who was his hero, he began to cry--not the depressed weeping of a man who is whipped before he is hurt, but the wailing of anger and a willingness to mix it. He was a driver, and the weapon he sought was the "spreader" which was used on his team. Seizing the stick, he started for the man who threw the rock, and the man, fearing the sobbing and enraged youth, started to run. Even with the spreader in his hands, young Crandal gained on him, but he did not overtake him. That was not his game. When he was within striking distance he drew back his spreader, and with arms accustomed to swing an axe, he struck the fleeing man across the side of the head. The man wilted in his tracks, and young Crandal, still enraged by the cowardly use of the stone, jumped on him with both feet. Other members of the North Star crew had to take him off.

In the meantime Crandal and the bully had been fighting. Ten times they met, and at each encounter each struck and kicked the other, and at each encounter they seemed to rebound from the impact, only to straighten up and go at it again. At the tenth encounter the "south paw" of Crandal found the mark it had been seeking--the right ear of the bully. The Ohio man's knees sagged. Bleeding from the lips, his eyes rapidly closing from the punishment he had received, he sagged lower and lower until finally he was stretched helpless on the ground. With panting breath he uttered that word which on the frontier was at once a manly word and a token of defeat--"Enough."

Both Eyes Closed

Other members of the crew had to lead him to the boat. By the time he could stand his eyes were completely closed. In a few minutes he sent for Crandal, and the two shook hands, the Ohio bully declaring Jonas Crandal the best man on the canal.

The fame of Crandal spread after than encounter, and at last word come back from Ohio that a

brother of the man he had whipped would fight him. Ohio men wagered \$100 on the fight. Under the rules of the frontier, there was nothing for Crandal to do but meet the new claimant. The rules were arranged; the place was decided on. The fight was to be with fist, claws, feet and teeth, man against man, in a squared ring.

Crandal's father tried to keep him away, but when the time came for the battle he was on hand--at the place where The Huntington Press building now stands. Men were coming in to see the fight. Saloons were their meeting place, and one saloon keeper asked Crandal to keep his place until he returned. Crandal consented and went behind the bar. Then the Ohio crowd arrived--six or eight men--and chance would have it that they entered the place where Crandal was substituting for the proprietor.

Fight Off Scheduled Time

The Ohio bully ordered a round of drinks for his fellow travelers, but declared that he "would help himself."

"Not while I am here," said Crandal. "You stay on that side. I'll take care of this over here."

"I'm going to help myself", said the fighter, and he started to come around the bar.

Crandal warned him again, but he came on.

In an instant Crandal's foot landed on the Ohio man's chest, just above the stomach. In another instant his left had swung to the side of his head. In a third instant the great Ohio fighter was stretched on the floor.

The Ohio crowd was panicky. While the trouble had been brewing, Crandal's father had arrived. He had ceased trying to prevent the fight, and when inquiries were made as to who the fellow was that had whipped the champion of the canal, the elder Crandal said: "He's the boy that can whip you all. Bring on the Ohio men one at a time ad he'll show you."

The bully came to life again. He also wanted to know who had whipped him.

"That's the feller you was to fight", drawled a Hoosier. "You got whipped before the fight come off."

The Ohioan said his brother had warned him not to come to Huntington, but he thought he could whip anything on the canal.

Bears Cause Excitement

Sometimes it was an entirely different kind of excitement that made gossip up and down the canal. In Paulding county, Ohio, was a stretch of what was known as "the big woods". This was great hunting territory, and probably was the home of more bear and deer than any other stretch of country in northern Indiana and Ohio.

An Irishman was a member of the crew on the boat on which Crandal was working as driver. It was night. The headlight on this boat was excellent, casting a good light half a mile ahead, and when the craft came on a bear, the bear was confused by the light. It happened that the Irishman was doing a trick (taking his turn) at driving, and he did not see the bear until the horses began to balk and prance. Then the bruin decided to run. At the same time the Irishman came to similar decision. Both the driver and the bear had chosen the same direction for flight.

"You ought to have heard the brush crack when that Irishman and the bear started. One was as scared as the other and neither one of them stopped for little saplings", said Crandal. "Finally the Irishman circled back to the boat, and he had a good story of how he was chased by a bear. The bear could tell the same story if it could talk."

"It did make a man nervous to run onto a bear, though" he continued. "I ran onto one once up in the big woods. It was a black bear. I didn't see it till the horses got scared and almost stopped. That bear was looking at the headlight. I was riding one of the horses, and I just slid over on the side of the horse away from the bear and went ahead. When the bear got out of the light he made a dash over the tow path. He came right between me and the boat. Running onto a bear like that at night made a man nervous for a while."

When Water Was Low

When the water was low, or the boats tied up because of a bar, the crew often went fishing. This was not a very serious undertaking. They simply baited lines and fished from the boat. Many a time they caught good strings of bullhead catfish from the canal.

Races Were Frequent Between The Boats

"One time we raced a boat all the way from Lafayette to Toledo and beat them one hour", said Mr. Crandal. "At night we could see their headlight back of us. When they got too close we got in their swale and rested our horses and made theirs pull harder. Then they would drop back a little and we would go on. You could ride the swale from another boat and lighten the work for your mules. The boat behind would push the water ahead, and the boat in front would be in the way of the wave made by the boat behind. If the boat in front could get just far enough ahead to get at the beginning of this wave, the front boat would be pushed along by the wave to that it would be easy pulling for the horses."

Boats Made in Huntington

Boats were manufactured in Huntington in those days. The "ship yards" were at Flint creek about where the creek enters the sewer now at First street. Here were turned out the Nevada, the Amazon, the Seabird, and other craft. James Wilhelm bought the Amazon, and

it was a big boat for canal days. Crandal had a job as driver for this boat. The Amazon carried the record load to Toledo--2,600 bushels of wheat. The Seabird was a steamer and was finally taken to the Ohio river.

"It took three days and nights to go to Toledo and three days and nights coming back to Huntington", said Mr. Crandal, recounting experiences of the canal days. "We only took two hours for unloading. We locked into the Maumee river at Toledo, or if the water in the canal was not high enough there, we locked in at Maumee, a few miles this side. Tugs would meet us and take us to the elevators. With two shovelers in the boat and the elevators scooping it up, it was quick work. Then the tug would get us and we would soon be in the canal again, beating it for Huntington and Lafayette.

"One time, going down the Maumee, I bantered my captain to get hold of a tow and drop in behind for a swim. We both stripped, got a rope apiece and jumped in. We had to hold tight to the rope, for the tug was taking us along at a merry clip, and if we let go we would be a mile from shore. I would work over to him and put my food on his rope and you ought to have heard him beg. Every time I put my weight on his rope his head would go under and the tug would drag him along under water until I got my food off. When we had our swim we went up the side of the boat hand-over-hand."

Tow Team Stunned

Dealing with adventures on his trips, he said:

"One time in summer we met with a storm. We never stopped for anything until the ice stopped us, and we went right through storms. A flash of lightning hit a black elm right near the mules. It was hard work and we were using both teams that time. Well, the six mules dropped down to the ground as if they were all dead. I was riding one mule and I felt the electricity, but it did not hurt me. Then the mules began to open their eyes and in a minute every one of them was on its feet again. I wasn't afraid of the lightning that hit the tree and the mules, but I kept watching for another flash, believe me.

"Another time we were going through a lock and the boat was away below the path. Dad was trying to work one of the mules around, and it got stubborn. My father was a powerful man and when he got tired of trying to make the mule go, he hauled off and hit him with his fist and knocked it down. It was right on the edge of the path, and I thought it would slip into the lock. If it had, it would have smashed the deck of the boat. Dad saw what had to be done right away, and he grabbed the mule around the neck and drug it away from the lock. The mule would have weighed 1,100 pounds."

How Boats Were Built

Mr. Crandal told how the crew of a boat worked,

and how the boats were built. There were grain or freight pits forward and aft. Also forward and aft were bunks, four behind and two or three forward. The four bunks aft were for the two drivers and the two stern men who steered the boat. The trick was six hours on and six off, day and night. The stern man stood at the tiller or lounged against it for six long hours, and then turned in for a rest of six hours. The driver was with his mules or horses on the ^{tow} path for six hours. Then driver and horses would enter the boat. The horses occupied a bunk forward, and so did the bowsman. It was the duty of the bowsman to take the boat through the locks. He snubbed the boat with a rope as she entered the lock to prevent her butting her nose against the forward end of the lock, damaging it. The captain often acted as bowsman.

"Along the route were pay stations. These were operated like the old-fashioned toll gates. The boats were owned by individuals, who paid at the pay stations according to the amount of freight handled."

"How did the canal cross Clear Creek?" Mr Crandal was asked.

"They built aqueducts over the creeks," he explained. "There was one at Clear Creek and one a Silver Creek. There was one at the place where Flint creek enters the sewer, and another at Roanoke. The aqueducts were water-tight and worked all right.



Canal Boat

Samuel W, Hawley Home
Established first Nursery
Huntington, In

FORKS OF THE WABASH

The place where the Little River and the Wabash join, better known as the Forks of the Wabash, is very important historically since it is the one end of the Wabash-Maumee portage that connected the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi. The other end of the portage was at the junction of the St. Mary's and St. Joseph Rivers where they form the Maumee in Fort Wayne. This is a key area to the development of transportation and travel in Indiana. At first man used the river, then the old Indian trails, later came the Wabash and Erie Canal, the Wabash Railroad for steam trains, the Indiana Railroad for electric interurbans, and U.S. 24 which is used by trucks, buses, and automobiles.

There is a field located to the north of the highway at the Forks that is where the famous Miami chief, Little Turtle, conducted an agriculture school around 1795-1800. The braves were taught scientific farming by a Quaker farmer for a year. They weren't interested and went back to hunting and fishing.

General Harrison burnt the Miami village, just after Fort Wayne was seized in the War of 1812, hoping to thwart further Indian uprisings. The village was rebuilt and used until 1840.

The home of Chief La Fontaine which survived the construction and decline of the canal has been moved to the Forks of the Wabash park from its previous site across U.S. 24. In canal times the inland waterway flowed about 50 feet in front of the home built by this Miami chief. La Fontaine would bring barrels of coins from the government and distribute the money. The Indians were said to have brought the money they had left over from the prior years payment, throw it on the floor, and receive shiny new coins in its equivalent.

Genealogy - La Fontaine

The best known Miami Chief was Little Turtle who help negotiate many early treaties with the U. S. He died in his lodge from gout not far from the junction of the St. Joseph and St. Marys Rivers at Fort Wayne on July 14, 1812. After his death Jean Baptiste Richardville (called John Richardville pronounced Roosheville) became the principal chief of the Miami tribe. John was not a full-blooded Indian. His father was a French fur trader who married Little Turtle's sister. John was born at Kekionga (Fort Wayne) about 1761. He was elected Chief after saving a captured white man, who was tied to a stake by a war party of Miami braves. When the torch was put to the faggots piled around the captain, John's mother thrust a knife at John. He grabbed it to cut loose the cords thus releasing the prisoner from the stake. His mother hid the prisoner under pelts in a canoe and sent him down

river. Years later when John Richardville visited a town in Ohio the released white man declared he was the freed prisoner.

The Indian agent at Fort Wayne, Allen Hamilton, told of this feat. Richardville is thought to have been over fifty years of age when he did this and was then elected principal chief, civil ruler, and great lawgiver.

Richardville received \$500 from the U. S. to build a house as was provided by the Treaty of 1826. This home still stands on the banks of the St. Mary's at Fort Wayne. He had a large trading post in Fort Wayne which he moved to Wabash about 1836. He also built a house in Huntington. It was looked after by Margaret Lafalia, a French woman. He died at his home in Fort Wayne on August 13, 1841 and was buried the following day at the present day Cathedral in Fort Wayne. Later he was moved to the Catholic Cemetery. He had three daughters, La Blonde, Sarah, and Catherine.

Shortly before Richardville's death, his daughter Catherine was married to Francis La Fontaine, the last principal chief of the Miamis. He was elected over Brouillette and Meshingomesia. La Fontaine was born around 1810, the son of a French trader and a Miami woman. He lived east of Huntington. He moved to the Forks of the Wabash upon his election and established a store which was managed by John Roche. He wanted his Indian friends to be treated fairly and not ripped off by the white traders. This was after the Treaties of 1826 and 1838 when Indian pride was at an all time low. He tried to help his people through their suffering. He went as far as accompanying them to their new reservation in Kansas when they were removed in the fall of 1846. He stayed with them through the winter and when returning home in the spring was taken ill at St. Louis. When he reached Lafayette he found an unfinished building, crawled inside, and died on April 13, 1847. At the time of his death his daughter Mrs. Charles Engleman (born 1845) lived in Huntington. La Fontaine was buried in the Huntington Catholic Cemetery.

La Fontaine had two sons and four daughters. He was such a large man that he had a special chair made so he could sit comfortably.

Earlier, Little Turtle had served as both civil ruler and war chief. When Richardville was elected principal chief this power was divided between himself and Shepoconah (Deaf Man, husband of Frances Slocum). Deaf Man was elected war chief. He lived in a Miami village near the mouth of the Mississinewa River. More information about Frances Slocum can be found in another section of this book.

Shepoconah was succeeded by Francis Godfroy, the last war chief of the Miamis. Richardville, La Fontaine and Godfroy were important players in the treaties which ceded Wabash Valley Indian land to the United States.

Huntington County became the property of the United States through the treaties of 1818 and 1826. The "Ten Mile Reserve" was ten sections of land at the Forks of the Wabash. This is bordered today by the north bank of the Little River near the La Fontaine Street bridge in Huntington, north two and one half miles, west four miles, and south to the Wabash River and up until the Little River is reached.

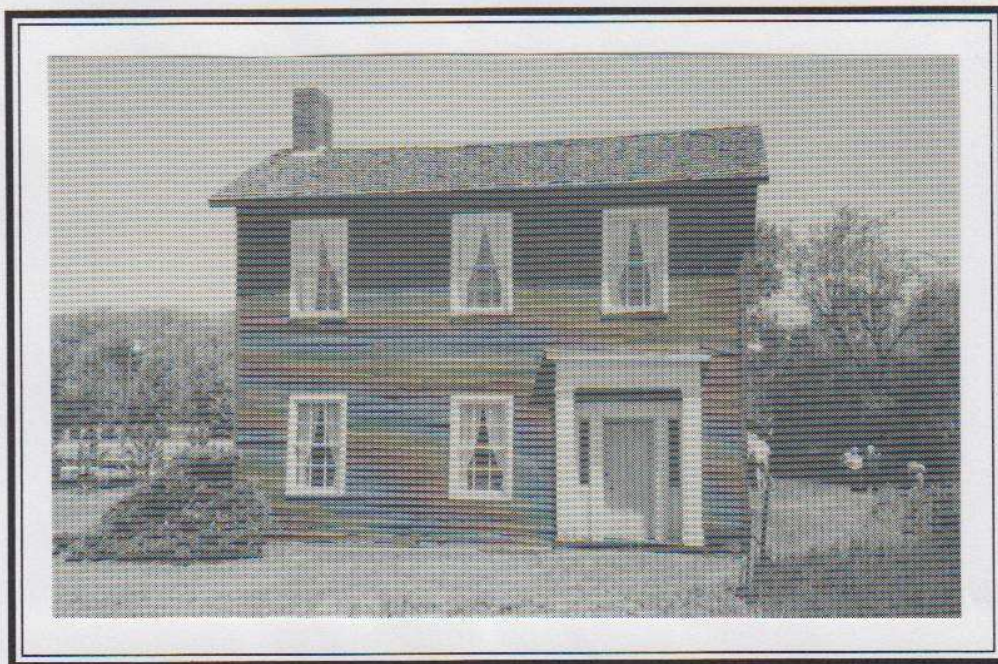
William Marshall negotiated another treaty at the Forks on October 23, 1834. Once again on November 6, 1838 a council met at the forks "Old Treaty Ground", ceded away their lands, and agreed to move beyond the Mississippi. The final treaty between the Miamis and the government was signed at the Forks on November 28, 1840. Samuel Milroy and Allen Hamilton, commissioner of the U. S., and the Miami chiefs conducted the council. The government agreed to pay \$550,000 for the Ten Mile Reserve in Huntington County and what remained of the big reserve south of Wabash. They also appropriated \$300,000 of the amount to pay tribal debts and agreed to pay the remainder in ten equal annual installments. All the early reservations in Huntington County are listed and their locations given in the History of Huntington County, Indiana by Frank Sumner Bash, 1914.

In the fall of 1846 the Miamis were conducted to a reservation near Leavenworth, Kansas by Alexis Coquillard. Coquillard was an agent of the North

American Fur Company and had been based at South Bend since 1824. The Indians both knew and liked him. Even so, many Indians did not want to leave their hunting grounds. They ran away or claimed to be part of the half breed families of Godfroy and Meshingomesia who were allowed to remain in Indiana. Finally, after a lot of trouble and delay, the tribe was put onto canal boats on the Wabash and Erie Canal. They were taken east on the canal to Junction Ohio, then down the Miami Erie Canal to Cincinnati. At Cincinnati they went down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and up the Missouri River to Kansas. This trip was made during a summer drought. Many of the Indians died when they were forced to march to the reservation. Those Indians who remained in Indiana became farmers.

In 1854 the Miamis eastern tribe members were paid \$221,257.86 over twenty-five years, or 5 per cent annually of the amount, according to a treaty they signed at Wabash. Calvin W. Cowgill was the special agent assigned to make the payment. Later Indians of the Miami tribe living in Michigan also received annuities.

The Indians would assemble annually at the Forks of the Wabash after the Treaty of 1826 to collect the annuities from the Indian agent and his body-guard. There were about 1/2 dozen trading houses where the Indians could purchase items with their money. Scarlet cloth seemed to capture their attention and sold for \$3 a yard. Colored calico sold for 50 cents a yard. And once the Wabash and Erie Canal was completed at the Forks, whiskey boats and floating saloons were a normal sight at the time of payment. Conditions deteriorated rapidly and the payment ground was moved up Clear Creek four miles north of the river.



HOME OF CHIEF LA FONTAINE
AT ORIGINAL SITE / BEFORE RELOCATION

WABASH COUNTY

Wabash county was established by the Indiana Assembly on January 30, 1832. Later more land was added to the original 16 x 24 miles. The county was officially organized January 23, 1835 by an act that appointed a committee of five men from five counties to "fix the Seat of Justice". It was named for the Wabash River which flows across the county. The town of Wabash was chosen as the county seat, three commissioners were elected, Stearns Fisher, Levi Bean, and Alpheus Blackman, and two associate judges were chosen, Daniel Jackson and Daniel Ballenger.

Farming was the first major industry with wheat, corn and flax being grown as well as sheep. During 1834-38 corn-crackers and flour mills were built wherever water power was available to turn the buhrstones. Soon saw mills were built to provide smooth lumber for dwellings. Brick kilns and lime kilns were kept busy making brick and mortar. By 1839 a furniture factory began making walnut and oak pieces. When sorghum was grown barrels and staves and cooper shops were needed. A tannery was built in 1839 and by 1840 a foundry began making cast iron plows.

Early settlers found that the unmarked and many times unbroken trails were insufficient to get their crops to market or to return with their needed supplies. Without the capability of shipping their corn, or hogs fattened by it, there was no reason to grow it. If it could reach the river it was worth 50 cents a bushel. The salt they needed cost from \$12-\$15 dollars a barrel in Indiana but on Lake Erie was less than \$5. They attempted reaching markets by dirt or plank roads and the canal.

Wabash & Erie Canal

In January 1828 the Indiana State Legislature created a board of commissioners for the Wabash and Erie Canal. Samuel Hanna represented Fort Wayne, David Burr represented Jackson and later Wabash counties, and Robert John represented Franklin county. The Wabash county level was surveyed under the supervision of Jesse Lynch Williams, chief canal engineer for the state, and his assistant, Stearns Fisher of Wabash.

Once construction started, they found the canal would cost between \$1,600 to \$2,000 per mile. They also had many unforeseen difficulties to overcome such as transporting provisions to the workers through dense forests or by water.

Canal contracts for the first sections in Wabash county were let in May to Meyers and Lemuel G. Jones. The next section was built by Benjamin Mariner. Others were built by Pennsylvanians Thomas Hayes and

William Terell. The first section and the lock had to be completed by Lemuel Jones and David and Jacob D. Cassat (father and son) upon the death of Meyers. The section from the lock to the stone bluff was built by Sera Sutherland.

The immigrants came. It didn't take long after the contracts were awarded for shanties and cabins to line the path that was cleared for the canal. Work on the canal was hard and they labored from the rising to the setting of the sun. They had to cut brush, grub out tree stumps, build roads and bridges, quarry stone for dams and culverts, and build feeders. A large basin was built to dock the canal boats about 10 feet below Wabash Avenue in Wabash, then known as Main Street. This is where the canal cut into town from the Wabash River. Near College Avenue the canal level was about ten feet higher than the surrounding land and a culvert was built that allowed wagons to drive under it.

The Wabash segment, according to financial records from November 3, 1834-November 18, 1835, was 60.49 chains long (1,352.34 feet) and cost \$22,226.38. This included the costs of grubbing and clearing; excavating the rock and earth, excavating the pit for the lock, forming the towpath and berm, using materials such as wood planks for locks, gates, and sills, cutting stone for masonry, and supplying iron. The stones for the lock were quarried near Lagro. A lime kiln at Lagro on the farm of David Watkins burned the stone for mortar.

The Wabash level was 687 feet above sea level or 114 feet above Lake Erie. The Lagro level was 720 feet above sea level or 147 feet above Lake Erie. The Fort Wayne level was 790 feet above sea level or 197 feet above Lake Erie. All three levels were completed to Wabash. But water was not let into the canal until 10 months later; however, the canal bed did not sit idle. It was used as a race track. In the spring of 1837 water was let into the canal from the feeder at Lagro. A crowd followed the water along the canal as it moved toward Wabash. Three weeks later boat traffic was started on the canal.

The Wabash and Erie Canal was finally completed from Toledo to Evansville in July of 1843 with traffic disappearing in the 1870's. The old dredge boat was taken from the canal bed at Lagro in 1876, sold to Thomas Scott, and moved to Toledo, Ohio. The canal no longer carried traffic but was used for fighting mill and factory fires. In 1877 canal owners demanded they be paid for the water used in fire fighting.

Between 1843 and 1848 Wabash County had three Underground Railroad stations. They were located in New Holland at Fred Kindley's place, in Lagro at A.

A. Peabody's place, and in North Manchester at the Maurice Place. It is said no slave was ever captured once they reached North Manchester. Most of the early settlers were willing to help the runaways. The bounty hunters from Kentucky were usually unsuccessful. The hunters paid informants, but these folks were held in contempt by most of the settlers.

Most slaves traveling to freedom followed the canal and then by night took trails laid out for them. One time a party of 20 slaves was taken to North Manchester. Three women and a baby traveled with the party. Seven slaves hidden beneath a load of lumber in the bed of a Pennsylvania wagon were taken to the Gene Stratton Porter home near Lagro at another time.

The Wabash and Erie Canal was built and operated in an expensive manner. It and the other internal improvement projects bankrupted Indiana. It was a case of too many individuals getting their profits before the public got its share. The boats were owned by their captains or by private companies. They furnished their own motive power--horses or mules. The state only collected tolls for the boats to pass through the canal. With this toll the locks, other canal structures, and the canal itself had to be maintained and lock tender and collector fees had to be paid.

The canal trade made warehouses necessary. By 1848 Wabash county had nine of them. Then in 1856 when they began competing with the railroad more warehouses were built.

Railroad

In 1853 a survey was made for the Wabash and St. Louis Railroad and by 1854 work was being done in Wabash. January 20, 1856 saw the arrival of the first train in that town. By June of that year trains were running from Toledo to Lafayette, the route of the Wabash and Erie Canal. The railroad, plus extensive flooding, hurt the canal business. One season floods closed down the canal for 90 days.

During peak years as much as 500,000 to 1,000,000 bushels of grain were shipped from Wabash County by canal. Tolls collected at Wabash in 1870 totaled \$7,924 and in 1871 totaled \$14,300.08. The 1870 shipments from Wabash included 135,400 pounds of merchandise, 10,030 bushels of corn, 240,652 feet of lumber, 979 cubic feet of lumber, 9,380 cords of wood, 85,000 bushels of wheat, 8,160 bushels of oats, 413 bushels of clover seed, and 9,625 perch of stone. In 1871 shipments included 117,000 bushels of wheat, 24,100 bushels of oats, 2,200 bushels of flax seed, 68,849 bushels of corn, 675 bushels of clover seed and 447,098 feet of lumber.

In 1873 the citizens of Indiana amended the state constitution saying the state could never again obligate itself for payment of any portion of canal bonds. The following year the canal was almost

abandoned. Insufficient tolls kept repairs from being made. Then in 1875 a flood washed out the canal near Peru leaving the bed not fit for commercial use. Boats were left stranded and sank into ruin and decay. In 1876 the canal was sold to William Fleming of Fort Wayne. Capitalists from Peru bought the portion of the canal between Lagro and Lafayette.

North Manchester

The second largest city in Wabash County is North Manchester. It was platted in 1837 by Peter Ogan and Jacob Neff, three years after Ogan had built his log home in 1834 near the Eel River. He figured the river would provide water for manufacturing.

In 1851, Joseph Harter and sons operated a flour mill in North Manchester and later in 1855 added a general mercantile business. Soon saw mills lined the Eel River. North Manchester had homes of sawn timber rather than the usual log cabins of most towns. The limestone foundations for these homes came from Lagro.

Wabash County was fortunate in having the Lake Erie, Wabash and St. Louis railroad which ran through the town of Wabash and the Detroit, Eel River and Illinois railroad which ran through North Manchester. Before long North Manchester also had the Cincinnati, Wabash and Michigan (Big Four).

Manchester College was established in North Manchester in 1889. It is the only college in Wabash County. Several blocks from the college on Mill Street the old covered bridge crossing the Eel River is still in use.

Roann / Stockdale

Another small town in the county is Roann on the south side of the Eel River. It was started when a tavern/inn was built by Joseph Beckner in 1836 as a place of food and rest for those traveling from Rochester to Wabash. It was platted in 1853.

Roann's name is said to have come from the combination of the names of Ann Beckner and Ann Roe, who cooked the meals for Elijah Hackleman, surveyor, while he stayed at Beckner's tavern. Another story says that Ann Beckner was rowing on the river (this was either during a wild storm or when Indians were chasing her) and her father shouted from the bank "Row, Ann, row, Ann, row!" Still another story tells of a Potawatomi Indian maiden, called Ann by the settlers who had a large canoe and would transport the whites across the Eel River. They would get her to come and get them by shouting, "Row Ann, Row Ann."

Stockdale, west of Roann, on the south side of the Eel River was platted in October 1839 by Thomas Goudy. This was at the Indian village called Squirreltown. The first flour mill at Stockdale was built in 1845 by Goudy but was washed away by a flood. He

also built a saw mill that sawed the lumber for the present buhr flour mill which was built by Baker and Rank in 1858 and changed to a roller mill in 1879. He constructed a short mill race to turn the waterwheels. Hand-hewn beams of oak, walnut and poplar that are sixty feet long support the floors. They were notched together and did not need nails. In 1881 James M. Deck contracted to purchase the mill over a period of time. He named the flour "White Loaf Flour." The mill could produce 50 barrels of flour a day. It was in operation until 1964. The present dam at the mill site was built in 1916 by James Deck.

Several covered bridges crossed the Eel at Roann. One was built in 1841 and another in 1845 but both were washed away. In 1856 another was built that washed out in 1876. It looked strange since funds ran out while building it and only the south end was covered. The present covered bridge was finished in 1877 and built on the Howe patent structure plan. It burned recently and was authentically replaced. The bridge has two spans supported by end abutments and a central pier. This bridge was bypassed by a new bridge in 1970.

Two citizens of the county who became famous were Thomas R. Marshall and Gene Stratton Porter. The latter has a section devoted to her in this book.

Thomas R. Marshall

North Manchester in Wabash County was the birthplace of Thomas Riley Marshall on March 14, 1854. His father was a country doctor who developed patented medicines. Marshall attended Wabash College, graduating in 1873 at the age of nineteen, and later got a law degree in 1909. He set up a law practice in Columbia City and was to marry Kate Hooper, but she died the day before the wedding. He later met Lois Kimsey and married her in 1895. Tom remodeled his home in Columbia City at that time. It now houses the Whitley County Museum.

Marshall became governor of Indiana in 1909-1913. In 1912 he was placed on the Democratic ticket with Woodrow Wilson and served two terms as Vice-President of the United States in 1913-1921. While presiding over the Senate during his first term he was bored by a speech in which the Senator kept saying "What this country needs..." Marshall said to his clerk, "What this country needs is a good 5 cent cigar." He declined taking over the presidency when Wilson was ill.

In May of 1925 Thomas Marshall addressed the graduating class of Manchester College. He had a bad cold but went on to Indianapolis and then to Washington, D.C. He died of a heart attack on June 1, 1925.

Interurban

On March 28, 1900 the Wabash River Traction Company was incorporated and built a line that ran from the foot of Wabash Street hill, at Canal Street,

south across the river, turned west on Mill Creek Pike and then ran north across the river at Boyd Park Bridge. It set up an amusement park to encourage business. By August of 1902 the line was built west from the park along the Wabash and Erie Canal towpath all the way to Peru.

By August 10, 1902 the Fort Wayne and Southwestern Traction Company ran its line along the old Wabash and Erie Canal towpath from Fort Wayne to Andrews, Huntington, Lagro and Wabash thus giving Wabash County two traction lines. Once again the old canal was providing a transportation service. By 1914, the peak traction year, there were 2318 miles of lines in Indiana. Passengers boarding the cars in Wabash could go almost anywhere in the state. But sadly, as was the case of the canal, the business declined. The last electric car left Wabash for Fort Wayne on September 11, 1938 from the South Wabash Street station.

Wabash County Today

Wabash county is composed of gently rolling land, four rivers (Wabash, Salamonie, Mississinewa, and Eel), and many tributaries. It has the advantage of having two cities, Wabash (pop. approx. 13 thousand) and North Manchester (pop. approx 6 thousand). It is close to the top in livestock production and is in the upper fourth of all counties in crop production. Its industries include General Tire & Rubber, Container Corp. of America, Essex, and U. S. Gypsum. It also makes timers and switches, fireplaces, bookbinding, wiring, transformers, and printed T-shirts. Three firms still operate from the 19th century. They are J.L. Clark (1887), Ford Motor Box Co. (1898), and B. Walter, Co. (1897). It also has Salamonie Lake and Mississinewa Lake which are portions of two major reservoirs. The monument to Frances Slocum is located near the Mississinewa Lake. Her life is described in another section of this book.

THE ROCK

Two miles west of Wabash is a great boulder transported by a glacier from the north shore of Lake Superior. It is a pudding stone composed of irregular and angular lumps of granite, gneiss, sienite, etc. Someone chiseled the dimensions 15 x 18 x 10 on its surface. It is thought to be sinking into the ground rather than deteriorating.

This landmark was mentioned in a report of March 17, 1790 by John F. Hamtramck to Lt. Col. Harmar on "the distances of the Wabash". The rock was significant in that it lies directly across the Wabash from the "Hospital", a place of refuge also known as the "secret cave".

Many years later the rock was recorded by John Collett, assistant geologist for the State of Indiana in 1871.

W & E CANAL - WABASH CO

The following article by Mrs. Leola Hockett appeared in the *Indiana Magazine of History* in 1928.

During the session of 1823-24, Congress passed an act authorizing the state of Indiana to "Survey and mark through the public lands of the United states, the route of a canal by which to connect the navigation of the Wabash and Miami rivers and Lake Erie." The act provided that, "ninety feet of land on each side of the canal" should be "reserved for sale on the part of the United States," and that the use thereof should "forever be vested in the state aforesaid, for a canal and for no other purpose whatever."

In 1827, another act was passed granting "to the State of Indiana for the purpose of aiding the said State in opening a canal to unite, at navigable points, the waters of the Wabash river with those of Lake Erie, a quantity of land equal to one half of five sections in width on each side of the canal, and reserving each alternate section to the United States to be selected by the Commissioner of the Land Office, under the direction of the President of the United States, from one side thereof to the other," the said lands to be "subject to the disposal of the Legislature of said state, for the purpose aforesaid and no other." The work was to be commenced within five years and finished within twenty years.

The action of Congress was approved by the Legislature of Indiana on January 5, 1828. A Board of Commissioners was appointed, composed of Samuel Hanna of Ft. Wayne, David Burr of Jackson county (later one of the founders of the town of Wabash), and Robert John of Franklin county.

To make the appropriation of land available, work must be commenced before March 2, 1832. The committee appointed by Judge Hanna to select the time and place for the first excavations chose a spot on the St. Joseph feeder line at Ft. Wayne. On the 22nd of February, 1832, friends of the canal repaired to that place for the event. Hugh Hanna (another of the founders of Wabash) was the Marshal of the day.

The proceedings are described by the
Cass County Times of March 2, 1832:

The procession having been formed agreeably to order, at the John's Hotel, proceeded across the St. Mary's river to the point selected when a circle was formed, in which the commissioners and Orator of the day took their stand. Charles W. Ewing, Esq., then arose, and in his usual happy, eloquent manner, delivered an appropriate address which was received with acclamation. F. Virgus, Esq., one of the canal commissioners, and the only one present, addressed the company, explained the reason why his colleagues were absent, adverted to the difficulties and embarrassments which the friends of the canal had encountered and overcome, noticed the importance of the work and the advantages that would ultimately be realized and then concluded by saying, "I am now about to commence the Wabash and Erie Canal, in the name and by the authority of the state of Indiana." Having thus said, he *struck the long suspended blow*, and broke the ground while the company hailed the event with three cheers.

Judge Hanna and Capt. Murray, two of the able and consistent advocates of the canal in the councils of the state, next approached and excavated the earth and then commenced an indiscriminate cutting and digging.

The procession then marched back to town, as they had marched to the place, in the following order—

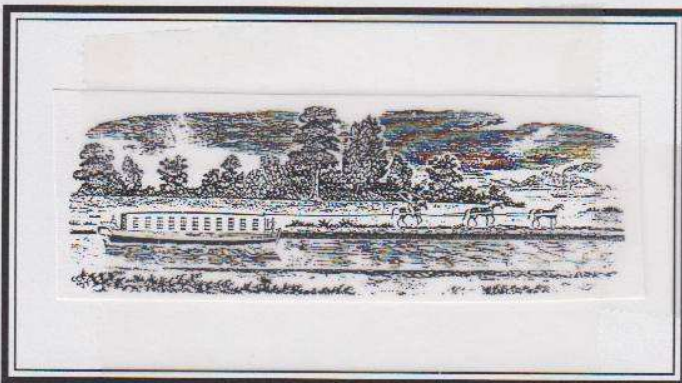
Canal Commissioners and Orator,
President and Secretary of the Meeting,
National Flag,
Committee on Arrangements,
Visitors and strangers,
Citizens generally.

Then they dispersed in good order.

The line through the county was surveyed in 1833 under the supervision of Jesse Williams of Ft. Wayne, one of whose assistants was Stearns Fisher of Wabash County. Contracts for the construction of the canal were let at Treaty Grounds, now Wabash, on May 4, 1834, in sections of thirty to sixty chains in length. In the archives of the Wabash county Historical Society are the records, kept by Mr. Fisher, of the work on sections eighty-nine to one hundred twenty-two, inclusive, which comprise that part of the canal from Wabash to Peru. Contracts were let in the western part of Wabash County to Myers & Jones, S. & H. Hanna, P. and J. Burke, Thomas Hayes, James Ferrell, James McAvoy, Adam Young, Turner & Kuntz, David Cassatt, W.T. Mallack & Co., and William Little & Sons. Work in the eastern part of the county was superintended by David Burr.

Just a month before the contracts were let at Treaty Grounds, Hugh Hanna and David Burr laid out the town of Wabash. This place consisted of nothing except the ten or twelve cabins that had been built for the negotiators of the treaty of 1826 and the few families who occupied them when work on the canal was begun there.

The county was an almost unbroken wilderness and the construction of the canal included the cutting of timber, grubbing out stumps and brush, making roads, building bridges over streams, quarrying stones, and



building dams, culverts and feeders. The first date in the records is November 3, 1834. The final settlement with most of the contractors was made on November 18, 1835.

Section eighty-nine, which was 60.49 chains in length, and included the lock at Wabash, was the work of Myers & Jones. The following is the final report on that section:

Grubbing and clearing	60.49 cubic yds.	@ \$10.00	\$ 604.90
Excavating earth	25,708 cubic yds.	@ .11½	2,956.42
Excavating rock	1,354 cubic yds.	@ .64	866.56
Excavating lock pit	823 cubic yds.	@ .20	184.60
Excavating rock pit	999 cubic yds.	@ .64	639.36
Full embankment	2,340 cubic yds.	@ .13	304.20
Puddle	371 cubic yds.	@ .25	92.75
Timber	1,179 cubic yds.	@ .06	70.74
2 in. plank	1,885 cubic yds.	@ .06	113.10
Locks, gates and sills			550.00
Cut stone masonry	1,669 .27 per.	@ 9.00	15,023.43
Iron	600 lbs.	@ .14	84.00
Protection	190 per.	@ 1.00	190.00
Upright timbers			48.00
Excavating detached rock	10 yds.	@ .40	4.00
Snubbing posts and fender posts			20.00
Building and removing dam and taking drift			
Making new quoin post [word illegible] from canal, etc.			53.00
By change of plan			12.00
			\$22,226.38

Contractors were paid eleven, eleven and a half and twelve centers per cubic yard for excavating earth under ordinary conditions, thirteen and fourteen for embankments and sixteen and twenty cents for lock excavations.

The sale of the land granted by Congress furnished the money with which to construct the canal. In the Wabash Gazette of August 21, 1850, was this notice: "Hon. John L. Wright, Clerk of the Land Office At Logansport, will be at LaGro on the 4th of September and at this place on the 5th for the purpose of receiving interest due on canal lands."

From Wabash eastward for fifty miles, the work was done by Irish laborers who came from the East. They were divided into two clans, the "Corkonians" and the "Fardowns". It seems that some sort of a feud had existed between them and that they brought their animosities with them when they came. Each side would beat unmercifully any member of the other side who was caught alone. Each side was so terrorized by the other, that on the least provocation, they would leave their work and take to the woods or march, armed, to any supposed point of danger. David Burr, when reporting the trouble to Governor Noah Noble, said that there were six hundred armed Irishmen and that he was compelled to send to Logansport for the militia. With the help of the militia from that town, Ft. Wayne and Huntington, the sheriffs of Wabash and Huntington counties, two lawyers and a judge, the "Irish Riot" was

quelled and eight of the ringleaders convicted and sent to prison. Wabash county had just been organized and was unable to bear expense occasioned by the disorders. The Legislature appropriated the money needed.

The canal was completed through Wabash County in 1836, and waited for ten months for water. The bottom of the canal was almost as level as a floor, and was at times used for a race track until the water was turned in. When the work was finished the town of Wabash was almost depopulated, as it was then composed mostly of canal laborers.

In the spring of 1837, the announcement was made that water would be turned into the canal from the feeder at LaGro. When the day came a crowd had gathered to witness the operation. There was a great burst of enthusiasm as the water began to pour into the bed of the big ditch and move slowly down the almost imperceptible incline towards Wabash. The crowd followed it in a body until the town was reached. In a short time, the water was deep enough to float a boat but it was nearly three weeks before any were running.

It has been erroneously stated that the *Prairie Hen* and the *Indiana* were the first boats to brave the raging waters of the Wabash and Erie Canal into the town of Wabash, but to the *Davy Crockett* belongs that distinction. The *Davy Crockett* was manufactured in Wabash from a large maple sap trough owned by David Cassatt. With Col. Hanna, William Steele, and Mr. Cassatt as captain, crew and passengers, this crude boat made the trip to LaGro and return. Mr. Cassatt's old horse, hitched to the craft with a grape vine, furnished the motive power.

The freight boat *Indiana* was scheduled to be the first actual boat to arrive in Wabash. The great event was to take place on July 4, 1837. Somewhere between Wabash and LaGro, an old packet boat, the *Prairie Hen*, of the Ohio Canal, passed the *Indiana* and reached Wabash first. It had on board about a hundred passengers, half of whom were Indians who had availed themselves of the opportunity to take a free ride, and incidentally, to partake of the "fire-water" that was part of the cargo.

The *Indiana*, commanded by Captain Columbia, was newly painted and the wonderful boat must have dazzled the spectators when it reached the landing at Wabash and Canal streets. Here the residents of the little village with chief Al-lo-lah and his braves from their village across the river had gathered to welcome it. The visitors were saluted with a volley of musketry and no doubt the crowd yelled itself hoarse. On board were a number of the early settlers of Ft. Wayne and Huntington and the German band of Ft. Wayne. If the recollections of those who attended the big celebration can be relied on, the music made by the Wooden Band was anything but euphonious.

A procession was formed and the company marched to Treaty Grounds where a sumptuous dinner was served, after which came speeches and a general good time. Elijah Hackleman, a Wabash County pioneer was one of the orators of the day. He had written his speech and, on the day preceding the great even, went into the woods to rehearse it. While engaged in this laudable activity, he came upon a nest of rattlesnakes. Nevertheless, he was able to deliver the speech the next day. The festivities closed with a big dance on the second floor of the only brick business house in the village. Early on the morning of July 5, the *Indiana* started on the return trip to Ft. Wayne.

In 1846, a daily line of packet boats was established from Lafayette to Toledo by Doyle & Dickey of Dayton, Ohio. This is said to have been the first public conveyance established in Wabash County. No account can be found of any regular line of stage coaches.

In 1851, Hull's line of freight boats was in operation, and, in 1852, this notice appeared in the *Wabash Weekly Gazette*: "The proprietorship of the Toledo and Wabash packets has passed into the hands of Messrs Petree & Co., who have had the boats thoroughly refitted and repaired. Captains Mahon, Davis and Dale. Regular daily trips both up and down."

The packet boats were fitted up expressly for passenger service. Sleeping apartments and dining accommodations were provided on board. As the motion of the boat was steady and smooth, making the, then considered, extremely rapid rate of eighty miles in twenty four hours, it was thought by many that perfection in the way of traveling had been reached.

From the following, taken from the *Wabash Gazette* of May 14, 1851, after the editor, John L. Knight, had traveled on the Packet boat *Indiana*, one would infer that a clean boat and courteous treatment by captain and hands was a most unusual thing:

Capt. J. H. Fountain's boat, *Indiana*, is orderly, neat and everything clean. The hands about the boat were quiet, pleasant, and in a great measure free, at least in the hearing of the passengers, from that profaneness in which the hands of many of the boats indulge, to the excessive annoyance of a large portion of the traveling public.

The passengers were so pleased with their treatment that they wrote this commendation, signed by all the passengers, and presented it to the Captain, but we felt that the Captain was entitled to special commendation for his conduct and qualities as the Master of one of our Packets, so we solicited a copy which we give here. "We the undersigned passengers on board the canal Packet *Indiana*, take great pleasure in commending to the traveling public, this boat, as one of the first on the canal for the neatness and order of its table, the respectful bearing of its hands and the gentlemanly and obliging demeanor of its Master, Capt. Fountain, who has won to himself the esteem of all who have been so fortunate as to fall into his care."

Twenty-one names were signed to this testimonial.

About the tenth of November of each year, boats were compelled to "lay up" for the winter. They usually began running again about the first of March. Sometimes when the ice was late in "breaking up", the season began a month later. Merchants ordered enough supplies to last during the winter, and grain was shipped eastward before cold weather.

It was customary for the boat men to winter somewhere along the line. During the winter of 1845-46, at his home four miles west of Wabash, Stearns Fisher cared for two men and more than forty horses and mules. The boat hands were considered a rough set. The value of the service of a mule driver seemed to be determined by his ability to "cuss" and beat the mules that drew the heavy loads over the surface of the canal.

Often a boat, loaded with supplies, wintered in some town along the line. A newspaper of Dec. 10 1849, contained this notice: "The trading boat *Harriet*, has a full supply of groceries such as coffee, teas, sugar etc. Now lying at Wabash where she will remain during the closing of the canal. Country merchants can have a full supply on reasonable terms by calling soon. Thomas Gilpin & Co."

In 1852, the following advertisement appeared, which shows that some of the boats were owned by local people: "Canal Boat For Sale. The undersigned wishes to sell his Canal Boat *Emperor* and the furniture belonging to it. Said boat is now lying at Wabash, is in good repair and is well known on the line as one of the strongest and best made boats on the Wabash trade." This notice was signed by Thomas McKibben. The market value of boats, of course, greatly varied. A news item indicated that the City of Alton was sold for \$1,400.

Each boat had a name. Some were: *The Lady Ellen*, *City of Alton*, *Other three*, *Superior*, *Metropolis*, *Caspian*, *McCarty*, *Australia*, *Jim Britton*, *Bill Ditton*, *Homer*, *Smith Grant*, *Pennsylvania*, *The Red Bird* (painted bright red), and *The Commit*. The spelling of the latter name was the occasion of some rather caustic humor by the *Wabash Gazette*. An editor thus vented his sarcasm concerning one boat: "The *Superior* is the name of the most inferior looking boat on the canal. It is drawn by two of the most dilapidated, jaded, ruined horses mortal man ever set eyes upon. Given a fair opportunity, they would gladly have drowned themselves."

The construction of the canal caused a complete revolution in the prices of farm products. The people, having had no market for their grain, had been unable to obtain its value in a little obscure village. Wheat was fifty and sixty cents a bushel. potatoes ten and fifteen. When a farmer took merchandise in exchange for his grain, he was allowed a slight advance over these prices. Immediately after the completion of the canal, wheat went to \$1.25 a bushel, and other things advanced in proportion.

Prices paid in Wabash for grain were higher than elsewhere and it was brought there from Delaware, Madison, Howard, Kosciusko, Whitley, Fulton and Blackford counties. It is said that from 500,000 to 1,000,000 bushels were shipped each season from the town of Wabash. There were several pork packing establishments in Wabash and in LaGro and pork was shipped from these towns to New York.

In 1848, there were nine ware-houses in Wabash and it was nothing unusual for wagons, loaded with grain, to line both sides of the road to the river, while the streets, in all directions, would be lined with wagons waiting their turns to unload. Sometimes when the boats were late farmers were compelled to dump their grain by the side of the road until the ware-houses could take care of it.

With the completion of the Toledo and Wabash Railroad in 1856, business on the canal began to decline. Soon the packet boat became a thing of the past. The canal company began building additional ware-houses along the line to better enable the canal boats to compete with the Railroad. Meetings were held in the local Court Houses at which were discussed ways and means for reviving business and measures were introduced in the Legislature that were designed "to insure the permanency of the canal." Stearns Fisher, Robert Cissna and a Mr. Washburn were sent from Wabash as delegates to a convention at Indianapolis. William Sweetzer, William Steele and T.S. Johnson made up a local committee to prepare a "memorial" to be sent to the Legislature. J.D. Conner, who represented Wabash County in the General Assembly was an untiring worker in the interest of the Canal. Besides the competition of the railroad, floods often interfered with navigation. At one time, traffic was stopped for ninety days as a result of high waters.

The amount of business done by the Wabash and Erie Canal in its better days, must have been enormous. In 1848, there was shipped from Wabash 12,102 bu. corn; 78,410 bu. wheat; and 904 bbls. pork. LaGro shipped 9,445 bu. corn; 83,937 bu. wheat; and 1,461 bbls. pork. In 1860, four boats loaded with 10,000 bushels of corn and one loaded with wheat, left Wabash for Toledo in one week. In the spring of 1870, a raft of logs worth \$10,000 was sent to the East from Wabash. Henry Sayre was the collector at Wabash, with his office in the Woolen Mills on the Canal.

Shipments during the season of 1870 included:

85,000 bu. wheat
10,030 bu. corn
8,160 bu. oats
240,652 ft. lumber
413 bu. clover seed
979 cu. ft. timber
8,625 per. stone
380 cords wood
Total receipts from tolls at Wabash \$7,924

During the season of 1871 there was shipped:

117,000 bu. wheat
68,849 bu. corn
24,100 bu. oats
675 bu. clover seed
2,200 bu. flax seed
447,098 ft. lumber
Local tolls\$ 213.17
Eastern tolls .. 13,743.71
Western tolls .. 352.20
<hr/>
Total .....\$14,309.08

In 1862 a steam canal boat, built at Lafayette, passed through Wabash County. It had a second boat in tow and both were heavily loaded. It made the trip to Toledo and returned in six days. The venture proved such a boat to be impractical because the churning of the water damaged the banks of the canal.

There were a least six locks in Wabash County. One was located five miles west of Wabash; one at Wabash; two at LaGro; one a mile and another a mile and a half east of LaGro. Most of the stone work on the west lock is still standing. It is about a hundred feet long and ten or more feet high. Bits of the others can still be seen. The large stones used in the construction of the locks came from quarries along the river in Wabash County. The lime for the mortar used to lay the stones in the locks between Ft. Wayne and Lafayette was burned in a crude kiln on the farm of David Watkins at LaGro.

Business on the Canal was practically abandoned in the early seventies. In 1875, Henry Stevens of LaGro was buying grain. He was shipping on railway cars as well as on canal boats. Another buyer leased the elevator owned by the Railroad at the town, and the railroad management sought to protect him in his monopoly of the grain trade by a discriminating charge of several cents a bushel for loading cars through the elevator. The charge was also imposed on grain loaded direct from wagons, and as Stevens had nothing except a small ware-house on the Canal, he was virtually put out of business. The Railroad refused to set cars for him unless he paid the charges. He had contracted for the delivery of a considerable amount of grain which was coming in rapidly. David Watkins, an ex-Captain on the Canal, had a boat that was rotting in the Canal a mile west of LaGro. Stevens proposed to Watkins that he raise the boat and haul the grain to Wabash to be shipped on the C.W. & M.R.R. and offered Watkins and two helpers each five dollars a day for the season. In two days the boat was raised, overhauled and at LaGro being loaded with wheat. It made the trip to Wabash once each day carrying two car-loads of grain per trip. When the season was over Capt. Watkins ran his boat back and grounded it again, and so ended transportation of the Wabash and Erie

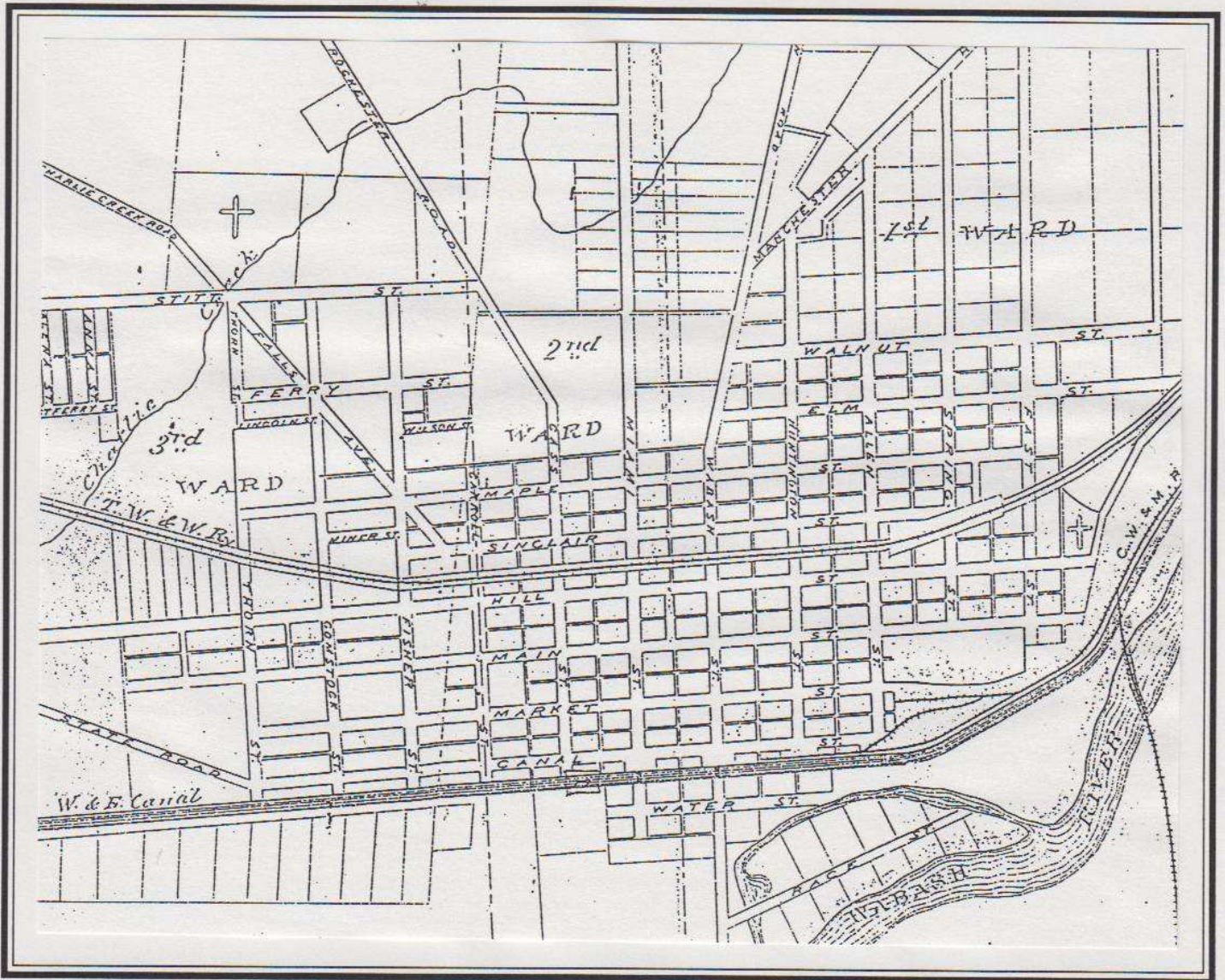
Canal in Wabash County. In March, 1876, the Canal was sold at Terre Haute, that part through Wabash county bringing \$505.

Water in the Canal was used by mills and factories and for years was the only source of supply for fire fighting. In 1877, the people who bought the Canal demanded rent for the water. In Wabash the Lock Mills Company was assessed \$450, the Oil Mill, the Woolen Mills, and the Railway Shops, each \$50. All other mills and factories, each \$25. The owners of the mills and factories became very indignant because of these demands. Whether the Canal owners succeeded in collecting, it has not been possible to learn.

In 1880, the United States Government surveyed a route along the old ditch, for what was expected to be a wonderful ship canal. In 1884, A Hydraulic Co. was organized with the purpose of utilizing the water of the Canal for factories and mills but the venture proved to be a dream only.

In some places through Wabash County, the bed of the canal has been almost entirely effaced. The tracks of the Electric Railway were laid on the tow-path. The stone lock in Wabash has been used as the foundation of a business building. One of the gates of this lock occupies a prominent place in the Wabash County Museum.

WABASH - 1876



GENE STRATTON-PORTER

Mark Stratton

Mark Stratton heard about the building of the Wabash and Erie Canal and how it would distribute farm produce to distant world markets. He decided to investigate the farmland bordering this new transportation system and came to Indiana in January of 1838. The weather was unusually mild, the roads mucky, and the swamps almost impossible to pass through. He followed the Maumee River from Toledo to Fort Wayne. There he followed the proposed route of the Wabash and Erie Canal. On his thirty-five mile trip from Fort Wayne to his destination of Lagro in Wabash county, he met a few of the Irish canal laborers.

At Lagro, Stratton inquired about the farm land and found it would not do because of the snakes. Apparently rattlesnakes were exceedingly abundant in the rocks of the bluffs or the rivers and creeks. Even before the settlers came to the area, the Indians were wary of the rattlesnakes. Just outside of Lagro near the Wabash/Huntington county line there is a huge rock. They worshipped at this rock bringing offerings to avert danger from the poisonous snakes they always encountered. They thought that their offerings and sacrifices at the "Altar of the Great Ruler of the Serpent", as the stone was called, would keep them from dying from snake bites.

Mark Stratton now headed for Kosciusko County. Here, he found the land to be full of the fever known as miasma which was thought to be caused by poisonous swamp gases. He headed back for Wabash county and found a 160 acre forested tract that didn't

have as many snakes and was dry. He purchased it and returned in June 1838 with his wife and two young children. It was just 15 miles north of the Wabash and Erie Canal. He was a farmer and not a hunter. He cleared land at the rate of ten acres a year.

The wheat prices in the Wabash valley doubled after 1843 because of the canal just as Stratton had believed would happen. Wabash had nine warehouses to handle the grain. By 1848 it was estimated that between five hundred thousand and one million bushels of grain were shipped out of Wabash by canal boat. The boats also carried pork products.

Meanwhile the rattlesnakes began to disappear from the area. As the canal was dug the rattlesnakes' dens were boarded over and they either starved or ate each other. Rattlesnakes were thrown on the huge piles of timber cleared from the canal right of way and burned. Farmers let their hogs run wild and the hogs ate the snakes. It is said that one winter cart loads of snakes were dumped into the canal and froze. With these reptiles greatly diminished, Stratton decided to purchase a farm in 1848 near Lagro and nearer the canal.

Gene Stratton

In 1858 Mark Stratton purchased a farm near Hopewell in Wabash Co. for \$50. There, Geneva (Gene) Stratton Porter was born in 1863. Her parents were Mark Stratton, age 50, and Mary Shallenbarger Stratton, age 46. She had nine living brothers and sisters. She was born during the Civil War when her father was helping runaway slaves and using their home as an underground railroad station.

Her father, an ordained minister, conducted services at the church which stood on the corner of his farm. He donated the land for the church, cemetery, and country school and help build them. When John Russell proposed that the church be named Stratton, Mark Stratton waived it aside and proposed the name Hopewell. He taught his twelve children to appreciate nature and beauty. Growing up at



Hopewell Farm, Gene learned about animals and the out of doors as well as keeping house and gracious hospitality. She also became friends with the Indians who lived nearby. She would sell arrowheads and goose quills given to her by them.

In 1872, when Gene was nine, her brother Leander drowned in the Wabash River near Lagro at the age of 19. She later immortalized him in her book "Laddie". He was buried in the Hopewell Church cemetery. The old church at Hopewell still stands. Also buried there are her two little sisters, who died of scarlet fever and whooping cough, and her mother and father.

Gene's mother grew ill and added to the troubles of her father. He was sixty years old and had lost the only one of his children who could have managed the farm. His main income was from selling cemetery lots at \$10 each. The canal had fallen into disuse. His land was not worth as much as it had been in the past. The following year all of Wabash county's corn crop was destroyed by worms. The entire area suffered.

The Strattons found a sharecropper to take over the land and moved to Wabash to live with Gene's sister, Anastasia. The house was located between the railroad and the canal's commercial district. This gave Gene a feeling of being trapped and she longed for the open spaces of her old farm. Only her birds, which she had brought in cages from the farm, held her interest.

Because Gene's mother died when she was quite young, much of her education came from the males in the family. Her father taught her to protect the crops from insect pests. This probably is what led her to become one of the outstanding naturalists of the world.

The foundation of the old Porter home, on which later another home was built, is about 1/2 mile north of the church at Hopewell. Nearby was the barn she wrote about, where Leon fed the goose so much corn that it burst after drinking water. At an angle across the cross roads by the church is the school which she also wrote about, where the disagreement between the sisters over "little birds in their nest agree" took place and where the sisters watched fighting roosters.

Charles Porter

In 1881, Gene visited Sylvan Lake near Rome City that had been constructed as a reservoir for the proposed Erie and Michigan Canal. She returned again in 1883 and in 1884. It was during the visit in 1884 that she met her future husband Charles Darwin Porter, a druggist from Geneva, Indiana. They married and moved to Decatur, Indiana, where their only child, Jeannette, was born.

Charles Porter built a drugstore, a bank, and a hotel. He organized the Bank of Geneva and was its first president. Through these enterprises they were

soon able to build a home better known as the Limberlost Cabin since it was built on the edge of the Limberlost Swamp. There Gene's interest in the swamp and photography grew. Her photos were so good that a representative of a photographic print paper came to find how she achieved her results. This being before the time of women's liberation, much of her success was credited to her husband and his fine chemicals.

She soon became known as "Bird Woman" and neighbors and friends would come to her door telling about an unusual bird or moth they had seen. Her husband even hired a man to accompany her into the swamp to carry her equipment which weighed over 100 pounds.

She published earlier books, but it was A Girl of the Limberlost that brought her fame in 1909. It was the first American book to be translated into Arabic. Other books were published the following years and she finished Laddie.

Before long the Limberlost Swamp was being drained so that muck crops could be planted. The great stands of timber were harvested and her swamp destroyed.

Wildflower Woods

Gene remembered times spent at Sylvan Lake and the Porters soon purchased 150 acres there called "Wildflower Woods." In 1914 they built a home similar to that at Limberlost and turned their land into a wildlife sanctuary for birds and wildflowers. She had vegetable beds and tame flower beds laid out. It is said she planted over 3,000 plants including trees and vines in her first two years there. During the winter she worked on her books. She made sure that all her books were published on her birthday.

The rights to several of her books were wanted by the film industry. She bought a small house in California so she was available for consultation. When she was 56 she had to choose between her husband, who thought it necessary to remain in Indiana, and her works. She took up residency in California but would make visits back to "Wildflower Woods." Charles Porter died in 1926.

Her books were made into movies. She wrote for "McCalls" and "Good Housekeeping" magazines. She had books published. She planned two homes, one on Catalina and one in Bel Air. She tended her garden, fed her creatures, and did the makeup, layout, photography and watercolor illustration for her books. She completed 19 books, numerous articles and short stories in the 21 years between her first book and November 1924.

A tragic accident occurred that November. Her chauffeur reported that their car had stalled and was struck by a streetcar just a few blocks from their Bel Air home. Gene never regained consciousness. She died at the age of 61 on December 6, 1924. During the last 17 years of her life her books sold at the rate of 1,700 copies a day.

LAGRO

General Tipton laid out the town of La Gro (Lagro) on the site of an old Indian town that was on the north side of the Wabash River nearly opposite the mouth of the Salamonie River. He registered the plat sometime between May 18, 1835 and June 10, 1835. The exact date was not recorded. The first lots were deeded to Jacob Chappel on September 18, 1834. The town was named for the old Miami Chief La Gros. Like other chiefs around this time the United States Government built him a brick house where he lived until his death.

Lewis Rogers, a trader, was the first white man to settle at Lagro. Then Robert McClure built the first log cabin in 1832. By 1834 the Wabash and Erie Canal was begun and about 150 shanties sprang up along the proposed canal for the workers and their families. That year James Osborn erected the first store by setting posts in the ground and nailing clapboards on the outside of them.

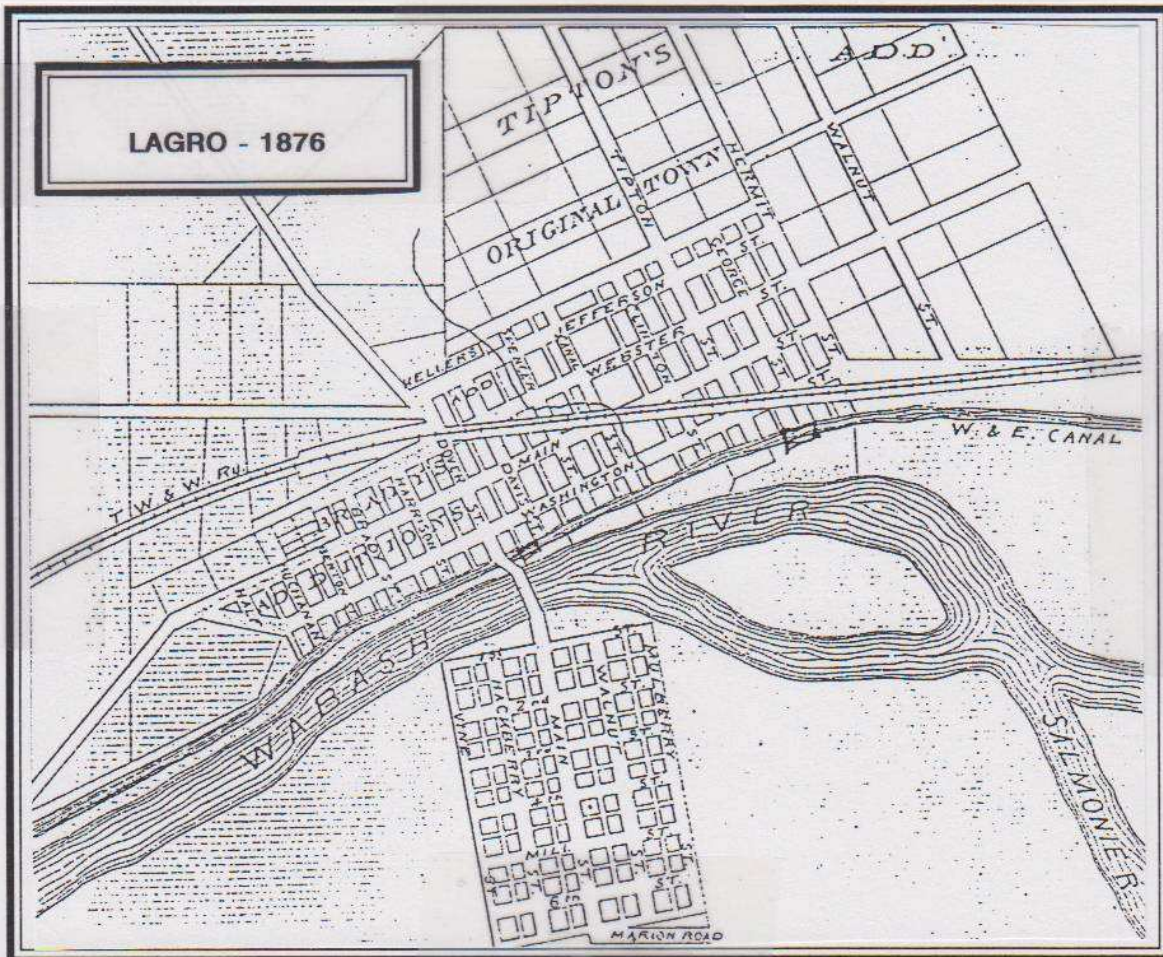
Mr. Hackleman, traveling with Mr. Hawkins to Fort Wayne and back to purchase land at the land office, wrote that they left Monday, May 16, 1836 for Fort Wayne. They followed the "new road" up the boundary line to Lagro where they crossed the

Wabash River below the feeder dam that was in the process of being built a few hundred yards below the mouth of the Salamonie River.

Mr. Hackleman describes Lagro as follows: "At the time of our visit, aside from a few Indian houses and canal shanties, the place contained not more than half a dozen houses."

The town had a ready supply of power from the Wabash River and limestone available nearby both of which made it a good place to live. Lagro soon had a store, a tavern, and three churches -- Presbyterian, Methodist, and Catholic. By 1835 a log school had been built. Impetus to the growth of the town was given by the arrival of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

Father Clark, soon to be followed by Father Julian Benoit, was in charge of the Catholic church. He was to see to the spiritual needs of the canal laborers from Lagro to Fort Wayne. He had to travel by horseback to see those in his charge. Father Benoit was well thought of by the Indians. If the Indians had to deal with the government they made sure Father Benoit was there to count the money and check out the goods. He is said to have found the government of trying to cheat the Indians out of \$75,000.



The prime supporters and collectors of money for building a church were Thomas Fitzgibbon, a canal construction superintendent and his brother-in-law Michael Hogan. By 1838, the Catholics built a church. It was decided it needed a bell. Enough money for the bell was finally collected by 1848. Pasque, a young man who had a strong team of oxen and a wagon, volunteered to go to Toledo, OH to get the bell. All the townsfolk waved him good-by. Then nothing was heard from him for over a year. It was feared he had run off with the money. But in the fall of over a year later he returned. He camped, forded streams, ate with settlers and made his way to Toledo to find they could not supply a suitable bell. They sent him to Bethlehem, PA. to a foundry noted for bell making. They sent him to Buffalo, NY where he located the bell. After many months of travel he returned to Lagro with the first bell in the Wabash Valley.

The church was expanded several times until it was decided in 1873 to build St. Patrick's Church. The church cost \$20,000 and was decorated by Father Grogan who was an artist as well as a priest.

When the Wabash and Erie Canal was commenced, the local contractor, David Burr, went to New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland to hire men to build the canal. He offered wages of \$13 - \$16 a month. He mainly hired men of Irish and German descent who had worked on the canals in the east. They were described as sturdy hard-working men in general but of course some proved to be "worthless" troublemakers.

The men of the day were described as having a "powerful thirst." John Comstock built a tannery, whiskey distillery, saw mill and grist mill in the town of Liberty Mills. His most profitable venture was the distillery. He would hitch oxen to a wagon loaded with barrels of whiskey and take it to Lagro for the canal diggers. He also went to Warsaw and Mishawaka.

The death rate on the Wabash and Erie Canal was high during its construction due to ague, malaria, and cholera often averaging as much as six deaths per mile in certain areas. Also contributing to this high rate were the fights and murders resulting from too much alcohol and disputes over religious differences. The infamous Irish Canal War that took place around Lagro is related in another section of this book.

Wabash and Erie Canal Structures at Lagro

In June 1837 the feeder was introduced into the Wabash and Erie Canal at Lagro between Davis and Dover Streets. This was just below lock No. 15. There was a set of wooden culverts and head gates built under the tow path. The culverts were underwater. It was 16 feet wide and 7 feet deep. As the water entered the canal the citizens of Lagro followed it toward Wabash.

In the town and vicinity of Lagro there were four cut stone locks built of stone quarried at the Salamonina quarry. The Salamonina stone was not of the best quality as was noted in the report made by Jesse Lynch Williams, Chief Engineer, in 1847.

The first of these was the James McDonald Lock (Lock No. 12) located approximately 2.3 miles to the east of the above mentioned feeder. It had an 8 foot lift. It is probably in the best condition of the four locks. Its isolated location has prevented stones from being removed. The lock's total length is 130 feet. The gate recess is 16 inches deep and 12 foot 5 inches long. The bed of the lock is 14 feet wide. The tumble was more elaborate than on the other locks. It allowed water, which collected in the valley when water in Rager Creek was high, to exit into the canal from the berm side without washing out the bank.

At the northwest corner of this lock stood the gatekeeper's house. It was named for James McDonald, who was employed by the Wabash-Erie Canal from 1830-1850. He was hired in Fort Wayne. The home he built was 1 1/2 miles east of Lagro along the canal. A marker was placed on U.S. 24 that still stood there in 1937 but is now gone that read:

OLD CANAL LOCK

THE JAMES MCDONALD LOCK ON THE OLD WABASH AND ERIE CANAL LIES SOUTH ACROSS THE FIELDS TO THE TRACTION LINE. IT IS IN A GOOD STATE OF PRESERVATION.

The Curley Hayes Lock (Lock No. 13) is 1.3 miles east of Lagro. It was named for the gatekeeper and can be seen from the street behind a house. This lock is full of trash. Its walls are blackened by fires used to burn trash. Its total length is 120 feet. It had a seven foot lift. Chisel marks can be seen in the stone as well as cuts for the gate hinges. Man has also removed blocks of the stone.

A turning basin where boats could turn around or stop over night was located to the west of the lock. It was 500 feet by 120 feet wide. A slaughter house 100 feet by 40 feet which had its own dock sat on the east side of the basin. A waste spillway 4 to 5 foot deep and 10 to 12 feet wide was built on the south side of the basin. It was filled with rocks that were almost as high as the towpath so as not to impede the passage of the mules over it. When the rainy season came the surplus water spilled over and out of the canal. The mules and horses often had to walk through 4 or 5 inches of water when this occurred.

In Lagro across Lagro Creek was built a two arch stone culvert, each arch of 11 chord. This allowed Lagro Creek to pass under the Wabash and Erie Canal preventing the canal from being washed out in time of flood. The bottom of the canal bed was also made of limestone.

A marker located on U.S. 24 at Canal Street was still in existence in 1936. It read:

OLD CANAL LOCKS

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY YARDS SOUTH MAY BE SEEN THE RUINS OF THE LOCKS ERECTED IN 1835 ON THE WABASH AND ERIE CANAL. AT ONE TIME A GREAT HIGHWAY OF TRADE AND TRAVEL.

James Kerr Lock (Lock No. 14) at Lagro is one of the best examples of early limestone construction in the state. It is easily accessible and sits in a park at the end of Canal Street. Its total length is 110 feet. The wing wall is 12 feet 10 inches in length. The gate recess measures 12 foot 5 inches. The chamber is 56 feet 6 inches long. It had a six foot lift. Near the lock Jim Kerr operated a supply store. Today a park has been created by the Kerr Lock. A log cabin that once stood up by U.S. 24 has been moved by the lock and near where the double culvert mentioned above once stood.

The James Ditton Lock (Lock No. 15) was located between Davis and Dover Streets and had a six foot lift. It was known as the toll lock. James Ditton was the lockmaster and canal boss of the Huntington-Wabash division of the W & E Canal. He operated a supply store there that sold such items as whiskey, hay, jewelry, etc. His son, Charles Ditton, was a boatman on the canal. He drove the horses hitched to the boat making a daily round trip from Huntington to Wabash. Today the Ditton Lock is buried under the street in front of the old interurban station.

The canal toll collectors building was located on the south side of Washington between Davis and Dover streets at the back of a saloon and a grocery. Jirah Barlow was at one time the toll collector. Lagro was an excellent choice as a toll collecting point since it took time to pass through the four locks. Towns usually grew up where a series of locks had to be cleared.

West of the Ditton Lock a dam (Dam No. 2) was built across the Wabash to collect water and feed it into the canal. This dam was located under the bridge which now crosses the Wabash. The feeder channel was located approximately 30 feet above or to the east of the dam.

The Canal and the Town

The Humbolt Hotel was opened in 1835 by Nelson and Jirah Barlow. It later housed the post office with John Townsend as postmaster.

The Keller House was a tavern that sat at the intersection of Davis St. and U.S. 24 overlooking the Wabash valley. It was a two story brick building built by Ephraim Keller in 1840. It was considered the finest hotel between Toledo and Lafayette.

The Western Hotel (1842) in Lagro was the first headquarters of the canal collector and was also used as a hotel competing with the Humbolt Hotel. Long porches extended along the east side on both the first and second floors. Traveling dignitaries would sit on the porch in their grand clothes and discuss the Mexican war, the rush to the California gold fields, the Omnibus bill, the Mason & Dixon line, or the Dred Scott decision. Later the hotel housed the Lagro Press in its basement.

By 1840 Lagro was doing more business than Wabash. Wilson Barlow and his brother Jirah were said to be of good character as businessmen. That year they reported shipments of 9,445 bushels of corn, 83,937 bushels of wheat, 1,461 barrels of pork from Lagro, 12, 102 bushels of corn, 78,410 bushels of wheat, and 904 barrels of pork from Wabash and 31,566 bushels of corn, 61,350 bushels of wheat, and 768 barrels of pork from Peru with Lagro being the toll collecting town.

The plank road built from Jonesboro aided the trade at Lagro making it easier to reach than Wabash. As many as 125 loaded wagons came from Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Hancock, Henry, and Madison counties on one day. Buying wheat, corn, and hogs was uncertain since the price might be up or down the next day.

In 1850 tolls collected at Lagro for the canal were \$10,618.68.

In 1853 another hotel was built to house railroad workers since the canal trade was diminishing. There were also boarding houses for those working on the canal, railroad and in the grain elevators.

At the end of the canal era in 1875 Lagro had two boot and shoe shops, two hardware stores, one grocery, one dry goods store, one tailor, one undertaker, one jeweler, one harness shop, one shingle mill, one lime dealer, a millinery, a drug store, and three doctors. During its heyday Lagro was a booming town. It set the record of shipping over 5,000 barrels of whiskey in a good year by canal boat. Through the passage of time things change. The Wabash Plain Dealer carried articles as follows:

January 14, 1876 The old dredge boat which has been lying in the canal bed a mile east of Lagro has been sold to Thomas Scott of Ohio, who is taking out and moving the machinery to Toledo. That destroys the

last hope of the canal ever being repaired and placed in a navigable condition.

June 17, 1887 The sale of the old Wabash Erie canal bed from the Ohio line to Lagro, at sheriff's sale in Fort Wayne on Saturday confirms the statements floating about -- (There was a railroad to be built along the towpath of the canal.) The appraisments of the bed between the points mentioned was \$16,000 but under the hammer it brought only \$15,000.

September 7, 1888 The street and alley committee went to Lagro to inspect the dam and to make repairs necessary to fill the old ditch with water and destroy the frightful stench that has emanated for the last month or two.

September 1888 Dam repaired at Lagro. Water was turned into the canal last Thursday week, but the filthy ditch was so dry that it did not reach Wabash until Wednesday, six days after. One summer's accumulation of disease breeding filth has been thus swept away and if the dam holds out the canal may lose a portion of its reputation as a curse.

By 1897-98 Lagro had still not lost its fame as being the "fightin'est town in the state of Indiana." While

the Cudahy oil pipe line was being laid from the southeast of Lagro to Chicago, the construction gang came to town and fights broke out. Their first visit was fairly peaceful, but by the second visit they were prepared to tear up the town. The local fighters heard that they were coming and took heavy stones and wrapped them in stockings. The 50 men tanked up with "forty rod" whiskey were soon found knocked down along the street from the socks of rocks swung by the locals.

Another time two twelve year old boys walked past a bench in from of the press office on which sat two drunks. One drunk yelled, "Hurrah for Bryant." One boy slung his rock sock and knocked the man unconscious. The other drunk got up cursing but was knocked down by the other lad's rock sock. Needless to say the boys took off running for home.

At election time the pipe liners decided they were going to town to vote. The sheriff and townsfolk said they were not. The sheriff swore in 25 deputies and the liners never showed.

Today Lagro is a small town that one passes without noticing on his way elsewhere. But once, it was of major importance to the Wabash & Erie Canal.



KERR LOCK

TOLLS OF WABASH AND ERIE CANAL.

The following is the amount of tolls and water rents received at each toll collector's office on the Wabash and Erie canal from October 1st, 1847, to October 1st, 1848, viz :

Fort Wayne office, for October 1847,	6,084	54	
Fort Wayne office, for November, 1847,	4,390	13	
Fort Wayne office, for December, 1847,	147	90	
Fort Wayne office, for January, 1848,	000	00	
Fort Wayne office, for February, 1848,	000	00	
Fort Wayne office, for March, 1848.	502	57	
Fort Wayne office, for April, 1848, - -	3,567	65	
Fort Wayne office, for May, 1848, - -	4,746	26	
Fort Wayne office, for June, 1848, - -	3,984	92	
Fort Wayne office, for July, 1848, - -	3,829	35	
Fort Wayne office, for August, 1848, -	5,284	28	
Fort Wayne office, for September, 1848, -	8,242	16	
Total, - - - - -			\$40,779 76
La Gros office, for October, 1847, - -	2,004	51	
La Gros office, for November, 1847, - -	751	06	
La Gros office, for December, 1847, - -	25	58	
La Gros office, for January, 1848, - -	000	00	
La Gros office, for February, 1848, - -	000	00	
La Gros office, for March, 1848, - -	253	58	
La Gros office, for April, 1848, - -	1,068	10	
La Gros office, for May, 1848, - -	731	47	
La Gros office, for June, 1848, - -	789	85	
La Gros office, for July, 1848, - -	255	73	
La Gros office, for August, 1848, - -	640	76	
La Gros office, for September, 1848, -	2,316	58	
Total, - - - - -			\$8,837 22
Logansport office, for October, 1847, -	3,078	78	
Logansport office, for November, 1847, -	1,369	74	
Logansport office, for December, 1847, -	20	63	
Logansport office, for January, 1848, -	00	00	
Logansport office, for February, 1848, -	00	00	
Logansport office, for March, 1848, - -	364	50	
Logansport office, for April, 1848, - -	2,329	13	
Logansport office, for May, 1848, - -	2,197	26	
Logansport office, for June, 1848, - -	1,549	83	
Logansport office, for July, 1848, - -	1,334	37	
Logansport office, for August, 1848, -	2,311	51	
Logansport office, for September, 1848, -	3,673	26	
Total, - - - - -			\$18,229 01

STATEMENT of the Amount of Tolls and Water-rents on the Wabash and Erie Canal, from the 1st day of November, 1847, to the 30th day of October, 1848, both inclusive.

OFFICES.	Nov. and Dec. 1847.	Jan. to April, 1848.	May, 1848.	June, 1848.	July, 1848.	August, 1848.	September, 1848.	October, 1848.	Total.
Covington,	\$295 74	\$185 66	\$1,224 06	\$1,548 25	\$1,092 31	\$1,330 29	\$2,368 40	\$4,106 94	\$12,151 65
Lafayette,	2,765 79	9,307 27	6,866 39	4,284 81	5,884 52	7,770 90	13,506 99	10,556 06	60,942 73
Logansport,	1,390 37	2,693 63	2,197 26	1,549 83	1,334 37	2,311 50	3,673 26	3,652 52	18,802 74
La Gro,	776 64	1,315 24	973 37	789 85	255 73	640 76	2,316 58	2,083 62	9,151 79
Fort Wayne,	4,538 03	4,070 22	4,746 26	4,184 92	3,829 35	5,284 28	8,242 16	10,204 77	45,099 99
	9,766 57	17,572 02	16,007 34	12,357 66	12,396 28	17, 7 73	30,107 39	30,603 91	146,148 90

STATEMENT of the Amount of Tolls received at the various Collectors' Offices, from November 1st, 1846, to November 1st, 1847.

OFFICES.	Nov. and Dec. 1846.	April, 1847.	May, 1847.	June, 1847.	July, 1847.	August, 1847.	September, 1847.	October, 1847.	Total.
Covington,			\$41 27	\$80 28	\$302 79	\$410 84	\$962 08	\$705 87	\$2,503 13
Lafayette,	\$6,628 69	\$167 55	10,085 13	13,868 46	10,752 35	6,603 25	7,765 98	7,600 94	63,472 35
Logansport,	2,082 55	444 75	3,886 38	3,363 24	2,365 65	1,341 41	2,003 32	3,078 78	18,566 08
La Gro,	626 78	1,334 58	1,021 24	719 07	357 12	198 13	1,178 37	1,994 51	7,429 80
Fort Wayne,	3,582 35	1,468 50	4,056 48	4,201 88	3,665 46	4,555 07	6,397 07	6,084 54	34,011 35
	12,920 37	3,415 38	19,090 50	22,232 93	17,443 37	13,108 70	18,306 82	19,464 64	125,982 71

STATEMENT

Of all articles cleared at La Gro, on the Wabash and Erie Canal, from the commencement to the close of navigation, in the year 1848.

	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	Septem-ber.	October.	Novem-ber.	Total.	Total of pounds.	No. of Tons.
Miles boats run,.....	668	2,559	1,644	1,600	951	1,403	3,167	2,285	861	15,168	.....	.....
Miles, passengers,.....	1,101	10,641	2,193	1,585	1,983	1,564	1,538	1,745	1,993	24,343	.....	.....
Barrels of flour,.....		199	.....	139	73	128	4	.....	349	892	193,564	97
Bushels of wheat,.....	1,240	18,744	6,882	17,333	2,179	17,456	77,335	69,981	10,533	221,684	13,301,040	6,651
Bushels of corn,.....	2,006	9,859	8,685	14,810	5,404	4,251	1,494	.....	3,328	49,836	2,790,816	1,395
Bushels of oats,.....	50	13	28	.....	473	.....	.....	.....	.....	564	18,612	9
Bushels of rye,.....	.....	275	.....	.....	60	118	.....	.....	.....	511	28,616	14
Bushels of barley,.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	23	1,288	1
Bushels of seeds,.....	72	115	52	870	72	50	229	5,966	243	7,669	460,140	230
Bushels of beans,.....	.....	.....	67	.....	.....	.....	.....	43	.....	110	6,600	3
Bushels of mineral coal,.....	.....	.....	.....	800	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	800	64,000	32
Barrels of whiskey,.....	41	.....	44	18	43	6	32	75	28	287	100,450	50
Barrels of salt,.....	.....	99	172	50	478	.....	25	587	636	2,047	614,100	307
Barrels of fish,.....	.....	17	48	8	.....	.....	.....	5	.....	78	23,400	12
Barrels of oil,.....	.....	.....	6	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	7	2,100	1
Barrels of pork,.....	791	136	1,197	431	.....	1	.....	6	58	2,620	786,000	393
Pounds of lard,.....	78,583	6,693	190,502	23,114	5,484	1,484	1,852	.....	10,888	318,604	318,604	159
Pounds of bacon,.....	.....	477	234,446	35,760	1,200	15,907	.....	98	7,500	295,388	295,388	148
Pounds of live hogs,.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	24,000	32,870	.....	56,870	56,870	28
Pounds of deer and coon skins,.....	.....	35,646	1,320	471	940	.....	.....	.....	.....	38,377	38,377	19
Bushels of potatoes,.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	300	.....	300	24,000	12
Pounds of cranberries,.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,734	.....	2,734	2,734	1
Pounds of merchandise,.....	.....	1,898	11,196	463	4,434	420	27,073	4,927	5,519	55,930	55,930	28
Pounds of sugar and molasses,.....	.....	.....	4,535	.....	.....	.....	331	.....	.....	4,866	4,866	2
Pounds of coffee,.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,184	14,841	.....	16,025	16,025	8
Pounds of tobacco,.....	.....	.....	5,952	.....	.....	.....	2,127	.....	.....	8,079	8,079	4
Pounds of glass and glassware,.....	.....	.....	600	.....	.....	.....	4,057	.....	.....	4,687	4,687	2
Pounds of iron, nails, and castings,.....	300	.....	2,307	994	.....	.....	200	1,262	616	5,679	5,679	3
Pounds of furniture,.....	.....	1,300	15,316	.....	2,850	2,600	4,342	8,795	4,594	39,797	39,797	20
Pounds of agricultural implements,.....	.....	.....	778	727	2,600	.....	.....	200	.....	4,305	4,305	2
Pounds of marble,.....	.....	.....	5,500	.....	.....	.....	41,626	.....	.....	47,126	47,126	24
Pounds of butter,.....	.....	114	111	4,542	2,217	2,275	2,011	1,202	1,127	13,599	13,599	7
Pounds of cheese,.....	.....	.....	600	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,919	.....	2,519	2,519	1
Pounds of hides,.....	.....	.....	3,296	2,464	164	.....	1,174	.....	.....	7,098	7,098	4
Pounds of pot and pearl ash,.....	.....	2,045	596	2,628	1,940	700	.....	1,707	.....	9,616	9,616	5
Pounds of staves, heading, &c.,.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	30,000	.....	.....	.....	30,000	30,000	15
Feet of lumber,.....	.....	50,740	.....	16,926	9,295	36	37,657	53,151	5,952	173,757	608,149	304
Thousands of shingles,.....	.....	44	50	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	94	28,200	14
Pounds of stoneware,.....	.....	3,649	.....	.....	12,500	.....	.....	.....	.....	16,149	16,149	8
Pounds of miscellaneous,.....	17,260	655	20,941	3,067	2,888	3,310	1,654	10,165	9,086	69,026	69,026	35
											20,097,549	10,048

TOLLS AND WATER RENTS OF WABASH AND ERIE CANAL.

The following is the amount of tolls and water rents received at each toll collector's office on the Wabash and Erie Canal, from October 1st, 1851, to October 1st, 1852, viz :

Fort Wayne office, for October, 1851.....	\$14,363 07
Fort Wayne office, for November, 1851.....	11,255 81
Fort Wayne office, for December, 1851.....	604 85
Fort Wayne office, for January, 1852.....	000 00
Fort Wayne office, for February, 1852.....	000 00
Fort Wayne office, for March, 1852.....	000 00
Fort Wayne office, for April, 1852.....	4,665 04
Fort Wayne office, for May, 1852.....	9,545 52
Fort Wayne office, for June, 1852.....	5,301 71
Fort Wayne office, for July, 1852.....	6,386 63
Fort Wayne office, for August, 1852.....	6,550 33
Fort Wayne office, for September, 1852.....	8,618 33

Total..... \$67,281 29

Lagro office, for October, 1851.....	\$2,365 95
Lagro office, for November, 1851.....	1,805 46
Lagro office, for December, 1851.....	51 29
Lagro office, for January, 1852.....	000 00
Lagro office, for March, 1852.....	359 36
Lagro office, for April, 1852.....	1,949 64
Lagro office, for May, 1852.....	1,372 72
Lagro office, for June, 1852.....	1,102 75
Lagro office, for July, 1852.....	907 47
Lagro office, for August, 1852.....	1,744 93
Lagro office, for September, 1852.....	1,679 42

Total..... \$13,451 49

Logansport office, for October, 1851.....	\$3,598 79
Logansport office, for November, 1851.....	3,509 39
Logansport office, for December, 1851.....	70 80
Logansport office, for January, 1852.....	00 00
Logansport office, for February, 1852.....	00 00
Logansport office, for March, 1852.....	378 19
Logansport office, for April, 1852.....	4,588 49
Logansport office, for May, 1852.....	2,442 00
Logansport office, for June, 1852.....	2,433 25
Logansport office, for July, 1852.....	1,740 53
Logansport office, for August, 1852.....	1,717 22
Logansport office, for September, 1852.....	2,664 39

Total..... \$23,143 05

Lafayette office, for October, 1851.....	\$8,840 76
Lafayette office, for November, 1851.....	7,432 34
Lafayette office, for December, 1851.....	487 73
Lafayette office, for January, 1852.....	00 00
Lafayette office, for February, 1852.....	00 00
Lafayette office, for March, 1852.....	335 22
Lafayette office, for April, 1852.....	11,020 45
Lafayette office, for May, 1852.....	10,626 21
Lafayette office, for June, 1852.....	8,975 81
Lafayette office, for July, 1852.....	7,970 01
Lafayette office, for August, 1852.....	9,939 40
Lafayette office, for September, 1852.....	10,259 87

Total..... \$75,887 80

Covington office, for October, 1851.....	\$2,190 63
Covington office, for November, 1851.....	620 89
Covington office, for December, 1851.....	105 30
Covington office, for January, 1852.....	000 00
Covington office, for February, 1852.....	000 00
Covington office, for March, 1852.....	000 00
Covington office, for April, 1852.....	2,116 23
Covington office, for May, 1852.....	1,829 74
Covington office, for June, 1852.....	1,417 05
Covington office, for July, 1852.....	1,687 58
Covington office, for August, 1852.....	2,179 79
Covington office, for September, 1852.....	2,036 15

Total..... \$14,183 36

Terre Haute office, for October, 1851.....	350 07
Terre Haute office, for November, 1851.....	321 93
Terre Haute office, for December, 1851.....	86 83
Terre Haute office, for January, 1852.....	00 00
Terre Haute office, for February, 1852.....	00 00
Terre Haute office, for March, 1852.....	262 97
Terre Haute office, for April, 1852.....	312 31
Terre Haute office, for May, 1852.....	589 67
Terre Haute office, for June, 1852.....	764 54
Terre Haute office, for July, 1852.....	906 19
Terre Haute office, for August, 1852.....	757 69
Terre Haute office, for September, 1852.....	715 14

Total..... \$5,063 34

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY - 1852

Comparative Statement of Articles transported on the Wabash and Erie Canal, which arrived and cleared at Lagro, from the commencement to the close of navigation, in 1851 and 1852.

ARTICLES.	ARRIVED.		CLEARED.	
	1852.	1851.	1852.	1851.
BARRELS.				
Ale and beer	114	85	3	12
Beef	7	1	1,616	653
Cider	17	1		
Cranberries			153	240
Fish, fresh water	787	475	4	3
Flour	56	196		
Green apples	2	2	1,164	925
Lime	74	36		18
Oil	43	40		
Pork	122	61	10	7
Salt, fine	8,000	4,947	2,129	2,046
Salt coarse	1,255	102	20	
Tar	62	68	1	50
Whisky	96	332	2,794	197
Spirits, domestic	63	61	16	27
Vinegar	199	178	2	3
BUSHELS.				
Barley	453			
Coal	428	1,550		
Coke	300	400		200
Corn			32,712	193,010
Oats				1,600
Potatoes	11	18	603	999
Rye	24	50	1,349	144
Seeds				920
Wheat			450,685	993,327
POUNDS.				
Animals, other than live hogs	24,657	700	1,600	
Agricultural implements	41,603		1,377	
Butter			17,537	16,371
Baggage and furniture	150,890	140,022	41,697	27,337
Bacon and pork			537,348	726,390
Cheese	20,036	12,259		240
Coffee	412,064	269,424	3,625	2,840
Cordage	3,014	5,952		
Cotton yarns	8,213	13,440		360
Crochery	112,733	82,115		810
Candles	9,187	14,425		
Clocks			82	
Dye stuffs		451		
Eggs			9,317	17,890
Dried fruit	2,415	10,608		180
Furs and peltries			5,287	1,758
Feathers			6,161	134
Ginseng and other roots			2,737	2,244
Glass and glassware	88,804	82,758	3,050	2,179
Grindstones	28,754	26,041		
Gypsum		1,500		
Grease			854	
Hides and skins			86,163	30,242
Hair			2,750	
Hemp			156	
Hogs, live			173,800	10,250
Iron, pig	18,106	22,580		
Iron, cast	495,211	398,967	2,250	22,778
Iron, bar	224,031	182,969	1,268	16,534
Lard		298	292,401	380,666
Leather	21,185	44,473	1,059	911
Lead	5,103	839		
Machinery	76,199	168,090	3,228	4,900
Mill-stones	13,516			
POUNDS.				
Molasses	518,112	900,200	2,500	1,000
Merchandise	1,322,127	1,116,201	22,210	10,692
Marble, wrought	4,815	150	3,245	
Nails and spikes	227,779	198,415	4,219	8,487
Nuts	1,019	5,720	5,575	2,510
Potters' ware	19,978	6,325		1,272
Powder	3,750	7,122	3,550	610
Pot and pearl ashes	14,506		21,958	19,303
Paper	2,170	10,437		3,800
Rags			17,752	17,437
Rice	44,400	24,445		1,240
Saleratus	11,469	18,787	500	1,034
Shot	1,107	802		
Soup	1,189	2,310	59	
Sugar	375,156	190,445	4,610	7,779
Tallow	93		30,031	11,763
Tobacco	118,022	62,820	41,643	39,419
Wool	70		1,916	1,463
Wood-ware	20,026	13,223		
West India fruits	2,984		150	
Wagons	26,467	7,451	3,300	1,160
White lead	41,022	27,142	125	
Miscellaneous	200,322	100,832	10,039	26,461
MISCELLANEOUS.				
Barrels, empty, number	127	359	300	1,168
Brooms, number	864	762		
Hoop-poles, number			23,100	43,400
Shingles, number	24,500	89,000	24,000	2,500
Staves and headings, number				22,000
Laths, number	18,000		10,000	
Stone, perches			4	150
Lumber, feet	14,219	31,726	965,218	841,558
Timber, feet			1,450	1,220
Shingle bolts, cords		5		

THE IRISH CANAL WAR

Lagro was the site of a major canal war between Irish immigrants who came to dig the canal. Most of them had worked on the original Erie Canal and brought their earlier grievances with them. The Irishmen were both Catholic "Corkonians" and Protestant "Far Downers." They were just as volatile in 1836 as they are today. Canal officials soon learned the necessity of separating the two crews.

The Protestants were set to work on the southwestern end of the line and the Catholics on the northeastern end between Lagro and Wabash. When they had too much to drink any insult could set off a fight. It became unsafe to go from one section on the line to another without taking safety precautions. The two groups being pretty equally divided were afraid that each other might burn their cabins or slay their members. By July 1, 1836 men, women, and children were hiding in the woods in the darkness. By July 10 the length of the line of opposition was almost fifty miles long.

Mr. Brady, a canal contractor, was fired upon by Sullivan who was said to have committed murder at Williamsburg, PA four years earlier and caused disturbances in Maryland the past year. He was not hurt.

As the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne that was fought in 1690 in Ireland approached, violence between the factions increased. When the canal was opened as far as Huntington, it gave the opposing sides an opportunity to settle their disputes. Arms were smuggled to the workers and a powder wagon robbed of three kegs of powder. Six to seven hundred workers at Lagro started to march down the canal bed to Wabash. Wabash was the site selected for the fight.

David Burr, who was in charge of the division of work, heard of the plan. He hurried from his house in Wabash to see the approaching army. The Irish were armed with picks, axes, shovels, pistols, and knives. They were not drunk but wanted to fight and have the losers move away. This would settle their fears and they would be able to work peaceably. Burr asked them to wait while he visited the other faction. He got them to agree to wait two days before fighting. In the meantime expresses were sent to Fort Wayne and Logansport asking for assistance.

The citizens of Huntington became alarmed by all the commotion and asked for aid to help protect them. The express arrived in Fort Wayne on July 11. The militia from Fort Wayne under the command of Col. J. Spencer responded and arrived in Huntington about midnight. They came down the canal by canal boat. The town of Huntington also organized a company commanded by Capt. Murray. The next morning they marched together on their route.

Lagro also became alarmed and sent to Huntington for support. David Burr asked Governor Noah Noble to send the troops from Logansport, under the command of Col. John Tipton, to help balance the numbers of peacemakers to that of the angry Irish. Governor Noble agreed. The Lagro militia then marched to Miamisport (Peru), met the two Logansport volunteer companies, and marched back to Lagro with them. They were to arrest and jail the eight ringleaders and restore peace.

The fight began. The Indians at one point offered to put a stop to the fighting but later were reported to sit around and laugh as the white men beat the brains out of each other. The peacemakers prevailed arresting some 200 workers and the eight ringleaders.

The ringleaders were sent under guard to Indianapolis. They went by foot along the Wabash River to Logansport where they had to wade the river. They rebelled and the guards had to run after them with their bayonets fixed in place to bring them back under control. They were eventually freed on a writ of *habeas corpus* due to some informality in the proceedings.

The militia companies involved were headed up by Col. John Spencer of Fort Wayne, Gen. John Tipton of Logansport, and Capt. Elias Murray of Huntington. Assistance was also given by William Johnson, Sheriff of Wabash County. The companies incurred expenses that were paid by an appropriation made at the 1835-36 session of the State Legislature.

After the Irish War Justices of the Peace were appointed and militia companies were organized to keep the peace in Wabash, Lagro, and Huntington. The Canal Board of Commissioners became more regulatory and required each contractor to dismiss any laborer who might take part in a fight. The laborer's name was sent to engineers down the line so he could not be employed elsewhere.

LAGRO CEMETERY



Documents Concerning the Irish War

Indianapolis, Indiana

December 30, 1835

In his message to the General Assembly December 8, 1835 Governor Noah Noble states that:

"During the past summer the foreign laborers upon the line of canal, resuscitated some of their old party animosities, which so often were the cause of collision in their native country, Ireland, and while under great excitement, from five to seven hundred on a side assembled for several days, armed for battle, to the great terror of the citizens of that vicinity. To prevent recurrences of the evil, the punishment known to our criminal laws for riotous conduct should be increased in proportion to such offenses."

Included below are letters sent following the Irish War. Spelling, grammar, and punctuation have been corrected. The first letter was sent to the State of Indiana House of Representatives and referred to the Committee on Claims on December 31, 1835. The second was written to Governor Noah Noble at his request from David Burr on December 30, 1835.

Executive Department

Indianapolis, Indiana

December 30, 1835

The Honorable C. B. Smith

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Sir: I lay before the House of Representatives the particulars, in writing, of the late riots upon the line of the Wabash Canal, which details were furnished at my request by one of the canal commissioners. With this history, I also submit the claims of the commandants, Captains Murray and Tipton, who, at the heads of their companies, repaired to the scene of disorder in support of the civil authority and liberally advanced money and provisions for the service. It will be seen that the laborers along the line in the adjoining counties had assembled in preparation for battle, making Wabash County the theater of their riotous conduct; consequently, that county would seem to be chargeable with the expense of the arrests and the prosecutions which followed. But as the occurrence was one of an unusual kind, growing out of, and threatening the progress of, the work in which the state is engaged, it is believed the treasury of that county is not justly chargeable with the expense. It is recommended that the commissioners appointed to assess damages to private property or one of the fund commissioners be authorized to examine the different claims and to direct their payment, so far as would be right, out of the canal fund.

Respectfully,

Noah Noble

The Honorable Noah Noble

Governor of Indiana

Dear Sir: In conformity with your request in relation to the disturbance amongst the Irish laborers on the Canal, it is proper to state that many persons of the two parties into which they are unfortunately divided, "Corkonians and Fardowns," had been engaged in those bloody affrays at Williamsport in Maryland and at the "high rocks on the Potomac" within the last two years. They had come since September in 1834 to the Wabash and Erie Canal with, as it is said, many of their leaders. Of course, they had brought their animosities with them. And from that time up to the twelfth of July last, when the general riot took place, they manifested their ill will to each other by merciless beatings on such persons of each party as chanced to fall in the power of the other.

On a considerable portion of the line there was no justice of the peace in these newly organized counties. As these frays were confined to the Irish alone, and to the least worthy amongst them, not much effort was made, and perhaps could not have been made, by the civil authority to suppress them. This exasperating course of hostilities increased until it became unsafe for the Irish to travel from one part of the line to the other without great precautions for their safety. Events proceeded to such an extent that they were mutually afraid that each party would have its cabins burnt and the inmates slain in the night.

Because of mutual fears and for safety the laborers had so hired out to the contractors that they had about equally divided the line between the parties; the Corkmen worked on the upper part, and the Fardowns on the lower part of the line. The beatings of such persons who were caught away from their friends increased to such a degree, and the parties became so exasperated, that about the first of July a determination became general that one or the other should leave the line. The worthless amongst them, by carrying threats of burnings and murders which were to be committed by falling on the defenseless in the night, so excited their fears that they left their houses and cabins and hid out in the woods without light or fire to betray their hiding place. The whole line, armed in military array, worked generally in the daytime until some idle report would get in circulation that one party was marching to fight the other. Then they would leave their work and hasten with great rapidity to the supposed point of danger.

From the fourth to the tenth of July, these alarms were constant and were aggravated by the threats and outrages of the worthless. The length of line occupied by these belligerent parties was nearly fifty miles. On the tenth of July the parties hastily collected;

or rather, they left their work and commenced a march towards the center of the line for a general battle.

Two days before this, I reached that part of the line, heard there was to be a turnout, but supposed it only rumor without foundation. I saw several persons and tried to convince them that no such thing would take place. On the tenth, however, one of the engineers reported that all the workmen on the lower end of the line were armed and were marching to the reputed battlefield. I met them about half a mile from my residence. They were in very orderly array and well armed; not a noisy or a drunken man was amongst them. They were formed, so they considered, to fight in order to protect themselves and to avoid being slain and to keep their property from being burned at night. They stated that the civil authority did not, or could not, protect them; that their families could not stay in their shanties but had to sleep in the woods; and that they had no resource left but a battle. They further stated that the weaker party should leave the line; that they wished to work and remain peaceable but could not; and that they would rather fight fairly in open day than be subject to these depredations at night. With the assurance that order would be restored and that I would negotiate a suspension of hostilities with the other party, I prevailed on them to wait until I could see their belligerent friends.

I then went to the reputed battlefield with three or four persons whom I supposed had influence with them. I found them fully prepared, well disposed in a strong military position, and exceedingly exasperated; and I had some difficulty in saving those who went with me from being killed. They expressed the same fears as the others but, after some persuasion, consented to appoint persons to agree on terms of peace with the Fardowns. They also agreed to suspend hostile operations until the result of the meetings between the persons deputed to negotiate the peace could be known.

In the meantime, the citizens at Huntington had become exceedingly alarmed at seeing the hostile array; three or four hundred armed men on each side had the avowed intention of meeting in battle; the civil authority was completely powerless. Fearing their persons and property would not be safe, they sent to Fort Wayne for aid of the militia. A company immediately was collected and in a few hours was sent to their relief. Meanwhile, the citizens of Huntington had collected and organized a company also.

By this time, the citizens of Lagro became alarmed; they sent to Huntington for the troops to come and protect them and aid the civil authority. As soon as I learned that the militia had turned out from sixty to one hundred in number, I thought the force altogether too small to do any good against seven or eight hundred armed men. Therefore, I sent to Logansport and requested assistance, which was promptly

rendered. The militia at Lagro, at my request, marched to Miamisport and met the two volunteer companies from Logansport; and all marched back to Lagro.

Two magistrates, an associate judge, the sheriffs of Huntington and Wabash counties, and the militia arrested and committed eight of the ringleaders. There was no safe jail on the canal line. Therefore, in order to remove the cause of contention, these men were sent under a strong guard to Indianapolis for safekeeping. Here they were confined until they were liberated by a writ of *habeas corpus* because of some informality in the proceedings.

There were more than six hundred armed Irishmen, and I am satisfied that no course other than the one pursued would have been sufficient to restore order. The commissioning of justices of the peace and the organizing of militia companies at Wabash, Lagro, and Huntington have restored, and I trust will preserve, order.

The commissioners, Messrs. Johnson and Lewis, were at Fort Wayne at the time; and I had not the benefit of their advice. As soon as order was restored, the canal board took more decided steps in their regulations. They now require each contractor to dismiss any laborer who may engage in a broil and to give his name to the engineers so that he may not be employed on the line.

The militia turned out on the first moment's warning; many of the men just happened to be in town and marched off without any preparation whatever. They had of necessity to be supplied with money and provisions for their subsistence. These were furnished by many of the contractors and people on the line. Amongst those incurring the greatest expense was Captain Elias Murray, of Huntington; he took command of the temporary garrison at Lagro, assisted the civil authority in making the arrests, and with his company, marched the prisoners to Indianapolis. He was engaged some three weeks in the service.

Colonel John Spencer, of Fort Wayne, who headed the militia from that city, and General John Tipton, who was active in forwarding the volunteer companies from Logansport, paid a large portion of the expenses. One of the prisoners who had been sent to Indianapolis was arrested on his return to the canal line, was convicted, and was sent to the penitentiary. On his way there he escaped from Mr. Johnson, the sheriff, who offered a reward of \$100.00 and paid it for his apprehension. Wabash County was also at great expense in sending the prisoners to Indianapolis. Other persons on the line were also at much expense in money and provision.

This expenditure was absolutely necessary for the preservation of order; it was the means of saving many human lives by preventing at least seven hundred armed and highly exasperated men from fighting a

RUN LAST BOAT ON OLD CANAL

WABASH PLAIN DEALER

- Friday, April 14, 1905 -

Captain Watkins of Lagro Proud in That
Distinction

Hauled Wheat for H. Stevens

Lifted His Sunken Stake Boat and Brought Two
Cars of Wheat Daily From Lagro to Wabash in 1875.

Capt. Watkins, who is one of the very earliest
residents of Wabash county, having come to Lagro on
June 15, 1831, and made his home there continuously,
ever since, was in this city yesterday and filed his
claim to the distinction of having been the last man to
navigate the waters of the old Wabash & Erie canal,
now but a grass-grown trench and a faded memory.

Capt. Watkins bears lightly his eighty-seven
years having been born in Wales in 1819, and coming
to this country when only twelve years old. Soon after
landing he went straight to Lagro, and obtained a
place as a grog carrier for the laborers digging the big
ditch, most of them Irish, receiving for the service
seventy-five cents a day in the "blue pup" and "white
dog" currency of those days. When the canal was
completed he took a situation on a boat, and finally
was advanced to the post of captain, a place he
proudly held until the last trip was made by any craft.

It was long after the formal abandonment of
the canal for through business that Capt. Watkins
made his last voyage. Along in 1875 Henry Stevens of
Lagro was buying grain. Another buyer had leased the
Wabash railroad elevator at that point, and the railway
company sought to protect the elevator men in their
monopoly of the grain trade at Lagro by a
discriminating charge of several cents a bushel for
loading cars through the elevator. This charge was
imposed on grain loaded direct from wagons, and as
Stevens, who was probably the most prominent citizen
of the place and a fighter, had nothing but the little
elevator on the canal he was virtually put out of
business, the railway people refusing to set cars for
him unless he paid the charges. As Stevens had
contracted for the delivery of considerable wheat which
was coming in rapidly, and had no place to store it, he
was very much distressed. The boats on the old canal
had long since ceased running and Capt. Watkins had
gone to other employment in Lagro. His boat had sunk
in the basin a mile west of the town where it was

slowly rotting, and there was little prospect, indeed, either
of the veteran commander or his craft, sailing the
decaying highway of commerce, which wound, a turgid
yellow stream among the hills and along the beautiful
valley of the Wabash.

The situation was serious enough for Stevens,
and in casting about for a means of getting his grain to
market, he bethought himself of the fact that the old
Cincinnati, Wabash & Michigan railroad, the the Michigan
division of the Big Four, had been constructed into
Wabash, and that its freight tracks were built along the
very brink of the canal in this city. Loading from a canal
boat would be easy and cheap, but where was the canal
boat?

It was while he revolved this problem in his mind
that he encountered Capt. Watkins, and the idea dawned
that the captain's old stakeboat lay in the basin, and
might yet be strong enough to haul a few loads of wheat
to Wabash, the distance being only five miles. The
proposition was promptly made to Watkins to raise the
sunken boat and get back into service again, and the
suggestion stirred the blood in the veins of the old sea
dog, who reflected that even if he raised the old boat and
caulked her spreading coons, that she would probably be
unseaworthy and might again seek the muddy depths of
the channel with a full cargo. "I will give you steady
employment for two month," said Stevens, at \$5 a day for
yourself and two men, handling two cars of wheat a day,
and will furnish you a mule and two line. Rather than have
the deal fall through, I will pay for your dinners at Arch
Stitt's or Bill Ditton's."

Capt. Watkins decided it was worth a trial, and
the next day went down to the wreck of the boat, and as
the water in the basin was shallow, soon had the hulk
afloat, and within two days she was receiving her cargo at
the old dock in Lagro. Two cars of wheat were placed
aboard, the mule was hitched to the line, and, while the
canal was shallow having filled during the long period of
neglect, Capt. Watkins' craft did not once ground. One
day he left Lagro in the early morning, arrived at Wabash
about ten o'clock with the load of sacked wheat,
transferred the latter to the cars set conveniently by the
old C.W. & M. road, and returned to Lagro by three
o'clock, ready to load for the next trip. Through the
summer the trips were kept up, and as Stevens' wheat
went north and came into Toledo over the Lake Shore
road, it graded as Michigan wheat and he got from two to
four cents a bushel premium over the Indiana grades.
When the season ended Capt. Watkins ran his boat back
to the basin and anchored her, and thus ended for all
time the navigation of the Wabash & Erie canal.

HANGING ROCK

Hanging Rock, a huge out-cropping of limestone just outside of Lagro, Indiana, where the Salamonie joins the Wabash, has played an important part in the history of the area. Early Native Americans used it as a landmark and reference point in their travels. They built signal fires on its top. It projects out at the top and provides shelter for parties below. In the 18th century French and English traders traveling up the Wabash River passed beneath it. Henry Hamilton, Lt. Governor of Detroit known as "the hair trader," used it as a reference point when he came through the portage with 171 British troops, 350 Indians, and 40 boats on his way to recapture Fort Sackville at Vincennes. He mentions it in his letters as "Sugar Loaf."

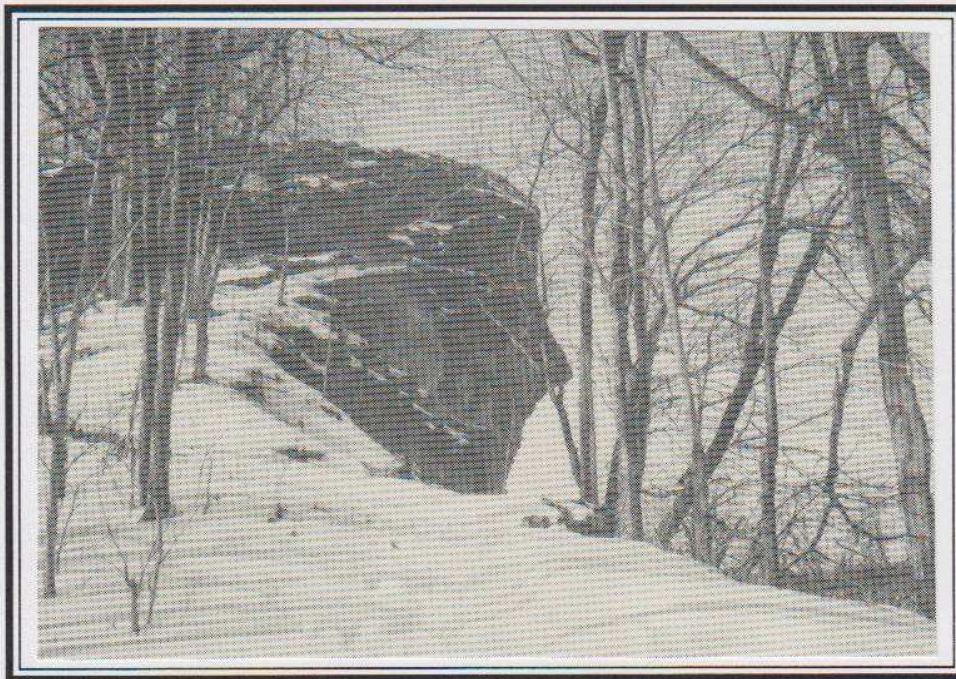
A legend of the area has it that a mother went to a spring to fetch a bucket of water. The two year old child she thought she had left safely behind in her cabin tried to follow the mother. A "painter" (panther) is said to have dragged the child away. The mother saw what was happening and screamed so loud that all the people of Lagro came to help rescue the child. They followed marks left on the ground where the child was dragged.

Another legend believed to be true by the Miami Indians is related by their chief, Clarence Godfroy. He said there was a beautiful Miami Indian girl named Wynusa who was in love with two strong and handsome Indian braves. They were also in love with her. She couldn't decide which brave to marry and came up with the following plan. She told the braves she wanted them to fight atop Hanging Rock at a time she set. The winner would get to marry her and the loser would plunge to his death in the Wabash River below. The braves foolishly agreed to her plan.

On the scheduled moonlight night both the braves and Wynusa climbed to the top of Hanging Rock. She really loved one brave but wouldn't acknowledge it even to herself. She watched them fight until one brave plunged to this death. When the victor approached Wynusa to claim her for his bride, she screamed that he had killed the one she truly loved and could not live without him. She is said to have run to the edge of Hanging Rock and jumped off. The Miamis believe she met her true love in The Happy Hunting Grounds. The legend has been written into "The Ballad of Hanging Rock" by Stormy Sellers.

The rock has been a favorite spot for fishing, boating, and picnicing. In 1962 Acres Inc. leased it from its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Swan, to help manage

it, promote interest in it, and protect it. In 1985 the Department of the Interior sought landmark status for Hanging Rock and the Wabash Reef. On May 23, 1986 their designation as a National Registered Natural Landmark was announced by Secretary of the Interior, Don Hodel. The registry was begun in 1962 and all



designated landmarks must meet strict criteria as "nationally significant examples of geological or ecological features representing the best of America's natural heritage."

What makes Hanging Rock Reef and the Wabash Reef of such great importance? They are remnants of ancient reefs that have gone through complex erosion. They have been eroded by oceans, glaciers, streams, and weathering agents. The Wabash River may eventually destroy Hanging Rock Reef.

Actually the Wabash Reef, which is exposed in cross section along the forty foot deep Big Four Cut of the Penn Central Railroad on the east side of Wabash,

is probably one of the most famous reefs in the world. It is four hundred feet wide at the cut and one can easily see coral and other fossils in the exposed central core and sloping flank beds. The first published works on the reef were by E.R. Cumings and Robert R. Shrock in 1926 and 1928. Conrail now owns this reef. Nearby is Paradise Spring where the Miamis ceded most of their land in northern Indiana and southern Michigan to the U. S. Between the reef and the river runs a road, the interurban tracks from Wabash to Fort Wayne, and the old tow path of the Wabash and Erie Canal,

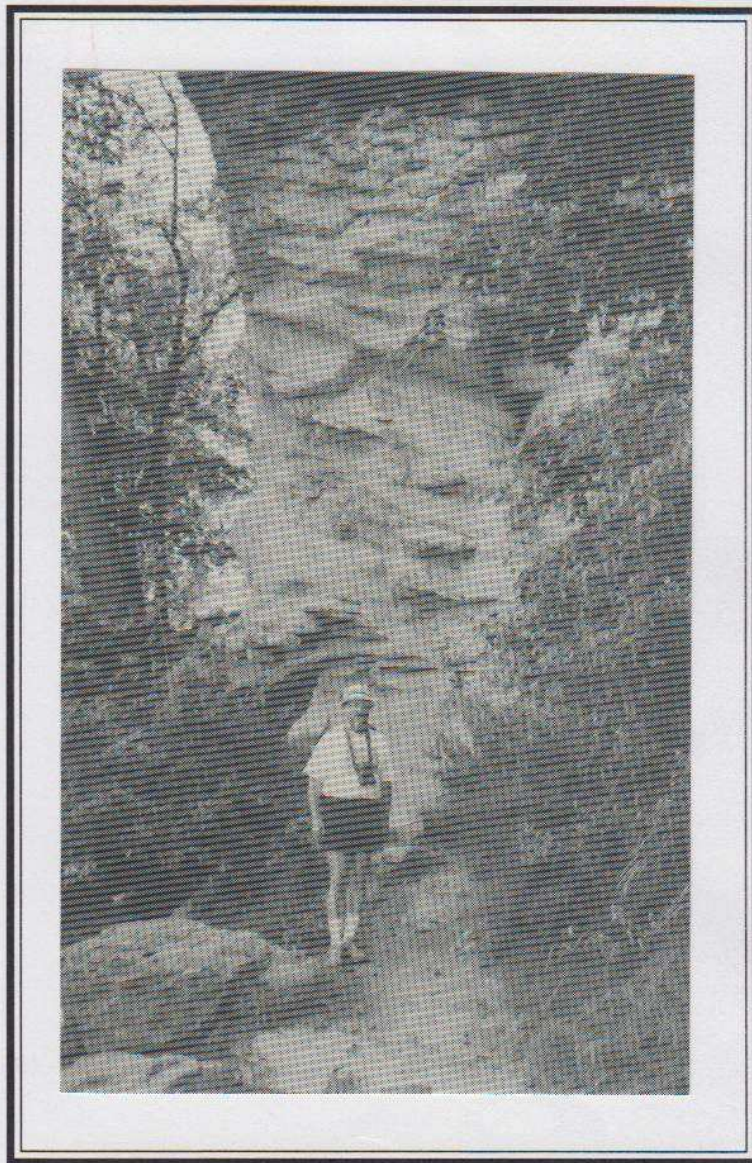
The Hanging Rock Reef is probably the most famous naturally exposed reef in the world. It was cut in two by stream erosion. Cumings and Shrock, along with William Thornbury (1954, 1969), Daniel Textoris and Albert Carozzi (1964) and Jack Sunderman (1983) have written detailed studies of the rock.

About 400 million years ago during the Silurian Period a shallow inland sea covered all of Indiana and most of North America. The northern portion of Indiana and northwestern Ohio was more shallow than Eastern Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois. It was called the Wabash Platform. On this platform lived corals, stromatoporoids, bryozoa, crinoids, sponges, etc. that built mounds on the floor of the sea with some becoming so large that a reef extended up into the wave zone. These reefs formed sort of an archipelago south of the so called "Fort Wayne Bank." Scientists believe the most advanced formations occur in the upper Wabash Valley. Seafloor muds were laid down over the reefs and compressed through time into rock layers hundreds of feet thick. During the Late Paleozoic and Mesozoic time the streams removed much of the overlying rock and exposed the reef standing as tall as today. During the Pleistocene Ice Age the glaciers and meltwater streams removed more of the rock but then once more covered the reef with glacial clay "till" and sand and gravel "outwash."

During the late Pleistocene the forerunners of the Wabash River carried glacial meltwaters that swirled in torrents stripping away the glacial sediment from the solid bedrock of the reef. Slowly the northern flank and central core were eroded away leaving Hanging Rock jutting 80 feet above the Wabash River. Today we see the hemi-klint or southern flank half-reef. If one views the reef from the river, he can see the subreef rock up to about head height on which the reef grew. This is mainly dolomite. Above this is the reef core. It is mainly nodular limestone and cherty limestone. Up higher are indentations that represent layers of interreef carbonate muds, that settled in during times when the reef was not growing, and were later eroded away.

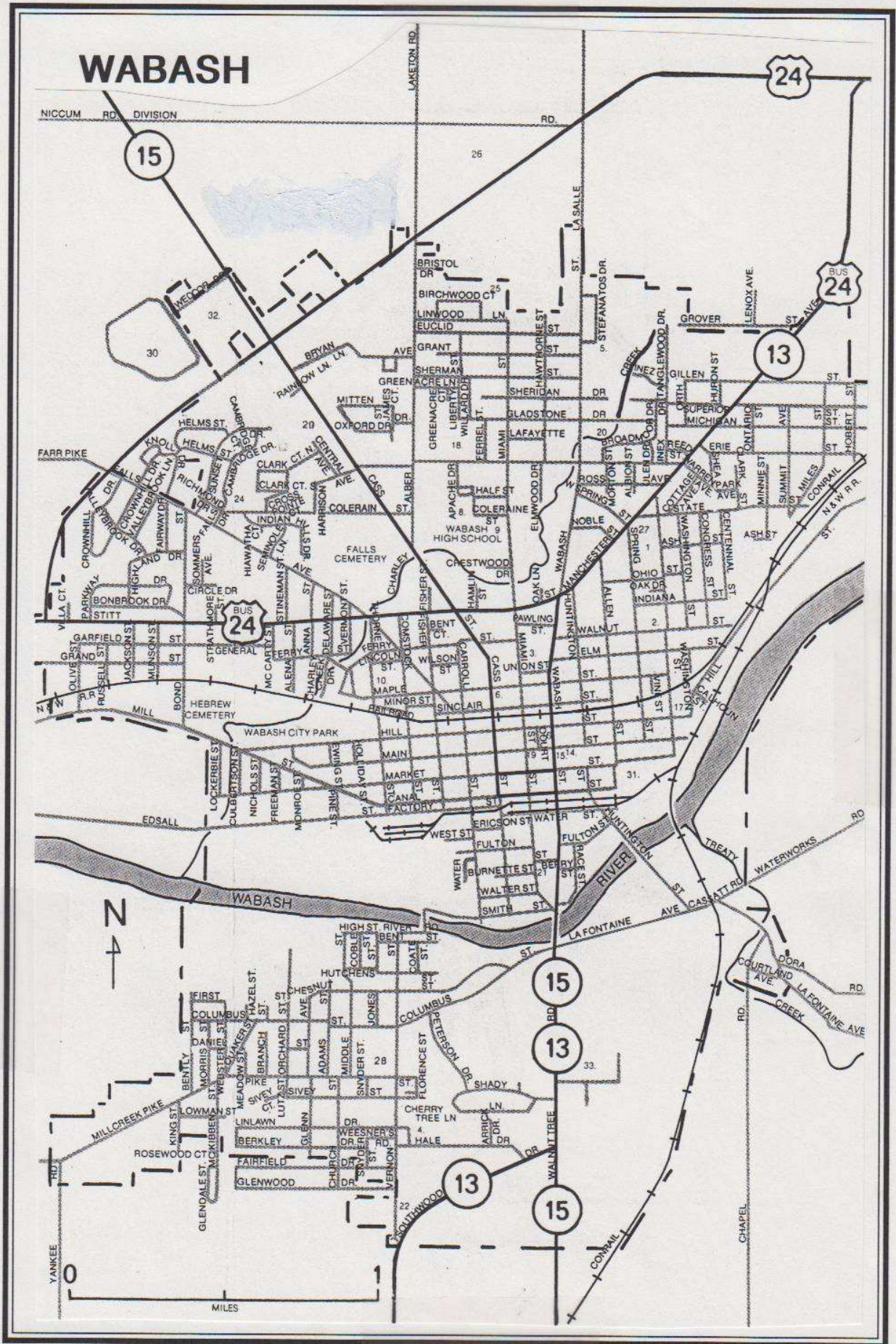
Most of the large fossils which were once part of the Hanging Rock central core have been eroded away. Fossil fragments give the visitor a glimpse into Silurian time.

Plants found at Hanging Rock include Virginia Cowslip, Snow Trillium, Appendaged Waterleaf, Heart-leaved Skullcap, Wahoo, Hoptree, Columbine, Rock Sandwort, Honewort, Bloodroot, Alum Root, Moonseed, Wing Stem, Meadow Parsnip, Sycamore, Silver Maple, Buckeye, American Elm, Hackberry, Blue Ash, Chinkapin Oak, Sugar Maple, Basswood, Stonecrop, Solomon's Seal, False Solomon's Seal, Mullein, Wild Geranium, and at one time Purple Cliffbrake.



**ED POWERS EXPLORES
HANGING ROCK**

WABASH



WABASH

Wabash calls itself "Rock City" after the rugged limestone outcrop on which it rests. It has the famous Wabash Reef which is further described in this book in the section about Hanging Rock. The reef is located near Paradise Spring.

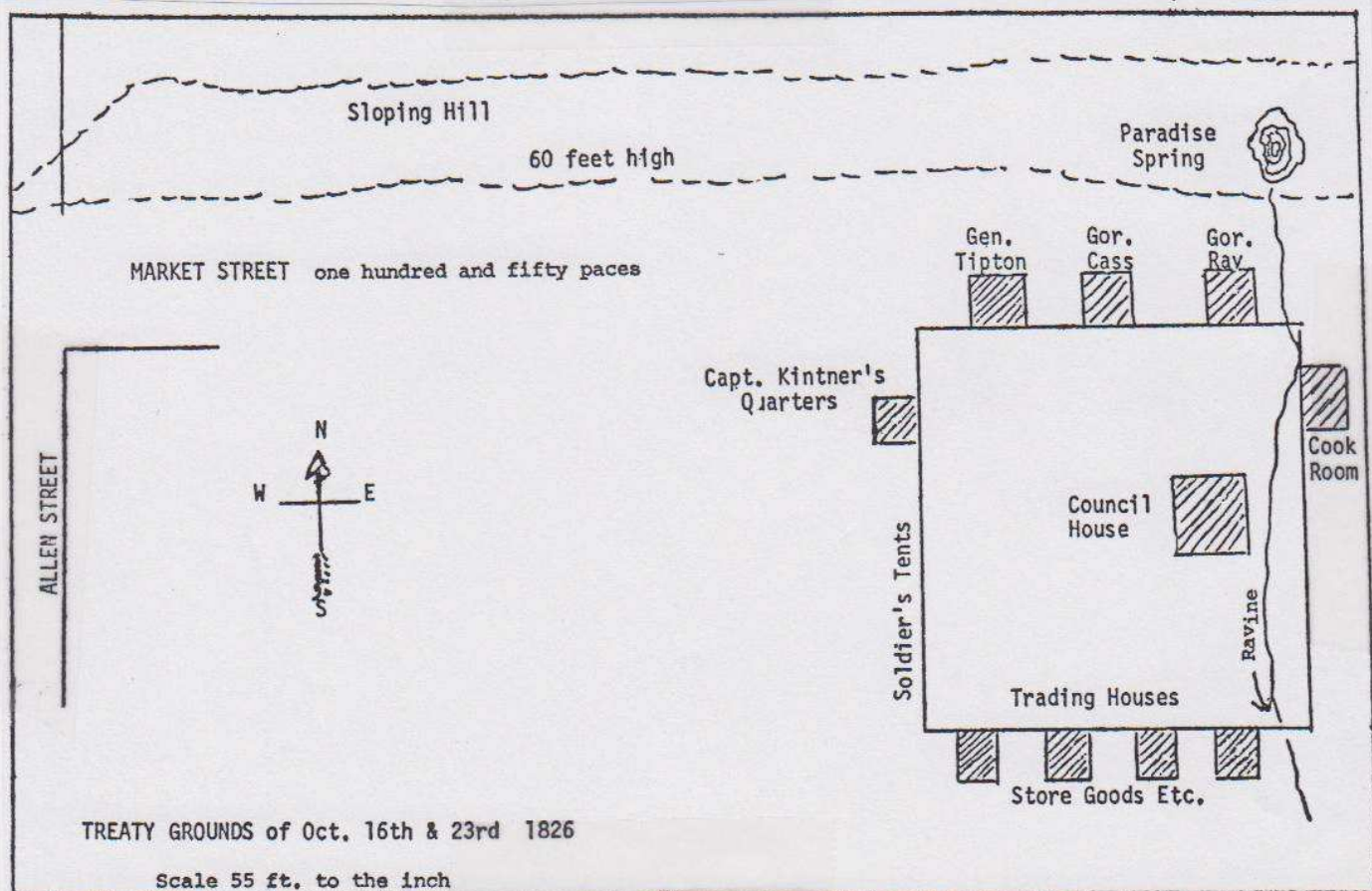
In 1826 "The Treaty of Paradise Spring" was signed with the Indians at Wabash. This treaty was of utmost importance in opening up white settlement to this area of Indiana. The arrangements for the treaty were made in the summer of the year for the meeting that was to take place that fall between the United States Commissioners and the Potawatomi and Miami Indians. Colonel John Tipton did not want the Indians near any settlement where they might be able to obtain "firewater". Tipton sent a letter to Governor Cass in which he stated, "Governor Ray and I have selected a place to hold the meeting at a fine spring of the northwest bank of the Wabash about twelve miles above the mouth of the Mississinaway River." This was about fifty feet south of Paradise Spring.

A space of 150 feet square was surveyed. The water from the spring ran through the eastern part of this space and could provide the necessary water for the expected 3000 persons. The land was fairly open and flat due to the annual flooding of the Wabash. On

the banks of the stream created by the spring, the council house was built. The cook house was located to the east of the square. Three cabins were built on the north side of the square for the commissioners General Lewis Cass of Michigan City, Governor James R. Ray of Indiana, and General John Tipton of Fort Wayne, who was the United States Indian agent. On the west, outside the square, were the quarters of Capt. Kintner's soldiers. On the south were four trading cabins.

The secretary, who was assigned to the commission, was ill and was replaced by James M. Ray. The Conner brothers, William of Indiana and Henry of Detroit who traded with the Indians, were the interpreters. The Miamis, under Chief Richardville, were of smaller number and were more peaceful than the Potawatomi, who were not so well acquainted with the ways of the whites. At the first meeting all present were introduced and the Indians understood all except for the name Ray. There was no word in their language to express Ray. Finally it was compared to a ray of sunshine and one of the chiefs called him Waw-sa-augh.

Weeks went by as the conference had trouble getting the Indians to agree as to which tribe should



receive the greater part of the consideration that the whites would pay. Also the commissioners could not agree on who should be on the resolution committee and what the resolve should be.

The Indians were fed throughout the conference and even supplied with rations of whiskey. However, one night the daily allotment of whiskey was not enough. The Indians tore down a stick chimney to reach a barrel of whiskey and became drunk. They pounded on Ray's door swinging clubs and tomahawks and demanding more "whisk, whisk." The following morning the commissioners had all remaining whiskey barrels emptied into the stream.

Another time a Miami Chief became so nasty while giving a speech that the Indian agent, Tipton, told him to sit down or he'd knock him down. The conference almost came to an abrupt end from the riot and pandemonium that ensued. Even though the commissioners were upset with Tipton, they allowed him to handle the affair at his request. He was able to get the Potawatomi to claim that they also had lived on the land in dispute. The treaty was signed on October 23, 1826 transferring thousands of acres of Indiana's best land to the U. S.

Only two years later another treaty was signed that ceded the land east of the Tippecanoe River to the United States. In return the Indians would receive \$2000 a year for an Indian school. The treaties of 1826 & 1828 opened up the land for the building of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

In later years Paradise Spring supplied water to the Big Four Station by means of two ditches that fed into a cistern, which in turn lead to a drinking fountain. The Big Four had its railroad yards near the treaty grounds. Today the spring, which had a tremendous volume of water in the 1800's, cannot be found. It is thought to be the victim of a lower water table.

In 1827 Wabash county was surveyed and opened for sale. On February 8, 1827 Jeremiah Cox purchased the first land southeast of Lagro, on the Salamonina River a short distance south of Hanging Rock. Shortly thereafter he purchased an additional 102 acres along the Wabash River.

The Samuel McClure family was the first permanent white settlers. He and his son arrived at the treaty grounds from Ohio in the fall of 1826. With them they brought a wagon load of apples. They had to cut a road most of the way to get the wagon through. In January 1827 the entire family came to live in the treaty cabins until they could build a home. During the winter he cleared 15 acres of land and planted it in corn only to find it belonged to Chief Charley. He moved down river three miles, built a cabin, cleared more ground and a year later opened the first store in the county.

In 1829 Robert Horse, an Indian, was made the first postmaster and a post office established on the Treaty Grounds. In 1838 the postmaster was William Steele. At this time the post office received a walnut cabinet with 24 pigeonholes for the mail. It was carried from place to place as other postmasters were appointed. Today it is in the Wabash County Museum. The mail was transported by stage and later canal boat. Letters were written on sheets of paper that were folded with the address put on the outside. The receiver of the letter paid the postage. Postage was determined by the number of sheets and the distance traveled. At one time the post office was located in a log cabin north on Canal Street in Wabash.

The town of Wabash was named for the Wabash River (water over white stones). It wasn't laid out until 1834.

The first school was held in a building previously used as a storehouse in Wabash in 1836-37. Today Wabash county boasts of Manchester College which was founded by representatives of the United Brethren Church in 1889, when they moved their seminary from Roanoke to North Manchester.

The first session of the Wabash Circuit Court was convened on June 11, 1835 in the home of David Burr and later adjourned to the home of William Steele in Wabash. Before this time the nearest courts were in Marion and Huntington. Beatings with the lash were being used as punishment and had gotten out of hand. The citizens demanded a court where a respectable trial could be held. After only a four day session in 1836 it was decided that a circuit judge would be sufficient to handle the trials. They saw no need for Associate or county judges. No major cases were decided by this court until the case of the State vs. John Hubbard and Sarah Hubbard was tried in 1855. This case is further mentioned as the French Murders in another section of this book.

Some say that the Wabash & Erie Canal was "responsible for the town of Wabash." Wabash was just an Indian trading post with about 500 residents before the canal. In a short 17 years once the canal was opened, Wabash mushroomed to 12,500 people.

Nature often contributed problems to the digging of the canal. Section workers uncovered a den of three hundred rattlesnakes in May of 1834. The snakes were said to have been as large as a man's arm.

Once the Wabash and Erie was completed to Wabash, in the spring of 1837, the commissioners did not let boats use it until it had been tested for the sufficiency of the embankments. This allowed the leakages to be located and repaired insuring navigation. This was not always the case as was found at places such as below Attica where the canal bed absorbed all the water or it leaked out in the gravel beds.

According to one historian's report, the first boat to reach Wabash was the "Davy Crocket," a sap trough, used in making maple syrup that was pulled by an old mare owned by David Cassatt. The mare was hitched to the trough by a grape vine. Colonel Hanna and Colonel William Steele rode on the trough. She is reported to have made the trip to Lagro and back sometime prior to July 4, 1837.

The more commonly agreed upon first boat to reach Wabash was the "Prairie Hen." On July 4, 1837 canal anticipation was at an all time high. The officials of the city of Wabash planned a gala celebration and a race that offered \$50 to the captain of the first boat to tie up at the Canal Street dock. Because they wanted everything to go smoothly they fixed the race. Their plan was to have Captain Dana Columbia (better known as "Hail or Hale Columbia") bring the "Indiana" down the canal on July 3 to a spot a few miles east of Wabash, tie up and then be first to enter Wabash the following day. Columbia, being a competitive man and wanting the \$50 prize, agreed to do so. The officials also planned to have a large crowd waiting at the dock, great speeches by dignitaries, and a huge ball. Columbia even went so far as to write his victory speech.

Captain Ed Patchin of the "Prairie Hen" also wanted the prize. When he heard about the fixed race he decided he would win. Just before nightfall he tied up the "Prairie Hen" a few miles above the "Indiana." Then late at night on July third, when he felt the crew of the "Indiana" was fast asleep, he had his mules tow the boat within close range of the "Indiana." He then sent the mules through the woods around the other boat while his crew quietly poled their boat past the "Indiana." Once around he rehitched the mules and pulled the "Prairie Hen" to a spot one mile outside of Wabash.

The morning of July 4, 1837 the "Prairie Hen" started toward Wabash unknown to Columbia who leisurely towed the "Indiana" there as well. As the crowd at the dock spied the boat coming in they began cheering and the bands played. On board were one hundred passengers of which half were uproariously drunk Indians. Patchin docked the "Prairie Hen" and demanded his prize money from the welcoming committee. Not knowing what else to do, they gave him his prize and let him make a speech. He went on and on as to how he beat Columbia to town even though the race was rigged.

The "Indiana" was said to have sailed into Wabash with a bright coat of paint, a number of settlers from Fort Wayne and Huntington, and a German wooden band. The band led the crowd to a picnic spot on the old Treaty Ground. The crowd didn't care who won and later honored Patchin as guest of honor at the ball held above Colonel Hanna's store in Wabash. An angry Dana Columbia sat at the back of the hall and scowled. It is said that "whiskey flowed like canal water" and a grand time was had by all. The "Prairie Hen" was often seen thereafter at the dock loading or unloading cargo it brought up and down the canal.

The "Indiana" was so well thought of that passengers on it signed a petition praising her as their favorite boat. They said she was clean, neat, and orderly. The boat hands were pleasant, quiet, and swore little around the ladies. Further information about the "Indiana" is in another section of this book.

Packet boats usually had a crew of a captain, steward, pantryman, cook, two cabin boys, a chambermaid, two bowsmen, two steersmen, and a driver. The fare averaged 4.5 cents a mile. A trip from Toledo to Lafayette cost \$7 and included meals. Passengers said they were so comfortable that they could walk around or play cards and that there were few bed bugs during cold weather.

Many of the early canal boats used in Wabash County were built in

St. Johnsville, N.Y. and carried that name. It wasn't until 1846 that Doyle and Dickey of Dayton, Ohio established a daily line of packet boats from Lafayette to Toledo. They carried passengers fitted out as described above and as described in the "Indiana" article. Their advertisement in June of 1847 said their packet boats left Lafayette at ten o'clock each morning and arrived in Toledo in 60 hours. Six years later in 1852 Messrs. Petrie & Co. bought the packets and established regular passenger service. The packets got new teams of horses at points along the canal and traveled at the speed limit of 4 miles per hour.

A trip on the packet could be in a relaxed atmosphere. They were painted gleaming white with trim of red or green. Passengers would loll around on the deck or play cards. Some rocked in rocking chairs. The horses were curried and combed with rosettes decorating their harnesses. Often a hot passenger in need of a bath would jump off the side of the boat. The boats sometimes became homes for gamesters or

June 1843 - Canal Traveler View

"About noon, on Friday, passed a little town called Wabash -- one of the most beautiful I had seen since I had left home. It is the only one, so far, that is situated on high, rolling land. The land on the north of the canal, being high and hilly, renders the town very healthy, and gives to it something of the appearance of a New England village." p. 63

Into the Old Northwest - Journeys with Charles H. Titus

George P. Clark 1994 Michigan State Press

con-men because they had time for poker and whiskey on the longer trips. Some of the female cooks also provided services other than cooking.

Some boats were more notorious than others for their drinking and gaming. Newspapers published ratings as to which boats were safe for family travel.

Dead bodies were often found in the canal. Usually a flask was found with the body leading to the assumption that the man had been drunk and fell or walked into the canal.

The freight boats traveled at about two miles and hour. They carried a second team of fresh horses or mules on board. At the height of the canal era it was estimated that 400 canal boats were operating on the Wabash and Erie Canal.

The crews of the boats were a tough bunch of men who worked hard by day and drank hard at night. In the early years of the canal they were the heroes of the day. To be part of a canal crew was many a young boy's dream. Toward the end of the canal era all of this changed. Canal captains were even looked down upon.

When the early canal boats pulled into port, the streets were filled with people greeting travelers, merchants unloading their cargo, and children running around in holiday spirit. Wagon loads of grain from surrounding counties waited in line for hours to load their grain onto the boats. There were sixteen warehouses in Wabash along Canal Street that handled as much as 500,000 bushels of grain per year.

Inns and taverns could be found near the canal. Crews from one boat would often fight crews from other boats. Most of the time they were drunk and were finishing a fight that started at the lock as to who had the right of way to pass through the lock first. It is said that the law was loosely enforced and blood on the floor was merely covered over with a layer of sawdust.

James Brownlee, a lawyer from Marion, traveled to Wabash on March 15, 1840 and later wrote about these travels in the Plain Dealer. He tells about the ferry crossing the Wabash River south of Wabash. He boarded at John Smith's tavern from March to December when he married Lucy Goldthait. They lived in the old canal contractors log house that he purchased for \$75 and sold a year later for \$150. Its front door opened out toward the street.

Brownlee tells how poor the whole town was and said that furs of coon, deer, and mink were the only trade worth money. He set up his law practice but made little. He said the canal was as great as had been expected. White Dog and Blue Pup (canal scrip) were issued. He knew that Jacob Vandergrift purchased canal land up Treaty Creek using White Dog for money.

Brownlee took a trip from Wabash to Fort Wayne in September 1840 on a packet boat. The trip took one and a half days and cost \$2.50. Travel was so

slow that he walked back taking one and one third days. He also recalled two men going to the canal in Wabash with wagon loads of dried peaches. They sold them and each bought two barrels of salt.

As canal transportation increased, the prices farmers received for their crops increased. New markets could be reached in the east. A bushel of wheat that sold for 40 cents in 1840, in the local village, was soon worth \$130 a bushel in 1872, in the large eastern cities. Delaware, Madison, Howard, Kosciusko, and Blackford counties brought their produce and products to Wabash county at Lagro to ship them by canal. The Wabash County Agriculture Society was formed in 1852 as an attempt to increase production to garner these higher prices.

By 1859 Wabash, the town built on solid rock, still had plank sidewalks, mud roads, swamps, frog ponds and ravines. The steep muddy roads made it almost impossible for ladies to get to church on Main Street. The roads leading from town were made of plank. Some charged tolls of 1 1/2 cent per mile. There were two hotels, the Center House on the northeast corner of Market and Wabash and the Indiana House on the corner of Canal and Huntington Streets. The latter mainly housed canal travelers.

During the week of August 13, 1859 the warehouses of Wm. Steele, Jr., Hanna & Smily, J. H. Gamble, L. Bruner, and Johnson's and Company all located along the canal reported receiving 10,095 bushels of wheat, 880 bushels of flax seed, and 190 bushels of oats. The railroad shipment according to agent A. K. Clough for the week was 600 bushels of wheat, 270 barrels of flour and 10,655 pounds of other articles.

Pork packing was a big industry. Lumaree and Daughtery shipped four rail cars, each loaded with 69 barrels of mess pork and 50 barrels of lard, per day. They slaughtered as many as 126,766 hogs in a year. Live hogs sold for \$4 and dressed hogs for \$4.50 - \$5.25.

Even with the coming of the railroad through the Wabash valley in January 1856, the canal survived for 20 years in the city of Wabash. However, as time passed the canal trade declined and the last shipment was made in 1872 by George Todd of Lagro. It was a load of 2,500 bushels of blacksmith coal from Cincinnati for Todd & Wright, merchants of Lagro. Finally, in March 1876 the Wabash County section of the canal was sold at Terre Haute for \$505.

The railroad that ran through Wabash was the Wabash Railroad later known as the Norfolk and Western. It ran between Detroit and St. Louis. It was first called the Continental Limited, then the Detroit and St. Louis Special, and finally the "Wabash Cannon Ball" after a 1943 ballad made it famous.

A timber was taken from the south corner of Wabash and southwest corner of Canal Streets in 1939. All that remains of the canal at Wabash are some old buildings along Canal Street that have big basement doors through which canal merchandise was brought into the buildings, and a view of a straight depression across a flat field if one gets atop a bluff to the east of town.

A new courthouse was opened in Wabash on May 8, 1878. It had a huge Seth Thomas clock installed on April 23, 1879. It was lighted by 134 gas jets and heated by burning coal unlike the first courthouse that used candles and oil lamps and was heated by wood fires. It was remodeled in 1958-60. It is a combination of styles--Greek Revival, Italianate, and Romanesque. On its grounds sits the statue of Abraham Lincoln called "Lincoln of the People" which was donated by Alexander New in 1832. Charles Keck was the sculptor for the \$35,000 statue.

On March 31, 1880, 43 years after the canal race, residents of Wabash experienced yet another celebration. Special trains brought passengers to Wabash for the occasion. The town's streets were lined with people in anticipation of the event. Courthouse bells began ringing at 8 p.m. that night and a sudden burst of light was met with deep silence as Wabash became the first electrically lighted city in the world. Citizens who normally would have shouted with joy stood in awe of the sight. The courthouse square was said to be as light as midday. A reporter claims to have read a newspaper four blocks from the courthouse and to have been able to see the face of a watch as far

out as four miles beyond Wabash while standing on a platform of a train. One lady tells of seeing the glow in the northern sky above Wabash from a hill top in the town of Vernon.

Wabash had agreed with the Brush Electric Light Company of Cleveland, Ohio, to test the new light. A dynamo was driven by an old 6-8 horsepower threshing machine steam engine. Following the successful test, Wabash was lighted by Brush Lamps until September 1888. The total cost was \$2,550 with the estimate for fuel, engineer, new carbon points, not to succeed over \$900 a year. One of the four original lamps of 3,000 candle-power, that were mounted on cross arms on top of the Court House dome 200 feet above ground, is on exhibit in the Court House.

Other exciting times for Wabash were the coming of the first trains, the first electric car of the Wabash River Traction company, the first transport airplane ever built in the U. S. built by the Service Motor Company, and the opening of the Salamonie and Mississinewa Reservoirs.

Wabash is proud of its Honeywell Community Center, given by Marc C. Honeywell as a memorial to his first wife. Honeywell founded M. C. Honeywell Plumbing and Heating in 1900 and merged with Minneapolis Heat Regulator Company later to become Honeywell Inc. Several of its buildings are located on Canal Street. It later went into temperature controls. Today it is one of the United States 100 largest businesses. It has forty seven heat control thermostat plants throughout the world.

Today the canal east of Wabash has been leveled.



The power lines mark the path of the old waterway.

THE "INDIANA"

The "Indiana" and a trip taken on her by his family was described in a journal by Mr. Richard Beste, an Englishman, as follows:

"At five o'clock in the evening we stepped from the little quai...on board the 'Indiana' canal boat...Three horses were harnessed to a rope about 50 yards ahead of the boat; they started at a moderate trot; and the town, where we had tarried so long, was soon lost to our sight."

"We wandered over the vessel, well pleased with the promise it gave of tolerable accommodations. The captain, a very young man, was civil and attentive to our wants, and told us that tea would be served at seven, which there, on that day was at the precise hour or sunset."

"The construction of the canal boat was --in miniature--much the same as that of the lake and river steamer."

"There was no hold under the deck, but on the deck at the stern were raised the kitchen, steward's room, and offices; in the center of the boat was the large salon, the sitting room of all by day and the sleeping room of the male passengers by night--adjoining it was the ladies' salon; beyond which again, was a small cabin with only four berths."

"The cabin was separated by a doorway and curtain from the ladies' salon, and on the other side opened upon the bow of the vessel. In it was a looking glass, a hand basin, two towels, a comb and brush, for the use of the ladies."

"It was a rule in the boat that no gentleman should go into the ladies' salon without express invitation from the ladies; consequently the third little room was sacred to the female sex, unless entered from the bow, in which case a male occupant would cut off the ladies from the wash house."

"A flat roof spread over the whole of the salons; and on it was piled the luggage; and here passengers walked up and down or sat to enjoy the view."

"The view, however, as yet was naught; the banks were low and the thick woods, in which were only partial clearings, shut us in on both sides..."

"Our children wondered where they were to sleep, as there were visible berths amid the red moreen curtains that hung around the ladies' salon, to give it an air of comfort in the August weather; they dreaded to pass four night on the floor, as they had done at Mrs. Long's hotel; but they said that they also drew comparative comfort from seeing a washstand, basin and two towels, instead of that amiable American woman's small tin pie dish."

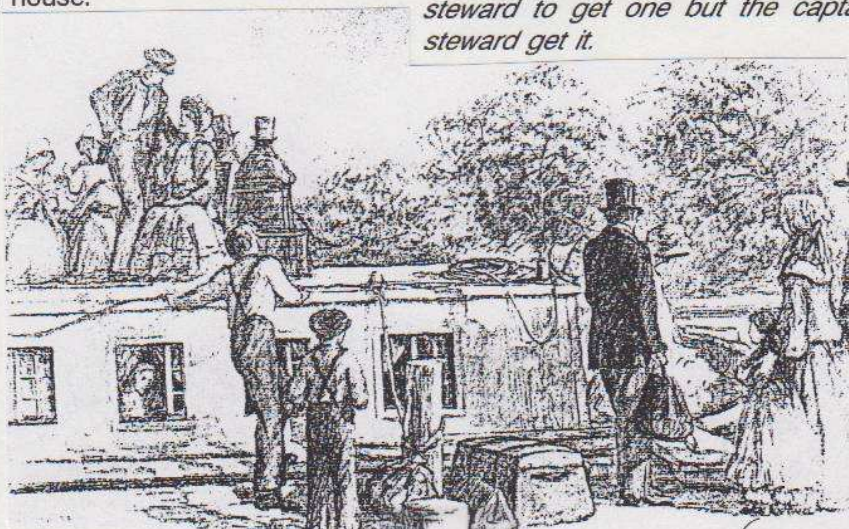
"The steward, however, soon solved their doubts by hooking up some shelves to the wall, and laying mattresses and sheets upon them."

"We were summoned to tea...all complained of the bad tea and coffee, of the hot heavy corn bread, and of the raw beef steak."

Agnes, one of Beste's daughters wrote that "after tea, we all began a most murderous attack upon the mosquitoes that swarmed on the windows and inside our berths, in expectation of feasting upon us as soon as we should go to bed."

"But those on whom we made war, were soon replaced by others; and the more we killed the more they seemed to come to be killed...it was as though they would defy us to exterminate the race. At last we gave up the task as hopeless and resigned ourselves, as well as we could, to pass the a sleepless night."

Richard Beste is said to have squabbled with the captain for 90 miles over a chamber pot. He found no pot at all aboard the "Indiana." He asked the steward to get one but the captain would not let the steward get it.



MAJOR - STEARNS FISHER

*From The History of Wabash County
Illustrated - 1884*

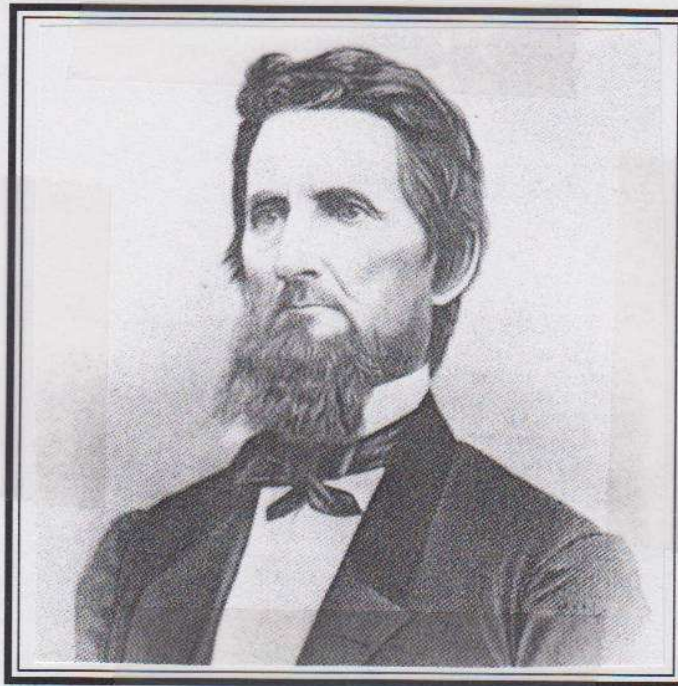
Stearns Fisher, the son of Jonathan and Sarah (Stearns) Fisher, was born November 25, 1804, in Marlboro, Vt. His father and mother were natives of Vermont also; the former, losing his father when but seven years old, was brought up by Mr. and Mrs. Hastings in Massachusetts, and became in after life a man of character and influence in his native State. Stearns Fisher, the son, remained in Vermont with his parents until his thirteenth year, when he removed with them to Cuyahoga County, Ohio, and there attended the common schools of the country, such as the times afforded, studying diligently to qualify himself as a teacher.

Mr. Fisher was an apt scholar, and by the generous exercise of his faculties soon became sufficiently learned to satisfactorily instruct others in the fundamental branches. He taught his first school in 1824, and as compensation for this onerous duty he received an equivalent in hemlock boards, "which," the record says, "are still in use in a barn then belonging to his father."

His occupation as a teacher was only a means to an end. He desired to become a scholarly, business man, to aid himself in the accomplishment of which he appropriated a portion of his time to teaching, and from the proceeds prepared the way for a life of usefulness and distinction by close application to those departments of study which he conceived to be best calculated to lead him directly toward the hoped-for position in life. Laboring during the day to secure the means of subsistence, he made more rapid advancement in his preparatory course. Afterward, he engaged as a common laborer on the Wabash & Erie Canal, during the early stages of its construction, devoting his nights, as before, to preparation for the practical duties of a civil engineer on that most important thoroughfare. Perseveringly he labored on,

and ere long the ideal of his life was attained, and he was elevated to the position of assistance civil engineer, and subsequently employed as such, holding the place until completion of the canal. As an engineer in laying out and directing the construction of public works in detail, he had few equals and no superiors. With the excellent record he had made for himself in view, he was afterward made superintendent, and held that position until the canal passed into the hands of the bond-holders in 1847.

Again, in 1852-54, when the projection of the Lake Erie, Wabash & St. Louis Railroad through this county had been determined upon, he superintended the survey and location of its line, with the fidelity characteristic of his life and experience. Mr. Fisher's ability was not confined to the accepted sphere of a civil engineer. He was a proficient also in the department of practical agriculture, a qualification recognized by the leading agriculturists of the State, who, in 1855, elected him a member of the State Board of Agriculture. This position he held for a number of years, and during the time served two terms as President of the board. At that time, and for several years anterior, commencing at the conclusion of his work on the railroad line, he had removed to and was comfortably situated on his farm, four miles west of the city, engaged chiefly in its management and in the working of his valuable stone quarry, both of which were sources of profit to him.



In 1860, he was elected to represent Wabash County in the Lower House of the State Legislature, and served as such during the exciting session of 1861, commanding, by his exercise of a sound judgment in measuring men and discriminating in matters of public policy, the respect and confidence of the leading legislative and executive officers of the State. Indeed, he was a confidant of Gov. Morton, who placed great reliance in his judgment concerning the grave matters that affected even the perpetuity of the State and nation.

In 1862, he was appointed by Gov. Morton State Paymaster, with the rank of Major, and he

continued to hold the position until the close of the war in 1866. In 1868, legislative honors were again conferred upon him by his constituents, the people of Wabash and Miami Counties, awarding him the position of Senator from that district, in which he served them faithfully during the sessions of 1868-69 and 1871.

In 1872, he was a prominent candidate for the office of Lieutenant Governor of the State, lacking but few votes to secure his nomination by the Republican convention. From the close of his Senatorial term until the time of his death, he was more or less occupied with public affairs, being universally respected for his sterling integrity, profound judgment and superior executive ability. He was extensively known in political and business circles, and was a member first of Whig and then of the Republican party. Religiously, he was a member of the Baptist Church in Wabash, of which he became a member in 1850, and continued during life. The interest of temperance and education were dear to him. He was a noble example of true manhood, kind, genial, cheerful, unassuming, self-educated, talented, and strictly temperate and honest. At times, his duties required of him the handling of large sums of public money, but not one cent of this did he ever appropriate directly or indirectly to his own use.

His first wife was Susan Ingersoll, of Piketon, Ohio. She died in April 1843, leaving three children. He

was married again, October 26, 1845 to Mrs. Luther Woods, whose maiden name was Harriet Loveland, by whom he had children, some of them still living. Mrs. A. P. Ferry and Mrs. M. H. Kidd, children of Maj. Fisher, now reside in Wabash. Mr. Fisher died at his home in the city on the 26th of July, 1877, in the seventy-third year of his age.

MRS. HARRIET L. FISHER, widow of the late Stearns Fisher, whose maiden name was Harriet Loveland, daughter of Joseph and Beulah Loveland, was born near Rutland, Vt. on the 29th of December, 1809, on a farm which has since become a part of the celebrated marble quarry which bears the name of the adjacent town. With her parents she moved to Granville, Ohio, in 1827. In 1830, she was married to Luther Woods, Esq. who died two years later. In 1844, she came to Indiana, and on October 26, 1845, she was married to the late Stearns Fisher, of Wabash. After a life of happiness with that good man, continuing through a period of more than thirty-five years, she was again, on the 26th of July, 1877, left in widowhood. In his life, Mr. Fisher has accumulated a sufficiency of this world's goods to maintain comfortably during the remainder of her life the surviving partner of his joys and sorrows. Mrs. Fisher still lives in the city of Wabash, surrounded with all that heart can wish for save that great void which eternity alone can supply.



**STEARNS FISHER HOME
NEAR RICHVALLEY**

RICHVALLEY

West of Wabash is the small town of Richvalley which is where Lock 17 has been covered by the overpass of Route 24 to span the Wabash Railroad. The lock was measured in 1962. The chamber was 13 feet wide with the length from one wing wall to the other end being 120 feet (the length between the gates was 90 feet.) The offsets for the gates were 10 feet long and 16 inches deep. The locks depth was ten feet.

At Richvalley bridge over the Wabash River there was a rock on which the Miamis ground corn. They would place the corn in the depression and grind it using a stone shaped like a rolling pin thus making it the first mill. The settlers called it Dish Pan Rock. When the St. Mary's Treaty was signed in 1818 it allowed for a water powered grist mill to be built for the Miamis at a site chosen by them. The mill was built in 1820 on Mill Creek about two miles east of Richvalley. The mill operator was Lewis Davis, the first white resident in Wabash County. He stayed until 1826.

The treaty also provided for a blacksmith shop and saw mill to be built. They were located by the mill. The blacksmith shop was run by Robert Wilson.

Johnathon Keller was the last to operate the Indian mill. His son, Johnathon Keller Jr., was the first white child born in Wabash County in Richvalley. Keller Sr. purchased a farm on October 3, 1832, which is now the center of Richvalley. The two original grist mill stones may be seen today. One is in the Wabash City Park near the Lincoln Log Cabin. The other is beside Elliot Road two miles west of Mill Creek Pike.

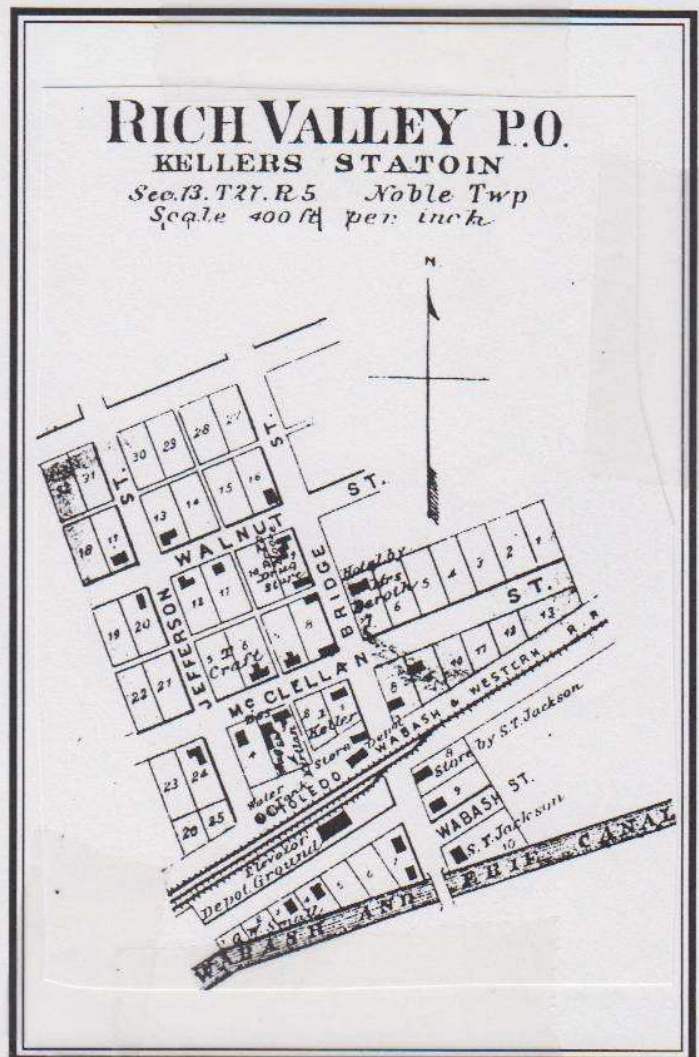
In 1827 a harness and saddle shop were built along the north bank of the Wabash River at the mouth of a creek. The shop was run by Captain Fred Kentner, who commanded the garrison of soldiers at Paradise Spring in 1826, and his brother, James. The creek was thus named Kentner Creek.

The first white permanent settler to Wabash County was Samuel McClure. He came in 1827. That year his son, Samuel Jr., built a cabin to use as a trading post with the Indians. His son, Joseph, married Elizabeth Keller in 1832 thus uniting the two families. The McClure's home over-looked the Wabash and Erie Canal and was built of brick 18 inches thick.

Just one mile west of the McClure home was the home of a canal engineer, Major Stearns Fisher. It was finished shortly after the canal was completed across Wabash County. Its walls were 22 inches thick. Stone for the walls was quarried from the Fisher quarry on the property. The house had five fireplaces. A section in this book concerns Mr. Fisher. To the west of this house was the Fisher Lock (Lock No. 17.)

The Fisher home has several stories told about it. One says that a man was found lying in the upstairs bedroom in a pool of blood. He is said to have won too much money from his partners in a card game. The floor boards are stained with his blood. In another story Mrs. Fisher is said to have fired a rifle through the door of the house when she recognized a man trying to break down the house's west door. This was John Hubbard who it the central character in Wabash County's big murder. The French Murder is described in another section of this book.

Richvalley was originally called Keller Settlement and then Keller Station. Later it was named Richvalley because its center was located on rich river bottom soil with wonderful prairie to the south and productive red clay hills and fertile level lands to the north. The land was able to produce wonderful crops, but the distance and trouble to reach markets were so bad that it was barely profitable.



The coming of the Wabash and Erie Canal was a great boon to the farmers. However, it brought gamblers and thieves with it. Edmund Williams was murdered on August 1, 1845 after delivering his wheat to a warehouse in Richvalley. He told a store keeper before he left for home that he feared being robbed and planned to hide his wheat money along the Wabash River before returning home. It is said that he did this but that where the money was hidden "only the Wabash knows the secret."

On an 1861 plat of Richvalley the Keller Addition No. 1 is shown between the canal and the Toledo, Wabash and Western Railroad (Norfolk Western.) This land was set aside for a railroad switch, Keller Station. Soon the canal could no longer compete with the railroad since the canal was seasonal, only operating about eight months of the year, and the railroad was faster. On this land in 1872 was built a "grain house" which had a capacity of 25,000 bushels. This later became the Richvalley Co-operative Elevator Company.

The bridge that currently crosses the Wabash and Erie Canal is located at the same place as the earlier canal bridge. A canal boat was abandoned there. Years ago the boat was put upon a train at the Richvalley Depot and taken to the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

Dr. Perry Moore of Richvalley collected many rare items. One was the shawl of Frances Slocum. Another was the personal flag of Anthony Wayne and had Wayne's name in the corner. Shortly after the American Revolution George Washington gave Wayne flags to present to the Chiefs of the various Indian Nations at the Treaty of Greenville (Ohio.) These flags symbolized peace between the U.S. government and the Indian Nations and the government's control of the Northwest Territory. Dr. Moore obtained the flag from an Indian family near Richvalley. It is the only remaining example of the treaty flags. Moore gave the flag to the State of Indiana and it hangs in the Indiana State Library. He gave most of his personal collection to the Wabash County Historical Society. He started the society and was its first president.



Richvalley
1884

THE FRENCH MURDERS

One of the most interesting events during canal times in Richvalley was the French murders, the most puzzling deaths connected with the Wabash and Erie Canal. A Cincinnati businessman, Aaron French, his wife and five children, settled in a cabin at the foot of a hill along the edge of the river bottom land northeast of Richvalley. Mr. French became ill and could barely support his wife and five children. Another family, John and Sarah Hubbard, began living with the Frenchs to "help out" as other neighbors had in the past.

One Saturday evening in October of 1854 neighbors stopped by the cabin to inquire about Mr. French's health. The town folk noticed Mrs. Hubbard wearing Mrs. French's clothing. They hadn't seen the Frenchs for about a year. The next morning Mrs. Hubbard met Mr. James Lewis at the gate to the yard. She said the Frenchs had moved west to Iowa since their father had died and left land to his children and that she and her husband had bought their belongings for \$40.

Later Mr. Hubbard invited a canal worker, Mr. Edward Boyle, to live with them at the cabin. Boyle was supposedly carrying several hundred dollars. In December Boyle also just seemed to disappear. It was assumed that he had left the community, until March when boys, seining in the canal while the water was lowered for repairs, found Boyle's marked body. It looked like murder.

At the same time, Hubbard suddenly appeared to have lots of money. He was accused of the murder and put in jail. He still denied it. When his wife came to visit him in jail, their conversation concerning the Frenchs was overheard. Mrs. Hubbard was immediately arrested and an investigation begun.

The sheriff and his deputy went to the old French farm. Upon arriving they noticed a "stagnating" smell coming from the Hubbard house. The floor boards of the home were loosened and eighteen inches below them were found seven bodies. At the bottom of the shallow grave were Mr. and Mrs. French, then the four children, and finally the tiny baby at the top. A hammer or ax had crushed each skull and Mrs. French had a broken neck and leg. The Frenchs were buried in Richvalley cemetery.

During his trial Hubbard claimed innocence, but he was found guilty and hanged on the Wabash County Courthouse lawn at 3 o'clock on Thursday, December 13, 1855. This is said to be Wabash County's only case of capital punishment. His wife was sentenced to life at the Indiana Woman's Reformatory where she later died. The Hubbards were defended by the Honorable John W. Petit and associates. The State was represented by Isaac M. Harlin and associates. Some say this was a bad omen for the canal, for in the five years after this terrible atrocity the canal began to fail.

After the Hubbard hanging, local physicians from Wabash and Somerset arranged with the sheriff to snatch the body from its grave. He was buried about 100 yards from the house at the poor farm. The physicians wanted to dissect and study the body. The sheriff agreed to mark the grave to make it easy to locate at night.

A team and wagon were hired for the job. One night, during a torrential downpour, the wagon, filled with the group of grave robbers, left Wabash for Richvalley. They were let out at the schoolhouse on the Urbana road and the driver proceeded to within a few rods of the poor farm. The physicians hurried toward the grave, but they soon became disoriented and lost their way. After a futile hour of searching, they found the site, only to discover they'd forgotten the tools to raise the body. One man was left behind to guard the grave while the others went back for the tools.

In the meantime, physicians (body snatchers) from Fort Wayne and Huntington arrived. They were in the nearby woods that surrounded the grave site. They tried to scare off the Wabash contingent by threatening to shoot them. The Wabash folks would not be undone and claimed to have the poor house superintendent and the sheriff on their side.

Hubbard's grave was at last opened, a rope tied around his neck, and his body dragged from the grave. This crafty crew marched back to the wagon with Hubbard securely tied to a rail which two men carried on their shoulders. In a mad dash they slipped into a gully and Hubbard landed on top of them. During the ensuing frantic chase, the Ft. Wayne/Huntington group continued to pursue and threaten.

Hubbard's body was finally thrown onto the wagon. The driver, scared by the pursuers' threats, raced along the road until he reached a building on Canal Street in Wabash. An accomplice threw a rope across the canal on signal from the physicians. He tied the rope to a string and the string to a brick which he launched across the canal. The physicians tied the rope around Hubbard's neck and pushed the corpse into the canal. It was pulled up the side of the building, through a window, and into the room arranged for the dissection.

Complaints were made by others living in the building. Hubbards remains were then packed into sacks and taken across the street, in broad daylight, to another room. Later the bones were divided up among the doctors and finally came into the possession Dr. Dickens of La Fontaine. He had them mounted and placed in his office. Later they were placed in the La Fontaine high school.

FRANCES SLOCUM

Frances Slocum was the daughter of the Slocums, Quakers of Pennsylvania. There was a massacre in 1778 in the Wyoming Valley a few months after which she was stolen by three Delaware Indians at the age of five. One month later, they shot and killed her father as he worked his field. She was adopted by a childless Delaware couple who named her Weletawash. They traveled throughout Canada, the Mid Atlantic states and the Northwest Territory finally settling in Kekionga, a Miami Indian village near Fort Wayne. Before arriving at Kekionga she was married to a Delaware brave who mistreated her.

After 1784 and the end of the Revolution, her brothers tried to find her. They traveled to Niagara and offered a large reward to any of the many Indians gathered there for information about her. They were led to believe she was dead. Her mother would not believe it and four years later the Slocums went to the west and offered \$500 for proof of Frances' death. Once again in 1797, her brothers tried again. Mrs. Slocum never gave up trying to find Frances up until her death in 1807. In 1826 her brothers journeyed to Upper Sandusky to follow a lead.

Frances became the wife of an Indian chief, (Shepoconnah or Deaf Man) in the 1790's and was known as Maconaquah (Little Bear Woman). In 1817 they moved east of Peru where an Indian settlement sprang up. Around 1835, during the canal era, Col. George W. Ewing, who was appointed by the government to work with the Indians, was spending the night at Deaf Man's Village when he noticed that the old woman, with whose family he lodged, had hair and skin color unlike the rest of the Indians. When he asked her if she was white, she said she was, but had kept the fact hidden for fear her relatives would come and take her away. Now that she was older, she said she would gladly see these relatives. She told Ewing her father's name but could not remember her given name.

Col. Ewing wrote a long letter to the postmaster in Lancaster, Pennsylvania telling about Frances. The postmaster, thinking the letter a hoax, threw it in a pile of waste papers. After his death two years later, his widow found the letter and sent it to the Lancaster Intelligencer. Rev. Samuel Brown read the article in the paper, knew the Slocum family, and mailed the paper to Wilkesbarre to Joseph Slocum, Frances' brother.

A letter was written to Ewing by John J. Slocum, Frances' nephew, to which Ewing replied that she was still alive, anxious to see them, and how they could find her. Her brother and sister from Ohio, Isaac Slocum and Mary Town, and her brother, Joseph, went to see her. Isaac arrived first and had an interpreter with him.

Frances seemed suspicious. It had been 59 years since she'd seen him. Isaac pointed to her left hand forefinger and asked what happened to it. Isaac remembered that another brother, Ebenezer, had crushed it with a hammer before she was captured. Frances replied, "My brother struck it with a hammer a long time ago."

She showed little emotion toward the rest of the family's visits. Once when she remembered her given name, she excitedly replied "yes, yes, Franca, Franca."

When the Indians were removed from the area in the 1840's, John Quincy Adams defended her right to stay in Indiana with her two daughters since she was a White/Indian. He gave a powerful speech in Congress in favor of B.A. Biddlack's bill which provided one square mile of land, occupied then by Miami Indians which included the house and other buildings owned by Frances, to be hers and her heirs forever. The bill became a law and Frances lived on her special reserve until she died in the spring of 1847.

When the U.S. government began building the Mississinewa Reservoir for its flood control, the grave of Frances Slocum had to be moved. Her grave is located on Bowman Road (650W) off of IN 124.



FRANCES SLOCUM 1773 - 1847

AGE 74

HISTORICAL MARKERS

Markers identifying the location of historical areas and describing the events that took place in Huntington and Wabash counties are given below. Most of the markers are the traditional ones put up by the State of Indiana. Some were erected by local historical societies or persons.

HUNTINGTON

BURK'S LOCK 1835-1873

The canal boat "Indiana" docked here on the evening of July 3, 1835, opening the Wabash and Erie canal to traffic from Fort Wayne to Huntington. This was the first section of the canal opened in Indiana. John Burk, for whom the lock was named, was a member of the first Board of Commissioners of Huntington County.

CANAL LANDING ON WASHINGTON ST

The Huntington Landing started 120 feet west of Washington Street and continued to the lock at Cherry Street. The Wabash & Erie Canal was 4 feet deep and 100 feet wide at this point.

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON

1731-1796 Signer of Declaration of Independence

The city, township, and county were named for Samuel Huntington signer of the Declaration of Independence and an important political figure in the Revolutionary War era. Records indicate the name was given by Elias Murray, Huntington's nephew, when he had the area surveyed for land agent John Tipton. This pioneer settlement had previously been known as Flint Springs.

EX PARTE MILLIGAN

In a landmark decision on April 5, 1866, the United States Supreme Court overturned the conspiracy against the national government conviction of Huntington attorney Lambdin P. Milligan (1812-1899). The decision, rising out of the Civil War, set a precedent which protects civilians from being tried in military courts, even in time of war, if the civil courts are open and functioning. (4 Wallace 2 1866)

THE "LIME CITY"

Huntington, the "Lime City," so named for its many limestone quarries and kilns, the first kiln being built in this vicinity by Michael Houseman in 1843 or 1844. By 1885 there were 31 kilns in operation; eight were perpetual kilns, the others were occasional kilns. The lime was of such high quality it was shipped out of the state as well as being used locally.

FORKS OF THE WABASH

The junction of the Wabash and Little rivers, 100 yards south, was the western terminus of the Maumee-Wabash long portage and, in 1835, of the first section of the Wabash and Erie Canal. During the 18th century French and English traders passed the way and, in 1778, Henry Hamilton brought 171 British troops and 350 Indians with 40 boats through the portage enroute to retake Fort Sackville at Vincennes. Three Miami villages were located here and Chiefs Richardville and LaFontaine once lived here. The Forks was the scene of many Indian councils and the Miami Treaties of 1834, 1836 and 1840.

LAGRO

KERR LOCK

IMPORTANT BUSINESS CENTER ON THE OLD WABASH AND ERIE CANAL THIS SITE PRESENTED TO THE TOWN OF LAGRO BY CHARLES NOTTINGHAM TO BE PRESENTED AS A HISTORICAL MONUMENT.

WABASH

KIN-COM-A-ONO SPRING

The treaty between the United States and the Miami Tribe of Indians was held near this spring October 23, 1826. U.S. Commissioners Louis Cass, James B. Ray and John Tipton.

PARADISE SPRING TREATY GROUND

At treaty ground (two blocks east) in October, 1826, Potawatomi and Miami tribes signed treaties with the United States ceding lands north of the Wabash river. The treaties included provisions for land for a canal and the Michigan Road.

FIRST ELECTRICALLY LIGHTED CITY

On March 31, 1880, officials of Wabash began experimenting with Charles F. Brush's carbon-arc lights. Four 3,000 candlepower lamps were placed atop the courthouse and used to illuminate the town until September, 1888.

HOPEWELL

MEMORIAL TO THE LADY OF THE LIMBERLOST GENE STRATTON PORTER NOTED HOOSIER NATURALIST NOVELIST BORN GENEVA GRACE STRATTON AUGUST 17, 1863 AT HOPEWELL DIED DECEMBER 6, 1924 BURIED AT GLENDALE CALIFORNIA THIS MEMORIAL ERECTED IN 1973 ON LAND FORMERLY OWNED BY THE STRATTON FAMILY.

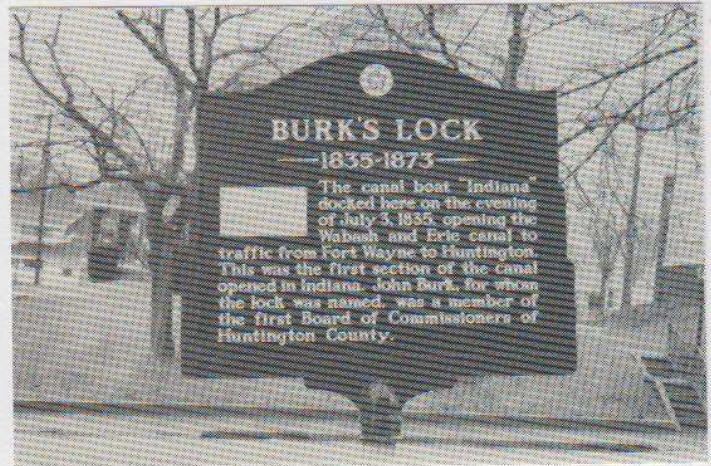
HOPEWELL MEMORIAL MUSEUM HONORING HOOSIERLAND'S GENE STRATTON PORTER YOU ARE NOW IN "THE LAND OF LADDIE"

This community was the locale for Mrs. Porter's popular novel "Laddie - A True Blue Story" published in 1913. Movie version released in 1935. Mrs. Porter as "little sister" related a romantic story (mixture of truth and fiction) of Stratton family life in the 1870's following the Civil War. Leading character was an idolized older brother - "Laddie" (Leander Elliott Stratton - 1853-1872) who drowned in the Wabash River.

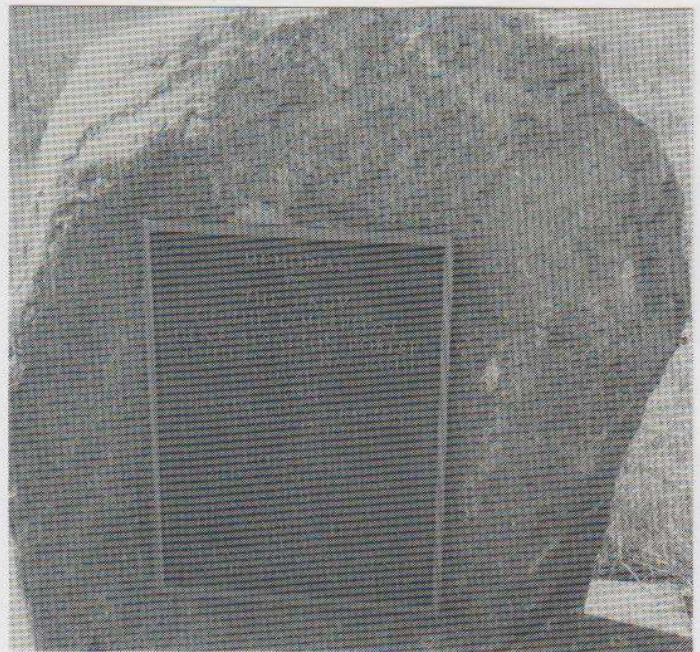
Stratton family migrated here in covered wagons from Ohio in 1845 settling on 240 acres (80 East-160 West).

Mrs. Porter, youngest of 12 children, born 1/2 mile north. Original home burned in 1907. Ten members of family buried here: parents, 1 son - "Laddie", 4 daughters and 8 grandsons. Last members of family moved from here to Wabash in October 1874.

THE HOPEWELL METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH GIRLHOOD CHURCH OF GENE STRATTON PORTER ORGANIZED IN 1845 AND BUILT ON LAND GIVEN BY REV. MARK STRATTON OUTSTANDING CIVIC AND RELIGIOUS LEADER LICENSED A LOCAL METHODIST PREACHER IN 1857



BURK'S LOCK 1835-1873

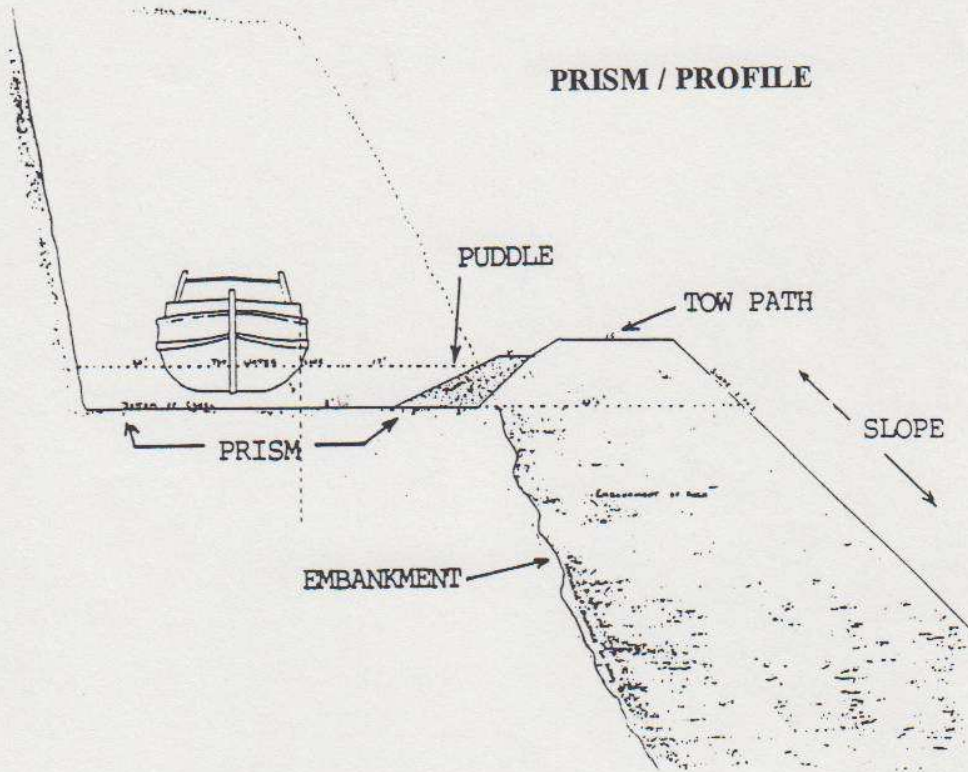


HOPEWELL

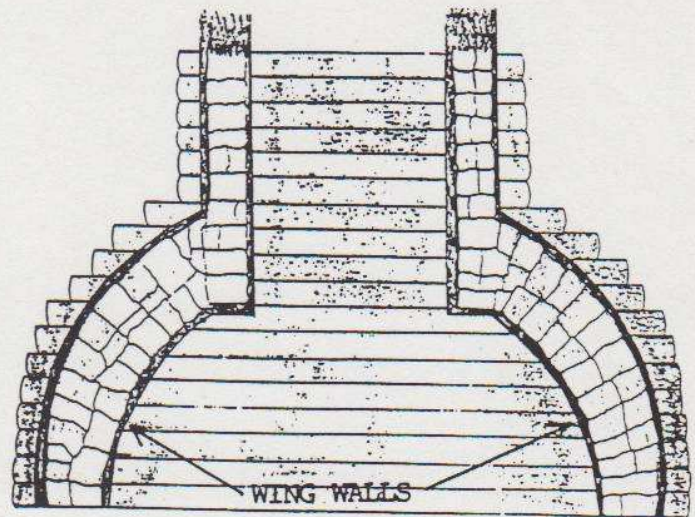
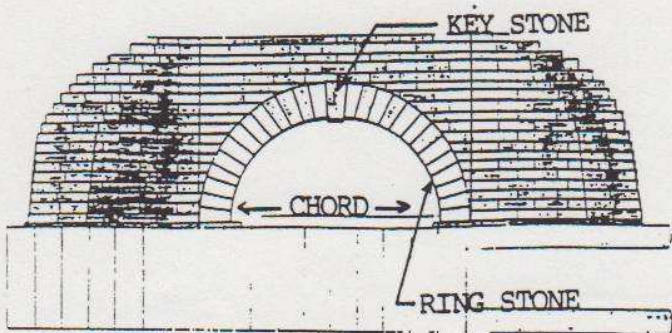


KIN-COM-A-ON0 SPRING

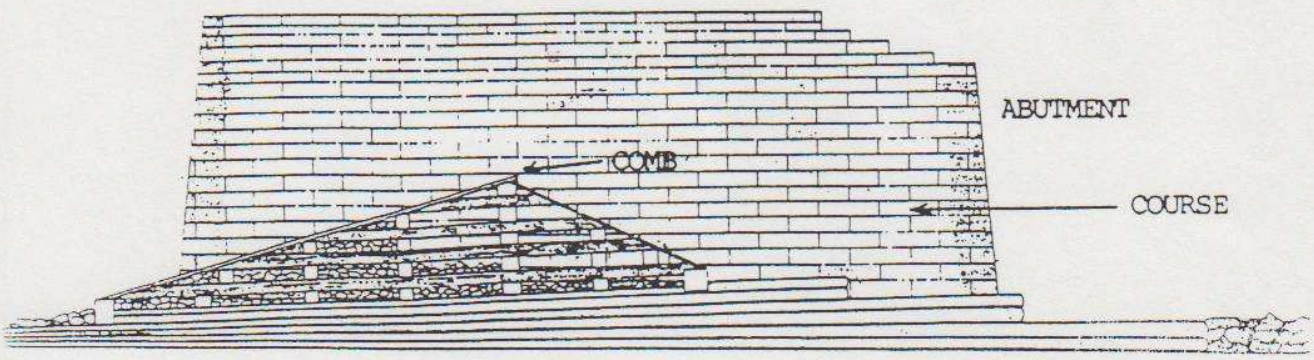
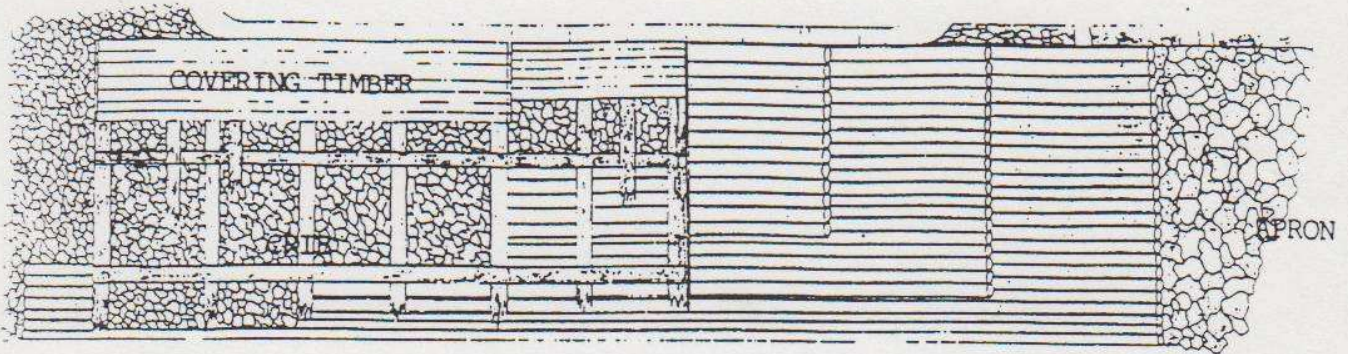
CANAL STRUCTURES



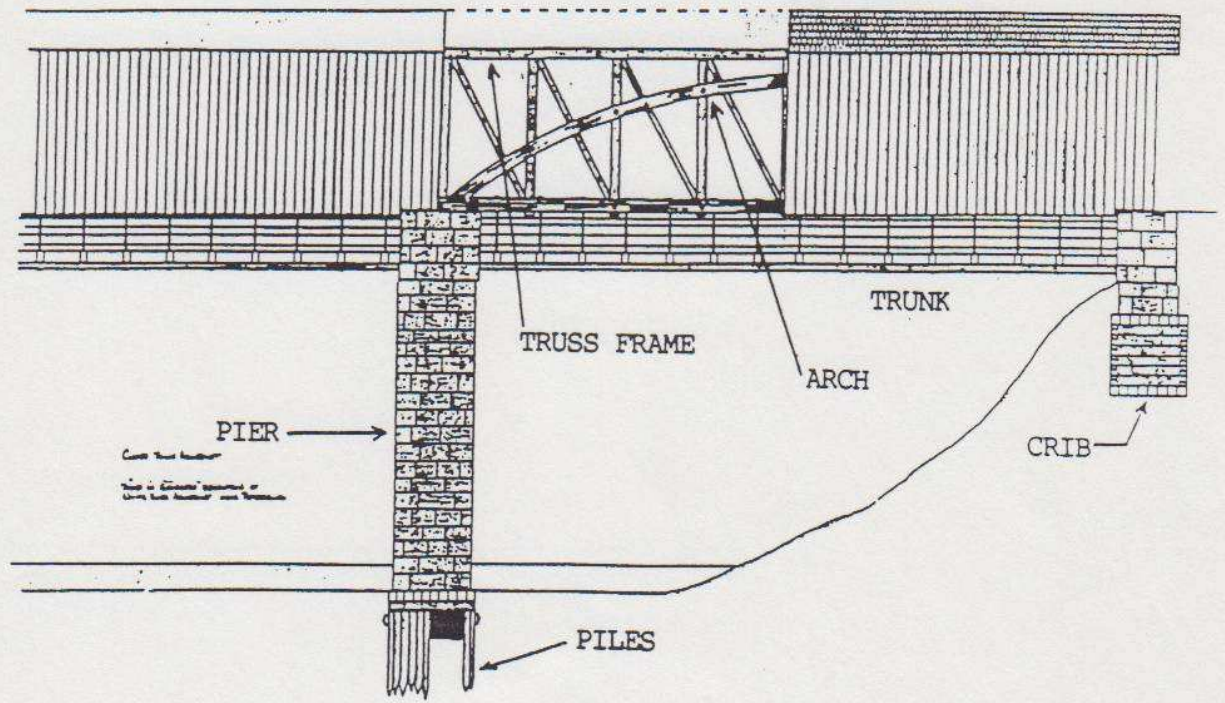
STONE CULVERT



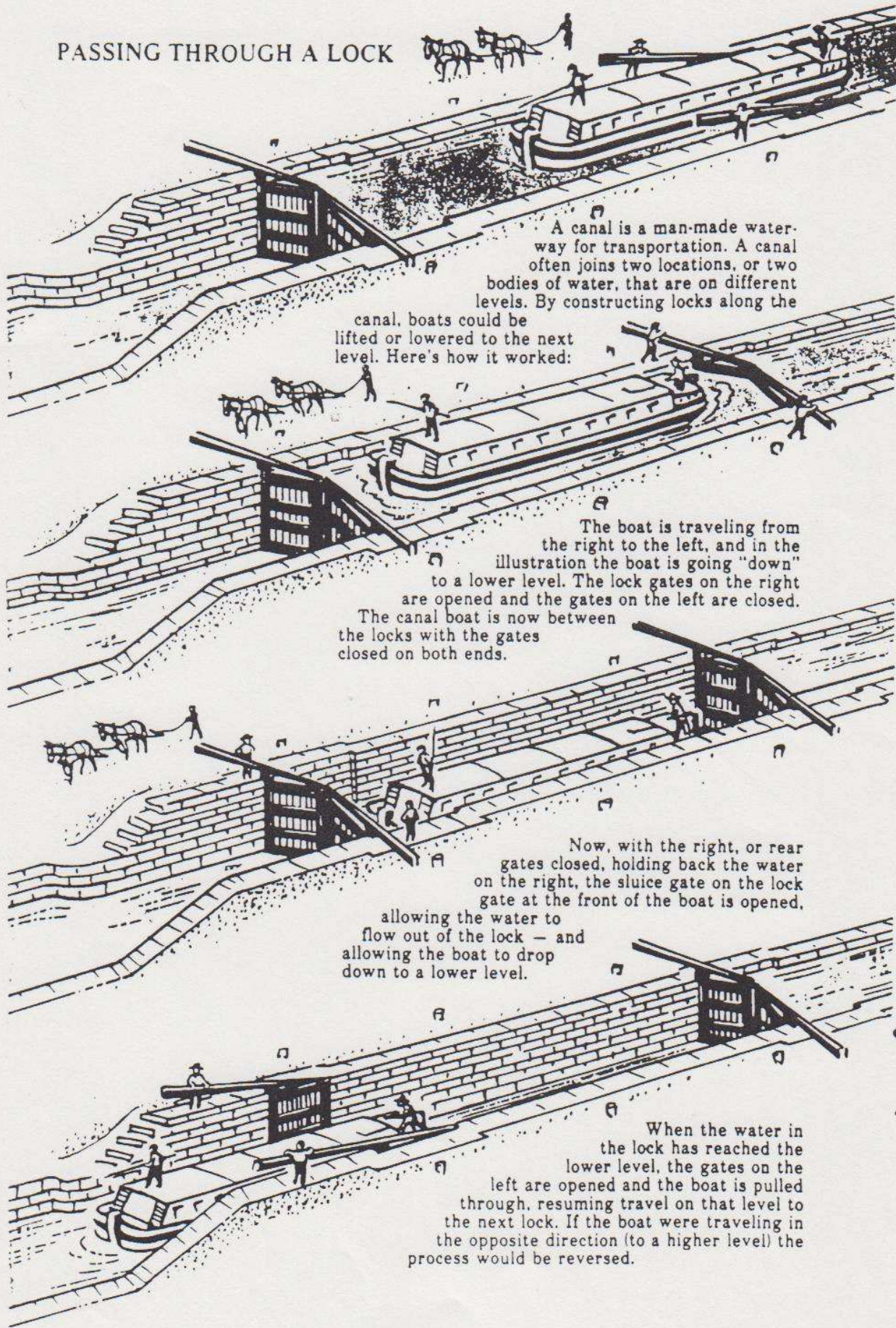
DAM



COVERED BRIDGE STYLE AQUEDUCT



PASSING THROUGH A LOCK



A canal is a man-made waterway for transportation. A canal often joins two locations, or two bodies of water, that are on different levels. By constructing locks along the

canal, boats could be lifted or lowered to the next level. Here's how it worked:

The boat is traveling from the right to the left, and in the illustration the boat is going "down" to a lower level. The lock gates on the right are opened and the gates on the left are closed.

The canal boat is now between the locks with the gates closed on both ends.

Now, with the right, or rear gates closed, holding back the water on the right, the sluice gate on the lock gate at the front of the boat is opened,

allowing the water to flow out of the lock — and allowing the boat to drop down to a lower level.

When the water in the lock has reached the lower level, the gates on the left are opened and the boat is pulled through, resuming travel on that level to the next lock. If the boat were traveling in the opposite direction (to a higher level) the process would be reversed.

TOWPATH NOTES

**CANAL SOCIETY SPRING TOUR
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