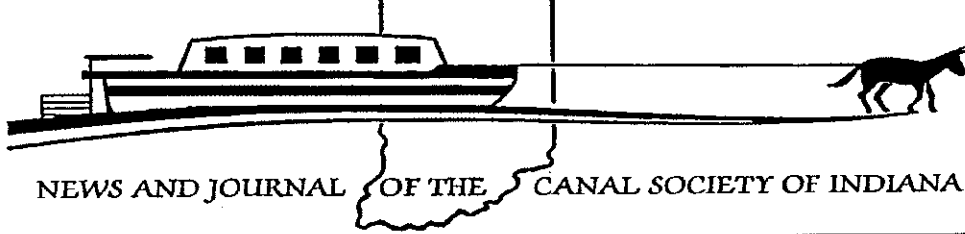


THE  
**HOOSIER-PACKET**

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P.O. BOX 10808 FORT WAYNE, IN 46854

MARCH 2016

## PROJECT GIVEN GO-AHEAD



A view like this down the Central Canal at Broad Ripple in northwestern Indianapolis will soon be obstructed by the erection of a flood gate as part of a levee project to prevent flooding of communities in low lying areas along the White River. Photo by Bob Schmidt

### FEATURES

1. Central Canal Flood Project
3. Canawlers At Rest: Nathan Billings Palmer
9. Invitation To CCWEC Annual Meeting
10. Zoar's Canal Boat Fleet
12. Abandoning The Wabash & Erie Canal
15. Canal Boat Progress
17. News From Delphi: An Organization Of Volunteers, Winter On The Canal
21. Jones Finds W&E Articles
22. Indiana Historian Ross Lockridge And Son
23. Early Ft. Wayne Postal History
24. Contributions To CSI, Membership Form

### CENTRAL CANAL FLOOD PROJECT

Since 2011 & 12 the Canal Society of Indiana (CSI) has followed the planning of a flood wall, which would protect communities along the White River in northern Indianapolis. In the November 2012 issue of *The Hoosier Packet* we covered this proposal and the controversy among local residences.

On December 17, 2015 Indianapolis public works officials announced that they would complete a floodwall at the cost of \$40 million of which 25% will

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## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

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be paid by the city with the balance paid by the Army Corps of Engineers. An earthen levee will be extended from Kessler Boulevard to Butler University. This levee will cross the Central Canal near Capital Avenue where a floodgate will be constructed. This floodgate will block the aesthetic view of the pristine canal and also be somewhat of a problem for joggers and pedestrians.

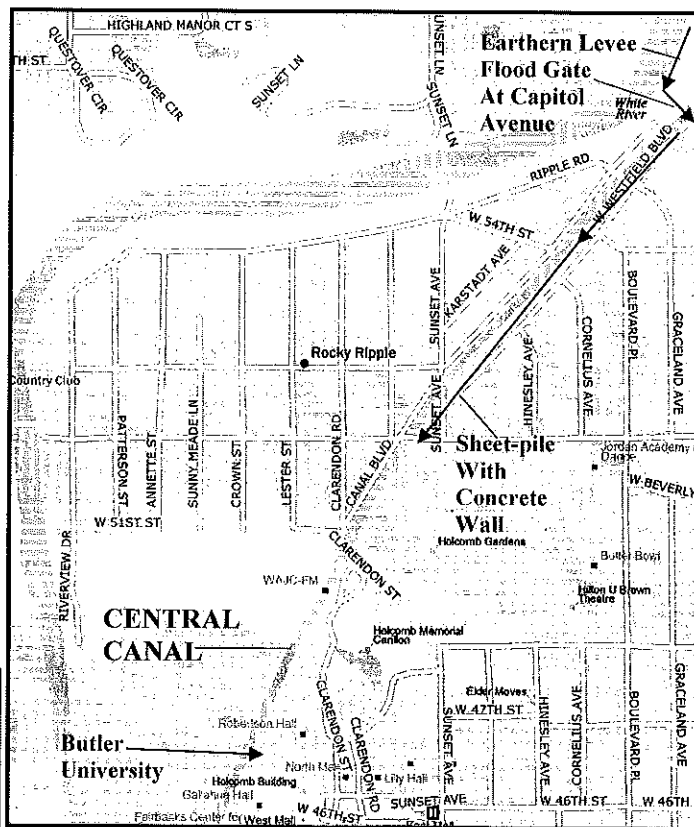
One of the city's proposals would have built the flood wall on the other side of the canal and not cross the prism. However, the soil on that side wasn't strong enough to support a wall.

The current plan will also require the removal of a lot of trees and vegetation along the canal. This has local residents concerned about the impact on their view and the impact on wildlife currently seen along the route.

CSI agrees that flooding has been a problem. From 1950-2002 four critical floods occurred in the area along the White River. In January 1991, floods forced the evacuation of 500 homes., disrupted utility services and damaged roadways. It was determined that during this flood, water came through and under the existing Warfleigh Levee. During further studies, it was discovered that the potential existed for the levee to be breached before the water rose over the top of it.

The floodwall will consist of a steel sheet pile wall with a decorative faced concrete wall and cap around the top of the sheet pile wall. CSI was hopeful that a solution to this flooding problem could be resolved with less impact on the canal itself.

Partial map of Northwestern Indianapolis Along The Central Canal



CANAWLERS  
AT REST

NATHAN  
BILLINGS  
PALMER

Find-A-Grave #10402874

b. August 27, 1790

d. April 13, 1875

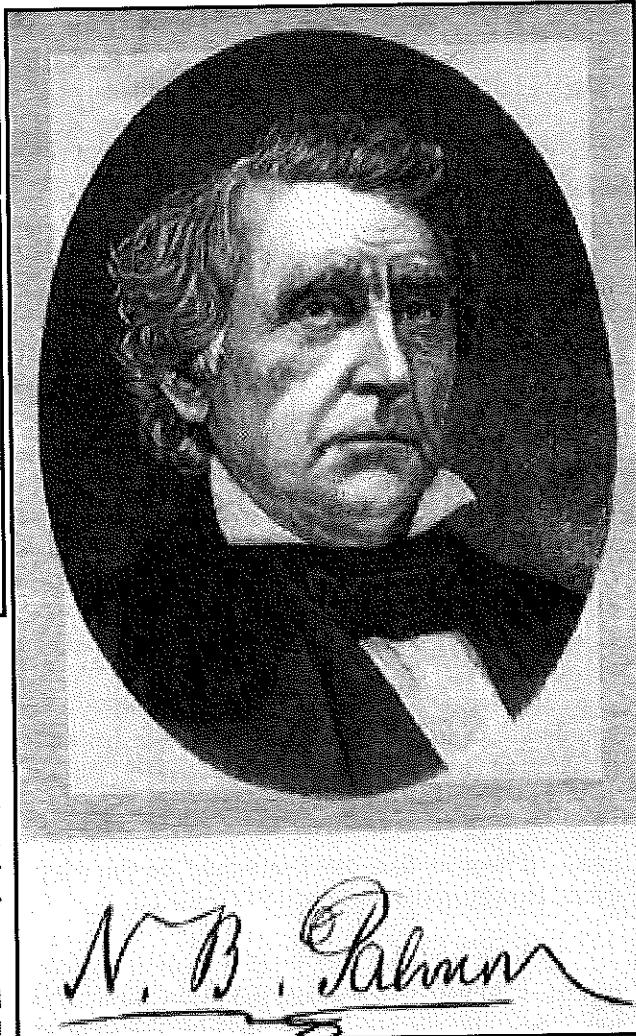
By Carolyn I. Schmidt

The Palmer family was founded in America in colonial days. Representatives of the family enrolled and served on the Continental line during the Revolutionary War.

Nathan Billings Palmer was born in Stonington, Connecticut, on August 27, 1790 to Nathan and Salome (Smith) Palmer. They had an older daughter named Bolsey. Nathan's father died the following year leaving Salome a widow with two young children.

In 1880, when Nathan was 10 years old, he and his mother moved to New York. His mother remarried a Mr. Gillett and they had 5 children, giving Nathan five half siblings. While growing up in New York, Nathan met Chloe Sacket and they were married there in 1811. In 1812 their first son was born. That year Nathan and his family emigrated to Pennsylvania where he soon took part in public life. He held many offices of trust, which he fulfilled to the benefit of the State.

In 1819 Nathan, Chloe and children Charles Clinton, Amelia Eliza, William Sacket, and perhaps Jane C. moved to Jefferson county, Indiana. They resided there for fourteen years during which time their other children Jerome, Louisa Salome, Jane Marie, Minerva A., Trumbull G., Blackford M., Marshal Edward, and Edward Livingston were born.



Nathan held many important offices in Jefferson county. He was a Representative of the county in the State Legislature and was elected Speaker of the Indiana House of Representatives from December 2, 1833—February 3, 1834. He was said to be a prompt and efficient presiding officer, who was knowledgeable of parliamentary rules and impartially applied them to cases that arose.

The 1834-35 Indiana's Legislature elected Nathan Treasurer of State for three years. He served for seven years from February 13, 1834 to February 9, 1841. His salary was \$400 a year plus prerequisites.

## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

A new court-house was built and taken over by the Legislature before it was completed. The House of Representatives sat in the lower room and the Senate in the upper. Nathan occupied the building especially erected for him. All other State officers found offices wherever they could.

This new office caused Nathan to spend even more time in the state capitol carrying out his duties. He decided to move his family to Indianapolis in the spring of 1835 and they became permanent residents. There his children Nathan B. Jr., and Mary Love were born making a total of 14 children.

After the State Board of Agriculture was chartered in February 1835, a County Agriculture Society was formed that June. Even though Nathan had just taken up residence, he was elected its president and Douglass Maguire was elected secretary. The society collected subscriptions for a premium fund. The board of justices also contributed fifty dollars to the fund. The fair was held that October at the Marion county courthouse in Indianapolis with exhibitions set out on its yard. On October 31 a total of one hundred and eighty-four dollars in premiums was disbursed. The next year four hundred dollars was collected for premiums. It looked like the fair would be an ongoing event. However, the Panic of 1837 ruined it.

While Nathan was in charge of the State finances, the Panic of 1837 and the Depression of 1839 took place. Indiana was deeply in debt. The State Legislature authorized Nathan as State Treasurer to issue large amounts of State scrip as a circulating medium in payment of its indebtedness to contractors on the public works of roads, canals, and railroads created through the Mammoth Internal Improvement Act of 1836. Nathan's signature, "N. B. Palmer," was affixed to two classes of scrip. The first, or oldest class, was dated 1840 and bore six per cent interest. The second, new or "green," as it was called, class was dated 1841 and bore the fourth of one per cent interest. These two kinds of scrip representing money formed the principal circulating medium of Indiana for several years. Although he had much to deal with at this time, he retired after several years without any slander over his public acts, which is very uncommon when someone has

charge of large amounts of public moneys.

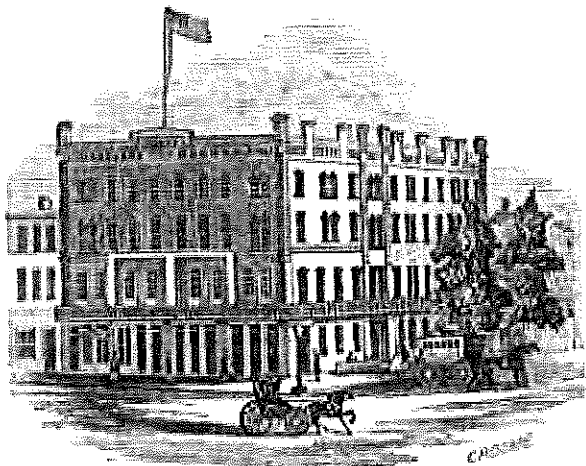
When the old board of canal fund commissioners was dissolved on February 24, 1840, a new two person board was created. Nathan Palmer and Milton Stapp made up this board. Nathan's service began on February 24, 1840, but, before the end of the year, he resigned. Perhaps he was too busy with his duties as State Treasurer and his construction of a hotel.

In 1840 Nathan started building a hotel at the southeast corner of Illinois and Washington Streets in Indianapolis. It was a two-story brick building that had a wooden story on top of it. The "Palmer House," as it was called, was opened in the summer of 1841 by John C. Parker of Charleston, Clarke county, Indiana. Nathan kept this house from 1841 to 1851.

The Palmer House became the Democratic headquarters and housed dignitaries. On June 11, 1842 President Martin Van Buren was accompanied from the bridge at Pogue's creek by four military companies, the fire companies and general citizens to the Palmer House where he stayed. On August 25, 1844 a reception for General Cass, who was on his way to Dayton, was held at the hotel. In January 1848, Andrew Kennedy, an ex-member of Congress and, at the time, a member of the Legislature, died there of small pox. This caused a panic among the members of the Legislature, and they adjourned. The U. S. Federal Census of 1850 shows Nathan, Chloe, Blackford, Edward, Nathan Jr., Mary, Chas. and Marshall Palmer living at the Palmer House with fifty-two other residents some of which were servants. Nathan was listed as hotel keeper with real estate valued at \$23,000.

John Nowland in his *Early Reminiscences of Indianapolis* writes about Nathan and the Palmer House saying, "none that ever sat at its hospitable board can forget the superabundance of every thing upon it, and the superior style in which it was gotten up; without ostentatious display of fine table furniture that could not be consumed, the eye met on every hand something far more interesting in the empty stomach of the weary traveler. Very little ever went on the table but had been subjected to the strict scrutiny of Mrs. Palmer."

**PALMER HOUSE**  
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.



S. BARBOUR, - - - Proprietor.

THIS OLD AND POPULAR HOTEL  
HAS BEEN  
**RE-BUILT THIS SEASON**

And Furnished in the Latest Style,  
WITH ENTIRE NEW FURNITURE

AND CONTAINS ABOUT 110 ROOMS, WELL VENTILATED

And Lighted, and is now open for the reception of Guests.

It is three squares from the Union Depot, one from the State House, and in the immediate neighborhood of most of the Business Houses of the City.

**PALMER HOUSE INDIANAPOLIS, IND.**  
S. BARBOUR PROPRIETOR

This old and popular hotel has been re-built this season and furnished in the latest style, with entire new furniture and contains about 110 rooms, well ventilated and lighted, and is now open for the reception of Guests.

It is three squares from the Train Depot, one from the State House, and in the immediate neighborhood of most of the Business Houses of the City.

Dr. Barbour, who leased the Palmer House, made a four-story brick of it in 1856 and extended it southward to the alley. Years later it was rearranged

and improved. Its name was changed to the "Occidental."

After his retirement as State Treasurer in 1841, Nathan was made examiner of the State Bank and its branches. He was to report their financial condition to the next annual session of the State Legislature. This was a position in which bribery and corruption could easily have been accomplished, but Nathan would have no part of it.

While examining the books of the Terre Haute branch, and counting the business paper and bank notes on hand, he found a deficit of about twenty thousand dollars. The cashier said this would be accounted for in the retired paper, or bills that were too worn for circulation tied up in five hundred dollar packages and placed in the bank vault to be exchanged for new paper from the mother bank. He handed Nathan about ten thousand dollars of retired money, which Nathan counted and returned to the cashier. The bank vault was so damp that the notes had adhered to each other and as they were counted the ends were loosened.

The cashier asked to be excused from further counting that day saying he had company at his home. He invited Nathan to join them at tea. Although Nathan declined the invitation, he let the cashier return home.

On the next day as the counting continued, Nathan was surprised when he was presented the same packages of notes he had counted the day before. An attempt had been made to disguise them by changing the colored ribbons that bound them together. Nathan saw other marks on the notes that he had seen the day before and realized the deception. He did not mention his discovery to the cashier. He just asked him to have the directors assembled.

Nathan told the directors that "he had been received and treated very kindly by the cashier, for which he felt grateful to that gentleman, but that he relied too much upon his credulity or want of business capacity, by presenting him those (pointing to the packages) retired bills to be counted again and credited to the bank."

## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

Immediately the cashier admitted his attempted deception and Nathan rebuked him in such a way that he never attempted anything of the kind again, at least with Nathan. The directors dismissed him and he left the State. The directors probably knew the true amount, but the cashier took the fall for them.

On July 31, 1847 Nathan Palmer was appointed by James Whitcomb, the governor of Indiana, to a three-year-term on the Board of Trustees of the Wabash & Erie Canal. This was when the State of Indiana turned the canal over to the bond holders to solve the debt issue. The Board of Trustees consisted of a 3-person board. Two members were selected by the bondholders and one person was selected by the State of Indiana (governor or the legislature). Nathan resigned a few months later in December 1847 and in January 1848 Austin M. Puett of Parke county, Indiana took over the position.

When Nathan concluded that railroads would eventually supplant canals, he became a mover in constructing railroads throughout the state of Indiana. The Madison and Indianapolis Railroad, the first railroad in the state, "was in no small degree the result of Mr. Palmer's exertions, and the company for a number of years had the benefit of his services as president and chief executive officer to the line," according to Sulgrove.

On May 17, 1854 Nicholas McCarty passed away. See the August 2002 "Canawlers At Rest: Nicholas McCarty" by Chuck Huppert in *The Hoosier Packet*. At that time a committee consisting of James M. Ray, Robert Hanna, Bethuel F. Morris, Calvin Fletcher, John D. Defrees, John M. Talbott, and Nathan B. Palmer prepared a resolution honoring McCarty that was adopted by a meeting of citizens. A portion of it said, "In the important public trusts committed to him (McCarty)—as commissioner of the canal fund in effecting the first loan of the State, as senator of this county, and in other engagements—he manifested remarkable judiciousness and ability."

The U. S. Federal Census of 1860 shows Nathan, Chloe, and Charles Palmer living in Ward 5 of Indianapolis. Also living with them are Louisa, Ella,

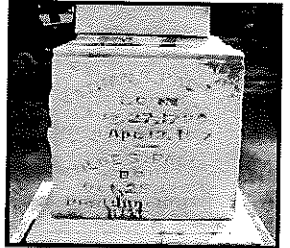
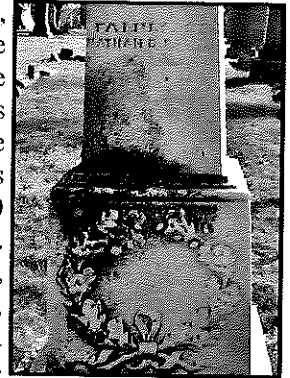
George, and Frank McDougal, Mary C. Morrison and Anne Gumert. Nathan's real estate was valued at \$8,672 and his personal estate at \$1,000. The 1870 Census shows Nathan's real estate value at \$300,000 and personal estate at \$1,000. Living with him are Chloe, Charles C., Edward, Hannah, and George B. Palmer, Estella Elizabeth (a servant) and William McDougal. Nathan and wife are retired with no occupation.

On June 10, 1871 Nathan's wife, Chloe, passed away. Sometime thereafter he married Julia A. Martindale according to his will published in the *Indianapolis Sentinel*.

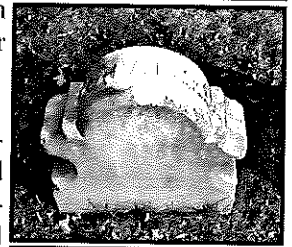
Nathan was a member of the Democratic party. He commanded the support of others for the party and at one time was the national chairman. He was also a councilman from the 5th ward in 1835 and held several other minor offices.

On April 13, 1875 Nathan Billings Palmer passed away. He was buried in Section 25, Lot 232 of Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis, Marion county, Indiana. A large family marker carries the birth and death dates of Nathan and his wife Chole. He and other family members also have head stones.

"As a public servant, having large and important trusts in his hands, his ca-



FAMILY OF  
NATHAN B. PALMER  
NATHAN B. PALMER  
BORN  
Aug. 27, 1790  
Died Apr. 13, 1875  
CHLOE S. PALMER  
BORN  
Oct. 28, 1794  
Died Jun. 10, 1871



N. B. PALMER  
1835-1875  
Sec. 25, Lot 232  
Crown Hill Cemetery  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
Photo by Colleen Starks Duvall

**A FULL SYNOPSIS OF THE WILL OF THE LATE NATHAN B. PALMER-  
WHO THE HEIRS ARE-  
DISPOSITION OF OVER \$300,000 IN MONEY AND VALUABLE REAL ESTATE**

Published in the *Indianapolis Sentinel* in 1875

The last Will and testament of Nathan B. Palmer, probated on Thursday, makes the following disposition of his property:

The valuable property located on the west side of Illinois Street between Maryland Street and the first alley south contains 12 lots. Of these his daughter, Louisa S. McDougal gets three, on condition that at her death they are to go to her sons George P. and Frank McDougal; two are given to his son Edward L. Palmer; one to Sophronia Duvell daughter of Boisey (Beisey? Bolsey) Nelson, his "only sister"; two are given, jointly, to his children Louisa S. McDougal, Blackford M. Palmer, Marshall E. Palmer, and Edward L. Palmer; one to his granddaughter Carrie Lack, daughter of Jennie (Jane) McDougal. One lot was given to James W. Dunn of Logansport, husband of Amelia, the testor's oldest daughter, but as both died before the testor, this lot falls to the general estate.

Of this subdivision known as Palmer's addition, which lies in the south part of the city near the Jeffersonville railroad, the following disposition is made: Louisa S. McDougal, seven lots; Henrietta Horn, (daughter of Minera), two lots; Emma Anderson, (another daughter of Minera's), three lots; Latham McDougal, William McDougal, Lillie McDougal (children of Jennie M. McDougal), three lots each; William Palmer, 3 lots; Frank Palmer, 3 lots; Williamson Dunn, 3 lots; six other lots were bequeathed to two grandchildren, who are now deceased, and these lots belong to the general estate.

Of the lands west of White River and adjoining West Indianapolis a strip 20 rods wide is given to his grandchildren, Susan Tilghman, Latham McDougal, Carrie Lack, William McDougal, jointly except that Balckford M. Palmer is to have the use and occupancy of the same for four years; another portion of the same size is given to William S. Palmer, Frank Palmer, Catherine Hunter (daughter of his oldest son, William S. Palmer), and Chloe Palmer (daughter of his son, Marshall E.) jointly. Some lands in Taylor County, Iowa are bequeathed to James W. Dunn, but as he died before the death of the testator the request is a nullity. The following bequest of money and personal effects are made: George P. McDougal, \$500; Carrie Lack, \$1000; Chloe Palmer, \$1000; Simon S. Gillett of Iowa (half brother), \$1000; Howard Palmer, \$50; Wm. Alex Morrison, \$50; doorplate to Blackford M. Palmer; Mary H. Palmer (daughter of Edward L. Palmer), \$1500; his second wife Julia A. Palmer, all the household furniture except such articles as are otherwise specially bequested to others, and also the occupancy and use of the homestead for one year from his death. The Will further provides that, having disposed of the Palmer House property, the testator directs that all money of his estate, after paying all legacies provided for in the will and all of his just debts, shall be equally portioned among my children then living, except an amount of \$8,000, to be deducted from Balckford M. Palmer's portion and to be divided equally among the following grandchildren: Susan Tilghman, Carrie Lack, Latham McDougal, Willie McDougal, and Lillie McDougal. The testator in one of the codicils to his will bequeathed to his heirs all of his stock in the First National Bank of Indianapolis, amounting to 100 shares, but this he subsequently revoked by an item in a later codicil. The Rev. Samuel T. Gillett, a half brother of the testator, is made the sole executor. The document contains no less than 28,000 words. Two sons of the testator's and one daughter died since the making of the Will in September of 1870 and according to the law the bequest to these lapse and become part of the general fund of the estate. It is thought that an attempt will be made to break the will, because certain provisions are not satisfactory to some of the heirs. The first wife of the testator died after the making of the will, and this together with the death of the three children, necessitates the additional number of codicils. Mr. Palmer's second wife, now his widow, is provided for by a marriage contract.

reer was marked by the most scrupulous integrity and exactness," according to Sulgrove's *History of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana*. Nowland, in his *Early Reminiscences of Indianapolis* says, "Mr Palmer's whole public life, as well as his private, seemed to be without reproach or fault; and while he was highly appreciated as a public man, he was no less esteemed as a gentleman and a citizen."

THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

NATHAN BILLINGS PALMER'S FAMILY

<u>Name</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Death</u>	<u>Cemetery</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Marriage</u>	<u>Place</u>
Palmer, Nathan	1740		1791				
m. Smith, Salome (Gillet)*	1770		1850				
Palmer, Boisey							
m. Nelson							
Nelson, Sophronia							
m. Duveil							
<b>Palmer, Nathan Billings</b>							
m1 Sacket, Chloe	8-27-1790	Stonington CN	4-13-1875	Crown Hill	Indianapolis IN		1811 New York NY
Palmer, Charles Clinton	1794		6-10-1871				
Palmer, Amelia Eliza	1812						
m. Dunn, James Wilson	1814		1872				
Dunn, Williamson	1807		1874				
Palmer, William Sacket							
Palmer, Catherine	6-33-1816	Potter Co PA	11-10-1863		Princeton IN		
m. Hunter							
Palmer, Jane C							
Palmer, Jerome							
Palmer, Louisa Salome	4-26-1822	IN	1907				
m. McDougal							
McDougal, George P							
McDougal, Frank							
McDougal, Jennie (Jane)							
McDougal, Carrie							
m. Lack							
McDougal, Latham							
McDougal, William	1848						
McDougal, Lillie							
Palmer, Jane Marie	5-16-1824	IN	5-26-1862				
Palmer, Minerva A	10-21-1826		7-10-1859				
m. Horn, Henry Jonah							
Horn, Henry Jonah							
Horn, Emma							
m. Anderson							
Palmer, Trumbull G							
Palmer, Blackford M	1830	IN	1876				
Palmer, Marshal Edward	1832	IN	6-13-1890		Indianapolis IN		
Palmer, Chloe							
Palmer, Edward Livingston	1-12-1834	Madison IN	10-25-1882				
m. Stephens, Elizabeth E	1842		1925				
Palmer, Mary Holcomb	1873		1883		Indianapolis IN		4-03-1872
Palmer, Susan Elizabeth	1875		1880				



## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

Name	Birth	Place	Death	Cemetery	Place	Marriage	Place
Palmer, Edna Louise	1877		1880				
Palmer, Isabella Stephens	1880		1937				
m. Korbly, Charles A	3-??-1871						
Palmer, Mary H	1883		1857				
Palmer, Lucy May	1836						
<u>Palmer, Nathan B</u>	1-??-1839		9-18-1859				
<u>Palmer, Mary Love</u>							
m. Morrison, Wm. Alex							
m. Martindale, Julia A**							
Gillet, Salome	1801		1880				
Gillet, Simon S	1802		1818				
Gillet, Polly	1804						
Gillet, Edgar P	1807						
Gillet, Rev. Samuel Trumbull	1809		1890				

\* After Nathan Palmer died, his wife Julia married Gillett. This made Bolsey and Nathan B. Palmer half siblings of Salome, Simon S, Polly, Edgar P. and Rev. Samuel Trumbull Gillett.

\*\*According to the Will published in the Indianapolis Sentinel, Nathan B's second marriage was to Julia A. Martindale.

### Sources:

Ancestry.com

<http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/25463818/person/26655205794/media/3?pgnu...>

A Full Synopsis of the Will of the Late Nathan B. Palmer—Who the Heirs Are—Disposition of Over \$300,000 in Money and Valuable Real Estate

Public Member Trees:

Cain Boyd

Duncan Family

Henselmeier Family

Lizzie's Tree

Dunn, Jacob Piatt. *Greater Indianapolis: The History, the Industries, the Institutions, and the People of a City of Homes.* Chicago, IL: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1910.

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Nowland, John H. B. *Sketches of Prominent Citizens of 1876 With a Few of the Pioneers of the City and County Who Have Passed Away.* Indianapolis, IN: Tilford & Carlton, Printers, 1877.

Sulgrove, B. R. *History of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana.* Philadelphia, PA: L.H. Everts & Co., 1884.

U.S. Federal Census: 1820, 1840

U.S. Passport Application 1795-1925 (May 15, 1851)

## YOU ARE INVITED

**Carroll County's W & E Canal Annual Meeting  
Canal Interpretive Center**

**1030 N. Washington St., Delphi, Indiana**

**7:00 p.m.—April 19, 2016**

Refreshments following program

**Guest speaker: Liza Hyatt**

Liza Hyatt, an Indianapolis poet/author whose great-great grandfathers on her paternal grandmother's side were Irish immigrants working on Indiana's canals, will share their history through stories and poems accompanied with Celtic harp. One worked on the Wabash and Erie Canal and the other on the Whitewater Canal first as a stone cutter and later as a lock-keeper.

Liza's program weaves together the history of how the land and people changed through the canal's construction, including stories of the Native Americans whose land was used for the canal, European immigrants who built it, and slaves escaping to freedom following the towpath north.

Liza received a Bi-centennial Legacy Project grant through the Indiana Arts Commission to develop this program. She also presented it at the Wabash County Historical Museum.

**ZOAR'S CANAL BOAT FLEET**

From Canal Comments No. 71

By Terry K. Woods

During the halcyon days of shipping on the Ohio Canal, say between the mid 1830s to the mid 1850s, nearly every business establishment along or near the canal's route could be counted upon to possess one or more canal boats. The Communal Settlement of Zoar, situated in the Valley of the Tuscarawas River between Bolivar and Canal Dover, was no exception.<sup>1</sup> Local Lore states that four Ohio Canal boats were registered in the name of Joseph P. Bimeler who was the Cashier and Agent General representing the Society's members, which at that time numbered up to 500 souls. We have the names of four Zoar canal boats, but we are not positive of the actual total number.

The ECONOMY, a scow-built craft, was probably the Zoarite's first canal boat. It, reportedly, was used mainly to shunt iron ore, castings, and finished iron products between the community's two iron furnaces and its warehouse on the canal. The Zoar community constructed their first iron furnace, along a quarter mile branch canal west of the Ohio Canal and Lock No. 8 north of the village, in 1834. Their second furnace, near the junction of One Leg (Connoton) Creek and the Tuscarawas River, was purchased from several Canton Entrepreneurs in 1835, so the advent of the ECONOMY no doubt dates from around this time. It is conceivable that the ECONOMY was home built. Several craftsmen in the village were capable of turning out such a scow-built, flat-bottomed craft.

The second canal boat operated by the Zoar community was the INDUSTRY.<sup>2</sup> It is said to have been built to specification at a boat yard to the north and was in operation by 1837.<sup>3</sup> Its first Captain was a Zoarite, Johannes Petermann, who was barely 18 years old at the time. An "outsider" from Pennsylvania, James Rutter, became Captain of the INDUSTRY the next year. The INDUSTRY was a large craft for its day, designed to hold up to 60 tons of cargo or a combination of cargo and passengers. The boat's crew consisted of two steersmen, two drivers, a bowsman and a cook. Rutter's salary for the 1838 boating season was

\$243, though he was expected to pay his own expenses.<sup>4</sup>

Beginning with the boating season of 1841, Captain Rutter, still with his residence listed as Pennsylvania, signed a new agreement with Joseph Bimeler, this time as Captain of the Zoar canal boat, FRIENDSHIP. It isn't clear if this was a new boat or merely the INDUSTRY with a new name. There is no record of a new craft being constructed at this time or of the original INDUSTRY being sold.

By the beginning of the 1844 boating season, Rutter was still Captain of the FRIENDSHIP. By now, though, his place of residence was noted in the contract as "Tuscarawas County." That year's contract contained a bit more detail and specified that he "go from this place north and obtain freight from Cleveland and interim points". A curious addition was made to the contract to the effect that Rutter agreed to "take care of and not mistreat or overwork the horses." Canal boat Captains of this era were notorious for "burning out" canal horses. Perhaps Bimeler just wanted to ensure that Captain Rutter was not one of them.

A new canal boat was built in 1849 for the Zoarites at Jacob Barnhardt's boat yard in Peninsula, Ohio for the sum of \$1,100. The old FRIENDSHIP was sold to S. Burns and John Hill of Bolivar on April 15, 1849, who promptly changed the boat's name to the BOLIVAR. The transaction was registered at the Cleveland Toll Collector's Office. Joseph Bimeler had registered the new boat at the Akron Office on April 5, 1849 as the FRIENDSHIP.

The boat INDUSTRY never appears in any canal boat registry so it may be that the Zoar community only owned and operated three canal boats, and probably only two at any one time. One boat was probably the INDUSTRY/FRIENDSHIP or the 1849 FRIENDSHIP. The second craft was no doubt the venerable ECONOMY that seems to have been a "Jack of All Trades" for a long time. There is an 1847 note to Bimeler in Zoar from the Captain of the FRIENDSHIP stating that he was "iced in" at Bolivar and would have to remain there until a thaw unless the "Scow Boat" could be sent up to break ice for him.<sup>5</sup>

## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

Johannes Petermann was Captain of the FRIENDSHIP during the late 1840s. Apparently he was now considered mature enough for the duty. Petermann and his wife made the 85 mile trip to Cleveland quite often. It seems odd that Petermann was named Captain of the FRIENDSHIP when he was also the town's Doctor. Of course, he did have some experience and he was a member of the Zoar community.

The Zoar Trustees picked the tasks each member of the community was to perform. The trips to Cleveland, the big city, were enjoyed by the Petermann's. However, their two little girls were sometimes not allowed to go along, but were, instead, placed in the girl's dormitory until their parent's returned.<sup>6</sup> Few names of Zoarites who were connected actively with canal boating are available. John Sturm, at the age of 74 in 1911, remembered that he and Mathias Disinger drove the horses that pulled the canal boats for one summer. Though many boatmen used mules at that time, the Zoarites always used horses.<sup>7</sup>

Iron Ore was among the first commodities shipped from Zoar on the canal. Of course a great deal of Pig Iron was shipped from the two furnaces, and the foundry at Zoar found a ready market for iron implements. These were all shipped by canal, though not necessarily on a Zoar canal boat.<sup>8</sup> Zoar iron stoves were known far and wide for their efficiency and craftsmanship. Tanned hides, and farm produce were big export items for many years, and the various warehouses and mills in and around Zoar provided grain and flour for export. A pottery was tried, but short-lived, as was silk manufacturing. Aside from grain, flour and produce, the most famous Zoar export was beer, known universally for its quality, taste and potency.<sup>9</sup>

In 1830, in preparation for canal boat traffic, the Zoarites petitioned the State to allow them to make the Tuscarawas Feeder they had constructed in 1827-29 navigable. Then they had enlarged their 1818 Mill Race and built a Guard Lock at its head to allow commercial boats to leave the Ohio Canal, cross the Tuscarawas River and enter the race to the mill and other Zoar Industries. To date, though there was obvious intent to accept canal boats into the village of Zoar

proper, there is no evidence that any boat actually made the trip. Canal Boat Captains didn't care to brave the "raging Tuscarawas" and the construction of a new, six story mill across the canal below Zoar Lock on the main canal in 1837 made crossing the River unnecessary.<sup>10</sup>

It isn't entirely clear just how long the Zoarites operated their canal boat "fleet." The Pittsburgh & Western Railroad pierced the eastern portions of Zoar lands in 1854, thus negating the village's dependence upon the canal. Operations at the two Iron Furnaces were discontinued about this time. Iron Ore was shipped regularly to furnaces in Massillon into the 1880s, but, by now, via railroad. The ECONOMY was no doubt allowed to rot away at one of the iron furnaces' docks.

The Zoarite's distrust of government officials and regulations apparently extended to the registration of its canal boats. Only the ECONOMY and the two FRIENDSHIPS were recorded in the official registers. The ECONOMY was recorded late in it's life and the first FRIENDSHIP only when it was sold.

A note written from the Zoar community to a business concern in Cleveland on April 17, 1855 states, "FRIENDSHIP not running to Cleveland this spring. No produce to ship. Aqueduct four miles north under repair till 27<sup>th</sup> of this month."

The last canal boat entry pertaining to Zoar's canal boat "fleet" was at the Akron office, dated, August 8, 1855. It states, "I. J. Wolf, residing in Rochester, Ohio do certify that I am the owner of the canal boat FALCON of Rochester, late the FRIENDSHIP of Zoar."

We can say, then, that the community of Zoar actively operated canal boats from the early 1830s into, perhaps, 1855, a span of over twenty years.

<sup>1</sup> ZOAR AND THE OHIO CANAL, a paper presented by Terry Woods at the Zoar Schoolhouse, April 7, 2012.

<sup>2</sup>There is some evidence that the Zoarites at one time contracted with a J. Washborn of Dover to use his canal boat CUBA for their use. Zoar was given as the home port for Washborn's boat on April 13, 1839

## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

<sup>3</sup>CANAL FEVER, Lynn Metzger & Peg Bobel, The Kent State University Press, 2009. Kathy Fernandous in her article, THE HANDS OF THE DILIGENT, states on Pg 113 that the ECONOMY was operating by 1837.

<sup>4</sup>Agreement between James Rutter late of Pennsylvania and Joseph M. Bimeler of Zoar, April 22, 1839.

<sup>5</sup>Original in the Zoar Archives of the Ohio Historical Society.

<sup>6</sup>THE ZOAR STORY, Hilda Dischinger Morhart - Siebert Publishing Company Dover, Ohio, Second Edition, 1969, Pgs 26 & 27.

<sup>7</sup>IBID, Pg. 33.

<sup>8</sup>There are numerous references to outside boats being used to carry Zoar products when needed

<sup>9</sup>THE ZOAR STORY. Pg.63-65

<sup>10</sup>THE ZOAR SOCIETY, Edger B. Nixon. (PhD Dissertation) The Ohio State University, 1933 Pgs. 63-65.

The new mill across the canal was not a financial success, but it remained active and acted as a warehouse for canal shipments.

### ABANDONING THE WABASH AND ERIE CANAL

(continued from last month)

*Last month we published the report of the Wabash & Erie Canal's Board of Trustees to Indiana's General Assembly. The following letters from the canal's chief engineer and superintendent were attached to this report:*

#### CHIEF ENGINEER'S REPORT.

OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER,  
FORT WAYNE, December 16, 1874

To the Board of Trustees of the Wabash & Erie Canal.

GENTLEMEN:—The most marked event connected with the management of the Canal during the year 1874, was the total abandonment, in January last, of the important contract for repairs, made by the Board 23d June, 1846 with Messrs. A. P. Edgerton, Reed Case, Luther Jewett, and other parties of means and character, residing at Lafayette, Fort Wayne, and intermediate points, whose business interests, connected them with the Canal.

The method of maintaining the Canal by repair contracts was forced upon the board as early as 1859. It was then adopted as an expedient, affording the surest reliance for maintaining the Canal with its limited revenues, and the Trustees were careful to select, as contractors, only men of character and those whose interests in the business of the Wabash Valley, would be likely to prompt them to the use of the utmost economy and care. The Trustees were also careful to retain the control, to be exercised through their Chief Engineer, (also an officer of the Trust), of the plan and the time of making permanent repairs and the rebuilding

of structures.

By reference to former reports, it will be seen that the first repaid contract was made May 13, 1859. Among the parties to this contract, were A. P. Edgerton, Pliny Hoagland, Hugh McCulloch, O. Bird, and others. This contract was afterwards renewed with the same parties December, 1861, with certain modifications calculated to strengthen the work by authorizing the investment of capital in boats and otherwise, and was extended to 1873.

But the great floods in the Wabash in the early part of 1866, so damaged the large dam at Delphi, and several aqueducts and other structures, that the parties mentioned were unable and unwilling to repair the work, and this led to the consummation of the contract first above referred to, which was executed in June, 1866, and under which new parties were added to the original company by mutual agreement, "with large means and more extended business interests," as before stated.

The abandonment of their contract, just before the opening of navigation, greatly embarrassed those in charge of the Canal. It was manifestly out of their power to arrange a contract with new parties at so late a period with any promise of success.

Having thus been compelled to abandon the system of repair contracts, and fall back again to the former method, I have thought best to make this brief reference to the several contracts made since 1859, which contracts will be found fully set forth in the reports of the Board under their respective dates.

Under the circumstances, the policy adopted by the

## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

trustees was manifestly the best possible, to-wit, the appointment of a General Superintendent, to take entire charge of the collection of tolls and water rents, and expend the same along the line as far west as the means available would open the work. Wilson Smith, who was appointed Superintendent, is well fitted for these duties by his long experience on the Canal, and his well known integrity and sound practical judgment.

Mr. Smith is now making his last tour of inspection through the entire Canal for the purpose of settling the accounts for the year, and will in a few days report the details of his supervision.

In the condition of the Canal, as herein stated, the amount of tolls and water rents received is, of course, small amounting to \$7,179.61. The sum expended for repairs and salaries of Superintendent and those who have assisted him during the year, is \$5,997.03.

I am gratified to state that the rebuilding of the St. Mary's Aqueduct, at Fort Wayne, to the necessity of which reference has been made in several of my last reports, has been accomplished in a satisfactory manner during the past summer, under the immediate supervision of the General Superintendent, and in accordance with the plan prepared by the Chief Engineer several years ago. It may now be considered a substantial and safe structure for twelve or fifteen years to come. The means to rebuild the aqueduct were furnished by the Commissioners of Allen county.

The head-gates of the guard lock at St. Joseph Feeder have also been recently rebuilt. One of the abutments of the St. Joseph Feeder Dam was rebuilt two years ago, and is in good condition, but the other one must be rebuilt the coming season.

The Trustees are, however, fully advised of the decayed condition of many of the wooden structures on the entire length of the Canal. They have been temporarily repaired as the limited means would allow, while the rebuilding has been necessarily postponed in many cases. Now the time has come when the general rebuilding should be undertaken. This necessity, however, applies chiefly to the class of smaller structures, together with many of the wooden locks, while the im-

portant dams and aqueducts are generally in good condition. All of the locks, stone and wood, need new plank floors and the side walls of all the wooden locks must be replanked, and many of the crib walls largely rebuilt. The Canal, in many places, needs thorough dredging. This would add materially to the practical load which the boats could carry.

From an estimate made, it is believed that \$550,000 would pay the expenses of a full renewal of all the wooden structures and also a thorough dredging of the Canal, from the State Line to Terre Haute, or \$450,000 if opened no further as the commencement of any new contract, than to the excellent coal mines at the mouth of Coal Creek, thirty-six miles north of Terre Haute.

The number of boats controlled on the Canal continues to diminish and it is not probable that many will be built until there shall be a more assured prospect of keeping up the work.

The business of the canal for the past year has been confined almost entirely to local transportation. No through cargoes have been cleared for Toledo from any point south of Huntington, a portion of the Canal between Huntington and Peru not having been opened for lack of means. Not only were the tolls light, but most of the counties seem backward in donating money as heretofore, under the law providing there-

For further facts more in detail, I beg leave to refer the Board to the report of the General Superintendent.

Respectfully submitted,  
J. L. WILLIAMS  
Chief Engineer

### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT.

*To the Board of Trustees Wabash & Erie Canal:*

GENTLEMEN:—The Canal was opened for navigation from Roanoke to State Line of Ohio, June 2d. The delay was caused by rebuilding St. Mary's Aqueduct.

**THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016**

*District No. 1, from Ohio Line to Huntington, 45 miles Canal, and 7 miles of St. Joseph Feeder.*

Allen county appropriated the money to rebuild aqueduct, clean the Canal, repair some small breaks, and repair lock. Allen county paid for the year 1874, the sum of \$4,126.34. There was a discount of \$1,865 of Allen county orders amounting to \$93.25, which was paid from tolls and water rents.

After July 1st, the repair expense was paid in full from revenues.

The amount received from tolls and water rents amounts to..... \$2,607.18  
 Expenditures for the same time..... 2,112.20  
 Balance over expenses..... \$ 494.98  
 There is yet due the Canal fund on this district for tolls and water rents, which will soon be collected, about..... \$600.000

On July 31st, the Commissioners of Huntington county appropriated \$2,500 to repair Canal through Huntington. The repairs were made and water let into the Canal as far as the Forks of the Wabash, on the 20th of August. Owing to the amount of grass in the Canal, and the leaky condition of locks and aqueducts, navigation was not good till about 1st of October, after which about 30,000 or 40,000 bushels of grain have been taken by boats from Huntington.

Besides paying for opening Canal, Huntington county has paid for rebuilding abutments at Forks of Wabash, four gates for Roanoke locks, and two lock tenders, in all about \$1,268.38.

*District No. 2, from Huntington to Peru, 33 miles*

Wabash county paid for repairing Lagro's Dam cost \$340, but refused to donate any money to clean Canal and mend breaks, and that portion of the Canal, from Wabash to Lagro, has been without water all summer. This District yielded no revenue from tolls and the only water power is the Wabash Mill. The settlement has not been made with the mill, but the receipts and expenditures will be about equal.

*District No. 3, Peru to Paragon Guard Lock, on slackwater, 42 miles.*

On this district there was no aid from the counties, and, as there could not be through navigation, the receipts were necessarily light, only..... \$873.32  
 Expenses..... 760.37  
 Balance over expenses..... \$112.95  
 Water rents uncollected, about..... 250.00

*District No. 4, from Paragon Guard Lock to Attica, 41 miles*

This District has some local trade and quite a good water rent. Mr. Ten Eyck rendered very efficient aid in the management of this District.

The receipts on tolls and water rents amount to ..... \$3,699.11  
 The expenses ..... 3,114.46  
 Balance over expenses..... 574.65

There is \$400 uncollected water rents in this District.

In addition to the above, on this district, the Superintendent made a contract with the owners of water powers at Pittsburgh to rebuild a portion of the west abutment and the west side of the guard lock at Pittsburgh. Also to repair the Pittsburgh dam, and protect the lower end of the west abutment, and take cost of the work in water rent.

The work is all done and cost \$1,018.85. The settlement has been made and receipts given to the different parties to cover their water rent until the amount is liquidated, by the division of the cost of this work, James Matthews paid \$216.29, which pays water rent on his woolen mill until the first day of May, 1875. Vanderolgen, Fisher and Gregg paid \$493, which pays water rent on their flouring and saw mill till the 1st of January, 1875. Johnson Ward paid \$810.56, which pays water rent on his saw and lathe mill till the 1st of July, 1875.

The abstract account for the expenses for the entire Canal, with the voucher for the same in full, accompanies this report. The prospect of using the Canal for navigation another season is not encouraging. A por-

## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

tion of the structures are in good order and will last for several years. The St. Joseph dam, the east abutment of the same; the guard lock of the St. Joseph feeder, the St. Mary's aqueduct, the dam and abutments at Forks of the Wabash, Lagro dam, Pittsburgh dam and guard lock, Paragon guard lock and Wildcat guard lock are all in good condition.

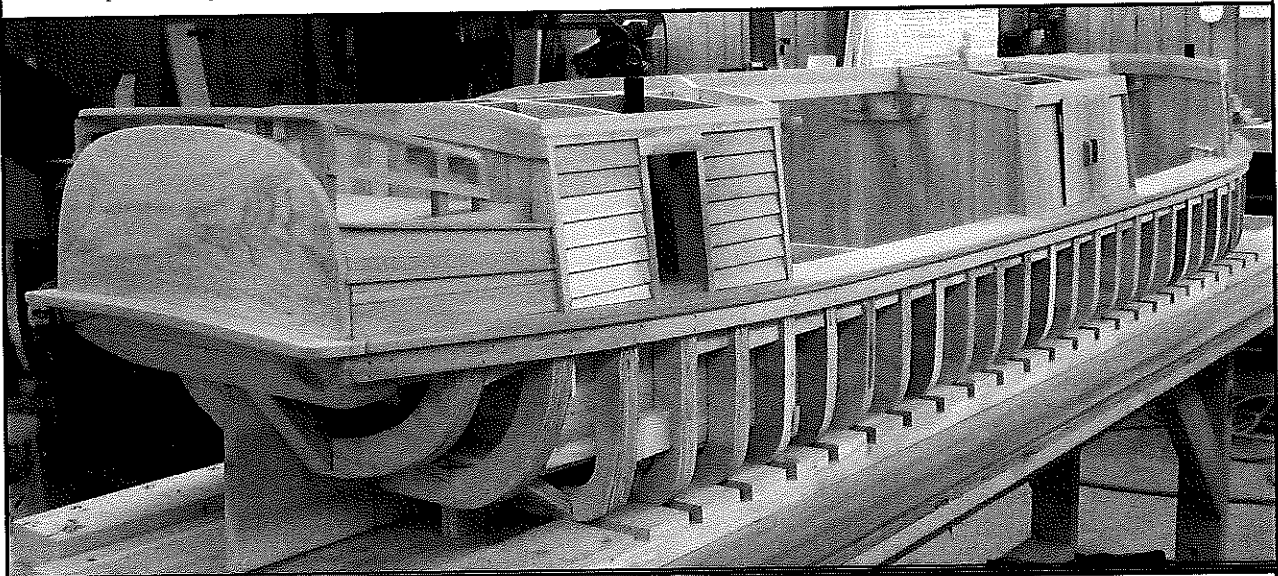
The lift locks, without exception, are in bad repair, and can not be used much longer without being repaired and replanked. The leakage is so great that the levels can not be kept up in their present condition. The Canal is so badly filled on bottom and sides that there is not capacity for the water to flow nor boats to navigate successfully. On the night of November 5th, some person or persons cut the berm bank of the Canal immediately over the culvert at Rattlesnake, in Carroll county. As the Canal was full of water, it made a very serious break, the water undermined the foundation of the culvert, causing the falling of the arches, as well as washing away about one thousand yards of bank. This will be an extensive structure to repair and will cost between two and three thousand dollars. As the Superintendent did not have the means to repair the breach, it remains untouched. It will not receive much damage

from high water, as that portion remaining will have to be removed before rebuilding. The Superintendent would call the attention of the Board to the bad condition of the locks and bottom of Canal and will say that, without a single exception, every lock on the entire line, from the State Line of Ohio to Terre Haute, is in bad condition, and will have to be partially rebuilt and thoroughly repaired, and that the Canal will have to be well cleaned before it will be of any benefit. It is entirely useless to expect it to be of any public good in its present condition. In addition to the bad condition of the locks, there are four aqueducts that will require rebuilding: the Spy Run aqueduct, ten miles west of Ft. Wayne the Flint Creek aqueduct, and the Eel Run aqueduct, will soon have to be rebuilt. The Superintendent, in conclusion, has to say that there were many embarrassments attending the care of the Canal the past season. The boatmen paid toll very reluctantly and only in part. The low water, and poor condition of the Canal, prevented us from being too rigid, as it was very desirable to avoid law suits. I gave the Canal my entire attention, and this report shows the results.

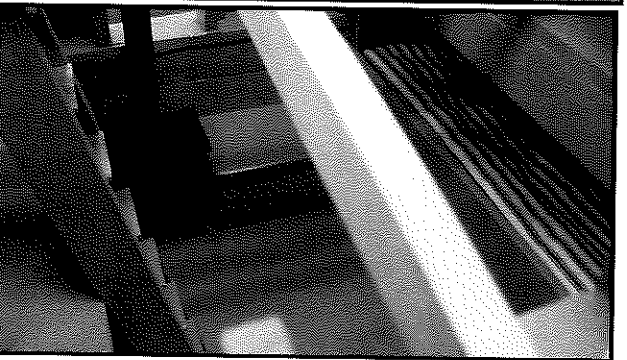
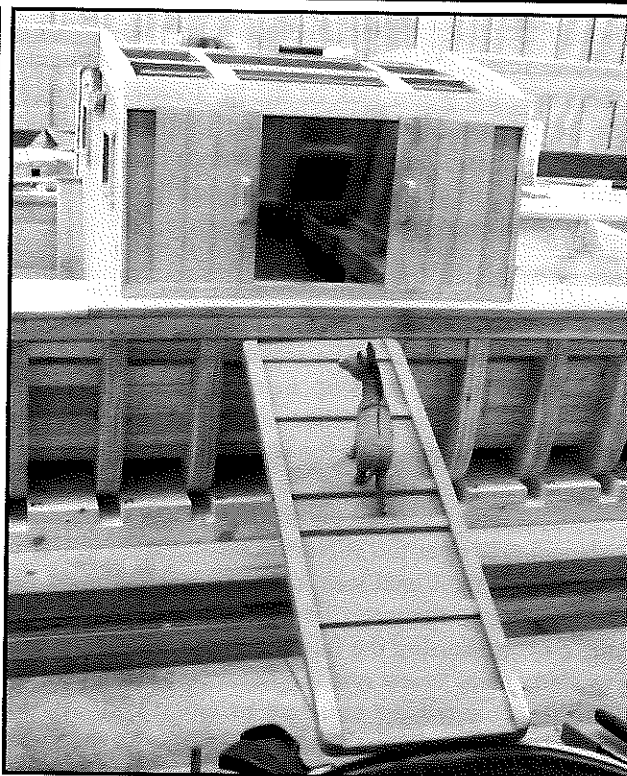
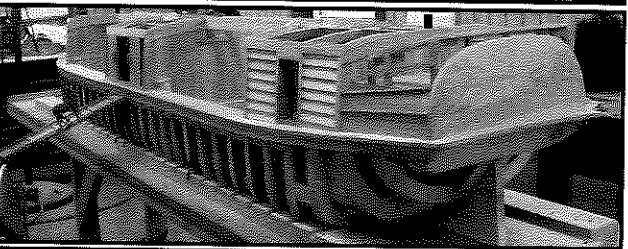
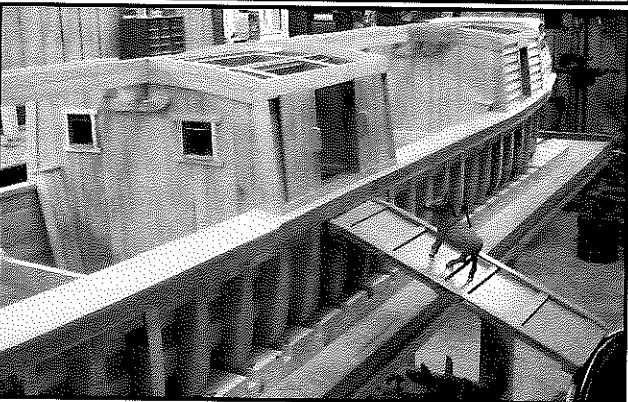
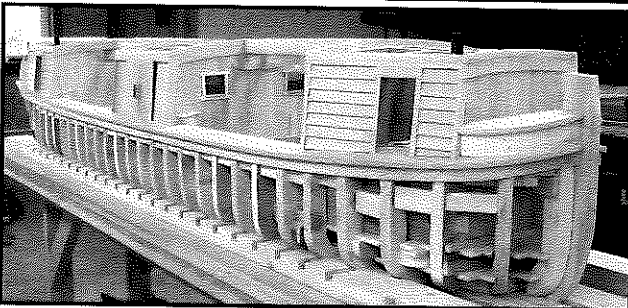
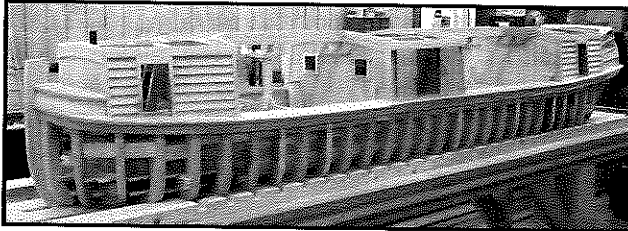
Respectfully submitted,  
WILSON SMITH  
Supt. W. and E. Canal

### CANAL BOAT PROGRESS

CSI Director, Terry Bodine of Covington, Indiana has been building a canal freight boat in his home workshop. These pictures of his progress were taken by Anne Bodine on January 12, 2016.



THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

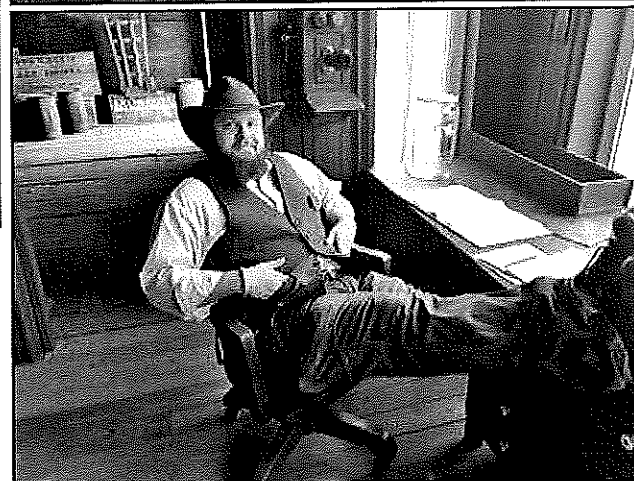
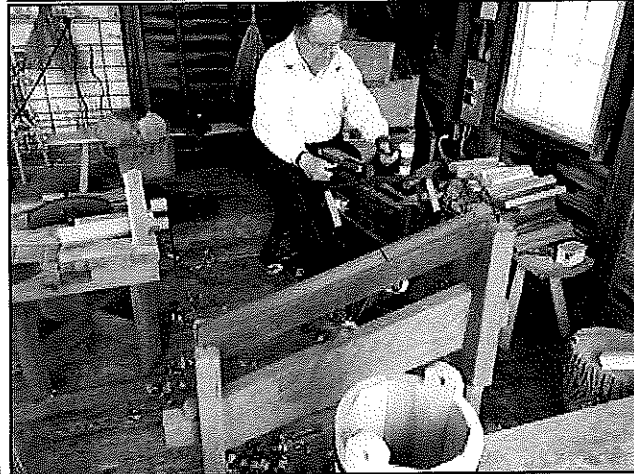
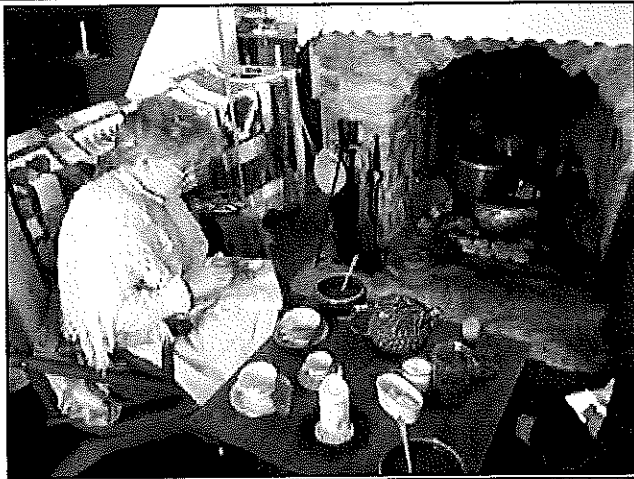
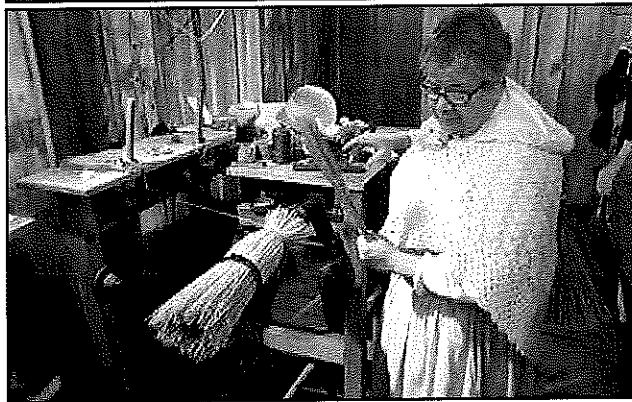




NEWS FROM DELPHI

AN ORGANIZATION OF VOLUNTEERS

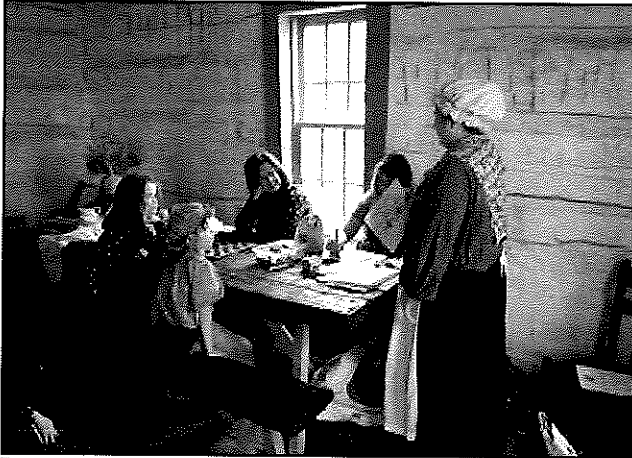
The Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal Association is an outstanding example of what a group of motivated volunteers can accomplish. Here are pictures showing how they came together to give Canal Park visitors an Old Fashioned Christmas.



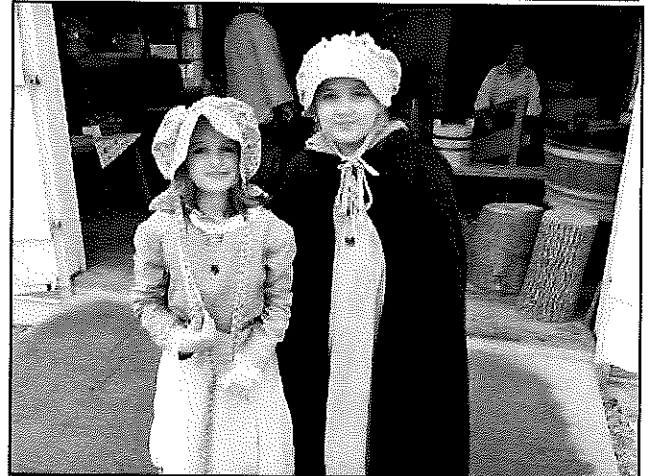
1. Dorothy and Ron Baker were in the Loom House representing Wabash Weavers Guild.
2. Bev Larson made a broom from scratch using historic equipment and techniques.
3. Beverly Seese portrayed a homemaker in the Fouts House and cooked in the open hearth.
4. Peter Cooper used a draw knife to shape a stave for a bucket or barrel in the Cooper Shop.
5. Eddie Graves acted as station master in the restored Leiters Ford Depot.

Other volunteers set up activities for visitors to do. The following pictures show visitors participating in these activities.

## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016



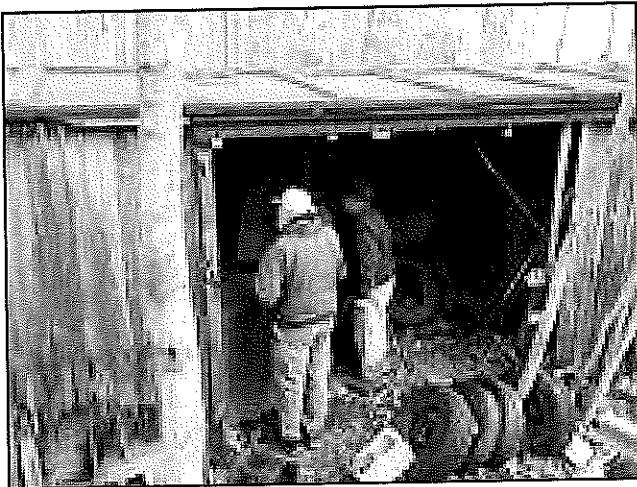
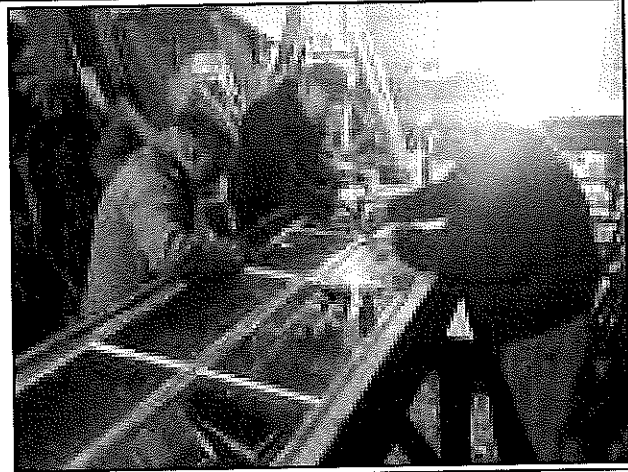
Others enjoyed greeting visitors, dressing in period dress, or talking to Santa Claus.



1. Children did leather crafts in the Canal Center.
2. Girl Scouts made Christmas ornaments in the Fouts House.
3. Visitor Bill Young tried to weave in the Loom House.

### M-W-F Volunteers At Work

Canal Park's Monday-Wednesday-Friday volunteers are always busy. Here they check out an old boxcar located in a barn near Lafayette, Indiana. If restored it could be added to the Depot exhibit. Although its outside wood paneling and flooring need to be replaced, its galvanized roof has protected the life of the metal. The door hardware is still present and could be reused.



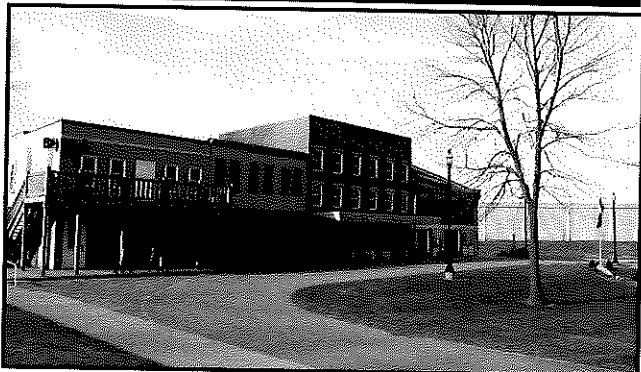
There volunteers also worked on one of the windows of the old one room schoolhouse that was recently acquired. They boxed in the overhang and eaves of the building getting it ready for a new metal roof and doors. Although from the outside it will look like a school house, the park will probably use it as a storage shed.

Besides new projects, other buildings require upkeep. Some of the Red Bridge decking had decayed. White oak planks were cut and fastened down.

# THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

## WINTER ON THE W&E CANAL

Photos by Mark Smith



1. Looking south from the north end of the canal.
2. Looking south with the warehouse that stores the canal boat on the left
3. The Canal Interpretive Center

1. The ticket agency awaiting next season's canal boat riders
2. Water being pumped into the canal from the stone quarry
3. The clear water entering the canal as seen from above

**ARTICLES ABOUT THE W&E CANAL  
FOUND BY PETE JONES**

Pete Jones, CSI member from Wabash, Indiana, found five articles by Leola Hackett, curator of the Wabash County Historical Museum in the 1940s-50s, in the *Wabash Plain Dealer*. They will be reprinted in the upcoming issues of *The Hoosier Packet*. This one is from January 8, 1942.

**Mrs. Leola Hackett Prepares Series of Stories on  
Construction and Use of Wabash and Erie Canal**

By. Mrs. Leola Hackett  
Curator: Wabash County  
Historical Museum

After the treaty between the government and the Indians, in 1818, at St. Mary's, O., a man was sent to Indiana to survey the lands which were ceded to the government by the Indians. His findings determined the practicability of the drainage of the swamp lands west of Fort Wayne and at the portage between the St. Marys and Wabash rivers at Fort Wayne, a distance of six miles.

Up to that time people from northern and central Ohio could reach the interior of Indiana only by means of canoes on the Maumee river in Fort Wayne, then up the St. Marys to the portage where the canoes were carried overland to the Wabash river.

The measurements and recommendations of the surveyor, Gen. Philip Schuyler, seem to have resulted in the passage of an act of Congress during the sessions of 1823-24 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 at the rivers Wabash and Miami and Lake Erie, and 90 feet on each side of the canal shall be reserved from sale on the part of the United States, and this use thereof, forever, be vested in the state aforesaid, for a canal, and for no other purpose whatever."

A few years passed and the matter was apparently forgotten, then the first practical suggestions for the perfection of the project came from Judge Samuel Hanna at Fort Wayne. He shared his ideas with David Burr and the two men began a correspondence with the

Indiana senators and representatives in Congress with the result that, in 1827, another act granted to the state of Indiana "for the purpose of aiding said state in opening a canal to unite at navigable points the waters of the Wabash 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, the lands to be subject to the disposal of the legislature of said state, for the purpose aforesaid and no other."

Strange to say, there was violent opposition in some places along the line. Judge Hanna was elected to the legislature as a special champion of the canal. The contest was long but finally resulted in the approval of the act by the legislature on January 5, 1828. A board of commissioners, David Burr, Samuel Lewis and James B. Johnson was appointed "to have charge of the sale of lands, donations, grants, loans, tolls and water power rents." An appropriation of \$1,000 was made for the purchase of the necessary instruments for the survey and for the survey and location of the "summit level" at Fort Wayne. Judge Hanna went to New York, purchased the instruments and returned by way of Detroit, from which place he made the remainder of the trip on horseback.

A surveyor was secured with David Burr and Judge Hanna as rod man and a man, at \$10 a month. On the second day the surveyor was taken ill and work was finished by Burr and Hanna.

**First Earth Turned**

To make the appropriation of land available "work on the canal must be commenced before March 2, 1832." A committee was appointed to select the time and place for the work to begin. On Feb. 22, 1832, with the necessary parades and orations, a few shovelfuls of earth were overturned near Fort Wayne. The Cass County Times said that one of the canal commissioners "addressed the company, 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 saying: I am now about to commence the Wabash and Erie canal, in

## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

the name and by the authority of the state of Indiana. Having thus said he struck the long suspended blow, and broke ground while the company hailed the event with three cheers," and the great canal was underway.

During the year 15 miles of the summit level was put under contract. The altitude at Fort Wayne is 197 feet above the mouth of the Maumee river and one of the most important problems was solved by the construction of a feeder canal from the St. Joseph river six miles above the town, where the feeder dam was built. The water carried from this highest point was necessary to provide for the section of the canal that passed thru Fort Wayne and also supplied the contents of Six-Mile reservoir in Ohio.

In May 1834 the contract for the remaining 13 miles of the summit level was let and the route through Wabash county was surveyed. Stearns Fisher of our county was the surveyor's assistant.

About the same time this ad appeared in the Fort Wayne Sentinel:

"NOTICE, Canal Letting

"Sealed proposals for the construction of the EIGHTEEN to TWENTY MILES of the WABASH & ERIE CANAL, will be received at Miamisport (Peru) Miami County, Indiana on the 28th day of July next, the work to be let extends from the town of Wabash westward to a point about 15 miles above Logansport, and embraces Five or Six LOCKS, a number of CULVERTS, and a DAM across the Wabash below the mouth of the Mississinewa river, 8 ft. high and near 500 ft. long.

"Plans and specifications of the work will be exhibited for four or five days previous to letting and all necessary explanations in relation to the work will be given by Engineer superintending the same.

"Bidders not personally known to the Commissioners or Engineer will be expected to produce satisfactory testimonials of character and qualifications as contractors.

D. Burr,

Sam'l Lewis

Jas. B. Johnson

Commissioners of the Wabash & Erie Canal  
Treaty Grounds 24th May, 1834"

Contracts for the work in Wabash county were let in sections of 30 to 60 chains in length.

In the possession of the Historical Society are the records kept by Stearns Fisher, superintendent of construction between Wabash and Peru. Contracts for the work from Wabash to the county line were let to Myers & Jones, S. & H. Hanna, P. & J. Burke, Thomas Hayes, James Ferrell, James McAvoy, Adam Yound, Turner Kuntz & Co., and Little & Sons.

(to be continued)

### INDIANA HISTORIAN ROSS LOCKRIDGE AND SON

By Thomas E. Castaldi

With the upcoming CSI "Extend The Canal" tour being headquartered in Henry County, also known as Raintree County, Indiana, Tom Castaldi, Allen County Historian and CSI Director from Fort Wayne, has submitted the following from an article he wrote for *Fort Wayne Monthly* magazine in September 2014.

One of the renowned fictional accounts of Indiana made famous both in book and on film has roots in northeast Indiana. A look at the author and the story line reveal an Allen County, Indiana influence. The book made it into the top ten national best seller list of 1948 and later was produced as a film by MGM with the enchanting title *Raintree County*. It was a popular movie that starred Elizabeth Taylor, Montgomery Clift, Eva Marie Saint and Lee Marvin. Ross Lockridge, Jr., wrote the story of nineteenth century Midwest history, folklore and landscape that took place somewhere in a fictional Indiana county of the 1840s.

Lockwood, Jr., of course suggests there was a senior. The senior, his father, was born in Miami County, Indiana in 1877 and went on to graduate from Indiana University in 1900. Ross Lockridge, Sr., married and returned to his north central Hoosier home. He became the principal of Peru High School, and later earned a law degree from IU in 1907. Not long after, he moved to Fort Wayne and went to work for Wayne Knitting Mills.

While in Fort Wayne, Lockridge, Sr., helped to organize the Allen County Fort Wayne Historical Soci-

## THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016

ety. During this time his reputation grew as a history writer of pioneer Indiana. Between the years 1937 to 1950, Lockridge served as a director of Indiana University Foundation's Hoosier Historic Memorial Activities Agency. Some of his works listed by the Indiana Historical Society include *George Rogers Clark* (1927), *A. Lincoln* (1930), *LaSalle* (1931), *The Old Fauntleroy Home* (1939), *Labyrinth* (1941), and *Theodore F. Thieme* (1942). His *The Story of Indiana* (1951) was primarily used as a text in Indiana at the junior high school level. Other writings from this historian tell about Johnny Appleseed, the Underground Railroad, as well as Indian's trails, river and canals. Still another extended work which continues to aid transportation history researchers is *Historic Hoosier Roadside Sites*, commissioned in 1936 by the Indiana State Highway Association. His clear and concise writing style has added to our knowledge of our past.

Ross Jr. was born in Bloomington, Indiana, and after arriving in Fort Wayne assisted his father with historical projects. Sadly, here too in Fort Wayne, another son Bruce drowned at the age of five. When son Ross was nine years old the family moved back to Bloomington. The senior Lockridge certainly must have shared many stories of Indiana and her rich history with his son. Could it be that while yet in Allen County the younger Lockridge first envisioned the notion of a mythical tree that grew in Raintree County?

In the Raintree County plot, Lockridge's main character Johnny had returned from the Civil War. He became a school principal, and felt a failure when he realized he gave up on finishing his dream of writing an epic poem about the beginnings of America. Although Johnny had his successes, the character is witnessed as he flashes back in memory wondering about the country's future. The tree Lockridge sought to feature in his tome is based on a real Golden Rain Tree which blooms in late June and July with subtle yellow flowers that drop like a raining of yellow pollen dust and flower petals. In the book, Johnny is influenced by several cultural concepts one of which is to find the legendary Rain Tree supposedly planted somewhere in Raintree County by the celebrated Johnny Appleseed who is buried in Allen County.

Author Don Blair gave a four season description in *The Story of New Harmony* writing that this tree puts on a show of beauty throughout the year. He says that it begins even in the dormant stage with its bare limbs which is followed by a leafing out or a showing of its leaves. Next comes the golden blooms which when dropped create a golden shower and are followed by lime-sized variegated pods which appear as Japanese lanterns. Once the pods have shed at summer's end, the tree blends into the forest with its autumn colors. Before returning to dormancy at the end of its cycle it has the appearance of a dead tree.

In 1948, shortly after his only book was published, Ross Lockridge, Jr., at age 34 took his own life in Bloomington, Indiana. Ross Lockridge, Sr., died in 1952.

According to the Henry County website: "In the book the reader will find Knightstown known as Beardstown, New Castle as Free Haven, and Straughn as Waycross." The CSI tour will visit both Knightstown and New Castle.

### EARLY FT. WAYNE POSTAL HISTORY

Don Haack, CSI Director from Ft. Wayne, sent in an article entitled "Fort Wayne Postal Service History" by John Kalb that he found in the September 2006 issue of *Allen County Lines*. A portion of it follows:

There was no official postal system in what is now Allen County, Indiana, until September of 1820 when Samuel Hanna agreed to become the first Fort Wayne postmaster. Benjamin Berry Kercheval (McCorkle and Barr who platted Fort Wayne named Berry Street after him) received the first appointment as postmaster of Fort Wayne on February 4, 1820. Kercheval never accepted the position. Samuel Hanna was then appointed postmaster and began serving on September 19 of that same year. Sam gave his general store on Superior Street at Barr Street as the location of his post office, but since the amount of mail coming and going was very light, he carried the mail in the brim of his hat. As Sam made his daily rounds, he dropped off and picked up what mail existed. Even at the rate of 25 cents for a single sheet and 50 cents for two, the amount collected in all of 1825 was only \$125.43. Therefore, Sam's hat band was easily able to be Fort Wayne's post office.

**THE HOOSIER PACKET - MARCH 2016**

The earliest known use of the Fort Wayne town postmark is on a letter which is located in the Kansas State Historical Society Archive at Topeka relating to early Baptist missions. The letter was posted "free" on February 22, 1822, and addressed to a U.S. Senator representing Kentucky, Richard H. Johnston in Washington City. It was written by Baptist missionary Isaac McCoy. The earliest known privately held item with the Fort Wayne manuscript (MS) town, state and date mark was dated as entering the mails at Fort Wayne on 'Jany' 10, 1823.'

On March 23, 1825, Allen Hamilton was appointed as Fort Wayne's second postmaster.

Henry Rudisill was appointed as Fort Wayne postmaster on March 2, 1831. In 1833, Fort Wayne did over \$100 per quarter-year of business. This qualified this office to receive a circular date stamp (CDS) at government expense. Rudisill started using this CDS in 1834. The earliest known use was dated September 27, 1834. Prior to this, all cancellations and town marks were applied with a quill pen and ink, and these are known as manuscript (or MS) cancels.

The Wabash & Erie Canal carried mail officially for a few years between 1840 and 1847. Doyle & Dickey Co. was the last to have the contract in 1846 and 1847. This method of mail transportation was very unreliable due to the weather conditions.

Earlier area histories recorded Oliver Fairfield as being the next Fort Wayne postmaster, but Fairfield never held this position. He was said to have served between Rudisill and Smallwood Noel, but no records in the Post Office archives support this. Noel was appointed on May 31, 1841. Then William Stewart followed in August of 1845. During Stewart's term, on May 17, 1847, he received the first of the new "adhesive backed" postage stamps....

<b>CONTRIBUTIONS TO CSI</b>	<u>\$50 Contributor</u> Christian, Glenn & Linda Koehler, Jeff & Mary Migliore, Brian & Laura Riddle, Martha
The following CSI members have contributed beyond the basic \$25 membership rate for 2016.	<u>\$75 Patron</u> Schuster, Dan
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