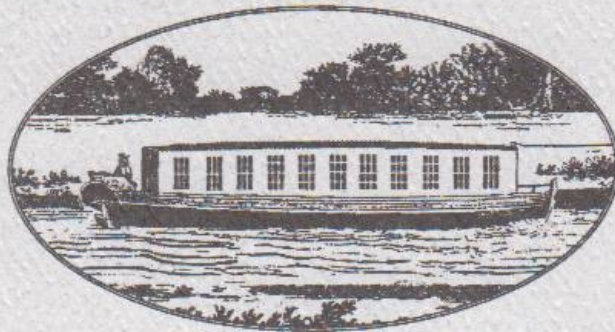


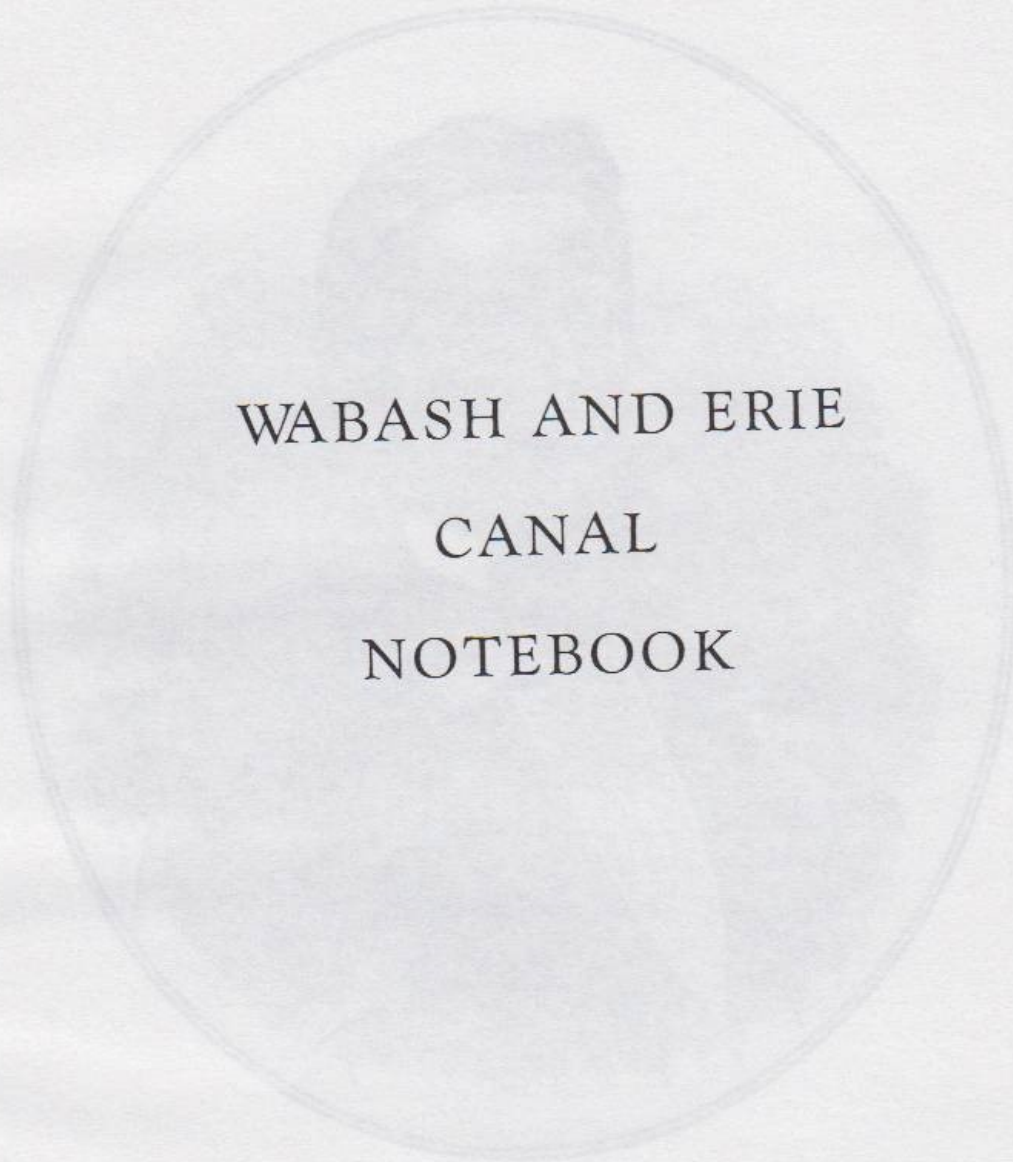
WABASH & ERIE CANAL

N O T E B O O K I I I

WABASH AND MIAMI COUNTIES



THOMAS E. CASTALDI



WABASH AND ERIE
CANAL
NOTEBOOK

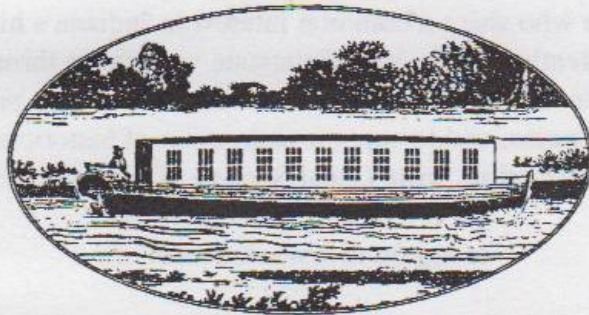
General Superintendant of the Wabash and Erie Canal
Cincinnati, Ohio



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WABASH & ERIE CANAL

N O T E B O O K I I I



THOMAS E. CASTALDI

Books by Tom Castaldi
Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook I
Allen and Huntington Counties

Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook II
Cass, Carroll and Tippecanoe Counties

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For more information, write Canal Society of Indiana, P.O. Box 40087,
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PREFACE

A third in the series written about the Wabash Erie Canal, *Notebook III* focuses on the longest canal in America, which helped open the west to settlement and spawned economic development. It fulfilled the dream of George Washington in finding a way to connect by water the Ohio River with Lake Erie. Following the format used for the two previous accounts, *Notebook III: Wabash and Miami Counties* concentrates on the official reports, route location, mechanical structures and stories of two additional important canal counties.

After the Wabash & Erie ground breaking in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on February 22, 1832, the first section opened in 1835 to Huntington, Indiana. With the intent of pushing the line west along the Wabash River to the mouth of the Tippecanoe River on the Wabash, some 128 miles to Tippecanoe County, the project by 1837 had reached new ports in towns such as Belden, Lagro, Wabash, Richvalley, Peru and Miamisport.

Before the canal, these settlements depended on what ever communication wilderness trails and the Wabash River could provide. Goods were difficult to receive on the upper portion of the mighty river with its natural current prone to flooding, and freezing solid in winter. Long dugout canoes called *pirogues* could make the trip downstream, but it took weeks of upstream paddling fully laden boats to return home again. Flatboats were constructed with the intent of selling Wabash Valley products where markets could be found along the way and finally the boat's timbers were dismantled in New Orleans and sold leaving a long walk back to northern Indiana. Attracting steamboat traffic to the upper Wabash was always a challenge and sometimes successful. However, in all practicality, the head of steamboat navigation was miles to the west where the Tippecanoe added its contribution to the Wabash River.

The canal showed the way for the old Highway 24, and over time attracted interurban and railroad routes. Along the highway in Wabash and Miami counties are the county roads, town streets, downtown business sections, urban development and farm cultivation that combined have hidden the traces of the old canal. Improvements such as these have erased from the landscape much of what once was the Wabash and Erie Canal.

TEC

Fort Wayne, Indiana

December 2004

WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN WABASH COUNTY, INDIANA

Traveling westbound on Old U.S. Highway 24 from Huntington into Wabash County, the flat landscape of northern Indiana changes to a scene of glens and vales carved by the Wabash River as it flows the southwest.¹ Here inhabitants discovered the beautiful river valley praised for its fertility and serenity. It had its drawbacks such as a dense wilderness and the mosquitoes of warm summer seasons. Other than the river as a means to transport people and their cargo, travel was best accomplished along winding trails made passable by animals taken up by early natives. Once the Wabash & Erie Canal was approved, it was expected that the project would enhance travel replacing riverbank foot trails. Since those days of the 1830s, new routes and transportation methods have continued to develop. On one side of the canal route paralleling hills rise one hundred or more feet in places. To the other side of the water route, the river follows its relentless one-way flow to the Gulf of Mexico. In later years Indiana's legislature chartered rail lines to parallel the canal weakening the waterway's economic value. First the railroad followed, then space was found for an electric interurban train and a highway. More recently a four-lane interstate-class highway has been added to this historic landscape.

Below Huntington, about one-half mile east of the Forks of the Wabash, a canal survey party once worked its way west where the Wabash was joined by the Little Wabash River. Led by Col. James Shriver, one member of the company recorded their daily activities. In his journal, John Peter Paul noted that it was at the Forks that a camp was set up on the evening of June 10, 1827.² Shriver's assignment was the culmination of a dream shared first by the native peoples, followed by the French explorers, missionaries and fur traders, then the British military and finally by the Americans pioneers. It seems that General Anthony Wayne appreciated the commercial as well as the military importance of the ultimate practicability of a canal from the Maumee Valley to the

Wabash cut through a nine-mile long land barrier or portage.³ It was perhaps the most direct water route from Buffalo, New York, to the Mississippi River.⁴

Shriver was working on the Whitewater Canal when he was reassigned in 1826 to survey the portage near Fort Wayne. Sickness overtook the survey party claiming the life of Col. Shriver, and Major Asa W. Moore was put in charge to survey the Wabash to the mouth of the Tippecanoe River.⁵ Settlers were eager to move into the new country so it was imperative that the Federal government determine the location of the land necessary for constructing a canal to facilitate western settlement. A legislative committee on internal improvements, which was concerned about the loss of land to private ownership thereby losing the opportunity to continue with plans for a canal, recommended the line "run and marked by Colonel Asa Moore of the U. S. civil engineers as the base of the canal." In doing so, we have a brief but accurate description of its course:

...commencing on the line dividing Ohio and Indiana near the point of its intersection with the Miami river, thence along the south side of the Maumee river to Fort Wayne, thence crossing the St. Marys above that place, to the beginning of that part of the canal located by the canal commissioners, and with the same to the Wabash at the mouth of Little river, thence resuming Col. Moore's line along the north side of the Wabash to the mouth of Tippecanoe river, in section 17 of township 24, north of range 3 west, in length nearly 130 miles, be assumed as the permanent line of the canal for all purposes connected with the selection of the lands granted to the state, and subject only to such variations as may be necessary in the actual location of the canal.⁶

Moore commented about the Wabash and Miami counties writing that the timber, water and quality of soil, from about thirty miles above Logansport were equal to any in the western country.⁷ It is apparent in the reports that Moore and his surveyors had become intimately familiar with the Wabash country. On Friday, June 15, 1827, John Peter Paul the surveyor wrote:

15th, Friday. Continued canal line. Moved encampment 6 miles to Camp Black Loon down Northeast side of the Wabash to the bluffs. On 16th, Saturday, took dam section, gauged stream and propelled to a short distance below Jane's Spring. The water very fine.⁸

Before a canal could be built, counties were organized to deal with such functions as land sales for financing construction, administration as well as establishing a seat of justice to prosecute the law. John Tipton hurriedly pushed the legislation that formed Huntington, Wabash and Miami counties. The Treaty of St. Mary's in 1818 changed the way counties were formed from ceded Indian land. Instead of establishing a separate civil authority, they were placed under the custody of an adjacent and already organized county. At the Treaty of St. Mary's, eight Indian tribes relinquished 5,800 square miles of land in Indiana. This "New Purchase" was divided into two large unorganized counties named Delaware and Wabash. "New Purchase" became "Adams New Purchase" when Delaware County was created and organized in 1827. Treaties in 1828 and 1832 extinguished most of the remaining American Indian lands. The former "Indian land" was treated as non-county area and divided into eleven unorganized counties in 1835. As an example, a strip of land to provide space for the Michigan Road was relinquished by the Potawatomi in the 1818 treaty. In 1826, at the Mouth of the Mississinewa a treaty was made with the Miami for overlapping claims with the Potawatomi.⁹

On February 2, 1832, Wabash County was formed from the Adams New Purchase and other non-county area. Because it was not completely organized the new entity was attached to Cass and Grant counties. Fully organized on March 1, 1835, the town of Wabash became its seat. Three years later on February 17, 1838, it was enlarged by acquisition of non-county areas.¹⁰

Likewise Miami County was to be established along with Huntington and Wabash counties. An act to form Miami County was approved by the Indiana legislature on February 2, 1832, but ambiguities invalidated the descriptions of both Wabash and Miami. A Subsequent Act was approved on January 2, 1834, however, it was not until March 1, 1834 that the county became a distinct entity.¹¹

Jesse Lynch Williams, Chief Engineer, in 1833 served as the general supervisor finalizing the survey line for the Wabash & Erie Canal through Wabash County. Supporting him were Stearns Fisher, Solomon Holman and Charles Voorheis. During this period, Col. David Burr served as a member of the Board of Canal Commissioners. The Colonel was critical in an effort to satisfy the demands of the Indiana legislature demonstrating that a canal was a practical endeavor. In 1828, it was Col. Burr, Judge Sam Hanna and John Smythe who laid a line of six-miles in length from the high ground on the St. Joseph River south to Fort Wayne where it could provide an adequate supply of water to the summit level of the main line of the proposed canal. Both Stearns Fisher and David Burr made their homes in Wabash County becoming important figures in the development of the county as well as the internal improvements movement that dominated the State's efforts during the first half of the nineteenth century.¹²

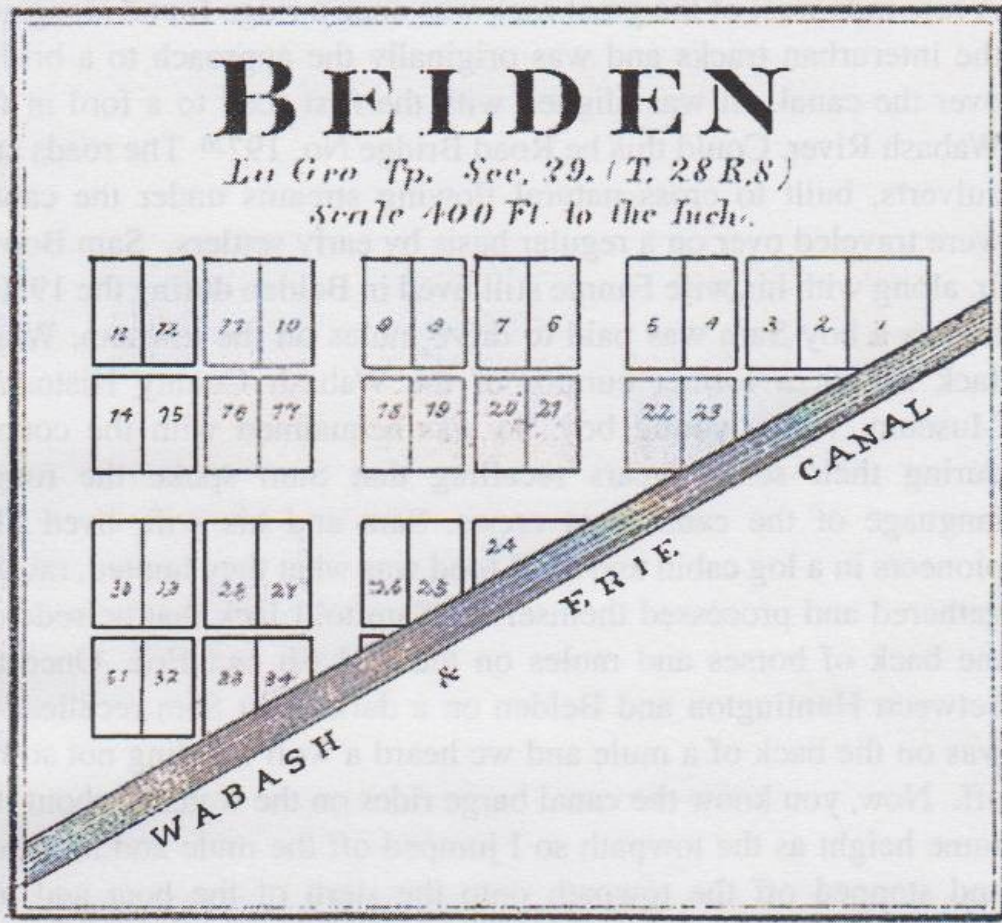
A TOBACCO ROAD

Early transportation routes included the rivers and streams as well as the animal traces that meandered through towering trees and dense undergrowth. When wagons came along the trails through the woods and over the prairies had to be made wider to accommodate the axle width of the cartwheels. Progress demands improvement. New routes were required to accommodate the influx of immigrants and the movement of their production. A procession of transportation improvements has passed until virtually nothing remains of those earliest pathways. With the loss of the artifacts of great transportation projects such as the Wabash & Erie, an opportunity to interpret its value and what was learned is lost. When improvements are made we witness destruction of history with an uneasy concern. A feeling of helplessness shrouds one as a system powered by special-interest groups cloaked in a guise that task at hand is the “will of the people.” It cannot be halted and spreads over one as frustration that somehow “they” do not understand the destruction being foisted upon those who know too well the permanence of the damage. It is impossible to hear the future cries of regret. Yet there will be an eternity of time to lament the irreplaceable destruction. As the new replaces the old, we sacrifice yet another connection with our earthy heritage to the gods of development and perhaps some one’s return on investment.

Transportation systems were developed after the last glacier receded that influenced and shaped this country’s topography. As its icy bulk slowly melted, it formed a river cutting through the landscape. With the ice flow, came natural gifts including gigantic pudding stones composed of irregular and angular lumps of granite that include gneiss and syenite. One such conglomerate deposited was held in esteem and revered as an altar by the local American Indians. Historian Thomas Helm described the boulder near the county line east of Lagro as revered by natives as a holy stone, “where offerings might be made efficaciously to avert danger from poisonous snakes, and was known as the altar of the great ruler of

the serpents.” Helm described it as: “the ‘Tobacco Rock,’ an immense boulder (sic), seven or eight feet long and four or five feet wide, and perhaps four or five feet high, which the Indians regarded in some way as the abode of the ‘Great Spirit,’ and upon which they always threw tobacco as they passed by.” Unfortunately, it was in the line of the canal so it was blown up and removed by the workers. The section of the canal at the county line was afterward known as “Tobacco Rock Section.”¹³ In time, the Wabash & Erie was pressed into reality because it was the will of the people, and as such Tobacco Rock was reduced to so much rubble. Samuel Boone Sr. told his son Samuel Jr. about another large glacial erratic that diggers moved from the path of the canal. Nearly six feet high, ten feet wide and eleven feet long, the contractors concocted a device to deal with the problem in another way. He described a contraption similar to a “Stump Puller,” which used a team of horses or oxen that pulled on a rope coiled on a large wheel fastened to a stump, to remove the obstacle, roots and all, from the line. According to the younger Boone, the contractors attached a strong hawser wound around the windlass with a long level hitched to several oxen. Along with the aid of a block and tackle device, the rock was moved from the canal right-of-way.¹⁴ To see a great boulder of similar proportions today, visit the intersection of old U.S. Highway 24 and the Hoosier Heartland Corridor west of Wabash. Helm called this stone the largest he had seen in the state.

North of the Wabash & Erie line once stood the town of Utica surveyed on March 1, 1837, by E. W. Cox. Joseph Brackett, its proprietor, recorded the town May 3, 1837, on land where the canal crossed the Wabash Huntington county line. Located on the north side of the canal at the Wabash County border it was platted with 212 lots arranged ten blocks along the canal and six blocks deep.¹⁵ Although it seemed ideally suited, the only business attracted to the town was a grain warehouse. Utica dwindled in population and in 1853 the town charter was vacated by the County Commissioners. A part of old Utica, however, was included in newly platted hamlet of Belden.¹⁶



Belden, Indiana. From *Atlas of Wabash County Indiana 1875*.

Belden also was situated on the north side of the Wabash River on the canal line. The town was platted by Archibald M. Kennedy, surveyed by Elijah Hackleman on May 13, 1856 and recorded on June 2, 1856. A post office was established in 1878, by which time the town also boasted a school, a saw mill, a grist-mill, a blacksmith, a store, a granary and several houses.¹⁷ Kennedy was said to have been a good businessman blessed with a talent for designing and constructing covered bridges across wide rivers.¹⁸ The place became a community populated by many canal workers such as James M. Deck, who came to Belden from Pennsylvania to work as a stonemason.¹⁹

A few rods west of the great rock was once a ridge found alongside the interurban tracks and was originally the approach to a bridge over the canal. It was aligned with the first road to a ford in the Wabash River. Could this be Road Bridge No. 19?²⁰ The roads and culverts, built to cross natural flowing streams under the canal, were traveled over on a regular basis by early settlers. Sam Boone Jr. along with his wife Fannie still lived in Belden during the 1930s, and as a boy Sam was paid to drive mules on the towpath. When Jack Miller, a former curator of the Wabash County Historical Museum, was a young boy, he was acquainted with the couple during their senior years recalling that Sam spoke the rough language of the canal boat crews. Sam and his wife lived like pioneers in a log cabin and their food was what they hunted, raised, gathered and processed themselves. Sam told Jack that he rode on the back of horses and mules on the Wabash and Erie. Once up between Huntington and Belden on a dark night Sam recalled, "I was on the back of a mule and we heard a wolf howling not so far off. Now, you know the canal barge rides on the water at about the same height as the towpath so I jumped off the mule and ran back and stepped off the towpath onto the stern of the boat and hid behind the captain who was standing at the tiller. It was pitch black in the middle of the night and the captain could not see through the darkness. The captain hollered out, 'You all right boy?' and I must have scared him half to death when I said I was cause he turned around quick and said, 'Get back up there on that mule boy' and back I ran down the towpath to the team.

Sometime about 1998 after Jack Miller had turned eighty years of age, he was delivering a presentation about the canal to a group of school children. One of the youngsters asked the grandfatherly figure if he knew anyone who worked on the canal. A smile began to appear on the teacher's face at hearing her student's innocent question, but both she and the classmates were surprised when the answer came back, "Why yes I did. I knew Sam Boone who drove horses and mules between Wabash and Huntington."

However, people and places have a way of remaining alive in our memories. In 2000, Jean Ott Gernand recalled that the Belden landing was the place where her great-grand parents disembarked a canal boat. John and Ann Maria Ott had traveled from Cincinnati in the 1800s and had no place to stay when they first reached their destination. A family by the name of Rosenthal invited John and Ann Maria to stay with them until they could manage to set up housekeeping. They found a place to call home near Belden known as the "German Settlement." Jean remembered a story from her childhood that expressed a family's never-forgotten gratitude for an incident that is succinct and to the point: "The Rosentals were very nice people". It is a story-in-a-statement that recalls the early settlers' support for one another in their time of need. Perhaps it is at the source of an experience for many that became popularly known as, "Hoosier Hospitality."

In 1884, Thomas Helm wrote that the town of Andrews was established three-quarter of a mile distance on the south side of the Wabash River across the Huntington County line. The historian predicted that Andrews, "will probably 'suck the life' – what there has been or still is" from Belden. Now over one-hundred years later, Andrews continues to thrive and there is little remaining to mark the location of what was once Belden.²¹



ON THE CHESEBRO LOCK LEVEL

From Silver Creek Arch and nearly the site of Chesebro Lock No. 11 in Huntington County, there were several mechanical structures on the approximately six-mile level before reaching Lock No. 12 well into Wabash County. Jesse Williams, Chief Engineer, reported in 1847 that a culvert, “No. 46” measuring 4 feet by 2 feet could be protected by submerging it under water for a cost of \$2.00. He continued describing the condition of a waste weir that was planned as a depression in the towpath to allow the escape of excess canal water. He wrote, “The next structure is a long waste wier (sic) to discharge the floods of Clear creek – a breast wall and sides built of timber, will last seven years.” Towing animals often waded through four or five inches of water as they plodded along the towpath over a waste weir that was at work anytime there was an overflow water condition in the canal channel.²² From east to west, he described in a report to the Canal Trustees a creek passage under the canal known as, “Culvert No. 47”. It was made entirely of wood, “2 spans 10 by 2” and submerged under water to preserve it from decaying action of the elements. Next another “Waste Weir, 70 feet long – timber breast and side walls, may last six years.” Then Williams mentions the, “Flood-gates built upon ‘English’s patent,’ with stone abutments.” During times of flood-creating rains, known as “freshets” a floodgate came into play.²³

Robert English was born in Ireland in 1808²⁴ and migrated to Pennsylvania as a youngster with his parents.²⁵ In 1834 he moved to the Indiana canal town of Lagro as a canal contractor.²⁶ Here, with his brother Michael, they built and operated a gristmill a short distance up the Salamonie River from its mouth at the Wabash River. Together they opened a warehouse in Lagro and became prominent grain dealers. On June 1, 1841, the U.S. Patent Office *Report from the Commissioner of Patents*, lists Robert English of Lagro, Indiana, as having been granted patent No. 1254 for his “Canal Lock Gate” design.²⁷

E. F. Lucas was General Superintendent of the Wabash & Erie in 1844 and reported to the Indiana General Assembly that several new lock gates were put in place during the past season and referred to certain improvements.²⁸ He chose to highlight Robert English's design in his report:

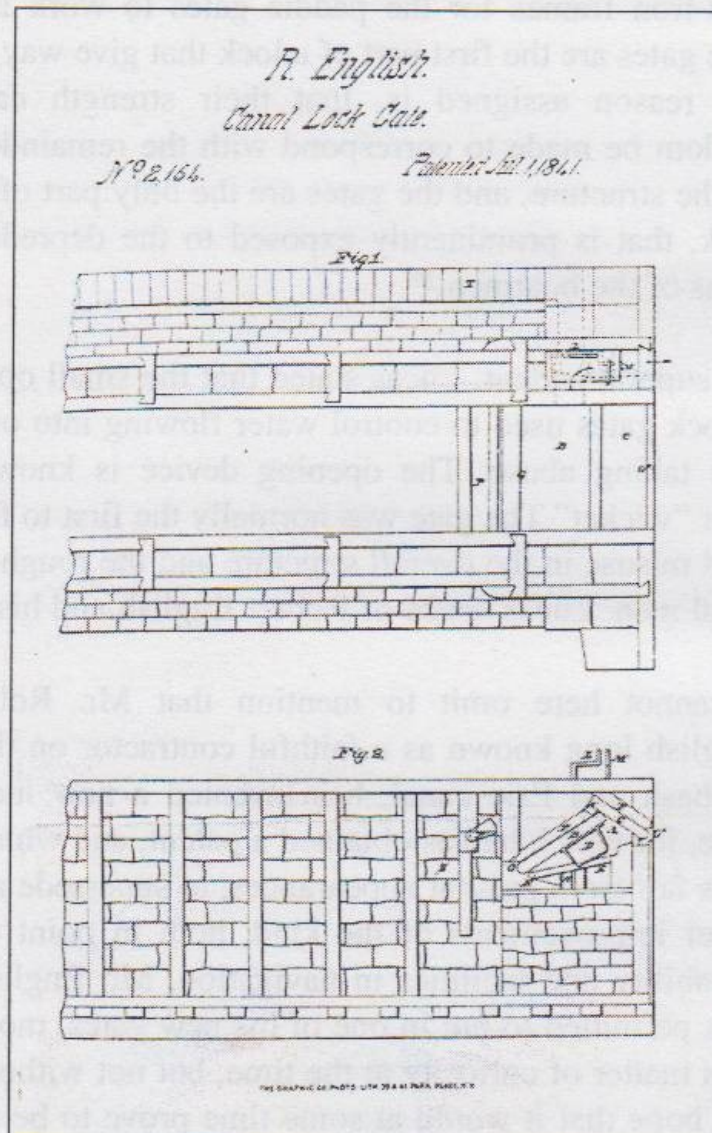
There have been a large number of new lock gates put in during the past season — some additional improvement has been made on the plan; such as cast-iron frames for the paddle gates to work in. The gates are the first part of a lock that give way — the reason assigned is, that their strength can seldom be made to correspond with the remainder of the structure, and the gates are the only part of a lock, that is prominently exposed to the depredations of the boatmen.²⁹

As superintendent, Lucas stated that the small openings in the large lock gates used to control water flowing into or out of a lock, were taking abuse. The opening device is known as the "paddle" or "wicket" The gate was normally the first to fail taking the greatest misuse in the overall structure and the rough handling by the canal men. Lucas spoke of Robert English and his ability:

I cannot here omit to mention that Mr. Robt. English long known as a faithful contractor on the Wabash and Erie canal, has invented a new lock gate, for which he has obtained a patent, and which bids fair from present appearances, to supersede all other improvements of the kind, both in point of durability and facilities in navigation. Mr. English was permitted to put in one of his new gates, more as a matter of curiosity at the time, but not without the hope that it would at some time prove to be of public and lasting utility. The invention is highly spoken of by eminent Engineers, both in this and

other States, The one now in operation is at the first lock above Carrollton [near Delphi, Indiana].

Lucas recommended that the invention be made available for all gates being built thereafter. Further that the gates were adaptable to the, "making of waste weirs to drain the canal to the bottom when it occurs that outlets have to be made in the banks at a considerable cost, and always attended with more or less danger."³⁰



Robert English's June 1, 1841
U.S. Patent for "Canal Lock Gate" design.

In 1845, E.F. Lucas reported several large waste weirs were put in place for the purpose of draining the canal on those levels of the canal that were prone to damage during flooding...

two of which are on Robt. English's plan of patent gates – one of a large dimension at the Mouth of Clear Creek, a short distance below Huntington. This creek empties into the canal rather as a feeder; but from some cause or other, the passway for the waste water in times of floods or heavy falls of rain, were not until the last season (1845) sufficiently provided for. The stream has its source in a very hilly country, and at times floods the canal with more than the ordinary quantity of water, which heretofore invariably made heavy breaches in the embankment. There is one other on the same plan on the adjoining level below or west of Clear Creek.³¹

In May 1999, the Indiana Department of Transportation at the urging of the Canal Society of Indiana recovered and removed the remains of the Clear Creek Floodgate located three miles west of the Historic Forks of the Wabash Park. Built on “English's patent”, the old floodgate proved to be buried deeper than anticipated, contained more stone than was previously imagined and sat on a heretofore forgotten 30 by 24 feet timber foundation. As to the other floodgate designed and built, “on the same plan on the adjoining level below or west of Clear Creek.” that “level below” Clear Creek is the one described by Superintendent Lucas west of the Huntington and Wabash county line.

They are looked on as valuable improvements on all those levels that trace the base of a bluff or hill country where it is continually subject in time of heavy and sudden rains to receive all the wild water that collects from the hills, and in all cases were

[where] suitable outlets are not made, heavy breaches are made.³²

This series of overflow control devices planned by the engineers in eastern Wabash County seem to be a precursor of what was to come on down the line. Elevation of the canal route right-of-way drops twenty-two feet requiring four lifting locks in the four and one-half miles space between the Huntington and Wabash county line and the town of Lagro.³³

A line was established that in the twenty-first century reveals the planners' keen sense of observation. To the north of the canal line is the high bluff bordering the river valley. Yet to the south of the route the ground rises once again before descending to the river's bank. A swell or gentle hollow was found between these two high points and proved to be a good path for building and maintaining a proper canal level. With the drop in elevation small streams meander down the bluff racing to the river intersecting the canal route. Culverts were needed to cross creek water in the next few miles and Chief Engineer Williams made these observations in 1847:

Culvert No. 48, is a rough stone arch of six feet chord, springing from abutments 2 1/2 feet high. Road-bridge No. 19, will require re-building in 1849. Culvert No. 49, of wood, 2 spans 10 feet by 2 feet – submerged. Culvert No. 50, of wood, 10 feet by 2 feet – submerged. Culvert No. 51, of wood, 10 feet by 2 feet – submerged.³⁴

On June 17, 1827, after returning from Black Loon's camp near present-day Huntington and Wabash county line, John Peter Paul wrote:

The land good, fine timber, pure water emanating (sic) from first rate springs. The whole country,

from the forks down as far as I have yet been, entitled to the same character. The River itself is beautiful, being surrounded on each side with banks sufficiently high to prevent inundation and having for its bed a perfectly smooth regular, rock. No stagnate water, no unwholesome vegetation in the stream; on the contrary everything calculated to induce a belief the country will be healthy.”³⁵

It may be noted that the report of 1847 conducted by Jesse Williams was an audit of conditions of the canal's structures. Bondholders had become suspicious of the State's ability to pay the interest due them on seven and a half million dollars, not to mention its capacity to make good the principle. As such, Charles Butler a New York attorney was sent to the Indiana legislature in Indianapolis to represent the interest of the bondholders. At that time it looked as if the project could be a success, but investors were seeking assurance from the State of Indiana that their investment would be protected. A bill was introduced in the 1846-47 legislative session known as the Butler Bill that would have divided the debt into two parts. The State agreed to pay the bondholders interest and principal from taxes, and the other half of the obligation was to be paid from canal revenues. Rather than surrender the project in full payment to the creditors, the State placed it in trust for their benefit. For every \$1,000.00, bondholder was to receive two certificates. One was "State Stock" valued at \$500.00 earning 5% interest to be paid from taxation. The other called "Canal Stock," also in the amount of \$500, was to pay 5% interest payable from canal land sales and tolls revenues. In December 1846 Butler was asked to make a change in the terms of subscription of not less than \$2,250,000.00 to finish the project. It became effective when bonds in the amount of \$4,000,000.00 had been surrendered and a subscription equal to 20% or \$800,000.00 had been achieved. The state would not be responsible for the interest or the principle on bonds not returned for exchange. After much haggling in the House and Senate, the bill was passed into law on January 27, 1847. In this action, the State of Indiana turned

the canal over to three trustees named to represent the bondholders and two appointed by the State. On June 9, 1847, Governor James Whitcomb authorized the board of trustees, "to take possession of the canal and its appurtenances, in accordance with the provisions of an act to provide for the funded debt of the State of Indiana, and for the completion of the Wabash and Erie canal to Evansville." This act, "approved January 19, 1846, and an act supplementary thereto, approved January 27, 1847; and on the first day of July, the canal and all its appurtenances were surrendered into the hands of the board of trustees, or agents appointed by the board to receive them."³⁶ Charles Butler of New York served as president of the trustees and represented the bondholders. Thomas H. Blake of Terre Haute; and Nathan B. Palmer of Indianapolis were appointed by the Governor.³⁷

Half of the debt remained to be satisfied by the state's promise. Although the backers had that promise broken once before, the situation in Indiana had changed since 1836 because the population was growing and the taxable property liability had doubled.³⁸ By 1858-59 the bondholders issued an injunction to abandon the canal sending the message that they expected the canal project to be rescued by the state. The only concession was to grant the trustees' request to lease to private groups thereby privatizing the Wabash & Erie project. Trustees retained ownership and control of the canal but the lessees were responsible for the repair and rebuilding of structures as directed by the chief engineer. All tolls were to be deposited to the credit of the trustees and kept in a reserve fund until the termination of the contract at which time the net earnings would be turned over to the lessees.³⁹

The canal system now was in private hands with operations handed over to an outside company. Records for the contracted repair work for structures add more to canal history. For example, in the first year of this arrangement with lessees, in the Wabash and Erie Canal Company's Eastern Division's A.P. Edgerton Journal, a draft to Kimball & Edsall for \$67.00 dated September 6, 1859, was recorded in payment, "for timber for bridge for McDonalds."⁴⁰

These records reveal the frequency of maintenance, the extent of repairs, the nature of the problems confronted, and the cost of materials in the nineteenth century that took place on the Chesebro Lock level and beyond.



Color 32 timber in 1850. Photo in author's collection.

Blue Star Lighter on Old U.S. 24 near the Wabash County
lock. It is one-half mile east of Lock No. 12 about the channel
boat captain would have entered a lock into his timber slanting
lock under the lockman's hand a boat was approaching the lock.
About one half mile
miles from Lago.



McDONALD LOCK LEVEL

James McDonald was born in Cavan County, Ireland in 1818, and at age nineteen boarded a ship for America. His ship was driven off course during a storm at sea landing in Bermuda Islands before reaching New York on March 17, 1837. He worked for a New Jersey canal that summer and autumn then moved west in 1837. In Fort Wayne, he went to work on the Wabash & Erie where he continued his employment until 1850. McDonald married Miss Finam McDonough in 1849 and the next year moved to Wabash County where they purchased an acre of ground in a woods near the lock east of Lagro. During their twenty six years of marriage they raised four children.⁴¹



Culvert 52 timbers in 2004. Photo in author's collection.

Blue Star Highway or old U.S. 24 intersects Wabash County Road 600 E one-half mile east of Lock No. 12 about the distance a boat captain would have intoned a loud note on his tinhorn alerting lock tender Jim McDonald that a boat was approaching his lock.⁴² About one half mile west from road 600 E and two and one-third miles from Lagro, remnants of the lock stand in place along side the

railroad line. Approximately 130 feet east of the lock remains of Culvert No. 52 are exposed in the banks and bed of Rager Creek that has replaced the actual canal. Jesse Williams reported in 1847 that the culvert was made of wood, 2 spans each 10 feet by 2 feet at the time submerged under the water. Today a foundation of timbers lies under a layer of silt brought down by Rager Creek. Lateral timbers and portions of three 15-inch wide by 12-inch thick members protrude from the south bank. Each of these pieces originally was much longer, but today range from two to seven feet in length. In 2002 they made up what remains of the east "10 feet by 1 foot" span. To the west about ten feet another lateral timber lies partially exposed extending from the north bank and up from the bed of the canal bottom. To the west stands "McDonald's Lock" and perhaps the best preserved stone lifting lock along the Wabash & Erie Canal. Chief Engineer Williams in his 1847 report describes the structure in its original condition:

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 fail 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 re-building in 1850.⁴³

The stones for Lock 12 came from a nearby stone quarry. As a matter of interest, "Salamania," according to a 1982 *Indiana Magazine of History* story, located this quarry south of Lagro stating that it was partially or perhaps totally, engulfed by the Salamonie Reservoir now located between Lagro and Wabash.⁴⁴ The problem with this description is that the reservoir is distinctly southeast of Lagro, even though, adjacent to the Salamonie River near an area known as the "Narrows." It also was within the boundaries of "The Big Miami Reserve." After the defeat of the Miami nation, the U.S. Government at the 1818 Treaty of Saint Mary's granted the reserve to the tribe. It was a thirty-mile square along

the Wabash River beginning at the mouth of the Salamonie at Lagro and extended to the mouth of the Eel River at Logansport.⁴⁵ From each of these tributaries to the Wabash, the boundaries then stretched thirty miles to the south forming a nine hundred square mile area. Later the government decreased the size of the Indian lands when it made grants first for the Michigan Road on the west of the reserve and second for the Wabash & Erie on the north side.⁴⁶



Salamonie Quarry south of Lagro — 2004.
Photo in author's collection.

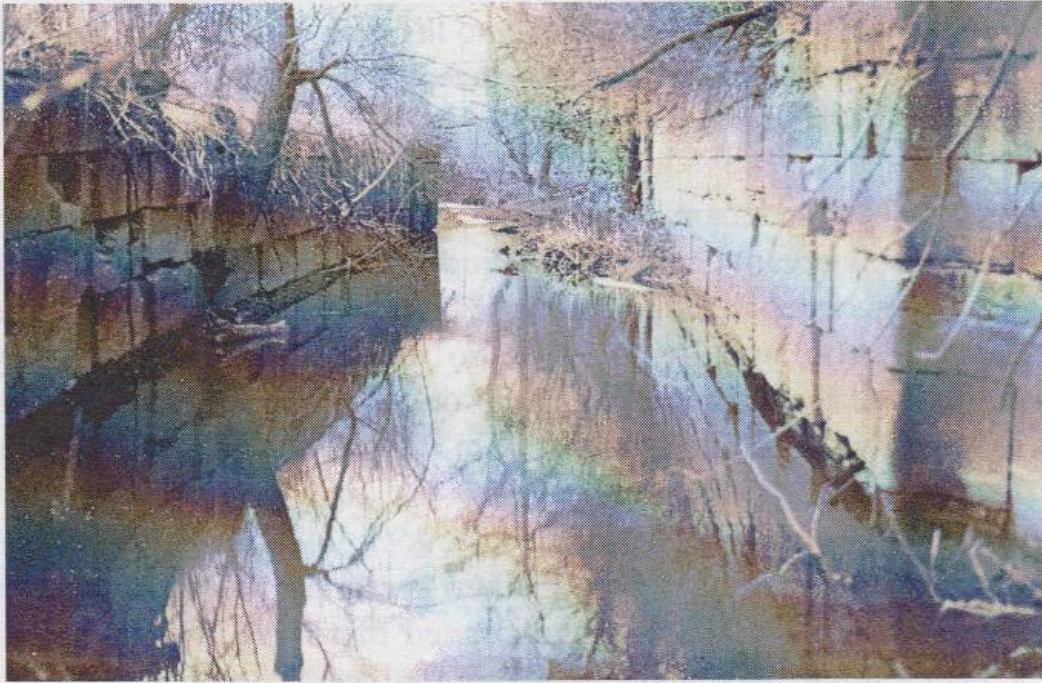
Stone for building the four locks in the Lagro vicinity was available and found in a place called the “Narrows.” Here a quarry was worked that took advantage of exposed limestone created by the eroding affects of the Salamonie River. As the crow flies, “Salamania Quarry” is one and one-half miles south of Lock No. 12, and today can be reached by driving two and one half miles southeast of Lagro on CR 500 East. Flossie Enyart Bailey supports the quarry’s whereabouts in her *Pioneer Days in the Wabash Valley* (1933). In it she writes that the freight houses in Lagro were built on foundation stones, “quarried a short distance from the

Salamonie River which empties into the Wabash and were brought to LaGro on flat boats." She also states, "The stone was used in the building of the canal locks was also brought down the river."⁴⁷

C.A. Anderson, researching a history of Wabash County for the Federal government's Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the 1930s, obtained the services of E.L. Martin. An employee of the canal, Martin was living in Lagro at the time. Together they determined that James McDonald Lock No. 12 measured 130 feet in length with 16 inches allowed for the gates to set back into the lock and niches measuring twelve feet and five inches long.⁴⁸ V. Friederika Van Buskirk visited the lock in 1936 and wrote that this structure may have been the best preserved of all the locks in the Lagro region. Further it was noted that remains of the lock-keeper's house were evident at the northwest corner of the lock. Van Buskirk stated:

tumblers provided a means for the water which collected in the valley when the elevations of the creeks were sufficient, to find an exit into the canal from the Berm side without washing the bank in its way. Due to Rager Creek it was necessary to build one more elaborate than the others in Lagro Township.⁴⁹

"Tumble" is a term applied to the raceway or sluice constructed parallel to a lock to allow excess water to flow around a lock on the berm or heelpath, opposite the towpath side, which might build up in the channel when the upstream lock gates were closed. Rager Creek crosses the Blue Star Highway (old U.S. 24) one-quarter mile east of county road 600 East about the same distance east of Lock No. 12 on the canal line. Presently, the lock in the old canal bed, continues to drain Rager Creek.



An east to west view of Mc Donald Lock No. 12 in 2002.

J. Miller Photograph

In the summer of 2002 an area 60 yards in diameter was examined and no evidence of the lockkeeper's house could be found. If Van Buskirk believed that the large cut stone found at the northwest corner of Lock 12 is the lockkeeper house foundation, it might well be a stone from the tumble and not the house.

While surveying the canal route on June 21, 1827, John Peter Paul made the following entry in his journal:

Friday morning. Weather still remarkably cool for the season, the maximum not being over 78°. On that day progressed with the line about three quarters of a mile and on the...22nd, Saturday, run an ordinate and then made a re-survey of an experimental line. Shortened the distance, straightened the line and got better ground. 24th, Sunday, day pleasant. Had an excursion in a perogue (sic) up the River about half a mile to Ash Peak, or Ash-she-pe-quah, signifying in Pottawattamie and Miami, the

Big Rock. Took the altitude, found to be about 75 feet above the water at low tide.

What Paul called Ash Peak on the Wabash is today known as Hanging Rock.⁵⁰ North of the river, through this area in 1847, Jesse Williams described several canal structures:

Culvert No. 53, of wood, 10 feet by 18 inches – submerged. Lock No. 13, 7 feet lift, of *cut stone*. The description of lock No. 12, just preceding (sic) will apply to this. Gates will need renewal in 1850.⁵¹

Known by the name of its keeper, Curley Hayes⁵², Lock No. 13 is visible from the Blue Star Highway or the old State Road 24 that runs south of and parallel to the Norfolk and Southern (old Wabash) rail line. It is located about a mile east of the river bridge in Lagro. Anderson, in his WPA report wrote that in 1936 the lock measures 120 feet in length and had a depth of eight feet four inches. Over the years since the close of the canal, Anderson suggested that rather than take the time to quarry a rock for a personal project when one was needed, some persons have removed a limestone block one by one. Unfortunately, the practice of removing stones and timbers continues with virtually all extant Wabash & Erie Canal structures.⁵³ A photograph of Anderson's era shows the south wall of the lock reduced by five or so courses of stone when compared with the opposite wall to the north. To the south the interurban rail line is positioned on top of the old towpath. At the turn of the millennium, this lock can be viewed from the road and is on private property being used as a trash container.



Hayes Lock No. 13 as it appeared in 1937. J. Miller Photograph.

West of the Curley Hayes Lock, C.A. Anderson reported a turnaround basin had been constructed that permitted boats to change direction, layover or load and unload cargo. It is estimated that it was five hundred feet long and one hundred-twenty feet wide. Although there is evidence of a canal channel to and from the Hayes Lock, looking west the earth is flat suggesting this could have been a basin area. A large slaughterhouse is supposed to have stood on the east end of the basin with an ample dock used for loading product. Today, to follow the route of the canal it is necessary to sight the utility poles installed on the easement that was the towpath.

West of the lock and on the south side of the basin, Anderson described a waste weir or spillway in the line. It was four or five feet deep about twelve feet in length and filled-in with rocks. Tow animals could wade through five or so inches of water while crossing the top of the structure. Surplus water spilled over and washed south to the river. Jesse Williams does not mention a structure here in 1847 nor does it appear on the map of Lagro in the Baskin, Forster & Co.'s *Atlas* of 1876. It must be kept in mind,



Hayes Lock No. 13 in 2002. J. Miller Photograph.

however, that Anderson assisted with the 1936 project by E. L. Martin, who could provide a firsthand witness having worked for the canal.



LITTLE LAGRO'S LONG LEGACY

Lagro is described in the *Indiana Gazetteer* of 1840 as a flourishing Hoosier town first settled in 1835 and that it was named for an “Indian Chief who formerly resided there.”⁵³ In the 1884 *History of Wabash County* atlas, Thomas Helm offers a discussion about the physical geography saying, “It is a fortunate place for a town. Natural water power flowing from both the Wabash and Salamonie rivers provides water power. An abundance of lime and cutting stone are found in the region.”

Because of its location on an important river route between the Great Lakes with its access to the eastern seaboard and the Mississippi River into the west used by both American Indians and French, the Lagro site became a popular trading stop. Later with the promise of a canal offering convenient two-way boat traffic coming through, General John Tipton became the proprietor of Lagro and platted the town in May 1834. He named it in honor of the chief of the Indian tribe that occupied the area. Lagro was duly recorded at the county seat of Wabash in March 1838.⁵⁴ Originally, the Miami village along the north bank of the Wabash River across from the mouth of the Salamonie was on ground granted at the treaties of 1818 and 1826. Chief O-sah-la-monee or Au-sah-mo-nee or Oshmonne – a name whose meaning comes from the wildflower we know as the Blood Root – was born in the 1770s. French traders referred to the rather obese chief as “Big Body” or “Le Gros” and later La Grosse that gradually experienced a spelling change over the years to “Lagro.” The first house built in Lagro was a fine brick home built for the Miami chief by the government in 1828. It was the first brick house erected in the county⁵⁵ and stood in the space now occupied by the present-day American Legion Hall Post 248 at 800 Washington Street. Le Gros died in 1831, and is buried in the nearby Odd Fellows Cemetery.⁵⁶

Under Le Gros the Miamis sympathized with the British and fought battles against American armies led by Harmer, St. Clair and

Wayne. With the signing of the 1795 Treaty of Greenville they remained peaceful. However, at the start of the American War of 1812 with England some of Le Gros's warriors joined with Tecumseh. Peace came at the July 1814 Second Treaty of Greenville. Captain Charley, whose name also is remembered in the county as Charley Creek, refused to accept the terms unless they allowed the Miami to remain neutral in the war with the English. All in all, the Miami enjoyed a relatively peaceful arrangement with the Americans after that time. At the close of the war with England in 1815, the Miami maintained a more peaceful relationship with the Americans even during the 1832 Blackhawk War. The 1826 Treaty of Mississinewa opened the land that made possible a canal to connect the Maumee and Wabash river systems,⁵⁹ which included the eastern section of the county south of the Wabash River and 208,000 acres found between the Eel and Wabash rivers. It consumed the land north of the Wabash to the mouth of the Tippecanoe River the original terminus of the canal project. Miamis continued to hold on to the lands south of the Wabash from the Salamonie and the Eel rivers that came to be called the Miami National Reserve often called "The Big Miami Reserve" or the "Thirty Mile Reserve". The Potawatomi held title to lands north of the Eel River. However, title to the Miami lands within the present boundaries of Indiana was extinguished in the forty four different treaties between 1775 and the end of 1840. More and more Miami lands diminished as new settlers arrived, albeit some individual reserves were established. In November 1838 the Miami Reserve was purchased by the United States, and in the 1840 treaty all except a few individual reserves were ceded to the United States to be vacated after five years. Terms of the treaty were executed in 1845 when the Miami families were removed to the west.⁶⁰

By canal boat, Lagro was four miles from the landing at Belden, fifty eight miles from the Indiana-Ohio state line and, one hundred forty-two miles from Toledo.⁶¹ Once the town became a canal port, economic development took place at its present site supported by its proximity to the locks.⁶² Well before the town plat was recorded, hundreds of laborers converged on the place, which

created a sizeable village of log shanties in the surrounding woods. Work on the canal was being let to contractors in May 1834.⁶³ Daniel Ballinger hired on and brought his big oxen team with him. Workers from as far as Indianapolis that same year were attracted to Lagro to help prepare for the influx of immigrants who would arrive to do the hard labor of building a canal. Historian Thomas Helm lists John Russell, Samuel Layser, Michael and Henry Hushaw, and Thomas and Adam Nelson as the men who were put to work building shanties for the laborers and later were given general work. Also among the early arrivals was Thomas Fitzgibbon, who came in 1834 became a contractor on the canal, settled down and made his home southwest of Lagro.⁶⁴ A large number of workmen followed and occupied the shanties along the entire line of the section being cut through the wilderness. It was a costly affair ranging from \$1,600 to \$2,000 a mile to clear the way as trees were cut down by the hundreds, the stumps and roots grubbed and burned. Along with digging came the necessary mechanical structures. Helm writes that, "locks, feeder dam and etc were to be built."⁶⁵

Before the canal was placed in operation, the cost of shipping made commerce impractical, and it was not uncommon that a local farmer, merchant or artisan paid more in shipping charges than the total cost of the goods being delivered.⁶⁶ As the canal business opened the way to markets, prices improved for farmers who saw the opportunity and took advantage of the landing at Lagro. One woman recalled that farmers doing business on the canal soon found that they could collect double what they formerly priced their products and buy the goods they needed for half of what they once paid.⁶⁷

It took two days to haul grain by horse drawn wagon about twenty miles from Marion, Indiana. At the end of one day's travel, one place in the road became a popular overnight campground. Jesse D. Scott and Elihu Garrison platted a town on the site in 1837 and named it *America*. Beginning sometime before 1836 as a two-track wagon road cut through the forest, this direct route between

Marion and Lagro, became known as the America Road. Within ten years, others saw the commercial advantages of the town of America and began providing services such as a blacksmith shop, general store, hotel, church and school on the road to Lagro. Soon grain was being hauled the fifty miles distance from Anderson, Indiana, to the canal landing at Lagro. Eastern markets connecting through Toledo paid good money for grain that may not have buyers in the Midwest. Such was the economic development created by the canal up and down the line. Once the canal ceased operations, the town of America slowly died out. Activity gave way to the newer railroad-supported community of Ashland, which later became La Fontaine. Today America is a ghost town along the "America Road" with nothing to mark it but a cemetery and one house in a pleasant countryside setting.⁶⁸

During the later years, keeping the system in good repair brought employment as well. Joseph Elder was paid \$630.00 for repairing, "12 Gates for Huntington & Lagro Locks @ 52.42." If these numbers are correct, it is apparent that the lessees rounded up the numbers when they received final payment. Other examples of repair costs occurred in February of 1865 when contractor J. Todd was issued a \$127.00 draft for 6,687 feet of plank for the Lagro and Wabash locks.⁶⁹

While in the first three or four years of canal construction, area farmers experienced poor crop production. To accommodate workers and the incoming emigrants, supplies shipped by pirogue from Wea Plains south of Lafayette were necessary. A Pirogue was a dugout canoe made by felling great trees that were hollowed out and floated on the river. One of these boats is reported to have been five feet across at the base and sixty feet in length. When filled with cargo of flour, bacon, meat, whiskey and other supplies, the long arduous task of several men, pole in hand, began pushing against the river's bed. As many as a dozen pirogues may have made up a fleet to retrieve supplies traveling by day and taking their rest in the forest along the river by night. Step by step they urged the long slender crafts against the river's current. After as many as twelve



Old Wabash River Bridge at Lagro offered visitors a view of Wabash Dam No. 2. A portion of the old river dam is visible below the left span of the road bridge. Photo by R. Hubbell, date unknown. Courtesy, J. Miller.

days of exhausting work of pushing upstream, the boatmen reached the construction camps of Wabash County. From Fort Wayne ox drawn wagons supplied:

the hungry multitudes who labored and toiled in their years' long task of leveling down the hills and filling up the hollows and digging away the tree-roots and quarrying the rocks for the locks, and construction of the feeder dams, and doing all that must needs be done to complete the mighty task they had undertaken to accomplish.”

Written about 50 years after these experiences, Helm said that exorbitant prices for foodstuffs were paid. Flour commanded a price of \$25 and bacon \$50, however, he did not say in what quantities.⁷⁰

Several businesses were established in Lagro as news of the canal's commerce opportunities spread. A Mr. Gallahan started building a hotel that was completed by Ephraim Keller in 1835 or 1836. It was about the time that a store was opened by Jirah and Wilson Barlow. In 1843, after the canal was linked between

Lafayette, Indiana, and Toledo, Ohio, business boomed in the town. Grain and stock came to the canal from as far north as Goshen and from the south from Muncie, Anderson, Indianapolis and Richmond because a better price could be obtained at the canal with its certain connection to eastern markets. Long trains of one hundred horse-drawn wagons were a common sight and could be seen lined up for miles awaiting their turn to make a trade and unload their cargo. One reason for Lagro's great success was its easy all downhill access as compared to Wabash town's several ascents. This of course led to the necessity of large warehouses such as the ones built by Robert English in about 1841 and later by John R. Murphy and Judge Comstock.⁷¹

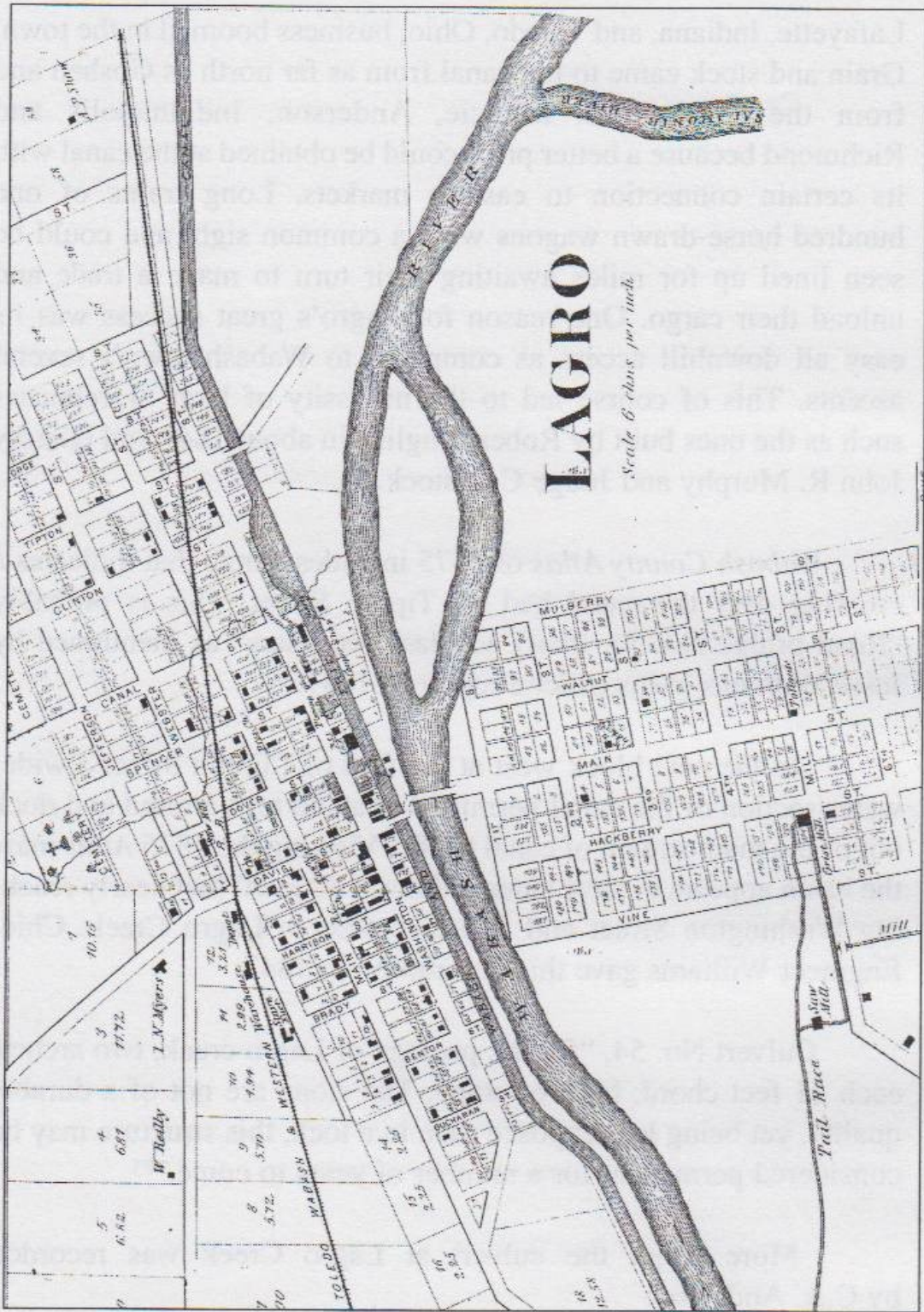
Wabash County Atlas of 1875 includes a map that indicates a crossing over the canal bed on Tipton Street. This is probably "Road-bridge No. 54, (that) will last two years" as mentioned by Jesse Williams in his official report of 1847.⁷²

In the next block west at the foot of Clinton Street a wide-water section of the canal permitted boats to turn around and dock out of the main stream of canal traffic. Viewing the 1875 *Atlas* map, the basin appears to have extended north 80 to 90 feet nearly reaching Washington Street and 260 feet west to Lagro Creek. Chief Engineer Williams gave this description in 1847:

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."⁷³

More about the culvert at Lagro Creek was recorded by C.A. Anderson:

Over this creek in the days of the canal was...a low wide archway permitting the creek to flow under the bed. The archway was wide enough to take care of



Map of Lagro near the end of the canal era,
Atlas of Wabash County Indiana 1875.

surplus water during the rainy seasons. It is possible (in 1936) to imagine its approximate location and if one was a more persistent digger than what I am they or he might be able to locate the foundation for the archway. The canal be was made of limestone at this place as was the archway and the sides of the canal, with soil filled on the outside of the bed allowing for a towpath.⁷⁴

Lock No. 14 was built on a July 31, 1834 contract awarded to a Mr. Matlock, and No. 15 on the same date to Stewart and Wallace.⁷⁵ Both locks were situated in the town of Lagro and described by Chief Engineer Williams in 1847 as, “each six feet lift, built of *cut stone*. The stone procured from Salamania 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.”⁷⁶

Jim Kerr Lock or Number 14 is preserved today in a community park located at the foot of Canal Street on Washington. An historical marker reads:

KERR LOCK
Important Business Center on the
old Wabash & Erie canal.
This Site Presented to
The Town of Lagro
by Charles Edward Nottingham
to be presented (older marker said “preserved”)
as a Historical Monument

In addition to his duties at the lock, Kerr operated a supply store near this place. Anderson measured the lock at 110 feet in length with the wing wall being twelve feet and ten inches long.⁷⁷ Van Buskirk spoke out against those persons pilfering stones from the lock. She called for a movement promoting the refurbishing of the historic structure as a tool to educate the young and remind the

older citizens of the work of their predecessors. "Picture the large beams extending from the gates raising or lowering the water level as occasion demanded" she wrote.⁷⁸ Presently some gain towards preserving the Kerr Lock site has taken place. Kerr Lock Park encompasses Lock No. 14 and a log cabin that stood at the southeast corner of State Road 524 and U.S. 24 has been removed to the small park area. The canal channel is evident, but no indication of the Lagro Creek arch known officially as Culvert No. 54 can be found. During the 1840s this lock was sometimes referred to by the name of its builder. In a story about a party of old settlers tracking a bear, Thomas Helm mentions that they first spotted the huge animal tracks where it had crossed the canal during the night. The hunters followed the signs across the county and it was sighted in the area of Rich Valley. After a full day's chase, the hunting dogs forced the bear to take refuge in a tree that was, "a little west of the canal lock known as the Matlock Lock." As it turned out, a number of Indians on horseback were also pursuing the bear, so the two hunting parties agreed to share the prize because bear meat was highly sought after in those days.⁷⁹



Lagro's Kerr Lock No. 14 as viewed from west to east in 2004.
Photo in author's collection.

Another incident relating to Kerr Lock concerns the fate of a man named William Walker who was known to have had an addiction to alcohol. On June 8, 1854, after leaving a local saloon heading for his home on the other side of the canal, he decided to cross over at the lock. When Walker failed to show up the next morning, and was reported missing, officials surmised that Walker might have met with an accident somewhere along his route home. A decision was made to drain off the water on the short level of the canal west of Kerr Lock. Walker's body was found and removed from the muddy bottom with a boat hook. In the victim's coat pocket the coroner found a bottle of whiskey. It was concluded that the deceased had lost his balance while under the influence of drink and fell into the waters that took his life. Four years later in 1860, "Corky" Taylor fell into the canal at the lock and drowned. It was determined that this fatality was related to an over indulgence of whiskey.⁸⁰ Stories about indulging in spirits such as these are common during the time of the canal.

Lock No. 15 was commonly referred to as the "Jim Ditton" Lock. It stood a few yards east of the bridge over the river across from the old interurban station. It was in line with the canal channel and along the north edge of the towpath now marked by a line of utility poles. The interurban used the towpath for its rail bed and is between the station building and the site of the no longer visible Jim Ditton Lock. Until the 1930s, the canal bed could be seen even though the town made attempts to close it up with fill dirt. A rock wool business that started up in Lagro found the canal channel a handy place to dispose of the tailings from their manufacturing process. Rock wool used limestone from the Salamonie quarry that produced the by-product, which has erased the once busy water channel.

At Lagro, the task of constructing the canal was enlarged by the location of a 'feeder dam' and the four locks in or near the town. The line eventually extended from between the Indiana-Ohio state line to Lafayette, Indiana, remaining land locked until 1843.

During this time many referred to the project as the "Wabash Canal" before the line was pushed east to Lake Erie establishing what later became known as the Wabash & Erie Canal.⁸¹ Helm wrote that there was a, "substantial free bridge over the Wabash" and "also a 'feeder dam' directly at the upper edge of the bridge."⁸² As late as 1984 it was being suggested that there may be remains of the feeder dam under the left-hand span of the present bridge. However, the dam and the old road bridge were both positioned upstream from the present-day bridge.⁸³

The locks of Lagro were necessary to overcome the drop in elevation west of the canal's "Summit" at Fort Wayne. Stones used to build McDonald, Hayes, and Kerr are standing as a testament to pioneer planning and hard toil.⁸⁴ Historian Thomas Helm credits Captain Mahon, of Mahonsport, with having been the first to guide his boat, *The Red Bird*, from Lagro to Toledo in 1839. Since the canal did not open from the Indiana state line to Toledo until 1843, Helm may have been correct about *The Red Bird* being the first to Toledo from Lagro, but he was off on his timing.⁸⁵ Generally, it has been accepted by historians that the *Albert S. White* was the first boat to make the trip from Lafayette to Toledo during 1843. Did Mahon make a surprise trip albeit a shorter one than the *Albert S. White*? There appears to be no facts that support *The Red Bird* as having been the first boat from the State of Indiana to reach Toledo.

On July 4, 1837, Captain Dana Columbia of Fort Wayne piloted his packet boat the *Indiana* and was the first to arrive in Lagro. Arrangements were made for Captain Columbia to proceed the next day to record the *Indiana* as the first to arrive at the landing in Wabashtown. However, another craft dubbed the *Prairie Hen* appeared in town and was to make history on its next port of call. Its master was Captain Ed Patchen.

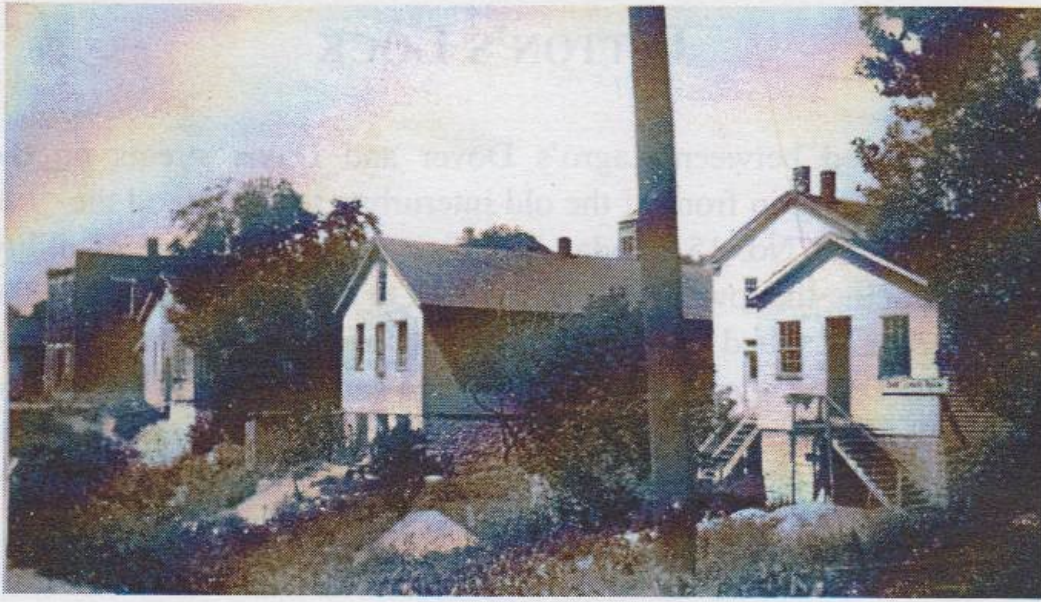
DITTON'S LOCK

Located between Lagro's Dover and Davis streets on the roadway in front of the old interurban station stood the "Jim Ditton" Lock No. 15. Today, standing beneath the line of utility polls tracing the towpath, the canal was to the north side, while the interurban roadbed was on the south side. C. A. Anderson noted that Jim Ditton operated a store here that supplied hay, whiskey and trinkets. Parts of the lock were still in place when preparing his 1936 survey, but he was clear about the destructive hand of man that was slowly causing the disappearance of the old waterway.

Tolls for boat traffic on the canal were collected in designated towns along the route. A town so chosen to host a toll-house found it to be the source of great economic development and Lagro was no exception. Fort Wayne was the next collection point to the east and Logansport to the west. Others along the line were established by the State in Lafayette, Covington, Terre Haute, Worthington, Petersburg and Evansville.

Lagro's collection office is described in the WPA project:

On the south side of Washington between Davis and Dover Streets is an old building that formerly housed the office of the local toll collector on the canal. It is located on the west side of the alley. The front of the building was a saloon and grocery while the back (facing the canal) contained the Canal Toll Collector's office. Jirah Barlow at one time occupied this office as toll collector for the canal.⁸⁶ When Samuel Abbott traveled to Lagro in 1834 with Augustus A. Peabody to claim land that Peabody had purchased, the canal workers were busy building the feeder dam.⁸⁷



Buildings on the north side of the canal as seen from Ditton Lock No. 15 *circa* 1930. – J. Miller photograph.

Ephraim Keller who came to Lagro in the 1830s opened the Mansion House and later the Humboldt House on Washington Street and even later the Keller House. Warehouses were built along the canal located on the east edge of Lagro extending to the west side. Business was beginning to boom in the 1800s and especially after the line was completed in 1843 from Lafayette - considered the head of steamboat navigation on the Wabash River - to Toledo, Ohio on Lake Erie. John Comstock, Michael & Robert English and John K. Murphy owned and operated these enterprises. Daniel Sayre came to town in 1858 and opened a general mercantile business buying grain and pork in large quantities. His business was on the north side of Washington Street and he moved his grain through the warehouse once operated by John Comstock and later by Martin Dedrick. Here Sayre shipped by canal until the railroad began taking over the business in the late 1850s.⁸⁸

Along with those who came to grub and shovel the channel through, there were those who arrived to serve as contractors or to settle near such a project and decided to make Lagro their home. Josiah L. Wynes born in New York State in 1805 became a

contractor on the canal in 1834 when the bids were first let. He later built the first mill on the Salamonie River but found time to serve as Wabash County's first elected sheriff as well as two terms in the State legislature. He died early at the age of thirty five in 1840. Squire Benjamin, Sr., a native of Athens County, Ohio, was born October 7, 1810. He first came to Fort Wayne and took a contract on the Wabash & Erie to build Lock No. 17 in 1835. James Elward of Kilkenny County, Ireland was born in 1805. After coming to America he worked constructing New York and Pennsylvania canals. He came to the Lagro area and purchased land to farm. Ann Thornhill married William Robinson an officer in the British Army. Their son Andrew J. Robinson was born in County Cork, Ireland on December 21, 1839 and after the death of her husband, Ann immigrated to America in 1848. Son Andrew moved to Lagro in 1853 and became the owner of several Wabash & Erie Canal boats. He operated the *Union* which some have called the first steamboat to navigate the canal. James P. Scott born in New Jersey on May 3, 1809, and had the benefit of an education. In 1834 he came to Wabash County and worked for the Wabash & Erie Canal while it was being constructed.⁸⁹

In order to replenish waters that escaped from the canal channel because of both leaks and evaporation, dams on streams were built to act as feeders. Jesse Williams' official description of the condition of the dam in 1847 that was built across the Wabash River to serve as a water supply feeder to the canal is concise and to the point:

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.

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 1849.⁹⁰

An effective structure, the dam created a slackwater or lake extending upstream nearly four miles reaching Belden on the Wabash. An island 150 feet above the dam created a swift current. At the east end of the island on the south side a backwater formed.⁹¹ Below the west end of the island, the dam and the feeder gates were located a few feet west of the interurban station. For many years during the early part of the twentieth century, the comb or upstream slanting side of the dam survived the elements. Dr. Arch Porter remembered them before the ravages of flood waters, ice gorges and dynamite moved the remnants from sight. The fifty-five degree incline aided the flow of water passing over the top of the dam helping eliminate washouts at the base of the dam. Water tumbling over the dam fell on a level platform or apron. When the apron washed away, river water eroded the river bed forming a basin. In turn, Dr. Porter recalled a dangerous upper current rushing out a few yards then reversing back toward the dam. Simultaneously, a lower current moved out over a bed of rocks forming riffles. Getting caught in this swirling water was most often fatal to man or beast. During the freezing winter months the ice formed by the water provided both a practical and entertaining purpose. A sheet of ice as wide as the river, a foot thick formed for miles upstream. Ice, cut into blocks, was hauled to a warehouse covered with sawdust preserving it for use well into the summer months. Skaters from Lagro were said to be among the fastest and most accomplished. A long tow rope fastened to a horse drawn sleigh for kids to grasp made for a thrilling ride over the ice. In summer, the dam constructed to provide water for the canal offered the added recreational advantages of boating, sightseeing and fishing.⁹²

For the most part, the canal followed the Wabash River wandering not more than three-quarters of a mile. Joseph Elder received a draft of \$150.00 from the canal lessees, "for new gates at Lagro Feeder", on September 4, 1865. Such repairs were important because the project depended on feeders to replenish the water supply. However, the feeder at Lagro was of special interest because it powered the wheels downstream in the town of Wabash. Historian Helm wrote that as late as 1884 the old dam was preserved in order to feed the channel of the canal for the mills and factories in Wabash.⁹³

In 1936, Anderson wrote that the feeder entered the canal from the Wabash River Dam No. 2. Stretching across the river, the dam was nearly the location now occupied by State Road 524 or Cement Avenue Bridge. Although traces of the dam and feeder had all but disappeared by 1936, he estimated the feeder was sixteen feet wide and seven feet deep. It was located about thirty feet west of the dam.⁹⁴ On the south bank of the Wabash, the river water laps upon the limestone blocks, many of which appear to be cut stones. Higher up on the deeply cut river channel are carefully laid blocks of stone that appear to be an abutment. On the north side a stone wall of several courses constitute a permanent part of the riverbank. At low water, two pier foundations can be seen. Together they appear to be the remains of Wabash Dam No. 2, however, this is what remains of the road bridge that crossed the river. It was blown down in a severe wind storm on the night of November 21, 1856.⁹⁵

A short feeder channel entered the canal main line several feet west of today's highway at the north end of the present river bridge. Its source on the river was behind the old interurban station erected by the traction company upstream of the dam. Usually, the engineers planned a guard lock at such sites where feeders were introduced to the controlled water of the canal. However, it appears that the function of the guard lock fell upon the responsibility of the Jim Ditton Lock No. 15 about forty yards east of the feeder's entrance to the canal. A similar arrangement can be observed upstream at the Forks of the Wabash Dam No. 1 feeder and nearby

Lock No. 10. This proximity of feeder entrance to these standard locks made sense when considering that a guard lock is usually defined as a lock at the influx of a slackwater pool and was not necessary for providing a specific lift. Instead the guard lock raised a boat to whatever level depth of the slackwater at the time and guarded the lower canal against high water.⁹⁶ It is sometimes referred to as a “feeder lock” because of its location at the head of a feeder or dam and was an access to a pond or slackwater. It was often designed with higher upper gates and more substantial head walls than usual in order to withstand floodwaters.⁹⁷

The feeder at Lagro, however, continued in operation because it was used to supply water to power Summerton Mill in the town of Wabash. The Toledo Wabash & Western Railroad had placed its tracks along side the canal and was moving to take the freight business away from the canal. The railroad began carrying grain in 1858, however, the canal that had previously enjoyed virtually all of that business saw a decline after 1864. By the 1870s, many places along the canal line were gradually disappearing.⁹⁸

A second turnaround basin had been excavated about a mile west of Lagro intended for redirecting barges or for making repairs while docked out of the flow of canal business. Since widewater places were not considered mechanical structures no record was made in the chief engineer’s annual report. We learn about them and their locations from the people who were living at the time and recollected an incident or because a basin may have served as a community landmark. One was the story of Captain Watkins’ barge that had been left to rot away in the Lagro basin when railroad competition began to take away the canal’s freight business.

Because of the railroad’s ability to both operate year round and travel at greater and greater speeds, passenger service had virtually moved to rail travel and had eliminated the need for packet boats. In another maneuver to close down the canal’s freight business, the railroad levied a surcharge on each bushel of grain at elevators brought up on the canal.⁹⁹

One grain buyer was able to lease the Wabash railroad elevator at Lagro, and worked with the rail company to force the canal out of business. A surcharge of several cents was levied on any grain loaded from wagons through the elevator on the canal increasing the price of every bushel of grain loaded onto rail cars. The elevator owner was virtually put out of business since the railway company refused to make cars for him available unless the tax was paid.

About 1875, Henry Stevens was buying grain at Lagro. The wheat was coming in with no place for storage and no canal boats were running at the time. The grain he had bought would surely spoil unless a way could be found to ship it to market. In his search, it occurred to him that the old Cincinnati, Wabash & Michigan railroad had routed its Michigan Division rails along the canal in the town of Wabash. Loading the grain from a canal boat from Lagro in Wabash was a solution. Since no canal boats were actively plying the idle waters of the canal, Stevens hit upon the idea of using Captain Watkins' boat. Still resting on the bottom of the Lagro widewater, Watkins' old stake boat might be made seaworthy enough to haul a few loads over the five miles distance to Wabash's rail point.

As a solution, Stevens told the Captain, "I will give you steady employment for two months at \$5.00 a day for yourself and two men, handling two cars of wheat a day, and will furnish you a mule and tow line. Rather than have the deal fall through, I will pay your dinners at Arch Stitt's or Bill Ditton's." Captain Watkins agreed to haul the grain using his boat that some accounts say was *The Rising Sun*. He returned to the basin and raised the boat from its watery grave. Watkins had the boat dried out and caulked before it was loaded, and for several weeks the old craft held together and made several trips from between Lagro to Wabash. In a couple of days, the boat proved seaworthy and was taken across shallow water to receive her cargo at the Lagro landing. To try out the bold experiment, two rail car loads of sacked wheat were loaded onboard

and with a mule tugging at the line, headed to Wabash town. Low water, some silt build up and other obstacles in the channel all worried the old Captain. Departing about ten o'clock with a load of sacked wheat, transferred the grain to the cars awaiting delivery in Wabash and returned to Lagro by three o'clock the same day. Not once did the boat ground and over the harvesting season, the grain was shipped successfully and Mr. Stevens got his wheat shipped. Its route was north and then into Toledo over the Lake Shore road. Since it was graded as Michigan wheat he got from two to four cents a bushel premium over the Indiana levels plus avoided the Wabash railroad's surcharge. Afterward, the old barge was returned to the Lagro basin, parked, mule unhitched, the slightly used towrope detached and *The Rising Sun* forlornly abandoned to slowly disappear into history. Captain Watkins is probably the last boatman to have navigated the old water way in Wabash County.¹⁰⁰



THE FIGHTING IRISH

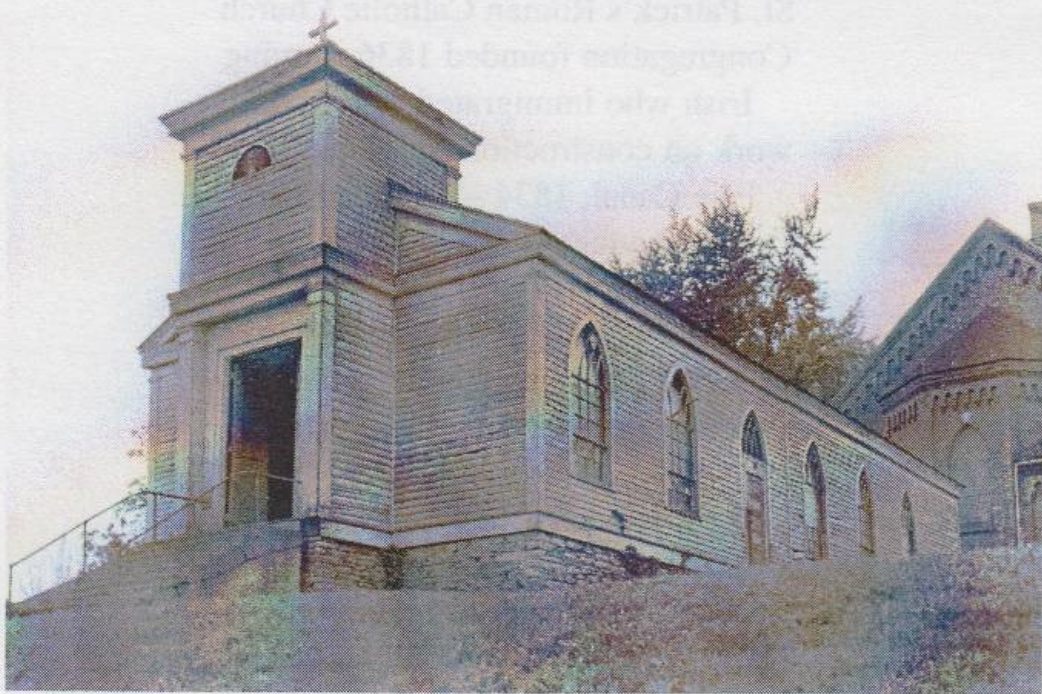
From the Lagro feeder site west of present-day State Road 524, St. Patrick's Church comes into view. An historical marker in front of the church contains the story of the parishioners it served and the architecture of the building:

St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church
Congregation founded 1836, serving
Irish who immigrated to area to
work on construction of Wabash and
Erie Canal, 1834 – 1837. Many
Irish bought land and stayed as
permanent residents using their
Religious and cultural interests to
build Lagro, originally platted
1834, into a thriving trade center.

Church dedicated first building 1838,
used for activities until razed in
1860's. This brick structure, built
1870 – 1873, designed in Victorian
Gothic Style; original bell still in
use. Brick made in Huntington
and Lagro. Features include
hand-carved alters and statues,
stained glass windows, and oak and walnut
curved stairway. Listed in National
Register of Historic Places 1999

(Installed 2000 Indiana Historical Bureau and
Eugene and Anne Driscoll family)

During the first half of 1834 a great number of Irish Catholics came to the Lagro region to work on the canal. After the construction was finished, many used their surplus earnings to buy unimproved land. Although some took land in the south portion of the township, many moved north creating an “Irish Settlement,” which was known by that name for decades. Irishmen, with their families, were attracted from the eastern canal projects in great numbers.¹⁰¹



Irish canal workers built the first Saint Patrick's Church in Lagro.
Courtesy of *Today's Catholic*, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

A year after the canal opened to Lagro, some of the same workers who built the canal financed the building of a wood frame church. Painted white, it measured 30 by 40 feet and remained a small space until 1858 when the church was doubled in size. Charles Foster, a German immigrant who settled in Huntington, built the large brick church during 1872. It was Foster who in 1862 contracted with the Canal Trustees to rebuild the culvert at Silver Creek replacing the wooden structure with a stone arch under the canal. Located east of the Huntington–Wabash county line along

U.S. 24, the Silver Creek Arch remains in place today.¹⁰² Bishop John Luers laid the cornerstone of the church on June 15, 1870, and when the building was dedicated on March 17, 1873, its parish population numbered about 300 families. A part of the first church is present in the new St. Patrick's belfry. The old original bell that was brought to Lagro in 1837 by a Frenchman named Pasque who hauled it by ox cart from Buffalo, New York. It provided a proper church bell for that first structure in Lagro.

The new St. Patrick church also is standing. Constructed facing to the north, it occupied the area north of the earlier south-facing church, which was razed early in the 1960s. In 1997, Bishop John D'Arcy designated the current church as an oratory signifying that St. Patrick Church was no longer an active parish.¹⁰³

A cemetery was established in 1848 for the burial of those hardy men, women and children of St. Patrick's parish. Most of them were Catholics from Ireland's County Cork, nicknamed "Corkonians." Many of their names can be read on weather worn headstones in St. Patrick Cemetery on CR 400 East near the Huntington and Wabash county line. Still others were interred in a Catholic section located southwest of the Lagro Township's Odd Fellows cemetery.¹⁰⁴

At first the canal planners believed the Wabash & Erie could be built with Hoosier labor. However, crop production was poor during the same years the State was depending upon farmers in the region to lend a hand. When the locals saw they were needed at home, their priorities quickly changed and the farmers left the canal project behind.¹⁰⁵ Officials had no other recourse but to look to the Irish and German immigrants to man the work force. Although Germans were attracted to the project, they tended to be the craftsmen and were given to settle-in as the land developed economically.

With the workers came their backgrounds, differences and values. It seemed that the Irish never shied away from a brawl.

They would just as well fight for sport of it as they would for some sort of emotional outlet. Why some of the outbreaks occurred has been lost over time. As a matter fact, a battle that took place during the construction of the canal may have been caused over a labor issue. Just as likely, the Irish were divided along the same lines as those whose ancestors had fought in the Battle of the Boyne.

Probably, the one event that attracts as much attention as any other surrounding canal history of nineteenth century Indiana was the labor dispute that came to be known as the "Irish War." The Irish laborers hired to dig the Wabash & Erie were a tough and hardy lot without whom, in the days before modern construction technology, the canals of the American east as well as the Wabash & Erie Canal would not have become a reality. They worked hard, played hard and fought hard. Often thought of as a one-time event, the Irish War may well have been several labor disturbances since feuds took place all along the line among the Irish canalers.¹⁰⁶ Because the Indiana militia became involved and the reports of the event are available, the Irish War is normally considered to have erupted on July 12, 1835.

Why would such confrontation take place? At least three causes for the fighting among the Irish are mentioned by historians. Canal officials learned that differences among certain Irish groups led to serious arguments. Recognizing that there were two parties, they were popularly divided as "Corkonians and Fardowns". Or, as other historians have stated, they were "Corkers" and "Way Downers" from Kerry. These two factions had battled each other at Williamsport, Maryland, and at the "High rocks on the Potomac" in the two years before the incident at Lagro. Migrating to the work available, both groups came to Indiana's Wabash & Erie during September of 1834 and with them they brought their experiences. As such, the groups were separated along the line of construction in an attempt to keep the warring parties at bay.¹⁰⁷

Another has written that the combatants on both sides were Catholic and an argument erupted into a confrontation over a work benefit concern. The contractors attempted to deal with the two groups' distain for one another by assigning the gangs at either end of the construction line. The Corkonians were at work in eastern Wabash County near Lagro while the Fardowns had been kept busy with construction near Richvalley below the town of Wabash in the western part of the county.¹⁰⁸

Contractors could afford to attract labor at a dollar plus so many "jiggers" of whiskey each day. When the work was first let a difference in a term of the contract triggered the disagreement. Liquor was not regulated, carried no tax and was readily available in the west. The Corkonians were said to have been enjoying six jiggers while the Fardowns were allowed but four. After a number of Fardowns defected to the east to partake in a better compensation agreement, those left behind objected saying that they were too good to be associating with the likes of the Cork men. The Corkonians took offence to the charge and sent back a challenge to fight it out.¹⁰⁹

Finally, because the differences surround the story of the Catholic Irish, it sometimes is said that the Irish War was an old dispute with Protestants or "Orangemen" brought over from the Emerald Isle.¹¹⁰ Perhaps the contention comes from a coincidence of a date in July. Although the gangs were separated along the line, they decided to settle their animosities on the 145th anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne. No doubt it made perfect sense to the combatants since it commemorated the date of a sharp engagement fought against the British along a river near Dublin, Ireland, on July 12, 1690, that pitted the Catholic interests of James II against William III and his Protestant supporters.¹¹¹ James was considered by some to be the rightful heir to King James of England, Ireland and Scotland, however, after his defeat at the Boyne River that hope ended and he left Ireland for exile in France.¹¹² His Irish followers held on to their culture along with their religion and brought their concerns to America including their feud.

Even though the contractors tried to keep the opponents apart, sporadic beatings of persons who were caught away from their friends increased. Early in July of 1835 it became clear one or the other faction must leave the canal line. All along a 50 mile stretch of the canal line from July 4th to the 10th there were threats and confrontations made by the belligerent parties. On the 10th, work came to a halt and the Corkonians began marching westward to meet their foe towards the center of the line which was in the vicinity west of Lagro.¹¹³

On July 10, 1835, the two Irish factions were prepared to re-engage the Battle of the Boyne of July 12, 1690. Six to eight hundred Corkonians and Ulstermen representing the Catholics and the Protestants were ready to enjoin in battle. Militia from Fort Wayne and Logansport arrived to put down the squabble.¹¹⁴ Women and children in the labor camps took refuge in a cave along the riverbank. In the nearby forest the mob began collecting what they could find as weapons since they had no firearms. Other than the cannon brought to Huntington at the time of the canal's opening from Fort Wayne by Dr. George Fate, all they had were their working tools, clubs and rocks to serve as their instruments of war.¹¹⁵

Now the hundreds of armed men met at a point 100 yards west of Enyeart Creek on the canal line.¹¹⁶ The Fardowns prepared themselves by digging in and ready for the battle. Not much came of the skirmish because the Corkonians had no ammunition for their cannon and resorted to firing small stones and gravel while aiming the gun into the sky. Finally after a few fisticuffs the ring-leaders of both sides called a truce and returned to their work sites. However, the U.S. Government pressed the issue and arrested the leaders.¹¹⁷ It should be noted that Chief Godfroy of the Miami, bewildered by the turmoil among the white men, offered the services of his warriors to help the authorities bring about order.¹¹⁸

David Burr reported to the legislature, stating that two days before the riot he was on the canal line and thought the upcoming

skirmish was nothing but rumor. On the 10th one of the engineers advised him that all the workers on the lower division were armed and marching to the proposed battlefield. Barr intercepted the marchers and found them to be orderly, sober and well armed. Inquiring he found that they felt forced,

...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 recourse left but a battle. 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.

Burr at once began to negotiate a suspension of hostilities with the Corkonians and asked the Fardowns to wait. He took a few representatives with him to the proposed battle site and found the opposition ready for a fight. It was all he could do to keep the Fardowns' representatives safe from harm. Even through they expressed the same concerns as the Fardowns, the "Corks" agreed to suspend hostile operations until a peace could be negotiated. Meanwhile, the residents of Huntington became alarmed for their own safety seeing three or four hundred armed men on each side and the civil authority completely powerless. A company of militia from Fort Wayne was called in for protection. Lagro too had the same concern and called on Huntington for troops to protect them. When Burr saw that there were less than 100 troops that were altogether too small against 700 to 800 rioters, he sent a messenger to Logansport requesting assistance. The militia stationed at Lagro marched west and met the Logansport troops at Miamisport. Here the two companies joined forces returning to Lagro.

Eight Irish ringleaders were arrested, but with no "safe jail" anywhere along the canal line, the men were marched under strong

guard to Indianapolis. The 700 workers were sent back to their jobs on the canal line. Some say this was a real threat to the progress of the canal and community orderliness while others think it another Irish brawl. Col. Murray's guards marched the prisoners down along the Wabash's north bank to Logansport. There the prisoners refused to cross the river south to Indianapolis. Murray, a no-nonsense individual, ordered his men to fix bayonets and charge causing the prisoners to hurriedly make the crossing. Once in Indianapolis, the eight were released on writs of *habeas corpus*. Some sentences were handed down and the rest released while the Irish workers went back to digging the canal.¹¹⁹

Many of the militia who had been called out were already in town and ordered to assemble for duty without time to prepare. Their provisions and subsistence was underwritten by many of the contractors and people along the line, notably Captain Elias Murray of Huntington. Murray had devoted three weeks taking command of the garrison at Lagro, assisted in making arrests and marched the prisoners to Indianapolis. Colonel John Spencer headed the militia from Fort Wayne and General John Tipton was active in moving the volunteer companies from Logansport. These men paid for expenses out of their own pockets. Another \$100.00 was paid when one of the prisoners who had been sent to Indianapolis was arrested upon his return to the canal line, and was convicted and sent to the penitentiary. On his way he escaped and Sheriff Johnson paid the reward money for his capture. It was left to the county to pay these bills. Burr closed his report asking for the State's assistance to pay these debts that not only kept peace in the region, but prevented a suspension of canal work that might have taken a month to resume.¹²⁰

From this experience the Canal Commissioners required, "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."¹²¹ Even so, this event was cause for serious concern among Americans everywhere. The Thursday September 3, 1835 edition of the *New-York Spectator* reported,

From the Fort Wayne (Indiana) Sentinel.

DISTURBANCES ON THE CANAL — There have been some disturbances among the Irish laborers on the Wabash and Erie Canal, which but for the prompt and energetic measures resorted to for their suppression, would have resulted in a sanguinary conflict between the two factions into which the Irish are divided. For some time past the Corkonians have been the strongest party on the canal line, and have embraced every opportunity of maltreating such of the Fardowns as might fall into their hands; nor have our own citizens at all times been safe from the attacks of these ruffians. The Fardowns having lately received great accessions to their numbers, resolved upon driving their opponents from the canal and preparations for the contest were made by both parties. The Irish were observed by the citizens to be in the habit of nightly assembling in secluded places in the woods, and all who could in any way procure arms, were providing themselves with them. Three kegs of powder were forcibly taken from a wagon on the highway; the houses of some of the citizens were entered and the owners compelled to give up their guns; and the lives of others were threatened who refused to surrender their guns. — Several outrages were committed by these deluded ruffians upon each other, and Mr. Brady, a canal contractor, was fired at, but fortunately without effect, by a wretch named Sullivan, who, we are informed, took a prominent part in the disturbances in Maryland last year, and is also deeply implicated in the murders committed at Williamsburg, Pa. four years ago.

The contest was to have taken place on the 12th inst. The anniversary of the battle of the Boyne. — On the 10th instant the Corkonians assembled at

Lagro, to the number of about three hundred, most of whom were armed. At the same time almost two hundred and fifty armed Fardowns' advanced to Wabash, seven miles from Lagro, on their way to attack their adversaries. D. Burr, Esq canal commissioner, and some other citizens of the neighborhood, succeeded in inducing the two parties to suspend the intended fight for two days, in order to give them an opportunity of making some amicable arrangement. In the meantime expresses were sent to Fort Wayne and Logansport, requesting assistance to suppress the disturbances, and protect the citizens from the dangers to which they would be exposed, if the parties should come in contact. The express arrived here on the 11th, and the appeal was promptly responded to by our citizens. The drum beat to arms, and in two hours a company of sixty-three men, well armed, and furnished with ammunition and provisions, were on their march for the scene of action. Colonel J. Spencer was elected to command the expedition; Adam Hull was elected first lieutenant, Samuel Edsall second lieutenant, and H. Rudsill, [ed. probably Henry Rudisill] ensign. The company embarked in a canal boat, and arrived at Huntington about midnight.

Next morning they marched forward on their route, under the command of Captain Murray. On hearing of the arrival of the volunteers, the Irish dispersed into the woods, and next day most of them returned to their work, fully satisfied that they could not trample on the laws of the state with impunity, and that, if they attempted to proceed any further in their mad career, they would inevitably meet with the punishment due to such lawless proceedings. The volunteers marched through Lagro and Wabash (at each of which places they received reinforce-

ments) to Peru; sending out on the way several small detachments, who scoured the woods in every direction, and examined all shanties on the line, where arms or suspected individuals were supposed to be concealed, seizing several guns, and making many prisoners. They arrived at Peru on the 14th, where they were joined by captain Tipton's volunteer company from Logansport. The number of volunteers now under arms was not less than 250, the whole of whom next day marched back to Lagro, where all the prisoners were assembled for examination.

The display of this force having awed the rioters into submission and there being nothing more to be done, the Fort Wayne and Logansport volunteers returned to their homes, leaving the prisoners at Lagro under the charge of the Huntington and Lagro volunteers. Upwards of 100 prisoners were arrested; of these several were discharged for want of evidence; 14 of the ringleaders, including Sullivan, were taken to Indianapolis for safe custody; some were admitted to bail; and the remainder were still kept under guard at the date of our latest accounts.

The Fort Wayne company arrived here on Friday morning at 3 o'clock, after a harassing march of 120 miles, through a new country, performed in the short space of 5-1/4 days.

Great credit is due to the citizens of Fort Wayne, Huntington, Logansport, and the canal line generally, for the spirit manifested on this occasion, which was the means of suppressing the present disturbances without bloodshed and will also have a tendency to prevent any future tumults, as it has convinced the Irish that, although they are in a sparsely settled country, yet an armed force can at any moment be brought among them, sufficiently powerful to enforce their submission to the laws of the state. Peace appears to be perfectly

re-established, but as a measure of precaution, arrangements are making for the organization of volunteer companies in all the villages along the canal line. A supply of the public arms at this time would be a great assistance. ¹²²

Canal work was frequently interrupted by rumors of one party or the other on the march with the intensions of attacking the other. As noted, the Irish workers' families were taking refuge in the woods at night and citizens in towns along the line were concerned about their wellbeing. Sanford Cox witnessed one such fray in 1835 while on a visit to Peru:

I soon learned the cause of the hostility of the Irishmen, and quaked at the thought of the narrow escape I had made. On the Sabbath before my arrival, one Hoosier and two Irishmen were said to have been killed, and several Irishmen wounded, in a fracas which took place a few miles above Peru, and but a few weeks before the Governor of the State ordered General Tipton to call out the militia to suppress the riots that ever and anon disturbed the quiet of the labors on the line of the canal. ¹²³

Elijah Hackleman, making his way from Illinois in May of 1836, on the canal line in western Wabash County, said, "Some distance ahead of us, at a 'shantee' there began to be heard loud and boisterous talk. The canalers instantly quit their work and ran for the shanty, and the noise and confusion made I have never heard before expressed." He continued, "clubs and other missiles began to fly so freely that we were compelled to leave the road and go some distance around to regain it, and left them still quarreling and fighting."

Governor Noah Noble received John Vawter's September 25, 1837, correspondence petitioning the governor to commute the death sentence of two Cork County men. The two had been

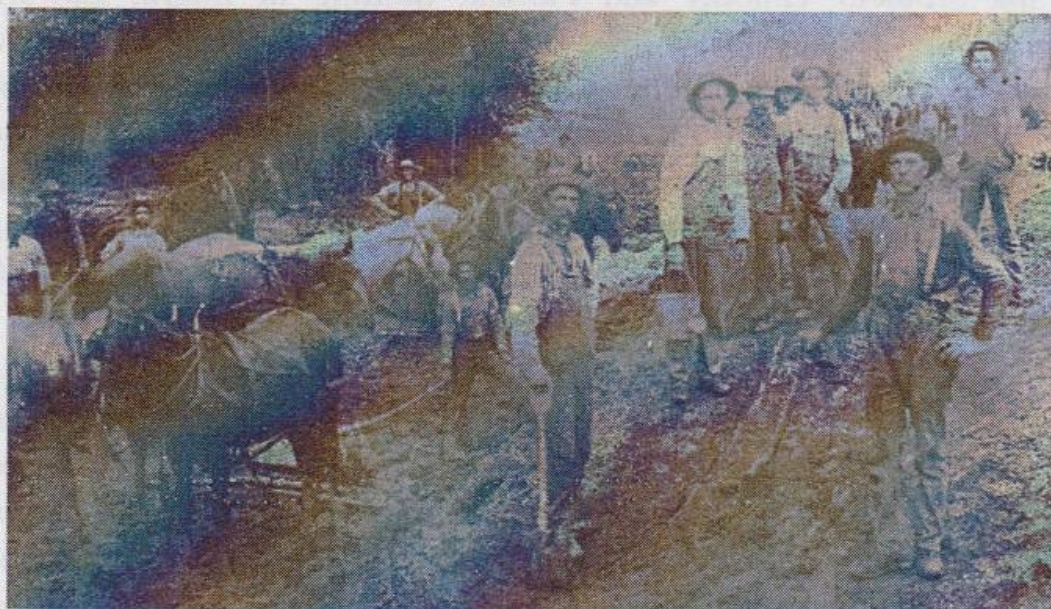
convicted of, "a most wanton attack by 5 Corkmans (sic) on an unoffending Fardow (sic) all of Irish burth (sic)..." He continued, "I write to apprise you & hope that for the protection of other un[of]fending Irish and for the peace and quiet of the labourers on the line of Public works you will think it meet to let those persons expiate their crime by the Verdi[c]t of the Jury & Judgement (sic) of the court being executed on them."¹²⁴

Impressions of the Irish as brawling, hard-drinking, canal laborer thugs lingered. The Irish who came to Indiana spent most of their time working peaceably on the canal and socializing in construction camp communities.

Historian Thomas Helm commented in 1884 that when the canal first reached Lagro, the place was nothing but workers' shanties with here and there a rare log cabin erected by what might be considered a permanent resident. Once the canal was completed in an area, many of the Irish workers moved down the line to continue the project. Others, however, entered land and settled down in the vicinity. Edward Kennerk (sometimes spelled Kinerk or Kenneark) was one who had been attracted to the idea of buying land. Born in County Limerick, Ireland, he came to America with his brothers Timothy and Patrick. Settling in Lagro, Edward became, "a gang leader" on the canal. Eventually, he moved to Allen County where he bought a farm on the northwest corner of Bluffton and Ferguson roads. According to historical records, Edward's brother, Timothy, who was born in 1812, immigrated to America in 1828 and arrived in Lagro in 1835. Both brothers, Timothy and Patrick, are listed as members of St. Patrick's parish having chosen to make their homes in Lagro.¹²⁵

J. Wesley Whicker wrote of the Irish laborers' life in the shanty camps, which sprang up along the path of the canal. These people faced long hours of labor digging, cutting and forming the channel and the embankments for the project. Living in camps along the waterway, some held a population of nearly 600 men,

women and children. Men worked on the line and many of the women, such as Edward Kennerk's wife, Selina Dalman Kennerk, were employed to do the cooking and laundry. If an epidemic of cholera descended upon the camp, they were said to have died like flies. On some occasions, they were buried in long trenches, covered with lime and interred under the same soil in which they had toiled.¹²⁶ Many of Lagro's laborers lived full lives, received reverend burials and were placed to rest on the high ground of St. Patrick's cemetery east of Lagro. Some of the family names include: Barry, Beck, Buckley, Casey, Caughlan, Collins, Coughlan, Donovan, Driscoll, Eagan, Finan, Fitz Gibbon, Grace, Griffin, Hogan, Holland, Kenneark, McDonald, McNarny, Murnan, Nolin, Reagan, Shanahan, and Sweeny, natives of counties in Ireland with names such as: Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Murah and Sligo.¹²⁷ Still others such as Thomas Fitzgibbon, whose canal contracts included the towing path through Lagro in June 1849, is buried the Catholic section on the southwest portion of the Lagro Township's IOOF cemetery.¹²⁸ These examples aside, it is no wonder considering the many fatalities encountered by this special group of people that an unfounded myth persisted through the years that one Irishman was buried every six feet of Wabash & Erie towpath.



Laborers at Lagro rebuilding the towpath.

SLAKING WEST OUT OF LAGRO

To the west of Lagro is a road that follows the north bank of the Wabash River. Serving several houses and utility substation facilities, it follows the canal towpath for over one half mile. Approximately four-tenths of a mile, below the ballpark at the Lagro Community Center, is the site of a construction worker's concern recalled by historian Thomas Helm. Few today can imagine the trials faced by those first canal laborers. John Russell told historians that west of Lagro, where the canal bends around the point of rocks, construction crews resorted to blasting away the bluff. Because this activity took place during the winter months, a large den of hibernating rattlesnakes was uncovered. Russell said that the snakes, stiff from the cold weather, were loaded and dumped by the cartload with the rocks and dirt into the canal embankment. Along the line rattlesnakes, described as "the large yellow kind", in dens were a common experience with some specimens as big around as a grown man's arm. On a single rocky ledge there were as many as three hundred of the reptiles removed to make way for the project.¹²⁹ In addition to encounters with snakes, the task of digging the canal was strenuous. A workplace mishap occurred on June 15, 1858, after boats were on the move. Although the cause was not reported, the body of a laborer, who had been attempting to repair a breach in the bank, was discovered about a mile west of Lagro.¹³⁰ Hazards other than workplace accidents included infections from malaria-carrying mosquitoes, lurking wolves, and of course other canal workers.

At seven-tenths of a mile from town, the north river lane is interrupted by a private owner's gate blocking further progress on the towpath trace. Across a long stretch that borders crop fields, the canal route leads to Enyart Creek that flows directly into the Wabash River.

While speaking about the level of water in the river, Jesse Williams warned, "The increased rise of the upper Wabash since

the original construction of the Canal, noticed from year to year as the forest has been cut away plainly indicated the necessity of giving additional height to the banks at several points." One of those places was located, "three fourths of a mile in length below the Lagro Locks." At these places, it was necessary to raise the towpath to a height of one foot above the flood mark of March 1849.¹³¹

Paralleling the towpath lane headed west along the Old State Road 24, the canal right-of-way can be traced by following along a power utility easement. Typically it is marked by the American Electric Power wires on the south side of the road. However, two sets of utility poles with their cables run east and west paralleling Old State Road 24. It is the south most power line that more closely follows the abandoned electric interurban track bed lying virtually atop the remains of the old canal towpath. Leading to the town of Wabash, the road runs about two miles along the top of a bluff before descending and crossing Enyeart Creek. Canal surveyors always seeking the level ground had placed the waterway along the base of this same bluff. By the start of the twenty-first century, it is all but impossible to identify many of the sites. A few structural members, however, do survive. From Lagro, Chief Engineer Williams reporting to the canal trustees, as they took over the responsibility of managing the project in 1847, stated the condition of the mechanical structures. Some distance beyond, "Road bridge No. 21, just below the dam." Williams was likely referring to the box culvert about two miles east of Lagro that once allowed Enyeart Creek to pass under the canal when he identified it as: Culvert No. 55, of timber, 3 spans, 12 feet by 2-1/2 feet – submerged."

Here at Enyeart Creek, two large cut stones protrude from the east bank of the stream in the well-defined channel and are north of the interurban concrete culvert abutments that remain. While visiting the site during April 1999, a local man and his son preparing for a fishing excursion were seining for crawdads to use as bait. When asked what the name of the creek might be, the man

said, "I've always been told this is Jackass Creek." He recalls the name many local residents know as "Jackass Curve" recollecting a train wreck on the nearby railroad line. Maps of the area, however, show it to be "Enyeart Creek." It was a mere one hundred yards to the west of the creek where the infamous "Irish War" took place in 1835.

One half of a mile west, on a long slightly raised levee that suggests the once thriving towpath, a line of utility poles extend through a crop field. At the turn of the century two utility lines parallel the road for miles keeping in mind that the towpath remnant is below the wires of the south line. Within the next mile are two small streams passing under Old State Road 24. It is unlikely that these are culverts No. 56 and No. 57 that engineer Williams described, however, this is the general area where the water passages were constructed to allow creeks to pass under the canal.¹³²

It was along this level through the valley floor that a September 1844 edition of the Peru *Observer* reported, "a breach in the canal a few miles below Lagro." It took one hundred men to repair the break that drained the level dry prior to September 7. It was not until September 14 that the *Observer* could inform its readers that the "boats are again on the run". However, fourteen days later more bad news appeared in the paper: "the canal broke again this week near Logansport. Not a drop of rain had fallen to occasion it."¹³³

Just over three miles from Lagro, and about one mile west of Enyeart Creek, today Pike Creek passes under the road. Pike Creek, most of the year, is a small stream trickling to the south before disappearing into an interurban culvert. Within the space of 20 yards south between the road and the interurban culvert, 30 timbers can be counted below the surface of the water in the creek bed. These timbers are in alignment with the south-most string of utility poles. This could be the site Williams reported as "Culvert No. 58, of timber, 8 feet by 2 feet – submerged."

The 1876 Baskin, Forster *Atlas* indicates a creek intersecting the canal near the Lagro-Noble township line and may be the one in the Chief Engineer's report reading: "Culvert No. 59, of timber, 10 feet by two feet – submerged." No sign remains of the next structure, "Flood gates with stone abutments, in good condition."¹³⁴

Presently the Old State Road 24 route turns to the south following the even older canal line that hugs the base of the bluff. Gradually the old water way meandered toward Wabashtown and the place called Paradise Springs.



TREATY GROUND

Chief *Ken-ton-gah*, called “Charley” by the Euro-Americans, lived on the land now occupied by the city of Wabash, Indiana. His Miami village, which among several spellings included *Ta-king-ga-mi-un-gi*, or *Kin-com-a-ong* means “cold running water place,” is the place called Paradise Springs as noted in the text of a prominent historical marker.¹³⁵

Paradise Springs
Treaty Ground Kin-Com-A-Ong Spring
The Treaty between the
United States and the
Miami Tribe of Indians
was held near this
spring October 23, 1826
U.S. Commissioners
Lewis Cass, James B. Ray
and John Tipton
Erected Indiana Centennial Year 1916

A council was held in 1826 on the upper Wabash with the Miami and Potawatomi Indian nations and the United States government, at which Governor Lewis Cass, General John Tipton and Indiana Governor James Brown Ray were appointed the American representatives. Ray actively sought the appointment, fully aware of the conflict of interest stated in the State’s constitution that prohibited a sitting governor to accept any other office of honor or profit under the government of the United States. So, Ray requested not a commission, but rather a letter of authority be sent him to perform his duties. Acquisitions included in this treaty favorable to the U.S. consisted of a ten mile wide strip of Potawatomi land on the north line of the State, and the small tract of Miami holdings lying between the Wabash and Eel rivers. Ray insisted on a

donation to the State of Indiana of one section for every mile, to be granted from the Indians for the construction of a road from Lake Michigan to the Ohio River. ¹³⁶

Treaty Ground is a historically important site for Indiana's internal improvements movement because of the agreements that were reached here. Without the lands held by the several Indian peoples the government's canal could not proceed. It was the responsibility of John Tipton, United States Indian Agent, with the assistance of Joseph Barron, an interpreter, and James H. Kintner, a guard, to select a site for the 1826 treaty negotiations.¹³⁷ They erected buildings for the Commissioners' headquarters, storehouses, council house and military quarters. Later, Jesse L. Williams said of this treaty that,

The extinguishment of Indian titles in these Western States successively, was an important epoch. (In) which the entire north half of Indiana, save a few reserves, was purchased from the Indians. By its terms, the way was opened for the Wabash & Erie Canal, and the grant of land by Congress followed the next year. ¹³⁸

Governor James M. Ray who, at the time, accepted the position of Assistant Secretary to the United States Commissioners commented in 1878 about the negotiations:

At the treaty held near the town of Wabash, at the site afterward called the 'treaty ground,' with the Pottawatomie and Miami Indians, in the fall of 1826, Gov. Lewis Cass, of Michigan, Gov. James B. Ray, of Indiana, and Gen. John Tipton from Fort Wayne, United States Indian Agent, being United States Commissioners. Col. Marshall, of Lawrence County, Ind., had been selected as Secretary of the Commission, but as his health disabled him from attending, I was appointed

Assistant Secretary, and discharged the duties of his position in his stead, William Conner, of Indiana, and his brother, Henry Conner, of Detroit, and others, being sworn United States Interpreters. The Pottawatomies were present in numbers of several hundred from the north part of the State toward Lake Michigan, while the Miamis living along and beyond the Wabash, under their Chief Richardville, were more limited in numbers although much more familiar with the progress of the whites than the former tribe, who manifested much more of the wild and savage Indian temper.¹³⁹

Once all parties agreed to the terms of the treaty, it was Ray who had the assignment of preparing three copies for the various signatories. Not everyone was pleased with the Governor's performance. It should be noted that there were persons who said that Ray nearly caused the collapse of the treaty proceedings because of his ineptness and ignorance in treaty procedure. Ray was also interested in moving the Michigan Road project forward. With the treaty, cessions of land by the Miami and Potawatomi in the Wabash country were to be won, as well as, to encourage the removal of the native people to the west. Some contended that Ray was too eager to gain rights over the lands necessary to move forward his internal improvements projects. Further during that December, an Indiana General Assembly movement took place to declare the Office of Governor vacant due to Ray's having violated the constitution by accepting an office of the Federal government.¹⁴⁰

Through this part of the country on June 28, 1827, John Peter Paul recalled in his diary that the party surveying the canal moved their camp to what is now the city of Wabash.

Resumed the old line and progressed about three miles with the line. Moved encampment three

miles, run below the Treaty Ground to fine Spring. Had the cold bath in its highest perfection. The health of all tolerably good, my own as good as usual. ¹⁴¹

By 1833 a final survey for locating the canal line through Wabash County was conducted by Chief Engineer Jesse Williams with the aid of Stearns Fisher, David Burr, Solomon Holman and Charles Voorhees. Burr, as one of the first canal commissioners, set up headquarters at Treaty Grounds adjacent to the line.¹⁴² Seven years later, on March 15, 1834, a consequence of Paul's 1827 preliminary survey work was becoming a reality and the following announcement appeared in the Indianapolis *Indiana Journal*.

NOTICE
TO CANAL CONTRACTORS AND LABORERS

There will be put under contract, on the first day of May next, at TREATY GROUND, Wabash County, Indiana, from twenty to twenty-five miles in Length of the

WABASH AND ERIE CANAL.

Embracing one large AQUEDUCT over the St. Mary's river, near the town of Fort Wayne, one aqueduct over Clear Creek, TWO DAMS across the Wabash river; Seven or Eight LOCKS; Seven or Eight BLUFF BANKS; several large CULVERTS, and other heavy works on the Canal line between *Huntington* and the *Treaty Ground*. Plans, Profiles of the route, and specifications of the work to be let, will be exhibited at Fort Wayne, Huntington, and Treaty Ground.

SEALED PROPOSALS for the construction of the work will be received from the 24th to the 29th of April to the 1st of May, at the Treaty Ground, where the awards of the Contracts will be made. From the large amount of work that is to be let, it is hoped that a general attendance will be given by Contractors, as the amount which will be put under contract will, in some small degree, depend upon the number of Contractors who may attend the letting.

Thirty-two miles of the Wabash and Erie Canal are now under contract and progressing with considerable activity. The State of Indiana has made provision for an energetic prosecution of the work. During the present year more than *Sixty Miles* will be under Contract; and from

2 TO 3 THOUSAND LABORERS

will be required for three or four years for the operations contemplated. Almost any number that may come to the line will find ready employ at GOOD WAGES for CASH, in a Healthy Country, where Lands are cheap and easy to acquire. The Canal route is mostly located in the centre of a rich body of NEW LANDS, which are sold at low rates, and for three fourths of the purchase money on a long credit. Many emigrant and native Laborers during the last year, from the proceeds of their labor alone, purchased tracts of Lands of 80 and 160 acres, and became respectable settlers and landholders. Perhaps there is no part of the United States where money can be employed to so great an advantage; where property can be so easily obtained, or where it is so rapidly increasing in value.

On the last day of receiving proposals at the letting, a few choice TRACTS OF LANDS

Will be offered to the highest bidders. They embrace a valuable Mill-Site on the *Salamonia River*.

Within Two Miles of the Canal.

The site will be situated at the head of the pool formed by a dam across the Wabash, immediately below the junction of the *Salamonia*, to introduce a Feeder into the Canal, and of course will afford easy access for Canal Boats from the Mill-site to the Canal. A great variety of excellent Lands, in the vicinity of the Canal may also be purchased at Private Entry, which offers reasonable inducement to Land Buyers as well as Canal Contractors and Laborers to attend the letting.

Facsimile of an *Indiana Journal* advertisement dated March 15, 1834, called for contractors and laborers to undertake the work of canal construction.

After the treaty, the site became a place for new arrivals to stop and get orientated to the area. Historian Thomas Helm said some began calling it the "New Comers' Headquarters." It was here that David Burr with Col. Hugh Hanna located and laid out the original town plat for Wabash. Hanna had acquired land in the area and was aware of plans for a possible canal through the area. It is not surprising that he with Burr moved forward to establish a town.¹⁴³ In the early part of 1830, Burr was appointed Postmaster and established a post office at "Treaty Ground."¹⁴⁴

Contracts were let at the Treaty Grounds, on the 4th day of May 1834, the location of the line having been supervised by Jesse Williams.¹⁴⁵ Prospective contractors came from not only Indiana but from the adjoining states as well hoping to win a contract.¹⁴⁶ It was said that each section was made in lengths of thirty to sixty chains in length. Stearns Fisher assisted Jesse Williams through the county on Sections 89 to 122 or from Wabash to Peru. Contractors who signed up to build the canal through western Wabash County included: Myers (Lewis) & Jones (Lemuel G.), S & H (Samuel and Huger) Hanna, P & J Burke, Thomas Hayes, James Ferrell, James McAvoy, Adam Young, Turner & Kuntz, David Cassatt, W. T. Mallack & Co., and William Little & Sons. David Burr had taken responsibility for superintending the eastern portion of Wabash County.¹⁴⁷

The State Board of Internal Improvement established the governance for steering the Wabash & Erie construction in 1836. Appointed Acting Commissioners from its own ranks were: Samuel Lewis from the state line to Huntington; David Burr on the division between Huntington and Georgetown; James B. Johnson from between Georgetown and Lafayette; and Thomas H. Blake for the Cross Cut work.¹⁴⁸

Pay for contractors seem small by later standards, just 11¢, 11-1/2¢ and 12¢ per cubic yard for excavating the canal channel. If the work was for building towpath or berm bank, contractors received 13¢ and 14¢. For lock excavation, the pay was sixteen to

twenty cents. Lewis Myers and Lemuel G. Jones won the contract to build Section 89, which was 60.49 chains in length. Work on the section involved grubbing and clearing, excavating, puddling, and building lock No. 16. The cost for the lock gates and sills came to \$550.00, cut stone masonry \$15,023.43, iron \$84.00, snubbing and fender posts \$20.00, and quoin post \$53.00 for a total of \$15,730. A final report from the contractor reflected that the cost for the entire section No. 89 was \$22,226.28.¹⁴⁹ Benjamin Mariner took the contract for the next section and the other adjoining ones were given to Thomas Hayes and William Terrell both of Pennsylvania. Myers died leaving Jones holding the contract for the lock work. Myers was assisted by David Cassatt and his son Jacob D. Cassatt, and the lock was made ready for canal boat use. Zera Sutherland agreed with Myers to complete the canal work from Lock 16 to the place known as stone bluff.¹⁵⁰

Originally, the canal channel passed around the coral reef leaving no room for the later-to-be-built rail line, forcing the railroaders to lay tracks following a different route. There was not space enough for a set of rails in the space between reef and river. As the canal made a sharp turn to the west, it cut across the south side of the Treaty Grounds. Although there are no signs of canal channel the route can be traced because it was replaced by the rail bed of a latter day spur line.

The canal route today can be seen by following a line extending from the northeast cutting through the railroad yards, connecting with a line now occupied by the rail line spur that crosses Treaty Grounds Park. Entering the town of Wabash from the east, the canal followed Water Street and crossed midtown at Wabash Street or generally the railroad spur is virtually on top the old tow-path. At the rear on the south side of the building row on Canal Street, old limestone foundations recall the days when the canal's water splashed upon them. Doors on the warehouses are still in place where barges once came alongside to load and unload cargo.¹⁵¹ Paradise Springs now enjoys a park status and is open for the public to enjoy. As recent as the 1930s the spring could be seen

as visible water running through a wooden box-like structure at the base of the west edge of the monument that once marked the site. Recently the marker has been moved about fifty yards southeast of its original resting place.¹⁵²

At the west end of Paradise Springs Historical Park stands an Indiana Historical Bureau format marker that summarizes the story of this place on the north bank of the Wabash River:

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.

Paradise Spring Park has replica log houses representing those erected for the American officials at the time of the treaty talks. The original treaty encampment consisted of ten buildings. A reconstruction of the camp began in 1987, based on the 1836 writings of Elijah Hackleman. Several markers, mounted on the outside walls of the small log houses tell the story:

Quarter of Major General John Tipton Indian Agent

A veteran of the Battle of Tippecanoe, General Tipton was appointed to the Indian Agency located in Ft. Wayne Indiana by President Monroe. John Quincy Adams appointed Major General Tipton, Indian Commissioner to oversee treaties with the Indians located in his jurisdiction. He served in this capacity until 1831. He was elected to the United States Senate in 1831 and distinguished himself by working for the good of the nation without reference to politics.

Quarters of James B. Ray

Governor of Indiana (1825-1831)

Born in Jefferson County, Kentucky, Governor Ray studied law at the University of Cincinnati and established a practice in Brookville, Indiana. Prior to being elected governor, he served one term as a state representative and two terms as a state senator. He later became a major supporter of railroad development and versioned Indianapolis with railroads radiating from its center.

Quarters of Lewis Cass

Governor of Michigan

Born in New Hampshire and a veteran of the war of 1812, Governor Cass was a skilled maker of treaties. In 1831 President Andrew Jackson appointed Governor Cass Secretary of War. He later served as Minister to France. In the Mid 1840s, he was elected to the United States Senate.

He was the Democratic Party nominee for president in 1848, but lost to Zachery Taylor.

In 1857 President Buchanan appointed Cass Secretary of State. His public service ended when he resigned in 1860 and returned to Michigan

Quarters of Captain Frederick R. Kintner

Head of Military Guard

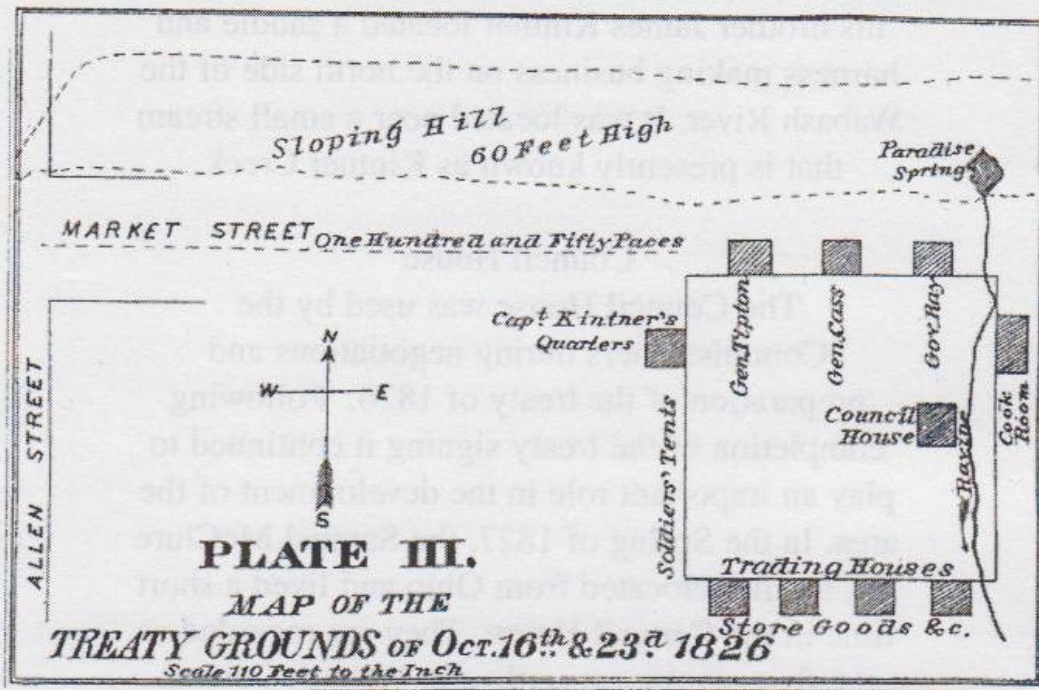
During treaty negotiations, military guards stood around-the-clock watch. Captain Kintner was the officer in charge of these men. Guards were provided shelter when in camp. Sufficient rations of beef and bread or flour with salt, and one gill (one-fourth pint) of liquor per day. They were compensated for their services a sum of money not less than fifty cents and not more than one dollar per day of service. In the fall of 1827, Kintner and

his brother James Kintner located a saddle and harness making business on the north side of the Wabash River. It was located near a small stream that is presently known as Kintner Creek.

Council House

The Council House was used by the Commissioners during negotiations and preparation of the treaty of 1826. Following completion of the treaty signing it continued to play an important role in the development of the area. In the Spring of 1827, the Samuel McClure Sr., family relocated from Ohio and lived a short time in the Council House. They are regarded as the first permanent settlers in Wabash County. By 1830 the first post office in Wabash County was established in this building with David Burr as Post Master. By 1832, David Burr utilized the Council House to award contracts for the construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal. By 1834, Mr. Burr and Hugh Hanna platted Wabash Town at this site. For a short time in 1834, the Council House was used for a school. Following the establishment of Wabash in 1834, David Burr and Hugh Hanna began holding meetings and strategy sessions in this building in an attempt to get Wabash designated as the county seat. In 1835 Wabash won a close race with Lagro and was designated the county seat.

Hugh Hanna and David Burr laid out Wabash, in 1834 on the north bank of the river and the town later became the county seat.¹⁵³ Duplicate tax list of 1835 indicate sixty men in the town, probably providing the canal workers with taverns, boarding, inns, foodstuffs and the like. No doubt they some moved on as the canal moved westward. By 1840 the town of Wabash was attracting more



Treaty Grounds Plate III shows the location of the Paradise Springs that flowed to the Wabash River. Eventually, the Wabash & Erie Canal passed on its east-west course to the south edge of Treaty Grounds. Map from T.B. Helm, *History of Wabash County Indiana* 1884.

and more Americans, and the town was reaching a population of one thousand.¹⁵⁴ The town of Wabash was considered a very pleasant place built on two elevations one in the river valley about forty feet below the next level. During the later years of the 1840s, it could boast two hundred houses, fifty of which were of sturdy brick constructed.¹⁵⁵

Fortunately, it had the financial backing of the pioneer Hanna family. Samuel Hanna, who originally was responsible in large part for the Wabash & Erie being developed, owned forty-one properties in Wabash among his thousands of acres in various places in northern Indiana. His brother Hugh Hanna, recognized as a founder of Wabashtown at one time was a tenant-in-common with ten properties in the new community.¹⁵⁶

Wabash and Lagro were towns that mainly consisted of Irish shanties intended for the laborers who dug the canal, with a few log cabins built by those considered to be permanent settlers. The canal brought commerce which helped grow Wabash's population during a time that Lagro proved to be a worthy competitor. General John Tipton, who founded Lagro, served in the U.S. Senate and brought his enormous influence to bear.

Less than a month before the canal contract for the first twenty-five mile Fort Wayne-Huntington section was let, Governor Noah Noble on February 2, 1832 signed into law "An Act Establishing the Counties of Huntington, Wabash and Miami."¹⁵⁷ Now a county seat of government had to be selected and Wabash County's selection is rich in legend.

Wabash's port landing was 64 miles from the Indiana-Ohio state line, Toledo at Lake Erie was 148 miles away, and it was 263 miles to Evansville on the Ohio River.¹⁵⁸ Hugh Hanna with his brother Samuel, an Indiana Senator, combined their power to out maneuver their competitor. The brothers sold prospects on the perceived notion that Wabash enjoyed a central location, which served an immense northern Indiana trading region. Because Tipton was away much of the time in distant Washington DC, it stands to reason, so the anecdote goes that the Hanna brothers were available and on the scene to promote the advantages of Wabash. The Hannas' strategy was successful and the population of Wabash grew in numbers. Of course there is also the yarn told that had it not been for the Wabash River flooding its banks holding Tipton's supporters from reaching the voting poles, the outcome would have favored Lagro. This is especially annoying to the Lagro citizenry considering the fact that Wabash won the contest by a single vote.¹⁵⁹ Myths aside, in fact it was by an act of the Indiana legislature that a commission was named to select the county's seat. During a meeting held at the Treaty Ground home of David Burr on May 18, 1835, after careful consideration and examination of several sites, the next day the commissioners chose Wabash as the permanent seat of justice for the county.¹⁶⁰

WABASH TOWN

Even though the canal was finished through Wabash County in 1836, it was not ready for the water. The 26-foot wide bed was dry and made a level roadway through the woods and it did not take long before some of the sport's minded citizenry were using it as a horse racing track. However, when the canal channel and tow-path were formed and ready on the Ditton Lock level, officials ordered the feeder opened at Lagro's Wabash Dam No. 2. As water first trickled then began to flow the canal took form. As it filled to its eventual four feet level, several of the local population walked along keeping pace with the westward movement of the new water to the town of Wabash. ¹⁶¹

July 4th had become the traditional date for opening ceremonies when the canal reached a new port. County seat Wabash was no exception, however, there are more than one story about which boat first reached Wabash town. While a celebration was being organized in town, contractor David Cassatt hitched his horse to a large maple tree trunk converted into a floating craft in Wabash to float the canal. Along with Hugh Hanna and William Steele the now "Captain" Cassatt steered his newly dubbed boat the *Davy Crockett*, to Lagro and back. Of course this would have made the *Davy Crockett* literally the first boat on the canal to reach Wabash. ¹⁶²

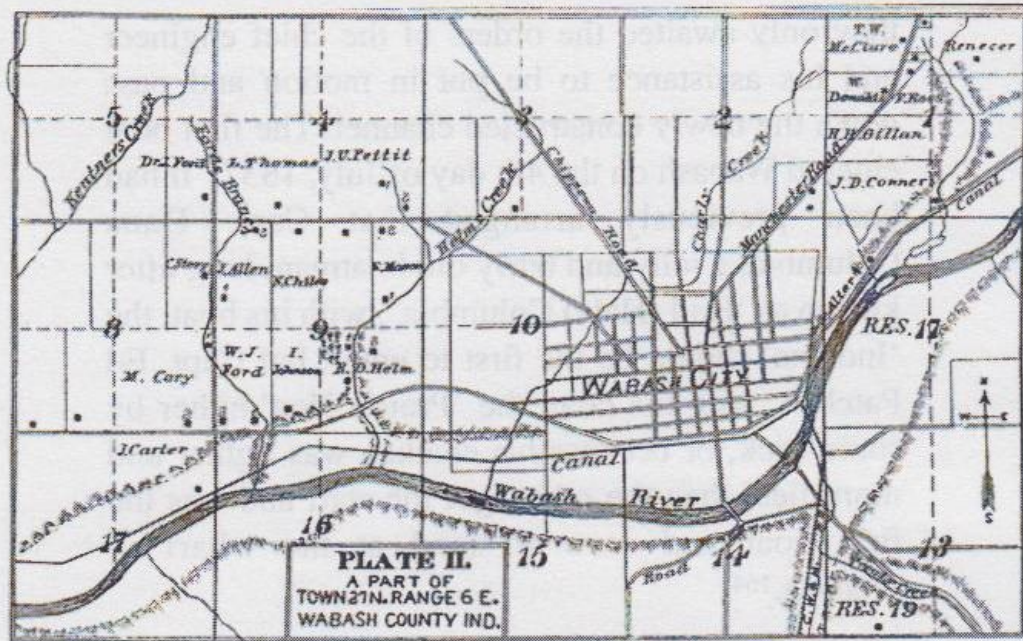
Officially the July 4, 1837, program for the day had scheduled the *Indiana* to be the first to grace the landing at Wabash. About a half mile below Lagro, the tiny craft *Prairie Hen* slipped past the *Indiana* on the way to Wabash town¹⁶³ and it became a favorite story for decades. One of the best is Thomas Helm's account:

The water was first let in to test the sufficiency of the embankments and enabled the managers to ascertain and stop leakages, necessary conditions precedent, to insure the practicability of navigation. Boats had been launched farther up the line, and

they only awaited the orders of the chief engineer and his assistance to be put in motion and pass down the newly constructed channel. The first boat entered Wabash on the 4th day of July, 1837. It had been previously arranged that Capt. Dana Columbia, a jolly and burly old boatman, long after known as 'Hail (Hale) Columbia"', with his boat, the 'Indiana' should be the first to enter; but Capt. Ed Patchen, with his boat, the 'Prairie Hen' either by some trick, or because his chicken was lighter and more fleet than the other, got the start and was the first boat and crew to land at the wharf in Wabash.¹⁶⁴

In the 1875 *Atlas of Wabash County*, the author holds a slightly different account. Although historians agree on the name of the craft, they disagree on its master stating, "a small boat called the 'Prairie Hen', Capt. Will Dale arrived a few rods in advance."¹⁶⁵

Even so the celebration was organized around the *Indiana* and progressed with a large crowd gathering in town to welcome its arrival. Muskets were fired and cheers went up from the Wabash crowds as passengers from Fort Wayne and Huntington with their German Band of Fort Wayne strained against the sounds of enthusiasm. James H. Kitner a saddle maker and trader joined in and nearly ruined the ceremony. It happened when he attempted to ignite a ceremonial cannon and a nearby store of gunpowder unexpectedly exploded. Although it tossed him into the air all he suffered were a few bruises. The party then moved east to Treaty Grounds for a dinner and to hear a speech by Elijah Hackleman. Records show that the day before he ventured into the forest to rehearse his remarks, but was interrupted when he disturbed a nest of rattlesnakes.¹⁶⁶



Map showing the Wabash & Erie Canal through Wabash. - *History of Wabash County Indiana* 1884.

Hugh Hanna had built the first brick building in downtown Wabash at the corner of Wabash and Canal streets. In the upstairs space on the night the canal reached town, Hanna hosted a gathering to mark the occasion.¹⁶⁷ The event according to a Mr. Ferry, “ended by a ball and it has been whispered that the potions on the occasion were mixed with something stronger than water, but the known habits of boatmen of that period being to take theirs straight, throws discredit upon the statement.”¹⁶⁸

Nineteenth century maps indicate that Road Bridge No. 22 may have been the designation assigned by the Chief Engineer to the one that crossed the canal at Huntington Street, and Road Bridge No. 23 the name given the bridge over Wabash Street. In 1847 bridge No. 22 was described as nearly new, while No. 23 was expected to last two years and was a bridge constructed, “of extra length.”¹⁶⁹ The names assigned to the north south streets of Wabash reflect a canal influence offering a lesson in Indiana geography and transportation history. From east to west through town, street names follow the sequence of the county names crossed by the Wabash &

Erie and the Wabash River. Allen, Huntington, Wabash, Miami, Cass and Carroll represent the progression that laborers followed beginning at the Indiana-Ohio state line across the north central tier of counties to the originally planned termination site at the mouth of the Tippecanoe on the Wabash River. Since the confluence is merely five or so miles into Tippecanoe County beyond the Carroll County line "Tippecanoe" apparently did not make the street naming list. The more logical reason is that Wabash could not expand to the west into Little Charley's Reserve. When David Burr and Hugh Hanna laid out "Wabash Town" in the spring of 1834 they are said to have held visions of the town becoming an important port on the canal. It was not until 1841 that the canal opened to Lafayette, the seat of Tippecanoe County, and the decision to have extended it past the original site. As such the planners may have determined that a "Tippecanoe" street designation was not warranted.¹⁷⁰

By 1843, the canal was opened from Lafayette to Toledo on Lake Erie. That year Charles H. Titus passed through Wabash and wrote the following in his journal:

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 town is north of the canal. Between the canal & the Wabash river, south of the town, is a beautiful tract of bottom land, of exceeding fertility. 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.¹⁷¹

A significant reminder of the old canal visible as a Wabash city landmark called "Boat Row" stands along the south side of several downtown buildings. On to the north side, these buildings open to Canal Street, however, it is on the south side where

canal-era foundations harbor an interesting history. Bordering the canal, boats docked along this string of buildings, which stand between Wabash Street and west to Miami Street, the backs of these edifices facing Water Street once looked over a watery wharf. Quarry-cut limestone blocks mark the walls of the docks, which served businesses such as mercantile and warehouses. Loading and unloading cargo with dock hands coming and going, added to the hustle and bustle of its day. One persisting myth circulating says that to this day water from the original canal can be found here and there under these structures. Charles White, retired professor of industrial engineering at the University of Alabama was born and raised in Wabash County. He noted that these buildings had openings or tunnels at the water level, which allowed transporting goods to the basement storage. It relieved lifting up to or lowering down from the street level as well as avoided working in inclement weather. The dock openings have since been sealed as have the openings between buildings.

County Historian Ron Woodward recalls a story related to these dock passageways and a reminder that occasionally pregnant mothers' "time of confinement" could not wait until the next port was reached. More than one child no doubt was born while on board a slow moving canal boat. However, one newborn that came into the world, somewhere between the Huntington Wabash county line and the Wabash landing, did not survive. When the sad party arrived in Wabash her small body was removed from the boat and placed in a grave prepared for her under one of the buildings. In recent years, when remodeling of the Plummer Building was taking place, the gravesite of the infant was rediscovered. A limestone marker was placed over the grave that has since been mounted on the east wall that reads:

REBECCA

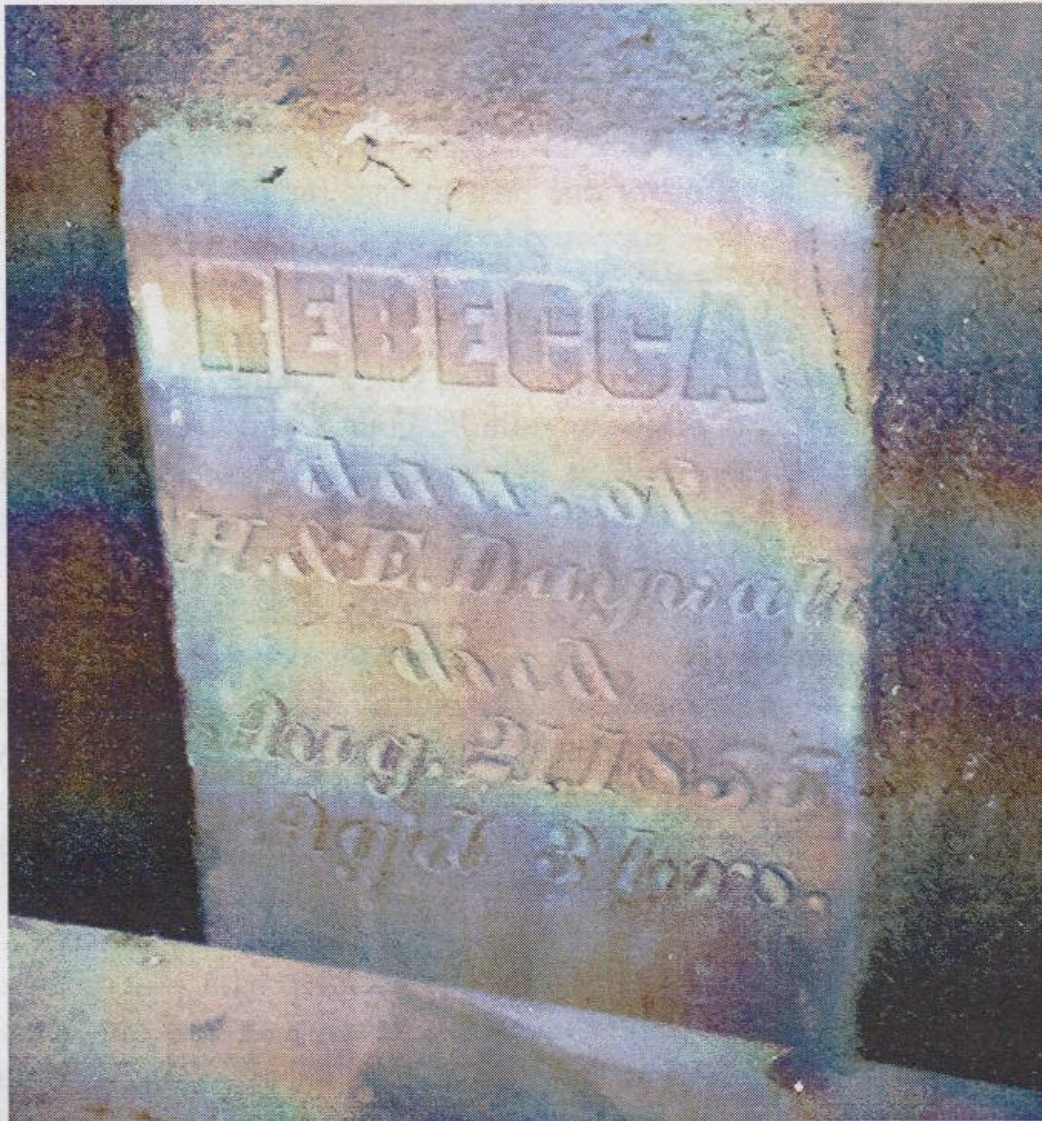
dau. of

H. & E. Daywaldt

died

Aug. 21, 1855

ag'd 3 hrs



A stone memorializes a child's death on the canal in Wabash.
Photo in author's collection.

Two news articles appearing in the *Miami County Sentinel* in June of 1840 tell of the roughness of canal crew life that happened to take place here.

Boat Row – The hands of the Line Boat “Today” got into a fight with those of the “Hanna” yesterday morning, a short distance above Wabashtown which resulted in one man being killed and another dangerously if not fatally injured, belonging to the

Hanna. The weapon used was a hatchet. The Sheriff of Wabash came down to this place in advance of "Today" and with the aid of a posse arrested three of her crew and took them back. The difficulty grew out of an effort of one boat to pass the other. The captain who is supposed to be most guilty, was not taken, having left the boat before it arrived here.

The next day the man reported killed "in the Boat Row" had not died but was in critical condition. Four of the five crew of the *Today* were arrested and at a hearing, "were committed." The Captain of the *Today* was still at large and described as a "lawless desperate character and is supposed to have used the hatchet." Further to the credit of the citizens of Wabash, it was reported, "Great excitement prevailed at Wabash in consequence of this outrage."¹⁷² The progress and economic development that the canal represented did not come without its downside. Obviously, law and order prevailed and the community grew stronger. In the ten years between 1840 and 1850, Wabash County grew in population from 2,736 to 12,109.

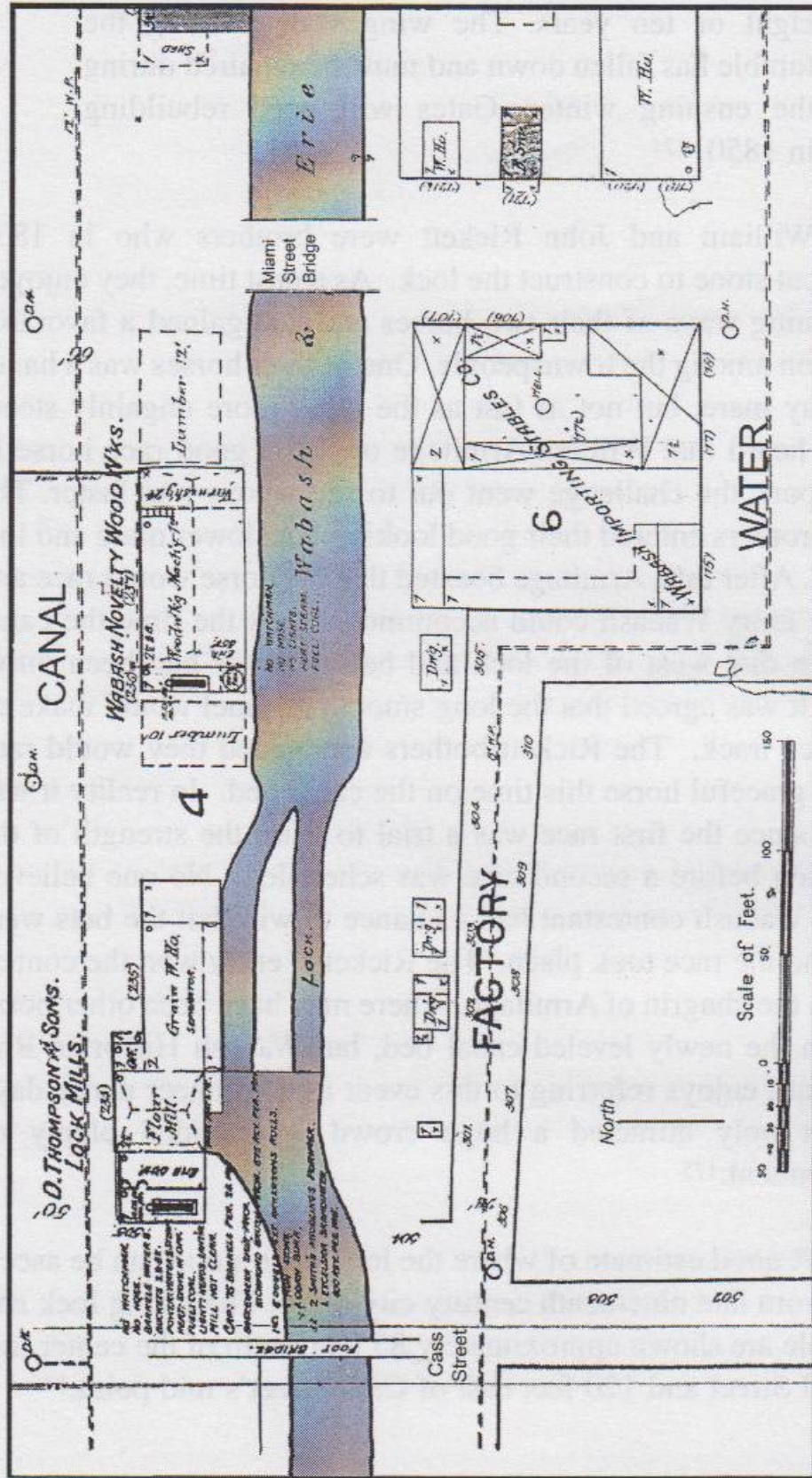
At Cass Street, a lifting lock once active with boat traffic is now in the vicinity busy with trucks moving in and out of the Wabash *Plain Dealer* loading dock and the canal serving as a rail bed. Contracting for the lock took place in 1834, and when completed by Lewis Myers and Lemuel G. Jones cost a total of \$15,730 to build. However, as mentioned previously Myers died before the contract was satisfied, and Jones with the assistance of David and Jacob D. Cassatt, completed the work on the lock. In 1847, the chief engineer gave the status of the condition of the lock in Wabash, which probably was first known as "Cissna Mill Lock" or Lock Mills and sometimes has been referred to as the "Hipskind Lock".¹⁷³

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.

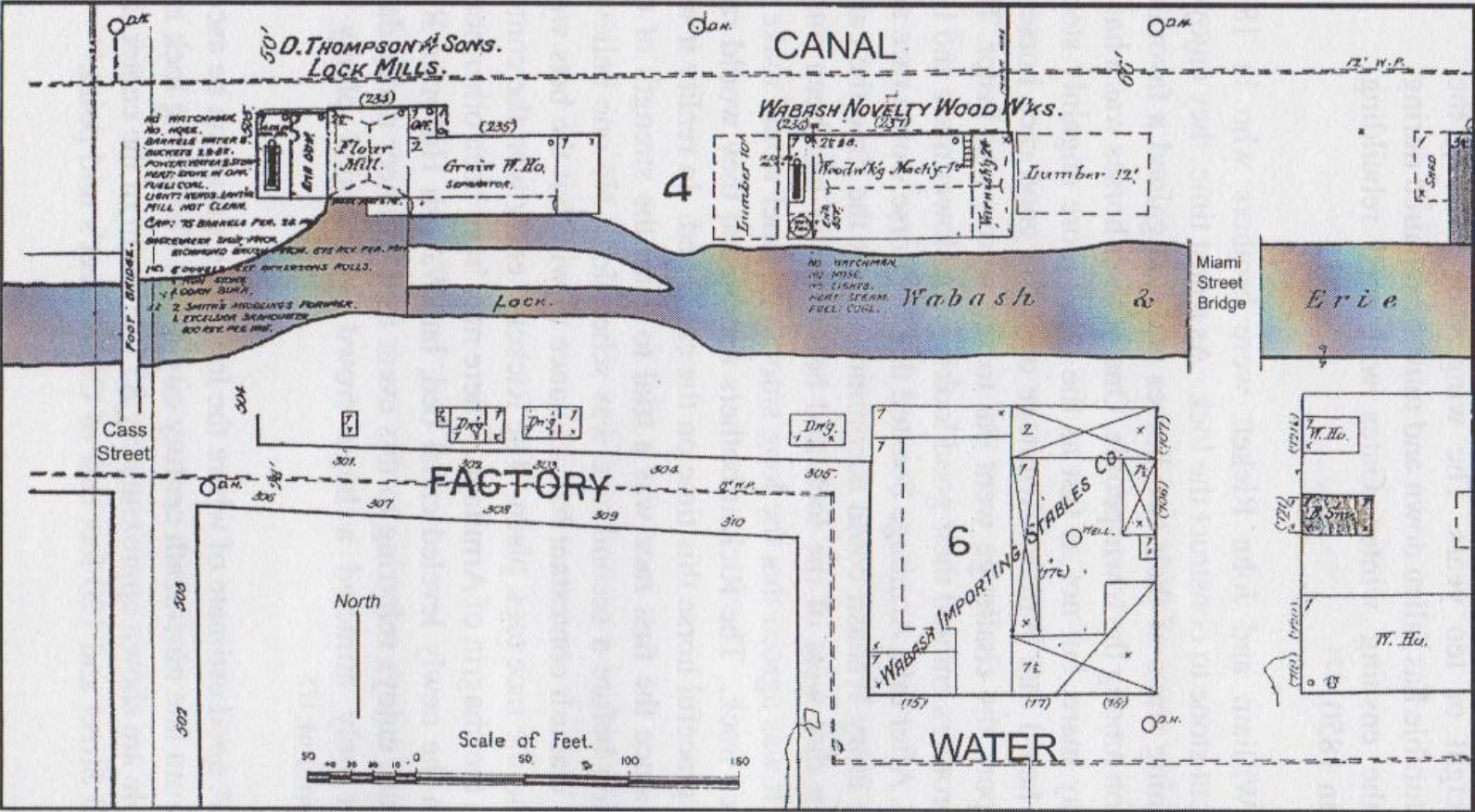
By frequent repairs, this lock may be made to stand eight or ten years. The wing wall forming the tumble has fallen down and must be repaired during the ensuing winter. Gates will need rebuilding in 1850. ¹⁷⁴

William and John Rickett were brothers who in 1836 helped cut stone to construct the lock. As a past time, they enjoyed the winning ways of their two horses and had gained a favorable reputation among the townspeople. One of their horses was a handsome bay mare, but not as fast as the other more ungainly steed. Having heard that William Armitage owned a good race horse in Logansport, the challenge went out to see whose was faster. The clever brothers entered their good looking but slower mare and lost the race. After this, Armitage boasted that his horse would race and win any entry Wabash could accommodate. At the time the canal had been dug west of the lock and before water had been introduced. It was agreed that the long smooth channel would make an ideal race track. The Rickett bothers announced they would race the less graceful horse this time on the canal bed. In reality it was a setup since the first race was a trial to learn the strength of the opposition before a second race was scheduled. No one believed that the Wabash contestant had a chance to win, but the bets were made and the race took place. The Ricketts' entry won the contest much to the chagrin of Armitage. There may have been other horse races on the newly leveled canal bed, but Wabash Historian Ron Woodward enjoys referring to this event as a "pioneer derby day" that not only attracted a huge crowd it provided plenty of entertainment.¹⁷⁵

A good estimate of where the lock once stood can be ascertained from late nineteenth century city maps. The lifting lock and its tumble are shown approximately 85 feet south of the center line of Canal Street and 120 feet east of Cass Street's mid point.¹⁷⁶



An 1887 Sanford Insurance map shows Lock Mills in relation to other local landmarks.



An 1887 Sanborn Insurance map shows Lock Mills in relation to other local landmarks.

Waterpower that came along with the lock's tumble powered the Thompson Flour Mill near the present-day intersection of Miami and Canal streets. Sanford Honeywell, the father of Mark Honeywell and founder of the multi-national Honeywell Corporation, came to Wabash County in 1843. He was a millwright who constructed mills and helped set them up for operation. It was Honeywell who erected the first mill in the county, which was located at Canal and Cass streets and operated by Robert Cissna.¹⁷⁷ Born in 1800 in Pennsylvania, Cissna is credited with establishing the flouring mill at the old canal lock, and was also responsible for improving area gravel roads and turnpikes at the time. As for the mill, Cissna obtained from the State the right to use the surplus water not needed for the general operation of the canal, "as would be sufficient, applied to an overshot wheel of eight feet diameter with proper gearing, to propel two four and one-half mills." George Summerton purchased the mill in 1903 and changed the name to Summerton and Sons Milling Co. and offered a brand of flour known as the "Pride of the Wabash". At one point, the mill was sold and became a part of the Honeywell facility.¹⁷⁸ For several years, the Service Fuel and Supply Company used a covered coal shed positioned over a portion of the canal lock chamber. Rails were positioned for coal cars to be moved to the upper part of the old structure. Meanwhile, delivery trucks could be driven down to the lower level of the lock chamber and coal released from the rail cars above filling the trucks' beds.¹⁷⁹ Later Hutchins Laundry built a dry cleaning plant here and the heavy lock timbers still in place inhibited the building progress. Some years later when the timbers caught fire the space was cleared to make way for the *Wabash Plain Dealer* building.

Not mentioned in the Report of the Chief Engineer of 1847 is the foot bridge at Cass Street. By 1887, maps indicate that a road bridge was constructed on Carroll Street to cross the channel.¹⁸⁰

After a serious flood in March of 1849, the towpath below the lock was raised one foot above the high water mark for a distance of three-fourths of a mile. The work was completed in the



Lock 16 featured in the *Wabash Plain Dealer*, July 12, 1955. “Old Canal Bed Exposed – The old Wabash Erie Canal bed and part of the locks can be seen since the recent fire of the Service Fuel and Supply coal shed, located just south of Canal street and Miami. The view above is looking east, the original direction of the one-time important water-way.

– Montie Talbert photo” Courtesy: Wabash County Historical Museum.

summer of 1849.¹⁸¹ By June 1862, two new gates were in need of replacement and Joseph Elder replaced them for \$52.50 each.¹⁸² That same year, a strange new craft came through Wabash County. A heavily loaded boat, it was powerful enough to tow another fully loaded boat bound for the port a Toledo. It returned six days later puffing along powered by its steam engine.¹⁸³

Some distance west of Wabash was a widewater section in the canal. It was a place where boats had space enough to turn around. Oftentimes a widewater provided docking away from boat traffic while making repairs, or perhaps to load and unload cargo.¹⁸⁴

Beginning near the town of Lagro, Charley Creek flows through the town of Wabash on to the river. Charley is a name that comes from the Eel River Miami chief Ken-ton-gah. Six sections

including the land on which Wabash near Paradise Springs now stands came to Charley's people as grants from the Treaty of 1826.¹⁸⁵ It is this stream that is likely the site of Jesse Williams' 1847 report of the structure called "Culvert No. 60, rough stone arch of 8 feet chord – badly constructed."¹⁸⁶

On Edsal Street connecting Culbertson Street and about one block south of Mill Street, a local man named Ed Watson was walking his small dog "Charlie." He was on his way "to do some target shooting" with an old .22 that was tucked securely under his arm. He could be described as a gent of about sixty years with a full white beard that hid most of his facial features but held the sagacious appearance of a Wabash Valley pioneer. He said that he had lived here in the same house all his life and was sure of the landmarks. The road passing in front of his place was lined by utility poles and traced the interurban electric train line west out of Wabash. Some of the concrete light posts used by the interurban line still stood west of here, he said. Another predominant line to the south is what remains of the Wabash & Erie Canal. Pointing to the stream below us that passed under the interurban road and the towpath beyond, Watson said, "This is Charley Creek and the next one west is Helm Creek." In all his years, he seldom if ever noticed any timbers or sign of the culvert that passed Charley Creek under the canal. "Well" he thought further, "When the water dries up sometimes you can see 'em. There's a spring down there (he pointed to a spot about half way between the interurban line to the towpath) the water comes up clear as crystal. Couldn't drink it anymore 'cause the stuff that comes into the creek from those pipes on the bank" as he pointed upstream to a point near the old traction line.¹⁸⁷

The section after the "stone bluff" (near the mouth of Helm's Creek) probably Section 90 was constructed by Benjamin Mariner of Wabash and the following Section 91 by Thomas Hayes and number 92 was let to another Pennsylvanian by the name of William Terrell.¹⁸⁸

Culvert No. 61, - probably Helms Creek - Williams 1847 report states: "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." Culvert No. 62, was made of wood, and "5 spans, 12-feet by 8-1/2 feet". It may have been built to enable Ford's Branch to pass under the canal to the Wabash.¹⁸⁹

The engineer's report gives a clue for what to expect downstream with the words about culverts stating that they, "...are insufficient in capacity for the passage of the floods. Injury to the embankments frequently occurs from this cause." Just as with the Forks of the Wabash level in Huntington County on Clear Creek where the volume of water created by rainstorms collected in the higher country to the north, water could come down Clear Creek in torrents. Often the force of the water was so great that it had the capacity to destroy towpath and structures such as culverts. One solution was to provide a gate in the towpath to allow excess water to escape the canal channel. It appears that was the solution here, because Chief Engineer Williams reported, "The next structure is flood gates with stone abutments."¹⁹⁰

Local farmer Jim Keefaber said that before a neighboring metals plant buried the site under fill material, the stonework, about 900 yards east of County Road 530 West could be seen with what appeared to be the scars of barge scrapes. This structure that could be used to drain the level of the canal for repairs, cleaning or protection from ice in winter was likely a device similar to the Clear Creek floodgate in Huntington County.

A wooden culvert, No. 62, was 5 spans across, 12 feet by 1-1/2 feet. It was submerged under water to avoid decaying the wood. Is this possibly the structure Jesse Williams recorded, which was necessary to pass over Ford's Branch?

East is the vestiges of a quarry with its small pit where water continues to accumulate forming a pool. Water trickling from

the quarry during its active days was no doubt consumed by the canal. Cut into the bluff overlooking the canal line, it is believed that this quarry is the same one from which stone was taken to build a nearby Greek revival style home. Constructed by Stearns Fisher, it is a house with a unique history during the days travelers stopped to eat a meal and stay the night. On one such occasion in one of the upstairs rooms, a disagreement during a card game ended in a murder of one player. His body was found on the floor in a puddle of blood the next morning by authorities summoned to investigate the offense. Later, the crime scene was thoroughly scrubbed clean to remove the blood found on the wood floor. Perhaps as if a reminder of a dastardly transgression against another, when the boards dried the stain strangely reappeared.¹⁹¹

Stearns Fisher was an accomplished man who rose to the level of General Superintendent of the Wabash & Erie. Born in Dover, Vermont on November 25, 1804, Stearns Fisher moved with his family to Newburgh, Ohio, in 1816, having received but a little education before making the move. He read books at night by the fireside or by attending evening school when he could because early settlers used daylight as a time to work. He did well enough that by age eighteen he was able to teach at the local school. With a canal's northern terminus being built near his father's farm, he went to work as a laborer. He soon moved up serving as an ax-man on a survey team. When he was given the job of rod-man, he got the idea that he could become an engineer. To prepare himself, he devoted his evenings studying mathematics. In the hotel where Fisher rented a sleeping room, was also the office of the Ohio Board of Public Works chairman, the Hon. Alfred Kelly. Looking to strike a light and seeing none except in Stearns Fisher's room, Kelly entered the room thinking that he was interrupting the occupant reading a novel. To his surprise, he found Fisher in deep study and so impressed with such dedication, Kelly decided to support the young rod-man's mathematical education. Because of this intervention, he became one of the assistant engineers during the survey and construction of the project.

It was in Picketon, Ohio, that Stearns Fisher met Susan Ingersoll and the two were married in 1831. They bought the property four miles west of Wabash and moved there in the fall of 1833 with his family. Mr. Fisher was assigned Resident Engineer of the canal lying between Lock No. 16 in Wabash, Indiana, to a point four miles west of Peru. He meticulously recorded for his own records, the names of those awarded contracts beginning November 3, 1834, encompassing Sections 89 through 111.

Susan died of consumption in April 1843 leaving three daughters and one son. In 1845 he married Mrs. Luther Woods, formerly Harriet Loveland, however, their union produced no children. The next year in 1846, Stearns Fisher was selected to replace Colonel E. F. Lucas as General Superintendent of the canal. In that capacity he had control of all canal construction and of all the state land offices. The Legislature - responsible for filling the vacancy - was Democratic in both houses and although Stearns Fisher was an outspoken Whig, his credentials were so impressive he was elected without opposition.

After 1850 he devoted his time to farming and was a member of the State Agricultural Board. He also served as a member of the Indiana Legislature in 1860-61 and in 1868 Stearns Fisher was elected to the State Senate. He died on July 26, 1877.¹⁹²

Road bridge No. 24 that the Chief Engineer noted in 1847 "will last two years."¹⁹³ This may have been the bridge that enabled Fisher and later occupants to cross the canal into the wide expanse of crop land that stretch several hundred yards to the Wabash River.

West of the Fisher house the canal channel may or may not be visible because the flow of water at the base of the bluff was reworked in the early 1940s to protect the adjacent crop fields. Although the towpath form seems to be original, it may have been reworked in places. A wide meadow east of Kentner Creek appears to have a defined channel that directs drainage into the stream that in turns flows south into the Wabash River. At Kentner Creek, Jesse



Stearns Fisher House faces a small well house and the old canal channel. Photo in author's collection.

Williams described the condition in 1847 of Culvert No. 63, reporting, "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."¹⁹⁴ Nothing is visible of culvert structure at the point where the canal met the creek at a right angle.

Kintner Creek is named for James H. Kintner who settled at the mouth of the creek. Kintner is the same fellow who suffered the premature explosion of gunpowder while celebrating the first canal boat's arrival in Wabash town. He and his brother Frederick R. were "Indian traders." They left Wabash County and followed John Tipton when he moved the Indian Agency from Fort Wayne to Logansport in 1828. James was elected the first sheriff of Cass County in 1829 and Frederick died in 1835. In that same year, Squire Benjamin arrived from Fort Wayne having accepted a contract to construct a lifting lock west of Kintner Creek.¹⁹⁵

As noted by the chief engineer, "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."¹⁹⁶

Economic development has affected the western Wabash County's lock condition more so than in the eastern portion. At the beginning of the 21st century many persons remember seeing Lock 17, but locating its precise location today is challenging. One eyewitness report described the tumble or "a run-around and a wooden archway allowing the canal to cross the creek. The archway was wide enough where it crossed over Brooks [Branch] Creek to allow for a towpath on its south side. The rock with which it was constructed came from the Fisher quarry nearby which produced a very superior rock for the purpose."¹⁹⁷ Another 1936 oral history confirms much of the information:

At this lock, as at all others, there was a spillway, allowing the water to pass from the upper part of the canal to below the lock, as the water would be higher at times in the upper portion while the lower levels were always below the water above. So on the north side of the lock, a run-around, or waterway, was constructed of timbers carrying the water to below the lock. Over Brooks Creek, the Canal crossed on a wooden archway thus supplying a method for the water to pass beneath the canal with no danger of washing out the canal in times of high water. The archway was wide enough, as in other cases where the canal passed over the creeks of Wabash County, to allow for a towpath on the south side. It is the last lock west in the county... at that time it was on the land owned by Stearns Fisher. The rock is said to have been quarried at the Fisher farm. The land on which the lock is located is owned by F. E. Tobias. — *F. E. Tobias, an old resident of Richvalley and owner of the land in 1936.*¹⁹⁸

In 1846, the Trustees ordered sealed proposals for the removal of locks 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8, west of Fort Wayne and stone put in place. Stone was to be obtained at Georgetown and

Salamonie quarries or from on land of Superintendent Stearns Fisher. ¹⁹⁹ Remains of the quarry can be seen but most of the location has been filled in and covered by the highway ramping elevating the highway to cross the railroad.

Little if any record remains of repairs made to Lock 17, however, it finally suffered the indignity of an unceremonious burial during the mid twentieth century. When U.S. 24 was elevated to span the then Wabash railroad line the highway route had to be moved to the east. In the spirit of progress, the lock's stone remains were covered over by the ramp on the south approach to the overpass. From photos made in its final days, the lock has the appearance of the Kerr Lock at Lagro. It is buried deep under the highway possibility preserved in good enough condition for future generations to excavate and study.



Fisher Lock No. 17 before it was buried under the ramp to pass Old U.S. 24 across the railroad line. – J. Miller photograph.



THE RICH VALLEY

West of Sterns Fisher's house, a culvert was constructed to pass Jackson Creek (or this may also be known as Brooks Creek) under the canal. To the south of the channel the archway was made wide enough for the passage of animals on the towpath.^{xc} It was in this place that Jesse Williams made improvements. As the Chief Engineer noted, due to the stripping of forests the incidence of flooding had increased. For a distance of one-fourth of a mile below Lock No. 17 the towpath was raised by one foot above its original height during the summer of 1849.²⁰⁰

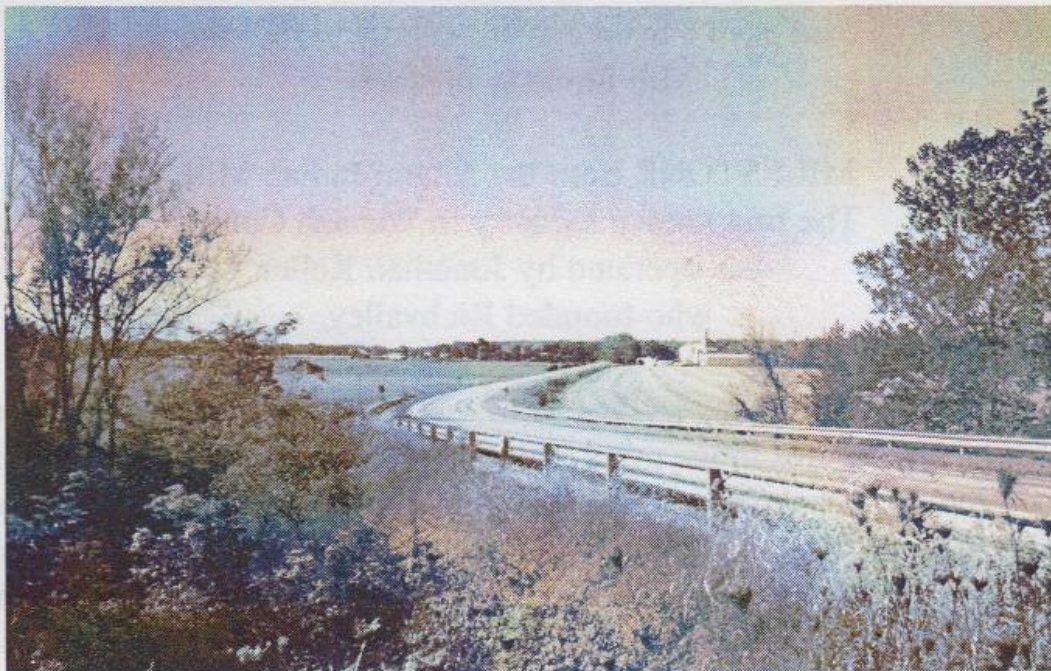
Culverts had to be built to allow natural streams to flow under the canal. Here the record is clear, however, as landscape changes and creeks move through differently cut beds to the river, it is difficult to locate precisely the many culverts that severed the canal. One of these culverts was given the designation of "No. 64", made of wood and was recorded as having an opening of 10 feet by 18 inches for a creek to flow. It was submerged in what may be Jackson or Brooks Creek. This was followed by Culvert No. 65, and measured 12 feet by 2-1/2 feet. Made of wood, it was submerged when there was water in what may be Engleman Creek at Richvalley. Jesse Williams noted in 1847 that it was likely to last for 10 or 15 years.

Within the Big Miami Reserve across the Wabash and the broad valley floor – a thirty mile square reservation - an important mill once served the native populations. It came about because of Article 5 of the 1818 Treaty of St. Mary's. For payment to the Miami, the U.S. agreed to pay an annuity of \$15,000.00 in silver as well,

The United States will cause to be built for the Miamis one grist mill and one saw-mill, at such proper sites as the chiefs of the nation Miamies may select, and will provide and support one blacksmith

and one gunsmith for them, and provide them with such implements of agriculture as the proper agent may think necessary.

Historian Ronald Thrush wrote that Lewis Davis was the first miller to take charge of the “Indian Mill” that dated back to 1820. Davis departed in 1826 replaced by Gillis McBean who left the job in 1828 because he feared the Indians he served. Jonathan Keller, who traveled from southern Indiana with his wife, took over the mill operations. They lived at the mill until 1831 then moved from the Miami Reserve to a site two miles northwest and across the Wabash River. Here they built a home on the bluff overlooking the present-day town of Richvalley. Keller became the neighbor of Wabash County’s “first permanent white settler” Samuel McClure, who came in 1827 and constructed a brick house east of Richvalley in 1831. Named for James and Jonathan Keller, the quiet community, first known as Keller’s Station, took advantage of the prosperity brought here on this level of the canal.²⁰¹



Lock No. 17 is buried below this earthen ramp west of Wabash, Indiana. The canal channel followed the right edge highway extending through Richvalley, Indiana, in the distance. Photo in author’s collection.

Indiana Historical Bureau has placed a marker at 55 West Mill Street in Richvalley:

MIAMI INDIAN MILLS

This millstone is a remnant of the grist and saw mills built near here for Miami Indians by United States government as part of the 1818 Treaty of St. Mary's. Treaty also established several Miami reservations in area. Possibly first industrial site in what became Wabash County. Erected 1995
Indiana Historical Bureau and Lions Club.

Near the State format marker are two additional and related signs:

THIS MILL STONE is from the Indian Mill at Mill Creek that was built in 1820 as a provision from the St. Marys Treaty of 1818. The stone was given to the Rich Valley community by J. Loren Elliott whose grandfather, Jacob O. Elliott had used a team and stone boat to pull the Mill Stone to his farm.

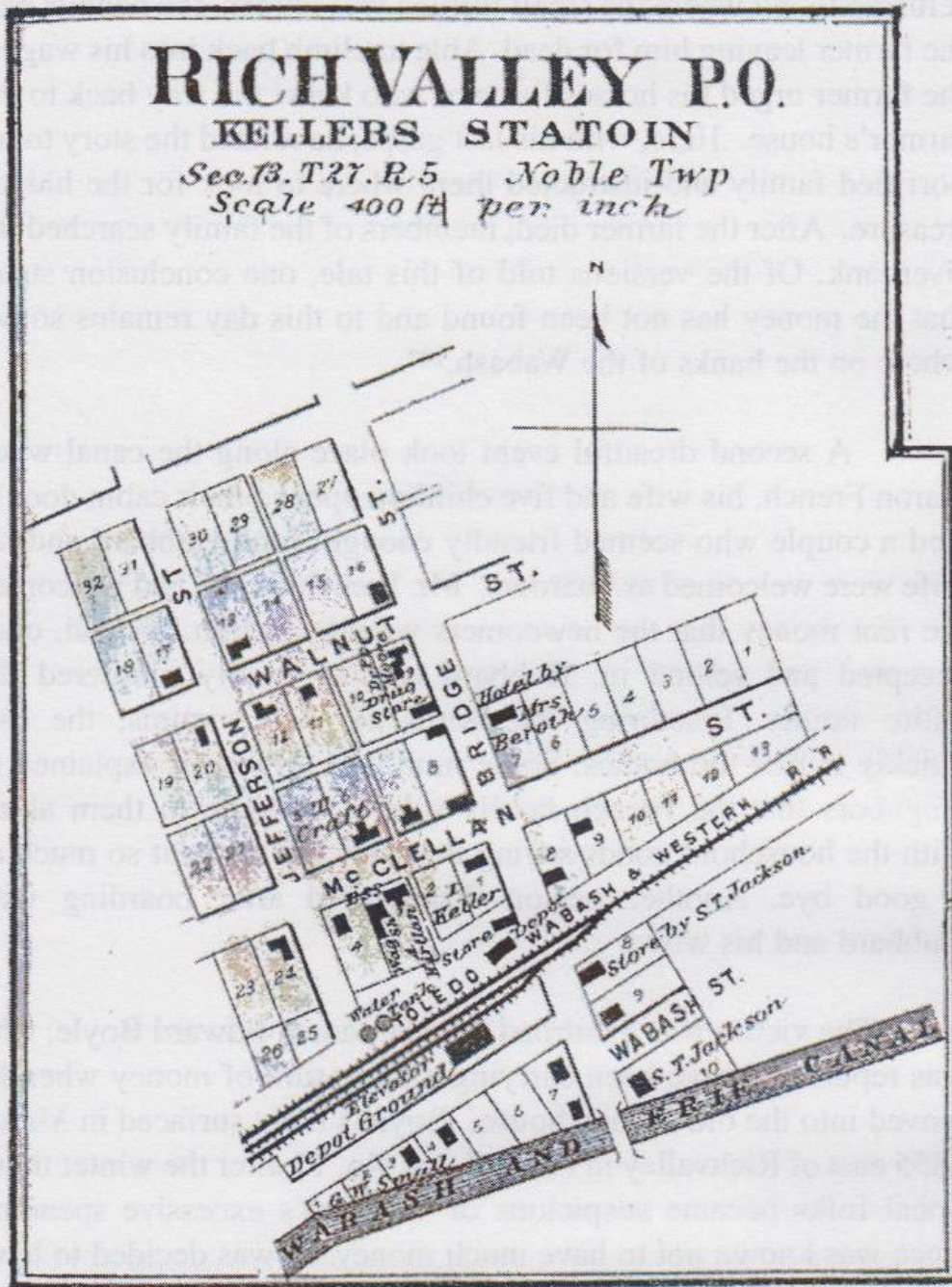
MILLSTONE from the Miami Indian Mill.
The first known industry in Wabash County was operated by Jonathan Keller who founded Richvalley.

Richvalley marks the site of one of the tragic tales along the canal that figures in the myth and lore of the old canal. One story is of the old farmer who had taken a wagonload of his yearlong harvest to Peru where he had pocketed a sizable payment. Returning along the towpath, he noticed suspicious characters approaching. Anticipating their evil intentions, he drove toward the Wabash River and hid the cash he had received for his crop in a secret place. Back on the towpath he was accosted by the roving bandits who demanded the money. Not being able to deliver, and

refusing to tell where the small fortune was hidden, the bandits beat the farmer leaving him for dead. Able to climb back into his wagon, the farmer urged his horses forward who knew the way back to the farmer's house. Here, with his last gasps, he related the story to his horrified family and instructed them where to look for the hidden treasure. After the farmer died, members of the family searched the riverbank. Of the versions told of this tale, one conclusion states that the money has not been found and to this day remains somewhere on the banks of the Wabash.²⁰²

A second dreadful event took place along the canal when Aaron French, his wife and five children opened their cabin door to find a couple who seemed friendly enough. John Hubbard and his wife were welcomed as boarders. Mr. French was ill and welcomed the rent money that the newcomers would pay him. Instead, once accepted and settled in, Hubbard cold-bloodedly murdered the entire family. Fracturing the skulls of their victims, the two quickly buried the bodies. Some time later, Hubbard explained to neighbors that the French family sold their home to them along with the household goods saying that they left without so much as a good bye. Another person disappeared after boarding with Hubbard and his wife.

The victim was a railroad worker named Edward Boyle, who was reputed to have been carrying a large sum of money when he moved into the old French house. Boyle's body surfaced in March 1855 east of Richvalley in Fisher Lock No. 17 after the winter thaw. Local folks became suspicious of Hubbard's excessive spending since was known not to have much money. It was decided to have the sheriff conduct an investigation, followed by the arrest of Hubbard who was placed in the Wabash County jail on suspicion of murder. During a visit by his wife while still in custody, the Hubbards were overheard speaking about the fate of the French family. It was not long until the sheriff uncovered the decayed remains of the five French children, their mother and father found



Richvalley, Indiana. From the *Atlas of Wabash County Indiana* 1875.

buried under the floor of the house. Their remains were removed to the Richvalley Cemetery where they rest to this day.

John Hubbard was tried and found guilty of first-degree murder. He was hanged on the Wabash County Court House lawn on December 13, 1855. His wife was judged guilty of first-degree murder as well and sentenced to life imprisonment.²⁰³ Jack Higgins told Frank Sumner Bash, "I was married in 1854, Judge Knight married us. I knew all the old fellows in the court house. I was a sailor for many years and made the noose that Mose Scott used when he hung Hubbard that murdered a whole family down by the canal." Although never proven to be true, a myth circulated that doctors from Fort Wayne robbed Hubbard's body from the grave and returned it by canal boat to their laboratory for medical dissection.²⁰⁵

Still another sad tale remembered by County Historian Ron Woodward was said to have taken place in the 1850s about an escaping fugitive from slavery. He had made his way north to Wabash County before being captured. Under the law at the time, the sheriff was obligated to contact the "owner" who in turn sent his agent to retrieve the man. Once the slave hunter arrived he arrogantly boasted of his past successes, took custody of the captive bound in chains from a reluctant sheriff, and boarded a canal boat headed for the Ohio River. The helpless captive was shackled both hands and feet and chained to the deck. Several pro-abolitionist passengers distracted the agent and attempted to free the fugitive. The would-be rescuers managed to free the chain from the floor but not the shackles. When the boat neared Richvalley, the fugitive made his escape over the bank but his progress was hindered by the heavy restraints. Hearing the commotion, the slave hunter went up to the deck and seeing the fugitive running off, took chase. Sadly, the situation that had started as a noble effort to gain freedom turned sour for the escaping man who was shot and killed. Now the men who had attempted to free him followed the trail, found the body, removed the irons and buried his remains.²⁰⁶

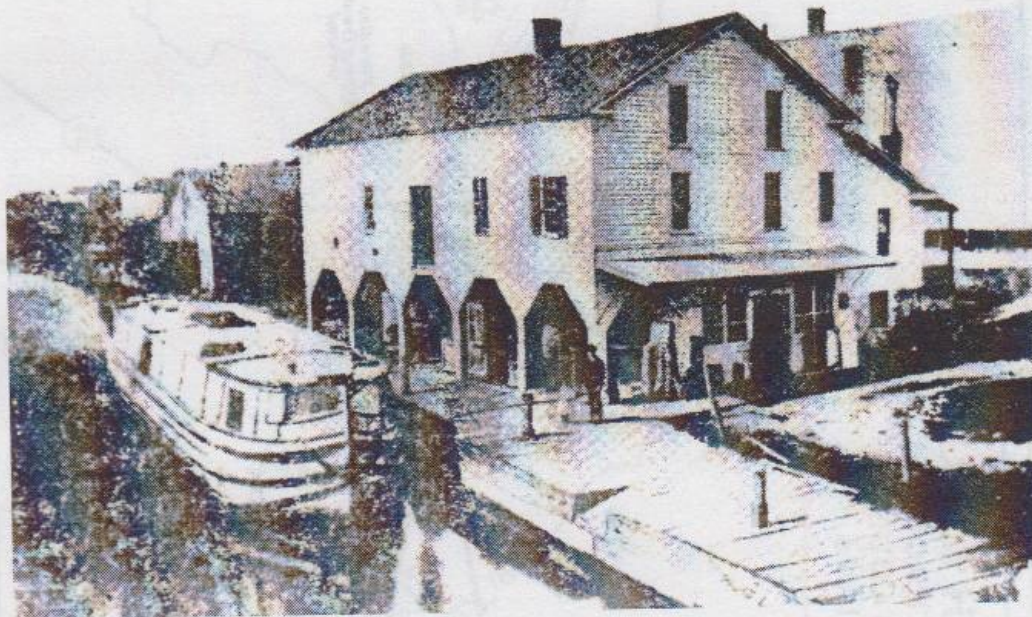
Wabash Road was the first state highway through Indiana, enacted by the legislature in 1826. It followed the Wabash River

and would eventually make a connection with the National Road at Terre Haute, via Lafayette, Delphi, Logansport and Peru to the mouth of the Salamonie River. In a subsequent act approved on January 24, 1828, the State road was extended to Fort Wayne where it continued to Toledo, Ohio. County Historian Ron Woodward noted that Samuel McClure originally cut the road. An early Indian trader who operated a William G. and George W. Ewing post, McClure's house, the first brick built house in the county, stands east of the Stearns Fischer home. McClure is said to have provided lodging for canal travelers as it conveniently overlooked the canal to the south. To the north of his house, the road he built is still visible in Wabash City Park and East Market Street where it climbs the bluff from Paradise Spring Park.²⁰⁷

The original modern state highway came through Peru in the late 1920s and was designated as State Road Highway 7 following the road to Lagro, Andrews and Fort Wayne. In 1925 the Federal Highway Act ushered in U.S. 24 constructed, on the north side of the river, across Wabash County eliminating Highway 7. From east to west the canal channel and towpath served Richvalley and later the railroad appeared. Today, the canal channel can be viewed to the north of the highway that has replaced the towpath. Some notice yet another remnant of the canal at Richvalley, which can be seen to the north of the highway. Often, after a heavy rain when water accumulates, the outlining form of a turnaround basin is easily imagined in the old channel.

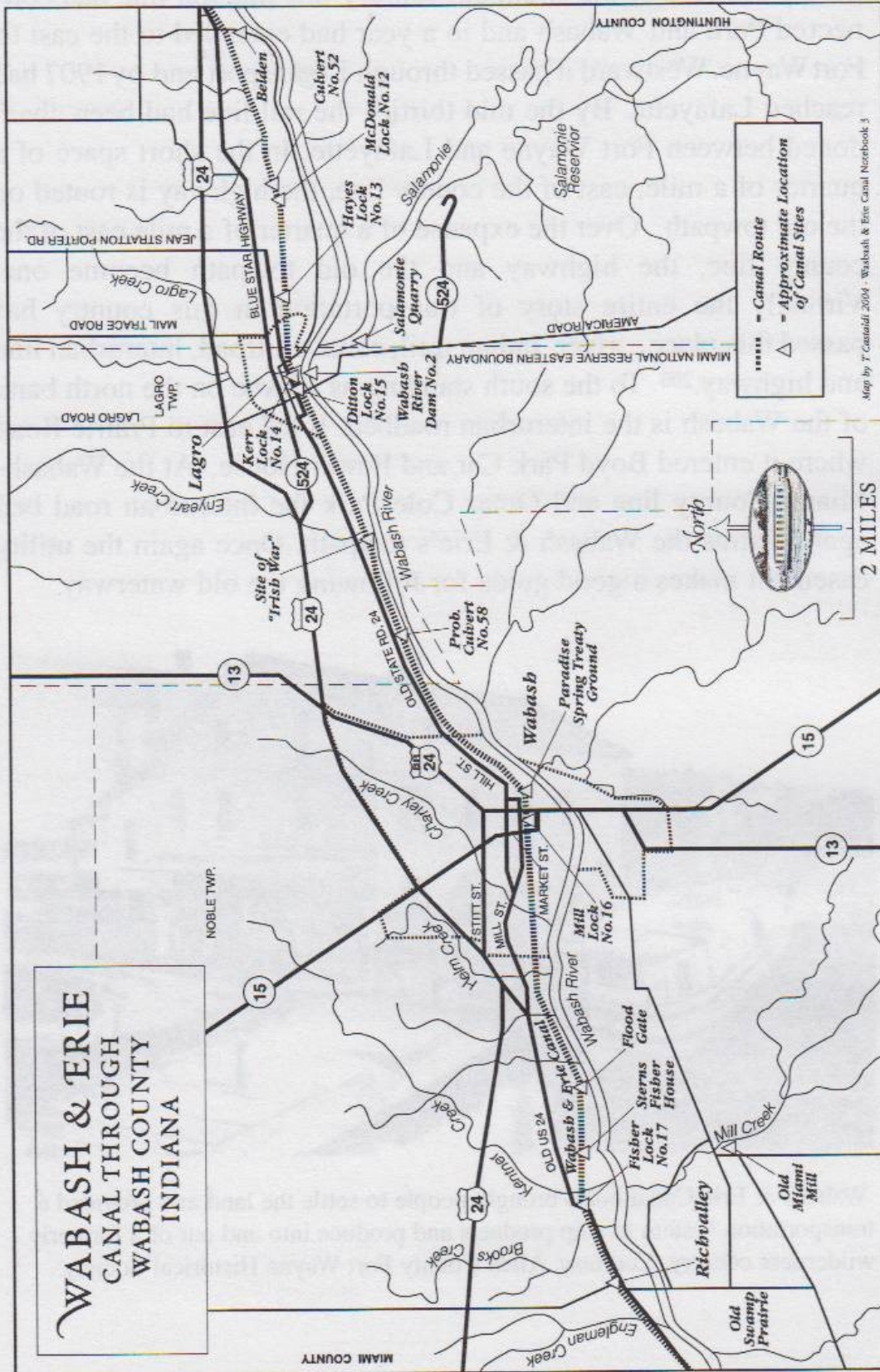
“Old State Road 24” (or present-day “Wabash Road”) follows closely the canal route between Locks 17 and 18. Heading west over the railroad line the canal bed is buried in the crop field to the north of the highway. Beyond the turn to Richvalley portions of the canal channel are visible as a deer trail and an all-terrain vehicle path. When the water is high at Richvalley, a turn around basin west of town reveals its shape and is visible from the highway. Here too is one of the few places along the canal route where the interurban rail line took a separate path and the utility poles connected by their wires are set far to the south near the riverbank.

By the turn of the twentieth century this traction line had connected Peru and Wabash and in a year had extended to the east to Fort Wayne. Westward it passed through Logansport and by 1907 had reached Lafayette. By the mid thirties the rail line had been abandoned between Fort Wayne and Lafayette. In the short space of a quarter of a mile, east of the county line, the highway is routed on the old towpath. Over the expanse of a quarter of a mile east of the county line, the highway and the old towpath become one. Virtually the entire story of transportation in this country has passed this place...river, Indian trail, canal, railroad, interurban line and highway.²⁰⁸ To the south standing as a levee on the north bank of the Wabash is the interurban roadbed. It led east to Prairie Road where it entered Boyd Park Car and Power House. At the Wabash-Miami County line and Omar Cole Park the interurban road bed again claims the Wabash & Erie's towpath. Once again the utility easement makes a good guide for following the old waterway.



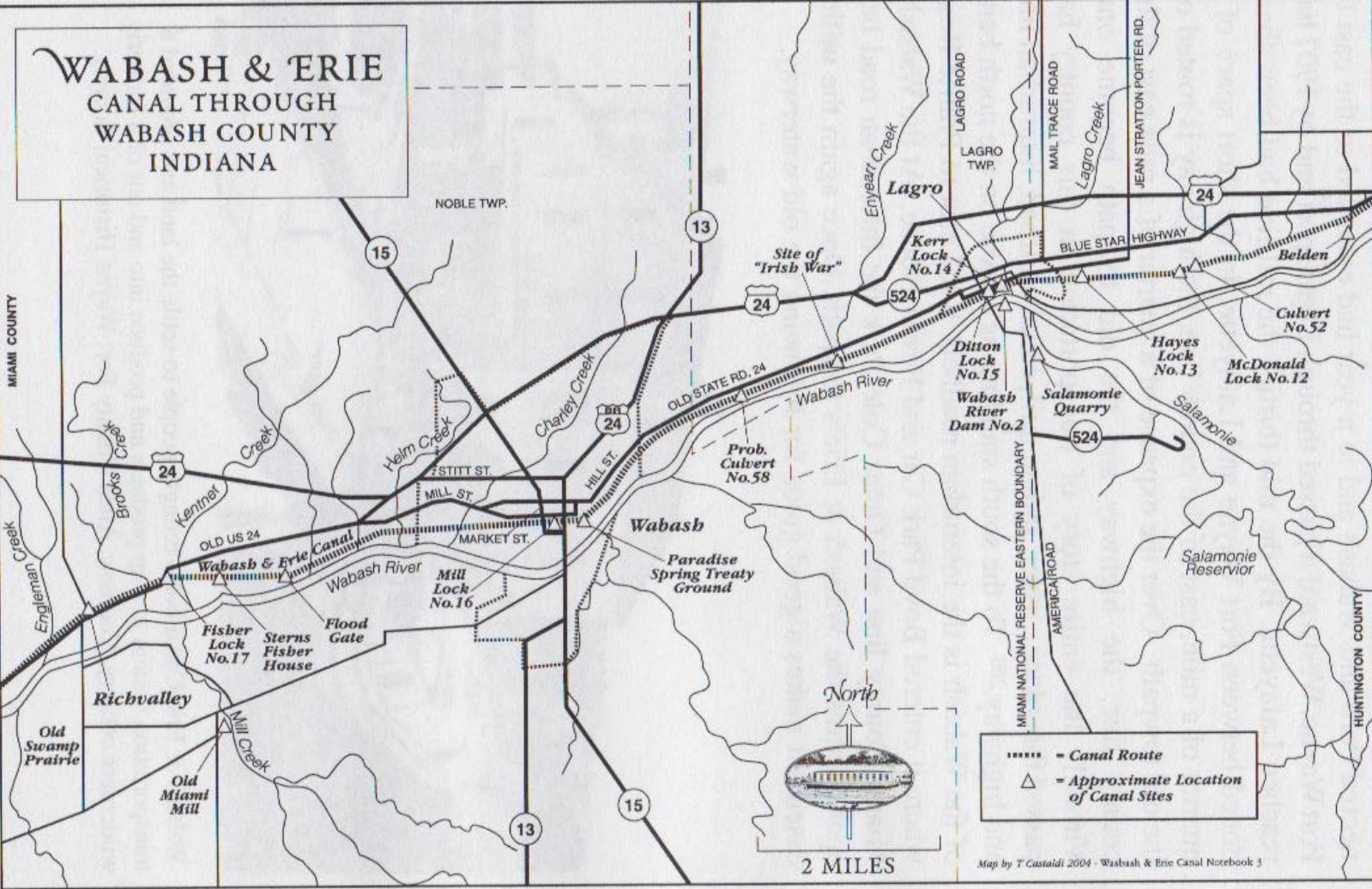
Wabash & Erie Canal boats brought people to settle the land and provided a transportation system to ship products and produce into and out of a formerly wilderness country. Courtesy, Allen County Fort Wayne Historical Society.

WABASH & ERIE CANAL THROUGH WABASH COUNTY INDIANA

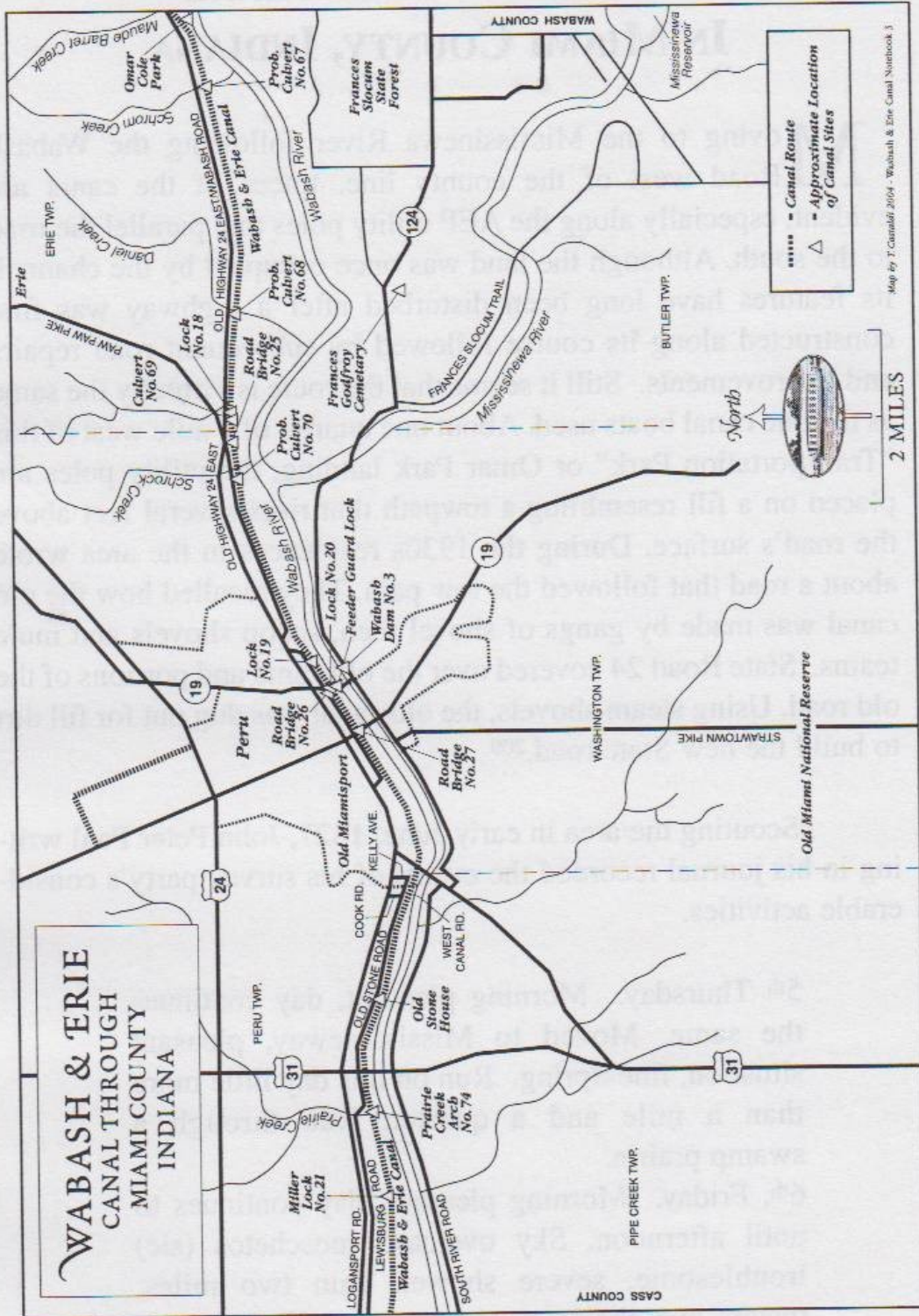


Map by T. Canfield, 2004. Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook 3.

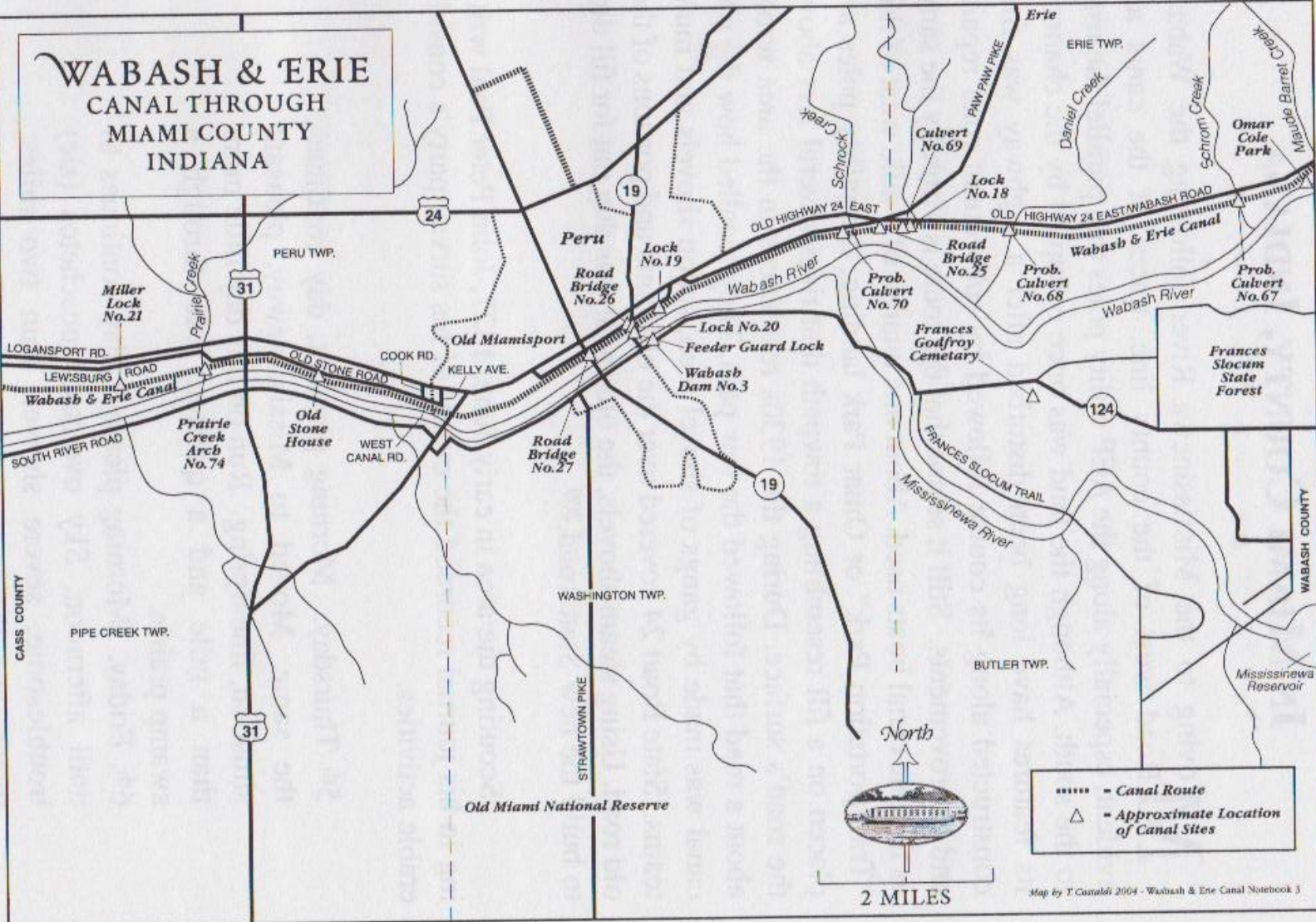
WABASH & ERIE CANAL THROUGH WABASH COUNTY INDIANA



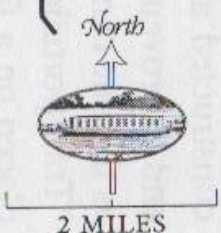
Map by T. Castaldi 2004 - Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook 3



WABASH & ERIE CANAL THROUGH MIAMI COUNTY INDIANA



----- - Canal Route
 △ - Approximate Location of Canal Sites



Map by T. Castaldi 2004 - Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook 3

WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN MIAMI COUNTY, INDIANA

Moving to the Mississinewa River following the Wabash Road west of the county line, traces of the canal are evident, especially along the AEP utility poles that parallel the road to the south. Although the land was once occupied by the channel, its features have long been disturbed after a highway was first constructed along its course followed by subsequent road repairs and improvements. Still it seems that the route is virtually the same as the one canal boats used. About one quarter of a mile west of this "Transportation Park" or Omar Park landing, the utility poles are placed on a fill resembling a towpath that rises several feet above the road's surface. During the 1930s residences in the area wrote about a road that followed the tow path. They recalled how the old canal was made by gangs of shovel men, scoop shovels and mule teams. State Road 24 covered over the old canal and portions of the old road. Using steam shovels, the old canal was dug out for fill dirt to build the new State road.²⁰⁹

Scouting the area in early June, 1827, John Peter Paul writing in his journal recorded the events of his survey party's considerable activities.

5th, Thursday. Morning pleasant, day continues the same. Moved to Mississineway, pleasant situation, fine Spring. Run on this day little more than a mile and a quarter. Run through a swamp prairie.

6th, Friday. Morning pleasant, day continues until afternoon. Sky overcast, moschetos (sic) troublesome, severe shower. Run two miles, twenty-two chains on the line and 61 chains on the ordinate from line to River. Returned to camp. Found a vast number of Indians there, some

drunk. Joseph Rushaville tolerably drunk and disposed to quarrel. Riley (the hunter) intoxicated and in some degree inclined to fight. However no disturbance.

7th. Morning cloudy, appearances unfavorable. Had severe rain, wet nearly all day. After running two miles on the line and an ordinate to the hill, towards the upper end of this day's work, we chained to the River. Returned to camp, got up and were up until a very late hour looking at the Indian dance.

The Indians became quite drunk, danced all night and are now hanging around the camp disposed to steal anything they can get their hands on. Expect I shall have an unpleasant Sunday – they can't get any more whiskey –

8th. Sunday pleasant. Walked out on the hill, viewed the Indian huts, saw groups of Indians sitting about playing on flutes. Returned to camp, took dinner and afterwards walked down to the Mississinaway. Stream beautiful, rapid and about 300 to 350 feet wide.²¹⁰

Commander Colonel James Shriver was ordered to locate other waterways among them, “a survey of a canal route from some convenient point at or near the mouth of the Mississinaway (sic) river on the Wabash” to the state capital. Citizens in Indianapolis could envision a 60-mile long canal route north to the Wabash & Erie that would make possible an uninterrupted communication between Indianapolis and New York. Indian Agent John Tipton was in Indianapolis on July 15, 1826, and wrote to John Ewing saying that he was about to meet with Shriver to urge the Colonel to proceed with the survey. Tipton asked Ewing what he thought “of quitting (sic) every thing else and urging the wabash & maumee (sic) canal and a cannal (sic) from this (Indianapolis) to that near the mouth of the mississinaway (sic).” He then proceeds to tell

Ewing that he is publishing a letter in the Indianapolis *Indiana Journal*, "but do not wish to be known as its author until the Treaty [of 1826 at Paradise Springs] is over. You may say that I can and will procure the liberty of the Indians for all necessary surveys to progress whenever applied to -." ²¹¹

In his unsigned letter published in the *Indiana Journal* on July 25, 1826, Tipton reveals what he must have considered certain political purposes surrounding the route the canal branch to Indianapolis would take. He mentions the expediency of procuring a canal to the mouth of the Mississinewa. At the time Colonel Shriver was about to "commence their labours, on such useless surveys as the Kankikee and Yellow river, from the St. Joseph of the Lake to the Maumee at Fort Wayne, and from the head of White river to St. Mary's." Unfortunately, Shriver died a month later on August 8, 1826, at Fort Wayne and John Peter Paul makes no mention of the project in his diary. ²¹²

The first reported mechanical structure recorded by the Chief Engineer in 1847 was Culvert No. 66, which may be Maude Barret Creek near Omar Cole Park. It was made of wood, submerged under water to protect it from decay and provided a 10 feet by 18 inches opening for the steam. Culvert No. 67 perhaps at Schrom Creek was also a submerged wood structure, but with a larger 12 feet by 3 feet passage. Although speculation, Culvert No. 68 may have been constructed for Daniel Creek to flow through its two wooden spans that each measured 10 feet by 2-1/2 feet. It needed some repairs in 1847 and the Chief Engineer wrote that, "The whole of the timber may be submerged by an expenditure of \$5.00." ²¹³

Lock No. 18 was described by Chief Engineer Jesse Williams as having a six-foot lift built of timber based upon the *wooden crib plan*. By renewing the two top courses, he estimated that the lock may last 4 years, but the gates will need renewed in two years. ²¹⁴ No sign of the old lock remains that once was in place

at approximately the site where PawPaw Pike joins old U.S. 24 now the "Wabash Road". In the year 2000, Miami County Historian Kreig Adkins placed a marker north of the site on the highway that reads, "Peru Wabash & Erie Canal 1837."

Advertisements were placed in behalf of the Trustees by Jesse Williams in June 1851 Indiana newspapers for sealed bids to be mailed through the Post Office at Fort Wayne. In part, the ad reads:

...for the use during the term of thirty years, of the surplus water necessarily passing around the wooden lock 3 miles above Peru ? the water to be used on an overshot or breast wheel. The amount of water to be leased is the quantity which it may be found necessary from time to time to pass over the tumble of said lock under the direction of the engineers or superintendent, for the purpose of supplying the navigation thence to the next feeder below, be the same more or less. As in other leases on the canal, the use of water must be subordinate to the purpose of navigation, and the mill is not to run when it will interfere therewith. With the water power will also be leased a lot of ground sufficient for its use and for buildings connected with it.²¹⁵

On November 28, 1863, contractor Alpha Buckley, received \$300.00 on account to make repairs to this lock. Buckley received \$1,298.71 for rebuilding the lock on April 14, 1864.²¹⁶

Shortly before Kreig Adkins placed the canal marker along the highway, he found a series of canal foundation timbers well over 150 years old under a Wabash Road (old U.S. 24) bridge. The large timbers continued under a second bridge, which paralleled the highway and was once used by an electric interurban rail line. Canal Society of Indiana *Newsletter* reported that the timbers, still

in good condition, ran about thirty feet upstream from the highway. Editor Carolyn Schmidt concluded that after studying the site, it is apparent that the rise of the neighboring farmer's front yard to the east and a gravel pit to the west are at the old towpath level. Atkins counted 43 timbers including those in the stream bed. At the south edge of the highway, two timbers on either side of the creek cross the wooden base and must have been a part of the culvert's retaining wall. He also located a member measuring 12 feet by 20 inches by 12 inches protruding from what may have been the retaining wall.²¹⁷



Into the twenty-first century, Culvert No. 69 timbers continue to serve as a base for a stream bed flowing under the Wabash Road – shown in the foreground – and at the base of an old interurban bridge. Photo in author's collection.

Chief Engineer Jesse Williams, 1847 structures report states that about one-tenth of a mile below Lock No. 18 was installed Culvert No. 69. It was made of wood, submerged below water level for passing a creek through three spans 12 feet by 2-1/2 feet. Next was Road Bridge No. 25 expected to last two more years, which probably is the one that served PawPaw Pike traffic. Culvert No. 70, below Lock No. 18, may have been the culvert that passed Shrock Creek under the canal line. It too was three spans and otherwise the same size as the previous culvert.²¹⁸

PawPaw Pike took the route that was once the north bank of the Wabash & Erie. The road followed to a point where it separates from the canal line, which moves toward the southwest. It is nearly straight across the Wabash from the mouth of the Mississinewa. Today the canal bed has been replaced by PawPaw Pike where it crosses Country Club Road on west past the intersection of Lovers Lane. Between the introduction of Country Club Road and short distance west to Lovers Lane, is the *Bill Mullikin Memorial* Bridge, which crosses Shrock Creek. No sign of a wooden culvert can be found at the surface, however, stones have been put in place that appear to be from the canal era. It should be noted that these were installed in 1998 when repairs to the bridge were made. From here PawPaw Pike extends to Ash Street in Peru where it rejoins old U.S. 24.²¹⁹

The pike connected the canal line with the town of PawPaw. In 1849, public officials were studying the practicality of constructing a plank road from Peru to Warsaw thus making PawPaw an important site along the route. It passed through a rich portion of Miami County connecting with Kosciusko County's large agricultural country. PawPaw Pike became an important access to the Wabash & Erie Canal and its promise of reaching profitable markets.²²⁰ Improved roads facilitated product delivery to the canal and on to market. Port towns contending for the business advertised that improved routes from crop fields led to their canal landing. Peru and Wabash competed against one another for the PawPaw plank road as they did for the one connecting the town of Gilead. By positioning their community as the shortest route and the market for good prices for product and produce, at stake was the amount of capital and business that could be expected to be concentrated on their dock.²²¹

The Central Canal was part of the Internal Improvement Mammoth Act of 1837 passed by the Indiana legislature. It was to connect with the Wabash & Erie at a point to be determined near Peru and extend to the Ohio River at Evansville. Its route took the central line through Indianapolis, Worthington and Petersburg.

Plans were made to link by a cross cut canal from Terre Haute on the Wabash & Erie to Worthington. However, the Cross-cut and lower portions of the Central Canal were taken into the Wabash & Erie when the Internal Improvements proved too much for Indiana's financial resources. As a solution for completing the Wabash & Erie a route from Terre Haute to Evansville was completed.²²² Historians seem to agree that if the Central Canal had been completed to Miami County, it most likely would have emerged on the south bank of the Wabash River at the mouth of the Mississinewa River near Peru.

On the north bank, between PawPaw Pike and the Wabash River west and across from the entrance of the Mississinewa River, the towpath has become a part of the countryside. It drives home the original pro-canal legislators' argument that as years pass, canals become a permanent part of the landscape. As late as 1851 the Miami County *Sentinel* copied for its readers a "notice of the probable extension" of the Central Canal "to its original terminus (the Wabash & Erie Canal) from the Indianapolis *Locomotive*."

We understand that Dr. Ramsay, Agent for the Company, F. C. Moore, Engineer, and Mr. Jeremiah Jackson, one of the principal Stockholders in the Central Canal Company, passed over the entire line of the Canal, from this City to where it strikes the Wabash and Erie Canal, for the purpose of examining whether it was practicable for the company to go on and finish the Canal to connect with the Wabash and Erie Canal. Of course the result and determination cannot be known until Mr. Jackson reports to the Stockholders in New York, but from the very favorable opinion he has formed of the country through which the Canal passes, and the comparatively small amount necessary to complete it, we have no doubt but the Company will commence next spring, and push it through as fast as the

work can be done. – should they determine to undertake the work, of which we have little doubt, they will most probably have it finished to Anderson next year, and form the connection of a northern water communication to New York by the year following. The importance of this improvement to the country is incalculable, as it will not only give us a direct water communication with New York, but it will furnish along the whole line of the Canal any quantity of water power.²²³

By 1853 the Wabash & Erie had reached Evansville, Indiana, on the Ohio River. There is no record of the Central Canal ever being completed to its northern terminus in Miami County.

Hal Phelps, Miami County Museum founder, spoke with Barney Baer and Henry Moss, two canal-era gentlemen after hearing about a canal structure that was known as, “Buttermilk Lock” located at Lepolds or Lippold’s Crossing east of Peru. Baer was a shopkeeper of 66 years and Henry Moss was age 79 in 1925 when Phelps asked how the lock got its name. “They told the story that in an early day one Elem Henton lived near the lock and he had a daughter by the name of Rachel that was a fine looking industrious girl and that she supplied the packets as they passed with buttermilk and the milk was so fine and the girl so pleasing and pretty in her manners that the canal folks called it Buttermilk Lock.”²²⁴

About one mile east of Peru’s landing, stood Lock No. 19. It was a six feet lift and constructed of cut stone. Chief Engineer Williams acknowledged, “Stone 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.”²²⁵ Because of increasing flooding, the chief engineer later in 1849 found it necessary to raise the towpath for a distance of one-fourth of a mile, “below the Lock near the mouth of Mississinewa.”²²⁶

Some historians have referred to Lock No. 19 as the “Buttermilk Lock,” however, others say that this name was associated with the next lock west officially established as Lock No. 20. In describing Lock No. 19’s location, Karl Hartisch, in an undated newspaper prepared for the Miami County Historical Museum, places the lock on Peru’s east side.

At the east edge of town at the end of Third and Second street there was another set of locks. At the end of east Fifth street stood a lone farm house as this was farmland then. The lady that lived in this house would walk over and sell cold buttermilk to the crews of the freight boats and the passengers on the passenger boats. Hence this lock became known as Buttermilk Lock.²²⁷

Joseph Shirk in 1915 sold a vacated canal right-of-way to C.W. Spangler and Anna Lippold. The purchase included the land along Sections 19 and 24, which divide the townships of Peru and Erie, and for a distance 408.4 feet west following the south line of the canal. This section division is approximately 200 feet west of the intersection of PawPaw Pike and Wabash Road. In handwriting across the top of the Quit Claim Deed are the words, “1/4 acre at ‘Buttermilk Lock’ pd by note 1/30/1 due 30 days pd 2/4/14.” Has this annotation any relevance to the typed description that followed or was it a separate deal made between Shirk and Spangler? It suggests that the Buttermilk Lock might be well east of Peru, and the Lippold surname implies that there may have been some family relationship to a “Crossing” of the same name in the vicinity.²²⁸ It is important to note that this document does not give the specific location of the lock.

In her *History of Erie Township*, Josephine Hostetler King says that the place where the first boat attempting to reach Peru was obliged to stop at Buttermilk Lock, which was “one mile above town.” She continued, “The reason they called this ‘Buttermilk

Lock' was because a man who lived by the lock had quite a herd of cows. He churned large amounts of butter and sold the buttermilk to the men who worked on the boats." King said the man's name was Rhinebarger. One mile east of the Peru Landing places this lock on a point along the canal between Smith and Garfield streets.

Another suggestion that favors this Lock No. 19 as the Buttermilk Lock comes from author Elizabeth Hamilton Frierhood. Her Richvalley-based great-grandfather Jacob D. Williams taught four years at a new school built at the old Buttermilk Lock settlement. It implies a location convenient to Richvalley and a canal structure that encouraged both economic and social development. A school house appears on an Erie Township map of 1877 about two and one quarter mile east of Lock No. 19 and six miles west of the Wabash and Miami county line, a reasonable distance a teacher might travel conveniently along the towpath. One could argue that a "School House" four blocks north and two blocks east on PawPaw Pike or Main Street does appear on the atlas map, however, it is within the City of Peru and not "at the old Buttermilk Lock settlement" as Frierhood noted.²²⁹ A photo of the "Long Island School" in the Miami County Historical Museum collection has an accompanying notation:

The School was built East of the Carter Butt home on State Highway #24, known in early years as the Canal Road. This building was built of walnut and poplar hewn logs 3 feet in diameter. (It) served the purpose of a school until a new frame building was built in the early 1870s. The building stood west of Erie and south on the Rhods Pierce Farm on the Township line. Canal boats pulled by mules passed this building while it was used as a school.²³⁰

During the 1950s, attorney, Walter Bixler, gave an address to the Hoosier Historical Society Tour in the Miami County Museum where he remarked that the Buttermilk Lock, “was just east of where the Hausake Harland Furniture Co., had its factory at the south end of Benton street.”²³¹ Karl Hartisch states in his paper describing Lock No.20: “A set of locks was located above what is now the water works and they sat directly behind what is now Eck Adams corporation.” It is described in more detail in the 1847 Chief Engineer’s report:

Lock No. 20, six feet lift, of *cut stone*, the stone from the same quarry with those just described. The upper courses of one wall for 2 or 3 feet in height is much dilapidated, and partly removed. This should be repaired during the ensuing winter. The gates will last 2 years.²³²

Bixley’s remark about the location of Buttermilk Lock is specific. None of the above sources mention the lock number as assigned by the Chief Engineer. The designation for structure types began with the “Number 1” at the Indiana-Ohio state line and progressed along the canal toward Evansville on the Ohio River. It was typical of locals to refer to the locks by other than the numbering system and mostly by the name of the lockkeeper, a mill name, or some notable person. “Buttermilk Lock” abounds with stories recalling the boat crew and passengers enjoying the comfort of a glass of cold buttermilk offered by pleasing young milk maiden. Elem Henton’s milk maid daughter Rachel married the wealthy James Omar Cole Sr. Their daughter, Kate Cole married Samuel Porter who in turn produced Cole Porter, who in adulthood became a world famous songwriter.²³³

A children’s ditty heard in Miami County dating back to the days of the canal was sung to the tune of “Jimmy Crack Corn”. It seems to fit the cadence of a swift moving packet boat towing horse, the buttermilk maid’s trade and a romantic’s gift:

Trottie trot trot.
Trottie trot trot.
Sold my buttermilk, every drop.
Every drop I had to spare.
To buy my gal a trottin' mare!"²³⁴

From a practical perspective, it is expected that mechanical structures will suffer wear and tear. Eighteen years after the Chief Engineer prepared his structures inventory, on April 17, 1865, Alpha Buckley was contracted to repair the, "Peru lock for \$212.00." Although nothing in the record indicates the nature of the work, a line item in the *A.P. Edgerton Journal* "Repairs to Permanent Structures" notes the work was completed at Lock 20.²³⁵



MIAMISPORT VS PERU

Peru is the county seat of Miami County and the canal line passed across Erie and Peru townships. However, before Peru was laid out, the town of Miamisport had been platted. Miami Chief John Baptiste de Richardville at the 1826 Treaty of Paradise Springs was granted a section or square mile of land whose eastern boundary followed a north and south line running from about a half block east at the point Broadway reaches the Wabash River. Not long after, William N. Hood and Joseph Holman of Fort Wayne bought the section from Chief Richardville and laid out Miamisport.

On March 12, 1829, they planned their town with an area for a market, a public square as well as lots suitable for both businesses and residences. However, Miamisport had been established with the idea of becoming county seat and not necessarily with an eye on serving those who may wish to make it their home. Basically, the town is bounded by present-day streets: Lafayette on the east, Main of the north, Holman on the west and the Wabash River to the south. David Burr prepared the plat and recorded it in the Cass County Recorder's Office on July 15, 1830. Most of the houses built were along Water Street that paralleled the Wabash. When the canal came along, these mostly log houses facing the river were removed and the houses along the berm bank were made to face the canal.²³⁵

William Hood broke away from Miamisport founder Joseph Holman and laid out Peru on the 210 acre tract of eastern Miamisport. Hood had envisioned the land he had purchased as the site of a town that might become the county seat. Stearns Fisher, Resident Engineer for the Wabash & Erie between the town of Wabash and into Miami County, laid out the plat for Peru sometime during the spring of 1834. It was so covered with forest that Fisher is said to have had woodmen, "precede him and clear away the underbrush so he could get a sight through his instrument." On July

On 26, 1834, Hood sold a third interest in the original plat to Richard L. Britton for \$3,000. Later, on July 28th, another third interest was deeded to Jesse L. Williams, Chief Engineer of the canal, in hopes that under his direction the proposed feeder and dam would be located east of the town. People moved to Peru to be nearer the new jobs that were being created by the mills and factories, which drew their source of power from the feeder's water resources.²³⁶ An eyewitness said that at first Peru was a town of 20 or so log cabins and eight or ten respectable houses and noted further, "The village was filled with people working on the Wabash and Erie canal, from different States."²³⁷

Miami County was established by the Indiana legislature on January 2, 1834 at a meeting on June 3rd at John McGregor's house in Miamisport, the requirements for a county seat were reviewed. It was learned that Miamisport did not meet specifications and located it at the site where Peru now stands.

Hood had offered an economic development package in return for establishing Peru as the county's seat. His deal included donation of a public square, a log jail equal to the one at Logansport, a two-story brick court house, forty feet square, purchase of the necessary county books, \$125 for the county fund, a free lot to the Methodist and Presbyterian churches, a free lot to any skilled worker who would choose to locate in town, special pricing or free lots to Miamisport merchants who elected to relocate and a free lot to any Miamisport family who would agree to build and move in to a house in Peru. By the middle of 1841, the town of Miamisport was virtually abandoned by the population.²³⁸

Situated near the center of the county on the north bank of the Wabash, the 1844 *Indiana Gazetteer* described Peru as being on the Wabash & Erie Canal, sixty-eight miles north of Indianapolis, sixty miles west southwest of Fort Wayne and sixty miles from Lafayette. Already it was noted that "the fine country around Peru and the enterprise of its citizens, which is doing much to complete

the Railroad from Indianapolis to this place, must make it an important point."²³⁹

With the government units in place, a routing concern emerged because a feeder was considered necessary to be located after having passed the Mississinewa River. In 1834 when the canal line was being located from the mouth of the Mississinewa to Millers Creek, Col. Moore was faced with making a considerable change in his plan. His original line followed the base of the bluffs to the north of the river until the high ground subsided near Millers Creek. To have continued the canal to Millers Creek without a feeder would have reduced the water level during the dry months and caused the system to shut down navigation. Consequently the line was constructed very near the river's bank, and although the revision represented a major change in the direction it sent the canal line straight through Peru.²⁴⁰

Next came one of the major mechanical structures that had to be built for the success of the project: Dam No. 3 across the Wabash River. Notices were placed in the Fort Wayne *Sentinel* on June 14, 1834 and again on July 4, 1834 in the *Indiana Democrat* announcing that sealed bids were being accepted for six locks, several culverts and a, "near 500 feet long" dam. Eighteen to twenty miles of the canal required construction from the "town of Wabash, westward to a point about 15 miles above Logansport." Proposals were to be received at Miamisport on July 28, 1834.

Jesse Williams had the responsibility for building the dams across the Wabash River, which was necessary to collect an additional supply of water to replenish the canal through a feeder device. Below Lock No. 20, a feeder is introduced from the river for that purpose. In an 1835 report to the Canal Commissioners, Williams said that Dam No. 1 on the Wabash at the mouth of the Little Wabash River and Dam No. 2, half a mile below the mouth of Salamonie were finished. He continued,

Notice.



Canal Letting.

SEALD PROPOSALS for the construction of
EIGHTEEN to TWENTY Miles of the
WABASH & ERIE CANAL.

Will be received at Miamisport, 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 a-
bove Logansport, and embraces

Five or Six LOCKS, a number of
CULVERTS, and a DAM a-
cross the Wabash, below the mouth
of the Mississinewa, 8 feet high,
and near 500 feet long.

Plans and Specifications of the work will be ex-
hibited for four or five days previous to the letting
and all necessary explanations in relation to the
work will be given by the Engineer superintend-
ing the same.

Bidders not personally known to the Commis-
sioners or Engineer will be expected to produce
satisfactory testimonials of character and qualifi-
cations as Contractors.

D. BURR, } Commissioners
SAML. LEWIS, } of the Wabash
JAS. B. JOHNSON } & Erie Canal.

TREATY GROUNDS, 24th May, 1834. 42

During June and July of 1834, ads appeared in newspapers requested bids to build the canal structures through Wabash and Miami counties.

“The most difficult part of the foundation of Dam No. 3, below the mouth of the Mississinewa, has been laid and secured; the abutments nearly completed, and the materials for the body of the Dam prepared. All these Dams, excepting about half of the one last named, are built upon a solid rock foundation, and from the care taken in constructing them great confidence is felt in their durability.”²³⁹

The following year the engineer's report included the status of the dam at Peru.

In my last report to the Board of Canal commissioners, three important dams were reported as completed; one across the St. Josephs and two across the Wabash, and I have now the satisfaction to state that these structures continue in a safe condition, and answer fully the purposes for which they were built. It is to be regretted that the successive floods which have recently occurred in the Wabash river, at the season of the year when we were accustomed to expect the lowest water have prevented the completion of dam No. 3, near the mouth of the Mississinewa. The cribs which form the body of the dam had been completed, and a portion of them filled and covered, when the last rise in the river put a stop to further operations. The resident Engineer has been advised to have the cribs entirely filled with stone, so soon as the flood subsides, and in this condition it is hoped the structure may stand without any considerable injury, until low water of next season, when it can be finished according to the original plan.²⁴⁰

It has been speculated in recent years by the editors of *Indiana Canals* that Dam No. 3 was designed to create a supply of slackwater to furnish needed water to the main line of the canal as well as serve the Central Canal. At the time engineers were well aware that the Central Canal was to have its terminus at Peru west of the Mississinewa River where it emptied into the Wabash. A slackwater lake could serve both canals and with a navigable feeder canal connecting to the Wabash & Erie, boats could pass from one canal to the other with ease. It was the same principle that was to be introduced at the next downstream dam where boats had to cross the Wabash River at Carrollton.²⁴¹ A Peru newspaper

stated in November 1837 that this “heavy and expensive contract is now nearly completed and we congratulate the state upon the permanency of its condition. Our enterprizing (sic) fellow citizen John Cooper, Esq. was the contractor on this immense structure.”²⁴² Also, the Indiana State Archives holds contracts made to Sanger and Durgin dated July 31, 1834 for the Wabash Dam No. 3 and feeder and to Alexander Wilson and William N. Hood for Wabash No 3 dated January 2, 1837.²⁴³

Fifteen chains in length, this feeder at its mouth has a guard lock with cut stone abutments, built for the purpose of passing rafts and other floats from the river into the canal, and also to regulate the flow of water. The feeder, according to Chief Engineer Williams, “is partially filled with drift wood, which must be removed. The lower gates of the guard lock must be renewed next winter.”²⁴⁴

Here is how the Wabash Dam No. 3 was described in 1837:

...situated a quarter of a mile above Peru, which last year was reported in an unfinished and hazardous (sic) condition, sustained considerable damage during the winter, one hundred and fifty feet of the body of the dam having been carried away by the ice freshets. This, together with other losses during the progress of the work, occasioned by the frequent and sudden rises to which this river is peculiarly liable, have increased very much the cost of this work. It has, however, been completed during the past season, excepting 40 feet of covering timber on the upper slope, which has not been placed. This dam is 400 feet in length between abutments, and 11 feet high from low water. It will turn into the canal an ample supply of water both for navigation and hydraulic purposes, as far down as the point where the canal enters the pool of dam No. 4, in which the crossing of the Wabash is effected. A feeder has been constructed from the

pool of this dam to the canal, 15 chains in length, in which a guard lock of cut stone has been built for the purpose of regulation the introduction of the water, and of admitting into the canal the boats and other craft which may descend the Wabash or Mississinnewa (sic) rivers. The river at this point furnishes more water than the canal can pass, and in order to make this surplus available for manufacturing purposes, a series of wooden culverts have been constructed under the guard bank with sliding gates at the upper end, to shut down in time of floods. This structure will be durable, as it is placed below the surface of low water in the pool.²⁴⁵

Ten years later in 1847, Engineer Williams described the condition of the dam this way:

Wabash dam No. 3, at the town of Peru, erected for the purpose of the feeder just described, is 400 feet long and 11 feet high. A part of this structure is on rock bottom, and part on a coarse gravel. The foundation up to low water is formed of brush and trees, covered with an apron of hewn timber, on which is erected a timber crib filled with stone. The dam may be called a safe and permanent structure, with the exception of the abutments, which are of timber and much decayed. One abutment must be renewed during the present summer, and the other during the next season. A portion of the covering timber, on the lower slope for 20 feet in length, has been washed off, and must be renewed during the present low water.

In the guard bank which extends from the dam abutment to the guard lock, and which forms the lower bank of the feeder, there is a series of large

wooden culverts, with sliding gates and the upper ends. This structure was erected to pass the surplus water from the pool of the dam to the mills below. It is now found to be in bad condition, the water leaking through and around it. Some expenditure for repairs will doubtless be required during the ensuing year.²⁴⁶



Present location where Wabash River Dam No. 3 once replenished canal water from the river through a feeder channel, which joined the main line at a guard lock below Lock No. 20. Photo in author's collection.

Sealed bids were accepted at the office of the Auditor of Public Accounts at Peru in April of 1844. The newspaper advertisement said that bids would be accepted until June 1st for leasing a sufficient quantity of water at Wabash Dam No. 3, "to propel a run of four and a half feet mill stones - term of thirty years." Water power offered for lease was to be used on the west side of the ravine which extended from the canal to the river and, passed through a head race to be constructed by the State. The lessee was required to build a mill in such a manner that the race could supply water for other mills to be erected. Rent was due beginning in November

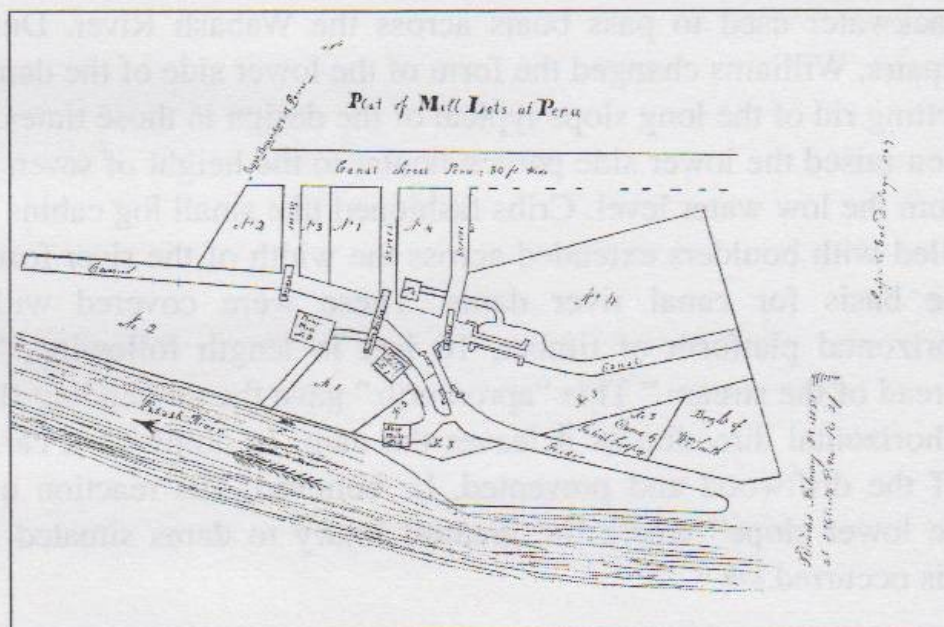
1845.²⁴⁷ A grist and saw mill known as the "Peru Mills" was placed for sale by the Miami County Sheriff for, "the rents and profits for a term of seven years." It was the result of litigation brought by Lewis Pence against William W. Higgins who held a half interest in the mill that was then in the possession of Jesse Higgins and Stephen W. Truesdell. The Peru Mills were appraised at \$2,500.00 plus forty barrels of flour valued at \$1.50 per barrel. By 1852 Peru Mills was soliciting grinding services by Mitchell & Co.²⁴⁸ An earlier mill was built in 1838 by Britton & Zern. In 1931 a contractor excavating for a pump house being erected east of the bridge on the north bank of the river uncovered two mill stones. The stones were believed to be those used in the corn cracker mill constructed by Britton & Zern. Today, the stones were removed and placed on the courthouse lawn for exhibition. Later they were removed to the west side of the Library.²⁴⁹

Other commercial ventures arose at the feeder dam including the Rankin grocery store business, which was placed on the market for sale in July 1851.²⁵⁰ John Bush invented a shingle machine and operated it at the feeder dam and even advertised that he would sell the rights to the design. As people were drawn to the feeder dam, it was recognized not only for its extensive water power but it became a fashionable resort for those who wished to get some exercise on the lake formed by the slackwater.²⁵³

New feeder lock gates were necessary again when Alpha Buckley was given a \$220.00 draft from the canal lessees for, "2 new gates Peru Feeder Lock" for \$148.00 on August 10, 1863. Buckley was born in Virginia in 1813, moved to Peru in 1841 and worked as a carpenter. He was known as an honest man who also was a boatman on the Wabash & Erie canal before he died in the late 1870s.²⁵⁴ H.L. Kilborn received a draft for \$100.00 from the canal lessees on March 13, 1860 for, "2 lock gates at Peru Feeder" and on April 10th Kilborn was paid \$100.00 for "2 lock gates Peru Feeder." By 1860 the dam abutment needed restoration and on July 23rd, A. Buckley was paid \$889.00 for his estimates to make

necessary repairs. On November 7th the final cost totaled \$2,019.13 and the canal lessees settled with Buckley.²⁵⁵

Williams does not include towpath bridges in his 1847 report of the condition of permanent structures. An exception is the bridge at Paragon, Indiana, the site on the Wabash River where the canal crossed the Wabash River near Delphi. However, animals towing boats required an access across a feeder that cut through the towpath. The Chief Engineer lists Road Bridge No. 26, “just below the mouth of the feeder” and he estimated that it would last another four years. A map in the Miami County Historical Museum shows the canal and feeders at Peru.²⁵⁶ Records are available showing that fifteen years later on April 27, 1862, Alpha Buckley was paid \$175.00 for work on the, “Tow Path Bridge Peru Feeder.” Once again on May 5, 1865, J. Powell was awarded a \$40.00 draft by the canal lessees to repair the feeder.²⁵⁷



Plat of Mill Lots at Peru was recorded on February 28, 1851.
Canal Society of Indiana.

Physical structures built out-of-doors are, of course, at the mercy of the elements. An ice storm in the spring of 1856 destroyed about 70 feet of the lower slope of the dam leaving it with a thirteen feet vertical fall. The chief engineer credited the sound construction of the dam's foundation for saving it from being undermined, "though resting at this point on a gravel bottom." The entire lower slope of the 400 feet long dam was given a new and improved form of apron crib. Williams noted "In the repair, it was deemed necessary to renew the lower slope of the dam for its whole length of 400 feet, giving it the new and improved form of the apron crib, as adopted in the repair of the Delphi (at Pittsburg) dam in 1849. He continued citing the Peru dam as among the most important structures on the Canal and that after the 1856 repairs were made, it was in a better condition than when it was first built.²⁵⁵

Back in the winter of 1848-49, unusual rains followed by floods seriously damaged the Pittsburg dam that formed the slackwater used to pass boats across the Wabash River. During repairs, Williams changed the form of the lower side of the dam by getting rid of the long slope typical of the design in those times. He then raised the lower side perpendicular to the height of seven feet from the low water level. Cribs fashioned like small log cabins and filled with boulders extended across the width of the river formed the basis for canal river dams. These were covered with a horizontal platform of timber, 16 feet in length following, "the thread of the stream." This "apron crib" gave the descending flood a horizontal direction as it leaves the dam. In doing so it carried off the driftwood and prevented, he believed, "its reaction upon the lower slope" where the greatest injury to dams situated like this occurred.²⁵⁶

A great deal of money was spent to repair the dam to prevent its destruction. Techniques learned at Pittsburg were employed to repair the Peru dam and these repairs cost \$11,168. Because of the March flooding, the chief engineer had the towpath bank raised one foot, "for near half a mile below the Peru feeder."²⁵⁷ Two abutments of the dam were repaired in 1860. With this work

completed the dam had a fairly complete renovation in just four years.²⁵⁸ Williams also noted that just below the mouth of the feeder, Road Bridge No. 26 will last up to four years.²⁵⁹

“The foundation of a large dam in the Wabash river, 250 feet east of the concrete bridge...has been found by the workmen who are dredging the river and removing three large islands east of the bridge.” In 1940 Ewing Shields contractor for the removal of the islands was quoted: “Whoever built that dam was an engineering genius and it was certainly a remarkable piece of work.” He continued, “...that construction of the dam was an extremely difficult feat in the days that the dam was built, inasmuch as it was necessary to use hand pumps to clear the river and only the most primitive tools were available, the workmen being without all of the engineering machinery and inventions that are used in river construction work today.” William C. H. Reeder, pioneer resident of Peru, said that the upper section of the dam was washed out in about 1875. He explained that the water level of the canal in this section was regulated by the dam diverting the river flow into the canal when needed.²⁶⁰

During the summer of 1999, a drought invaded much of the eastern United States. With little rainfall, water in the upper Wabash River was at an abnormally low level. The shallow water revealed telltale shapes of the canal dams at both Lagro and Peru. At both sites the dam remnants could be studied standing on the State Road 524 highway bridge and especially from the Wayne Street bridge in Peru. Dam No. 3 at Peru nearly returned to its original function. The low water level tumbled over the dam’s base extending across the width of the river at midstream. Again in 2004, Miami County Historian Kreig Adkins reported that he had counted as many as 80 foundation timbers during low water levels in the bed of the Wabash River.



MIAMI REMOVAL

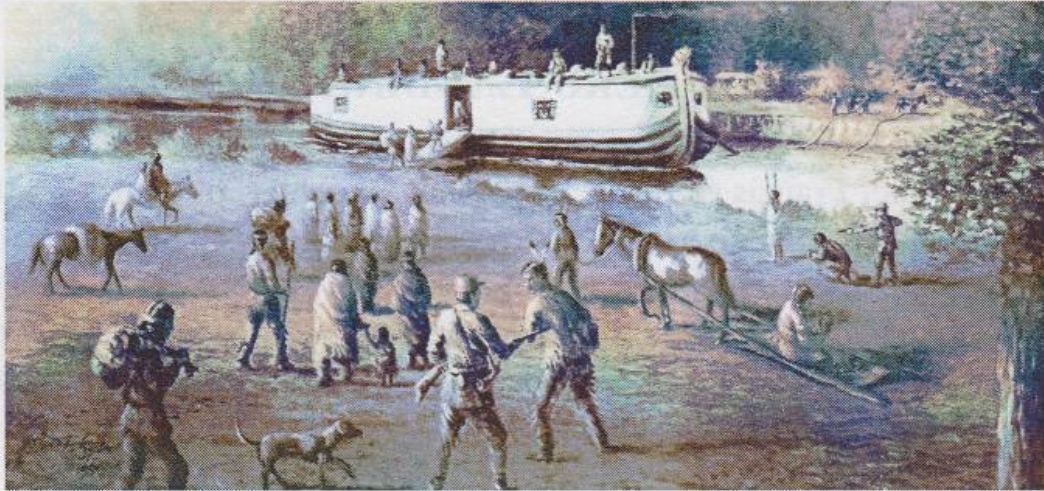
In the Treaty of Paradise Springs in 1826 the Miami people ceded lands north of the Wabash River to the United States government. Also a "Big Reserve" 30 miles by 30 miles extended along the south side of the Wabash from the Salamonie River to the Eel River at Logansport. It was here that the Miami were relegated. However, the treaties of 1838 and 1840 at the Forks of the Wabash reduced this reserve to ten sections of land along the Mississinewa River granted to Chief Metocinyah.²⁶⁴

The Miami agreed to move to lands west of the Mississippi River by 1845, however, they were reluctant to leave the land of their ancestors and delayed their departure. More specifically it was the Miami people who were not a part of the treaty making who faced being removed and probably did not understand the agreement.

Charles H. Titus kept a journal of his travels from Lafayette to Fort Wayne on the Wabash & Erie in 1843. He made these observations as his packet moved east.

A few miles above Logansport, on the right of the canal, commences the tract of land known as the Indian country. This was ceded to the U.S. last year, by the Miami Indians, who still occupy it. They are to leave it, & go west of the Mississippi in a year or two. The tribe, which was formerly numerous and powerful, has now dwindled to but a small remnant: fading away, as do all the other tribes, before the march of the white man.²⁶⁵

On October 6, 1846 three canal boats departed from Peru, Indiana, with a party of Indians and officials heading northeast. The Miami moved through Wabash, Largo, Huntington, Roanoke and Fort Wayne on the Wabash & Erie to Junction, where the boats



Miami people being marched onboard a canal boat, shown in John Fitzgibbon's "Relocation of the Miami Tribe 1846" painting, recalls the departure of Miami families from Peru on October 6, 1846. Two more boatloads of the Miami were collected at Fort Wayne. Courtesy Floyd Leonard.

turned south on the Miami & Erie Canal to Cincinnati. Here they were transferred to a steamer which steered down the Ohio, Mississippi and the Missouri rivers to Kansas Landing.

Arriving in the autumn the Indian people were ill prepared for the harshness of winter and lacked proper shelter. They yearned for their homes back on the Wabash. Many held small bags of soil taken from the graves of their ancestors and many prayed for death. The land in Kansas was considered good land, but by 1867 through treaties all Indians had been removed to Indian Territory or present-day Oklahoma. However, several treaty-signing Miami chiefs received grants in Indiana and with their families did not face the canal trip as some of their less fortunate brethren. Francois or Francis Godfroy and his descendants are an example of those who utilized the Wabash River and the Wabash & Erie Canal in their trading station business and travel. Godfroy, the son of a Frenchman and a Miami woman, was raised near Fort Wayne and later spent time overseeing his land and trading post in Blackford County on the Salamonie River. Upon the death of the Miami leader, Little Turtle, in 1812, Godfroy gained prominence when he was chosen to be the new war chief. He conducted an important trading business east of Peru where he spent many years and where he died before in 1840. ²⁶⁴

PERU LANDING

Chief Francis Godfroy, the Miami war chief, offered \$500.00 to the steamboat master who could reach his landing east of Peru above the mouth of the Mississinewa. One such attempt is recalled by Sanford Cox a self educated pioneer who practiced law in Lafayette. Cox wrote about the early history of the Wabash Valley in an 1859 Lafayette *Daily Courier* newspaper series.

After the heavy rain, which raised the river's water level, a trip up the Wabash to Logansport, Peru and Chief Godfroy's Mount Pleasant trading post was advertised in Lafayette. On the day prior to her landing at Chief Godfroy's wharf, the *Science* was not able to move over the rapids a short distance above the Logansport. Returning to the landing at Logansport and lightened her cargo of salt and flour, over a hundred passengers chose to walk around the rapids. With the reduced load, the steamboat easily passed over the rapids, re-boarded the passengers, and proceeded upstream to the little rival towns of Miamisport and Peru. The *Science* then proceeded up river to Godfroy's trading post. On the steamboat's return downstream a routine stop was made at the Peru wharf. For some reason, a fight erupted on the gangplank between the Logansport party and a group of Peru locals, which drew the attention of a crowd. Not far from the scene an Irish labor gang was at work on canal construction. Seeing a brawl at hand and always ready to join in a fracas, they could not pass up an opportunity to join in the fray. At one moment, the Irishmen with picks and shovels who had rushed the gangplank were engaged in at least ten fights, "and soon vanquished the party that proved the stronger, compelling them to rush into the ship in a hurry." Cox stated that surprisingly, Irish canal workers appeared from as far as a mile away ready for a fight. At the captain's order, the plank was pulled and the crew pushed off into the river. ²⁶⁷

By spring of the next season, the *Tecumseh* was at Godfroy's dock delivering merchandise from Cincinnati under the

command of Capt. David Laughlin of Louisville. Later, the *Tecumseh* changed her name to the *Logansport* and made several trips between Peru and Logansport. It is not certain which of the steamboats won the Chief's prize. However, Chief Godfroy had received large land grants and cash payments up and down the Wabash and Mississinewa rivers were known to be quite generous. On one occasion, he was said to have gifted a steamboat captain a half section of land to deliver him by boat from Lafayette to his home at Mount Pleasant.²⁶⁸

The fact that such steamboat activity took place is the basis for arguing against building the Wabash Dam No. 4 at Pittsburg. Ultimately, a steamboat lock was installed in the dam to pacify the citizens of Peru and Logansport.

On July 4, 1837, the first boat on the canal made its appearance. The Peru *Forester* newspaper's account reported the event:

Before 12 o'clock of that day, the town was filled with people of the country, to witness the grand display to be made on the occasion. Unfortunately, the boats did not arrive. The banks, being porous, absorbed the water much faster than was anticipated.

P.S. – Since the above was written, we were informed that the packet boat Indiana, Capt. Columbia, had arrived at the head of the lock about one mile above town, and that it would be impossible for her to reach the basin in consequence of the canal not having been sufficiently filled with water to buoy her up.

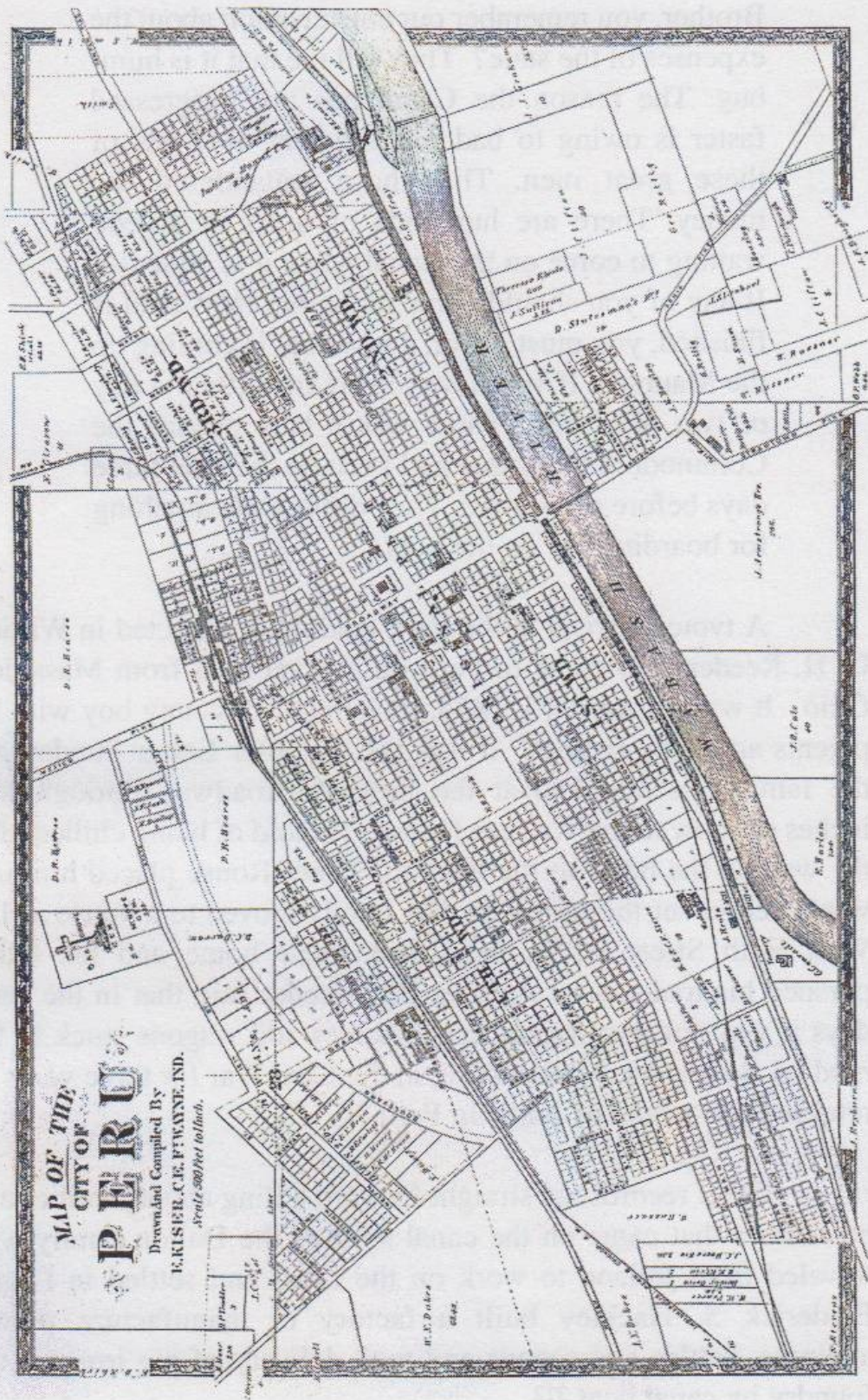
The Indiana was the FIRST CANAL BOAT, freighted with passengers alone, who left the canal boat at the lock above and came down to town during the evening, where they were most cordially received by Mr. Cooper, proprietor of

the National Hotel [northwest corner of Canal and Miami streets, familiarly known as the Stag Hotel in early days, and burned down some years ago], at which place they were joined by a large and respectable party of ladies and gentlemen, and a few turns of the 'light fantastic toe,' accompanied with music, told how much the company were gratified at the long expected event. Capt. Columbia informs us he will make another trip to this place next week.²⁶⁷

It was not too long before the canal was repaired and ready to use. On July 6, 1837 with water restored, the *Prairie* passed through Peru. Travel by water to Peru was 79 miles from the Indiana Ohio state line, 163 miles to Toledo and 278 miles to Evansville on the Ohio River.²⁶⁸

What was it like back in the 1840s to glide along in a canal boat? Mrs. Esther Sanford traveled from Ridgefield, Connecticut, and wrote her brother John Couch back in Ridgefield to tell him of her trip to Peru. Her letter appeared in the *Fort Wayne News Sentinel* on October 22, 1935.

We went aboard the boat at Cleveland Monday at 3 o'clock and got to Peru Friday noon – about 300 miles. There was a break in the canal so that we had to go further by land. After boarding the Commodore Perry at 3 o'clock on Monday, the next day at 8 o'clock we were up the Maumee River, ready to take the Canal (at Toledo). We came on about 18 miles, then we had to go about 32 miles by land. We went about 14 miles, then we put up for the night. Then we went on to the Canal and stayed on the Canal until we got to Peru (passing through Fort Wayne). It is more expensive traveling on the packets than it is on the steamboats.



Peru Indiana map from *Combination Atlas
Map of Miami County Indiana 1977.*

Brother, you remember our conversation about the expenses of the state? They tell me that it is humbug. The reason the Canal has not progressed faster is owing to bad management of a few of these great men. They have squandered the money. There are hundreds of boats at Toledo waiting to come on the Canal when it is done. If any of you should come on before the Canal is finished, you must get on a boat that is coming up the Maumee. If you have to stay in Buffalo a day or two, it is best. There was a lady aboard the Commodore Perry that had been on the boat three days before she started. They did not ask anything for boarding her on the boat.

A typical arrival at the Peru landing is reflected in William C. H. Reeder who came to Peru on a canal boat from Massillon, Ohio. It was on April 17, 1854, traveling as a young boy with his parents and baby brother. It was the day after Easter Sunday and the family disembarked at the foot of Broadway through four inches of snow to the Western House. He told of being chilled after the walk to the hotel so the landlord James Rouse placed him in a warm bed under the stairway. His family moved to a house at 111 West Fifth Street where they made their home and his father pursued his trade as a carpenter. Mr. Reeder said that in the early days it was not uncommon to see horses and wagons stuck in the mud on Broadway. After serving in the Civil War for three years he returned and made his home in Peru.²⁷¹

Other records are straight forward telling about families and businesses that came on the canal such as the Dalton family who traveled from Ireland to work on the canal and settled in Lagro. Frederick S. Hackley built a factory to manufacture plows, andirons, kettles and scoops and took delivery of pig iron for the foundry by canal boat.²⁷²

The National Hotel, having a reputation for good food, was popular with boat travelers. Anyone who found themselves short of funds could earn their keep in a sort of sweat equity arrangement. Out behind the inn was a large pile of timber ready to be split into rails to keep up with the demand for yard and garden fencing.²⁷³

Other reminiscences of old Peru are helpful in forming an image of life during canal days. Today a mile long walking trail beginning at Broadway extends westward following the towpath. Canal Street paralleled the old Wabash & Erie and most of it was filled in during 1901 when the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad replaced the line. Peru's first canal office was opened in 1840 and located on the northeast corner of Second and Miami streets. It later became the Ben Wallace livery stable and held a pay window office where circus hands were paid their wages. Two loading stations were located at Broadway and Canal streets along the south side of the towpath and a large warehouse, owned by Herman E. and Charles F. Sterne, filled the block long space between Broadway and Miami Street. A basin at the foot of Cass Street where the Peru Fire Department Station No. 1 now stands was a widewater that provided a space large enough for an 80 feet long boat to turn around or dock for repairs. Midway between Hohman and Grant streets was the Sterne Woolen Mills and the site where the first woolen blankets in the U.S. were made and shipped to the Civil War Union troops. A barn, used to stable canal towing horses and mules, once stood at the rear of 405 West Third Street but now has been razed. Further west and in the vicinity of the Peru Little League Park, some of the canal channel is visible and the towpath still serves as a dike against flooding river water.²⁷⁴

Chief Engineer Williams has these additional comments in his 1847 report about these currently difficult to locate culverts. One was designated as "Culvert No. 71," which was made of wood submerged below water level and provided for a six feet by eighteen inch passage under the canal. "Culvert No 72," was designed as the previous one except designed with a smaller three feet by twelve inch high opening.²⁷⁵

The canal office opened here in 1840 when John M. Witt, Clerk of the Land Office in Fort Wayne, moved the safe and other office assets to Peru. From here the business of the canal was conducted including an office to issue the canal's own currency.²⁷⁴ A year earlier in 1839, all of the state's internal improvement projects were in financial trouble. Indiana could not attract bond purchasers and contractors were not being paid for their work. As such, the Board of Internal Improvements abandoned all its public work in August. During the next year, the legislature issued \$1,500,000 in treasury notes to pay contractors. However, the state could not meet the interest payment obligation. In 1841, to pay the interest due another bond was issued, and because of their worthlessness were rejected by the bondholders. Next the legislature authorized forming private companies to own, complete and operate the unfinished portions of the public works except the Wabash & Erie which was to be held by the State. The act abolished the Board of Internal Improvements, the Fund Commissioner's office as well as the Chief Engineer. In their places were established a Canal Commissioner, and a State Agent to assume the responsibilities of the Fund Commissioners. In an attempt to prop up the State's deflated currency, land scrip and treasury notes were each made receivable for canal tolls and water rents on the Wabash & Erie.²⁷⁵

Jesse Williams had notes printed to satisfy contractors' debts securing them with canal lands and the suspended debt. The idea worked and the canal project continued.²⁷⁶ At first certificates of indebtedness were issued to the contractors on yellow paper stock and were distributed under the name "Yellow Dog". In 1840, the General Assembly approved carefully printed bills in \$10 and later \$5 denominations good for interest and principal due on canal lands. Because of the paper color, scrip receivable for canal lands east of Lafayette were dubbed "White Dog" and those supported by lands west to the state line became known as "Blue Dog". Once the "dogs" were out, they were accepted for less than face value. In fact at one time White Dog was worth between forty and sixty cents on the dollar. Laborers who were paid in this currency

received less for their efforts; speculators bought it in quantities at low value in hopes that the scrip would move up in value. Still others enjoyed a profitable return purchasing canal lands earning face value for the currency but with the devalued issue.²⁷⁷



Issued from Peru, Indiana, canal scrip used west of Lafayette became known as “White Dog” because of the color of the paper and its deflated value.

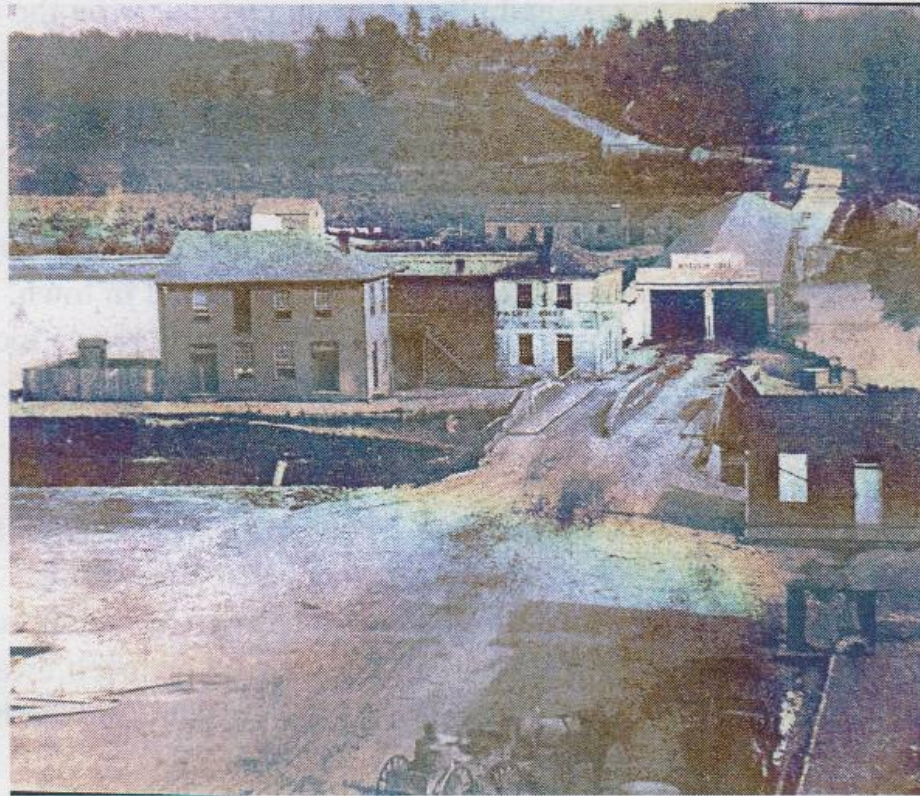


Incidents of skullduggery occurred when two legislators quietly moved an act through the session of 1846-47. Under this act, all lands in which principal or interest were due, and not paid for a specified time, could be declared as forfeited to the State and available for purchase by the public. Once the bill became law, the perpetrators made a hurried trip to the land office in Peru and convinced a clerk in the Land Office to help them carry out their plot. Behind closed doors the men entered all the best farm land of

the Wabash country that were behind in payments and overdue under the new law. John Shields who happened to be in the office suspected trouble. He quickly spread the alarm among those who he suspected were behind on their canal land payments. The excited settlers marched on the office and made it known, that although the swindlers had the law on their side, it may go well for them. At the next session of the legislature, the law was repealed and the land entries declared null. In July 1847, the Land Office was moved from Peru to Logansport.²⁸⁰

Peru enjoys the distinction of having been one of the ports that satisfied a condition of the original federal land grant. On March 2, 1827 every alternate section of land equal to one half of five sections on both sides of the survey line was granted to Indiana for, "a canal from the head of navigation on the Wabash at the Tippecanoe to the foot of the Maumee Rapids." Among the requirements it was stated that the project must begin in five years; it must be completed in twenty years; and it must be toll-free for the federal government's use. Further, George Washington had stressed the strategic importance of connecting Lake Erie with the Ohio in 1785 to Major General Henry Knox, his Secretary of War. When the war with Mexico erupted in 1845, Col. Wilson recruited a company. In 1846, the lads from Peru departed on a flat boat on the canal headed for the front. There are a few other incidents of soldiers off to war on the canal, however, it demonstrates that the vision of the land grant to provide a military route was not in vain.²⁸¹

Nowadays a modern bridge has been built to move traffic north and south on Broadway to cross the Wabash. However, in 1847 it was necessary for Jesse Williams to have a road bridge constructed over the canal, which paralleled the river. His report tells of the condition, "Road bridge No. 27, for the crossing of Broadway, in the town of Peru, requires at once certain repairs, equal to half the cost of a new bridge."²⁸²



Road Bridge No. 27 on Broadway crossed the canal north of the Wabash River covered bridge. Courtesy, Miami County Historical Museum.

A near calamity occurred on July 5, 1850, on the bridge when members of the artillery corps hauled out a cannon for firing several rounds in celebration of the Fourth. After a few shots were fired the piece was loaded with an extra charge of powder and rammed with clay, stone and brick to the muzzle. The big gun was touched off by the governor who was on hand for the celebration, creating a cloud of smoke and a noisy report. A portion of shot crossed the canal nearly striking one gentleman in the head, another in a different direction and the cannon carriage struck the governor in an embarrassing portion of his anatomy.²⁸³

By 1852 the bridge was in poor condition and considered too dangerous for crossing with a wagon team. At the time, bridge structures were expected to last ten to fifteen years. In several places along the line narrow track bridges were built at a cost of \$180.00. However, Peru citizens preferred one with two tracks, side

walks for foot passengers and placed far enough away on the berm bank to permit passage of tow animals under the bridge from wharf to wharf. Final cost was \$450.00, which after deducting the Board of Trustees allowance of \$180.00 left \$270.00 paid for by the community. Finally, the bridge was coated with fire proof paint.²⁸⁴ Community pride characterized Peruvians and especially along Broadway, which was considered the principal street in town. With its 100 feet wide expanse, it was lined with large full-grown locusts, elms and maples, and one nineteenth century history writer called it one of the best graded streets in the country.²⁸⁵

Miami County Historical Museum has a letter in its collection that may relate to the refurbishing of the bridge. It is from a contractor in Logansport named C. Kilborn and is addressed to Alpha Buckley both of whom are known to have been awarded contracts during the era of the canal. It has a difficult to read handwritten date, however, appears to be June 5, 1852.

Dear Sir

Yours of the 4th was received to day you say that you have the Bents framed (sic) that will make the Bridge to (sic) high to fit the Bolsters an (sic) it will not be much work to cut of (sic) the lower end of the posts & make saw mortises for the two large Braces I do not think that it would answer without the bolesteys (sic) being put on the draft I sent you (It was not supposed to be correct but to give the idea the Bridge wants about the same curve over the top that the old one had and you further say that you have never had the information in regard to the Bridge that you ought to have had this information I have repeatedly offered to furnish but you always steadily denied the want of it but I will now say what will be sufficient in regard to the work as I told you when I last saw you the frame (sic) work all wants to be boxed 1 inch the outside (sic) of the two outside stringers want to be counter sided and the

upper side of all of them & they will all want hewing as far as they lag on the Bolsters on the under side all the best of the timber to be counter hued except the Mud Sills & towpath Docking this I think will be sufficient. I forgot to send up the derrick when my Boat went up but I will send it up on a Boat this first of the week if I can get the chace (sic) I cannot go up on Monday but will be up some time in the fore part of the or by the middle of the week. Respectfully (sic) yours, C Kilborn

At the Broadway bridge stood a two story brick building used as the toll house for the bridge over the Wabash River, however, it was not associated with the business of the Wabash & Erie. Fortunately, it has been spared and faithful renovation may help recall the bygone era.²⁸⁴ What was standing near the northeast end of the bridge is the present-day elevator that during the canal era was operated by D. L. Scherer.

Rumors among past historians have it that one of the last boats to ply the level at Peru sank behind the elevator near present-day Broadway and Canal Street. To this day some believe that it lies beneath the tons of stone and gravel used to create the Chesapeake & Ohio railroad line.²⁸⁵

Moving westward through the original places of what was once Miamisport, structures of the canal have disappeared as well. Not so far to the west Chief Engineer Williams mentions a problem with the downstream bridge in his 1847 annual report: "Road bridge No. 28, at Col. Reyburn's must be rebuilt in 1848."²⁸⁵ Biographical sketches about canal era people are oftentimes very interesting. William M. Reyburn was born in Virginia on October 21, 1792. He came to Lewisburg, Ohio, with his family while a youth. Raised on the family farm, as a Buckeye he served in the War of 1812 and studied for the ministry. By 1831, he came to Miami County settling west of Peru and became one of the first Methodist preachers. He was elected to the county's first board of



During canal days D.L. Scherer operated the elevator and the structure stands today at the southeast corner of Canal Street and Broadway. Courtesy, Miami County Historical Museum.

commissioners; was the county agent in 1835; state representative in 1840 and elected a state senator in 1843.²⁸⁶

During the late spring of 1852 discussions about railroads were increasing and the press was opining. Indianapolis was looking for a route north since it already was looking at, “the Madison, the Terre Haute, the LaFayette, the Lawrenceburgh, the Richmond and the Bellefontaine routes” to haul the rich corn and wheat crops to the New York market, “for that is always the best market for these products.” The problem with all these roads seemed to be that they did not travel in the right direction. Lengthy rail lines could never compete for the heavy cargos that a good canal boat line could deliver the papers informed. As for Marion County, the solution was to complete the railroad from Indianapolis to Peru.²⁸⁷ After the line was completed, a small engine was brought from Toledo to Peru on board a canal boat. It was unloaded one half mile west of Broadway and placed on track that had been

prepared for the occasion in the town of Miamisport. Joseph Malbeff built up a head of steam and the engineer in control of the Peru and Indianapolis Rail Company, moved forward. On board were Al Ream who, for a time, was first an engineer then a conductor, and George O'Brien who became a baggage man.²⁸⁸

Among the late copies, George Zorn decided that his family would live in a two and one-half story stone house much like the one he remembered back in Pennsylvania. It was the only such structure between Fort Wayne and Logansport along the canal line, and even featured a luxurious hand-carved staircase that zigzagged from the entrance hall on the first floor extending to the second on up to the attic. So while the family lived in the same covered wagon used to travel from the east to their new frontier place, George Zorn built his stone house. It was a four-room home with two halls, a but flour cellar and a log-cabin third floor attic. Plinths were installed in the kitchen, one in the living room and another in a second floor bedroom. Located on the northeast of the canal, a hand-pumped well was dug on the north side of the house with the help to the property. A water



A HOUSE OF STONE

Boat passengers once enjoyed stopping at a particular dock to visit an unusual house. Not only was the house of interest, visitors could buy whiskey or cigars made from the farm's tobacco crop. Moreover the owners of the farm were considered well off because they traveled by horse and buggy at a time when others were living in simple one-room log cabins.²⁷⁹ George Zern with his wife, the former Mary Streeper or sometimes spelled "Streper", traveled with eleven of their thirteen children from Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Sometime between 1836 and 1838 they arrived at Miamisport, Indiana, where they met their two sons Henry and George already in residence in Miami County. The land chosen was along the canal and today's Old Stone Road. Shirley Donley Harris' account of the family's history makes an interesting observation. On December 1, 1855, George Zern had the financial capacity to buy eight acres of state-owned land along the Tippecanoe River. As such, "By purchasing this parcel of land, the Zerns played a part in helping the state work its way out of the debt incurred in the building of the canal system in Indiana."²⁸⁰

Among the log cabins, George Zern decided that his family would live in a two and one-half story stone house much like the ones he remembered back in Pennsylvania. It was the only such structure between Fort Wayne and Logansport along the canal line, and even featured a luxurious hand-carved staircase that zigzagged from the entrance hall on the first floor extending to the second on up to the attic. So, while the family lived in the same covered wagon used to travel from the east to their new frontier place, George Zern built his stone house. It was a four-room home with two halls, a dirt floor cellar and a low-ceiling third floor attic. Fireplaces were installed in the kitchen, one in the living room and another in a second floor bedroom. Erected on the north side of the canal, a hand pump well was dug on the north side of the house with the barn to the northwest and several corncribs on the property.²⁸¹ A marker stood in front of the Zern home.

THE OLD STONE HOUSE

Only two story dwelling between Fort Wayne and Logansport when built about 1838.

It was the Wabash Erie Canal Lockmaster's home.

Also station on the Underground Railroad 1860

Two of the thirteen children who came in the covered wagon were Streper D. Zern, born May 16, 1819, and Samuel Zern, born on December 14, 1821. Samuel worked as a boatman and it is believed that Streper did as well having no doubt been influenced by the packets and freighters that passed by the door of their homestead. Eldest son Henry Zern built the Peru Flouring Mills about the time his parents arrived in the area. Mary Streeper Zern died in 1845, while George lived until 1854. He rests at her side in the Oak Grove Cemetery in Peru. ²⁹⁵

Mary Streper Zern came from a Quaker background. Although her father had been disowned at age 19 for "engaging in military exercises" of the Revolutionary War, some or portions of Quaker principles may have influenced her value system over her lifetime. If so, it bodes well with the persistent rumors that suggest the Old Stone House's cellar served as an Underground Railroad safe haven for fugitives from slavery in the mid nineteenth century. Several religious groups offered such relief and the Quaker people were at the forefront. ²⁹⁶

By September 7, 1853, a lockkeeper from Peru named James W. Stitsworth lived in the stone house and the place was sold in 1855.²⁹⁷ Ownership of the Old Stone House changed several times after Stitsworth. In 1857, a Miami County *Sentinel* described the property to be 119 & 55/100 acres. It said that about 100 acres are featured improvements including a good orchard, a large stone house and a never failing spring of excellent water. It was again placed for sale in 1861 and records indicate that James Tillett bought the place for \$600.00. His son William passed it to Josephine Tillett Miller and Lee Miller, father-in-law of Josephine Tillett Miller. He removed the third floor attic probably in 1929,

concerned that a strong wind may blow it away. Clifford Starks rented the house in 1927 followed by Harvey Handy in 1932. At some point in time, the exterior stone was covered with stucco, and received a coat of white paint which was later repainted blue.

During this period the Stone House was owned by Dr. and Josephine Miller. He was a veterinarian who served the circus winter quarters at Peru. Some time while the house stood vacant, the hand-carved staircase disappeared. In November 1999 a fire blamed on a malfunctioning furnace destroyed much of the interior of the Old Stone House. The then owners Brian and Gale Mineweaser were approached by a buyer who wanted to raze the house, but instead sold it at less than the first offer price to Our Town Peru, Inc. to be restored. Old Town was joined by the Miami County Historical Society, the Tourism Division of the Peru Area Chamber of Commerce, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana and the Canal Society of Indiana.²⁹⁶ A new roof replaced the old one and the stucco removed to reveal the original appearance of the house.



Old Stone House built by George Zern was the only two-story house between Fort Wayne and Logansport during the Canal Era. Photo in author's collection.

In the early years of the new century, the Old Stone House is the property of a church group.²⁹⁷ A new facility has been constructed at the rear of the building, yet approaching the Old Stone House on the river road the structure stands as a monument to the people who worked to build the state.



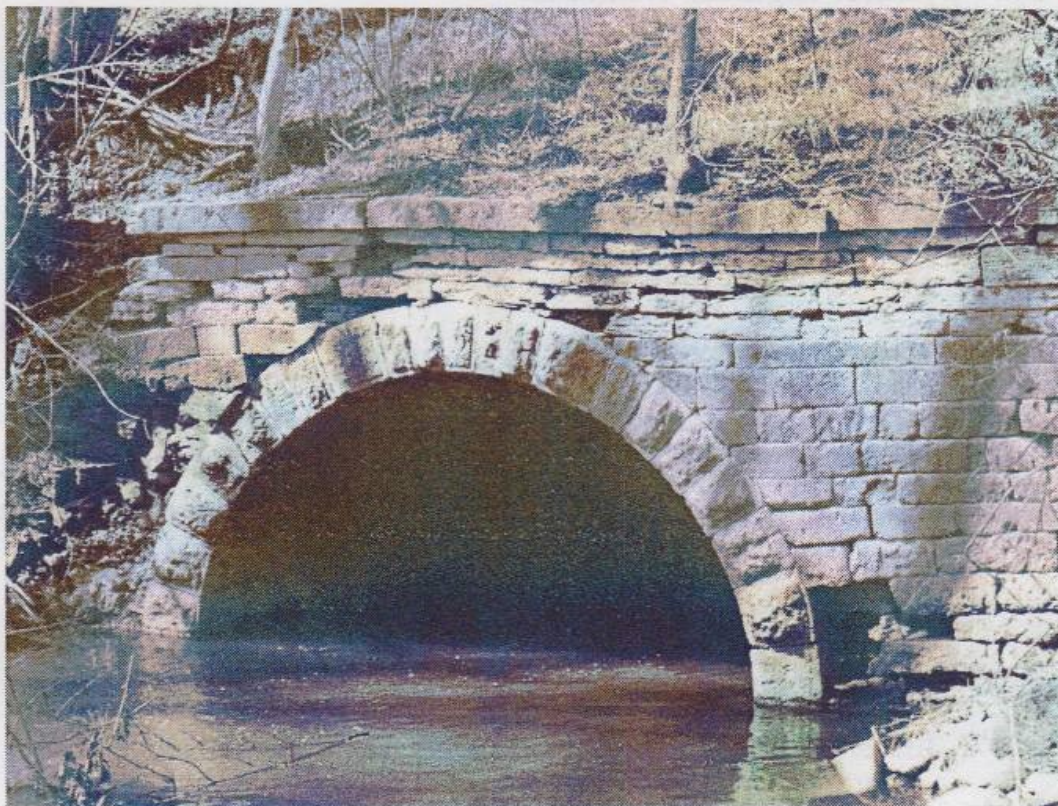
STONE ARCH WOODEN LOCK

At Prairie Creek the stone arch known officially as Culvert No. 73 crosses a stream named La Fontaine's Creek in the days of the canal. It sits on a farm and is used as a bridge to access the points west of the property. An arch was installed to cross streams much as an aqueduct was employed to move canal boats over rivers and large creeks. Not only were they used to span natural creeks, arches also could support a great weight from above. Inherently the natural arc formed by the stones is graceful to the eye, not to mention the curiosity that tugs at the mind considering so many stones being held in their places by a noble keystone. Several of the old structures are standing because they are made of large quarried limestone blocks, and seemed to have found a use serving as bridges for farm equipment and even a county road. Others survived because they were forgotten in some remote location. At the turn of the millennium, Prairie Creek stone arch is one of four that remains on the canal line. In extreme western Huntington County, Silver Creek Arch is standing in full view of Wabash River Heartland Corridor highway traffic. To the west of Prairie Creek, the next extant arch was used to cross boats over Cottonwood Creek is in western Cass County and in Carroll County Burnett's Creek arch is still in use serving as a county road bridge. Unfortunately, an arch in Wabash County once functioning near Stearns Fisher's house has been removed. Prairie Creek arch is showing its age, however, remains a monument to the workmanship of the nineteenth century. Jesse L. Williams was pleased with the structure even before it was finally completed:

This is a cut stone arch, 15 feet chord, recently rebuilt of stone from the Georgetown quarry. The stone arc of excellent quality and the arch is perfect. The head walls are unfinished, though the stone are prepared for this purpose. To finish the work will cost \$50.³⁰⁰

Kreig Adkins noted that during the year 2004, in an effort to clear Prairie Creek of underbrush and debris, a maintenance crew accidentally upended three foundation timbers. Once removed from the bottom of the stream and exposed to the open air, they will surely decay. Of equal concern is the potential for erosion damage to the north face of Arch No. 73 where stone, soil and water meet. It should be mentioned that additional stones on the southwest side of the arch have loosened and increasing numbers of them have dropped into the creek. With so few of these structures left to interpret the old waterway, the loss of this old water over water passage would be very unfortunate.

A corn cracker using native stone for its grinding stone was built on La Fontaine Creek in 1835 by George Townsend indicating that the fall of the stream was sufficient to operate a mill wheel.³⁰¹ Wooden culverts were placed below the canal to pass streams along the way and not a lot of attention was given to their existence.



Arch over Prairie Creek is constructed of stone from the Georgetown Quarry now part of Cass County's France Park. Photo from author's collection.

Culvert No. 74, of wood, 12 feet by 2 feet, not entirely submerged, but may be permanently covered with water by an expense of \$15. This should at once be done.³⁰²

The *Peru Republican* in its report of the June 1858 flood damage, noted that a short distance above Miller's Lock, about five miles below Peru, "a culvert under the canal gave way; an opening was thus made through which all the waters in the canal passed out into the river. It is, however, said to be a difficult one to repair." This same flooding caused several large breaks in the canal banks at Attica, Delphi, Logansport and Wabash and considered so destructive that the canal would not be in operation for the remainder of the summer. In Peru, so much of Canal Street was submerged that boats were being rowed through the center of the street.³⁰³

The next structure is Miller's Lock No. 21, and described in 1847 by chief engineer Williams:

8 feet lift, 4 miles below Peru. This lock is built upon the *wooden frame* plan, was erected in 1837. The caps and upper timbers are decayed, by renewing which the lock will answer one or two years longer. Gates will last 4 years.³⁰⁴

An incident in 1842 on the level upstream from Lock No. 21 caused a two-week delay in opening of the business season. It is typical of the problems that plagued the project. Stearns Fisher, reported that a large breach in the towing path bank about three miles below Peru,

...was occasioned by placing plank on the tumble or regulating weir of the lock, at the lower end of the level upon which it occurred, for the purpose of diverting water from the canal over a waste weir into the pool of a mill dam, in order to furnish a sufficient supply to propel the mill.

There is no evidence to prove the act upon any individual, but that some person was guilty, circumstances leave little room to doubt.

The cost of repairing this breach was about \$600 00. It is truly annoying, that such sums should have to be expended by the State, in consequence of the wanton interference with the canal, for the purpose of subserving private interest. It is doubtful whether the present law provides any punishment for this offence – certainly not an adequate one. To ‘wilfully (sic) and maliciously break, throw down, injure, or destroy any embankment’ &c., is by law, a penitentiary offence, but the same or worse results may be produced by placing a plank on the tumble of a lock, and if there is any punishment, (of which there is doubt) it is only a small fine. Here seems to be an inconsistency that needs a remedy.”³⁰⁵

On April 10, 1860, Alpha Buckley contracted to make repairs to Lock No. 21 and build four lock gates. Canal lessees paid Buckley \$329.58 for his work. On June 26, 1862, he again received a payment of \$210.00 for “4 new Gates Lower Lock Peru.”³⁰⁶

Edgerton’s Journal list payments to contractors on December 18, 1862:

“A. Buckley, pmt. Estimate on Contract Lock No. 21, \$300.00”.

Later in the document on March 2, 1863, this line item appears:

“Dft A. Buckley 2d Estimate on rebuilding Miller’s Lock \$500.00.”

On May 29, 1863, A. Buckley is paid in full for,

“Lock No. 21. Dep. P. Dec 18 ‘62...\$300.00” and
“Dep. P. Mar 2 ‘63...\$500.00.”

Other entries for work on “Millers Lock” appeared earlier in the *Edgerton's Journal* but are not identified as Lock No. 21. These include:

October 5, 1861, Dft to John H. Jamison final estimate on Contract 4 new gates to Miller's Lock \$125.00, and April 18, 1862, J.H. Jamison 4 new Gate Locks 200 Dep. Paid Oct. 2, 1861 Nos 125.00 \$75.00.³⁰⁷

It was at some point in the vicinity of Miller's Lock that the original plan called for the canal to return to a line in proximity paralleling the Wabash. Its re-routing passed the line through Peru thereby helping that community develop as a city, creating a valuable transportation heritage. Its rich history has provided many stories to help interpret where we as a people have traveled.

Historian Helm wrote, “the canal itself was dug through a heavy unbroken forest, not the least of the difficulties being the removal of that immense mass of timber, roots, branches and huge trunks together, the fact that laborers, implements, provisions had to be transported scores and sometimes hundreds of miles through the woods with no thoroughfares, through mud and swamps and bogs, across unbridged rivers and streams barely fordable; when all these things are considered it becomes more and more a matter of wonder how the work was ever accomplished.³⁰⁸ He continues, “the railroad began to carry grain about 1858, but the canal kept up business more or less till 1870, though but little was done upon it after 1864.”³⁰⁹

Jesse Williams reported that when railroads were first being considered, lateral roads running from the interior of the state to the canal would be a boom to canal traffic. However the railroads connected with lines extending to Lake Erie and to the Ohio River and paralleled their competition. He listed commodity after commodity such as corn, wheat, tobacco and pork that found rail a

more efficient method to ship their product.³¹⁰ As for the people it attracted, between 1840 and 1850, Miami County grew in population from 2,736 to 13,109.

Much is made of the business operations of the Wabash & Erie's inability to make a return for its financial investors, how railroad competition eliminated a desire for slower canal travel, unpredictable water level and the like. In opposition to this charge is an equally strong argument that it was the canal that brought people and products to a wilderness western country. The canal built an economy by making a market for products in the old west with good prices for producers. Its very infrastructure made possible the first manufacturing facilities. Excess canal water offered a valued power that was harnessed in the vicinity of locks and dams. In the era before electric motor-powered wheels or digital technology, water powered the plants that supported industry. Investors willingly put money into mills that expanded capabilities from grinding grain to shaping wood or forming iron products for use by an expanding nation. Business grew and expanded attracting others to form communities because of canals and the roads and rails they attracted could serve distant markets.

It has been stated by some local history writers that the last boat through Peru passed during the summer of 1872. However in 1925, Peru shopkeeper Barney Baer, when in his mid 60s, made the claim that he rode on that last Wabash & Erie boat. Called the *Alace Stern*, it was pulled by mules and the freighter carried a group of celebrators on the one and one half miles to Lewisburg. The excursion was a short run to participate in a dedication of a new church and the year was 1875. Miami County Historian Adkins agrees that 1875 is a likely date considering that the dam at Peru did not wash out until 1876.³¹²

Indiana owned the canal prior to 1847 in the days that connected Lake Erie with Terre Haute and it was that year that the state sold the line to the Wabash & Erie Canal Company. However, during 1874 the trustees did not make an effort to maintain the

business. Conditions were so poor that only local traffic could be served, and it was estimated that necessary repairs to mechanical structures would cost \$500,000.³¹³ With the canal now disconnected in sections and investors demanding a resolution, Jonathan K. Gapin of New York, representing the stockholders, filed a suit to place the canal in bankruptcy. It asked the trustees for an accounting of what was owed investors, and having the canal lands sold with the proceeds applied to the debt. A decree was obtained in 1874 and the canal was sold on February 12, 1876.³¹⁴ William Fleming of Fort Wayne purchased the right-of-way from the State Line to the west locks of Lagro on March 29, 1876. He was joined by Oscar A. Simons, John Bass, R.T. McDonald and others. The sale included the St. Joseph River feeder line hoping to become the water supplier to Fort Wayne.³¹⁵ In April of 1876, the portion of the canal extending from Lafayette and Lagro was bought by Elbert H. Shirk of Peru.³¹⁶ When he died in 1886 Milton Shirk followed by E. W. Shirk was appointed to hold the estate in trust for the heirs. Judge Woods of the U.S. district court decided that the Shirk title was good dismissing a number of defendants claiming some interests in it.³¹⁶

A March flood in 1913 devastated much of the Wabash and Ohio river valleys and did great damage to the last vestiges of the Wabash & Erie Canal bed and towpath. A Mrs. Frick of Peru wrote in her diary: "1913, Oct. 18. We went down to Canal Street to watch the men filling in the old canal-bed. They are using the dirt dug from East Main Street which is being paved. O, how thankful we shall be to be free from the dust and mud, and have sidewalks!"³¹⁷ During that same month, workmen were busy rebuilding and converting the old canal towpath in Lagro to handle a new electrically powered rail conveyance.

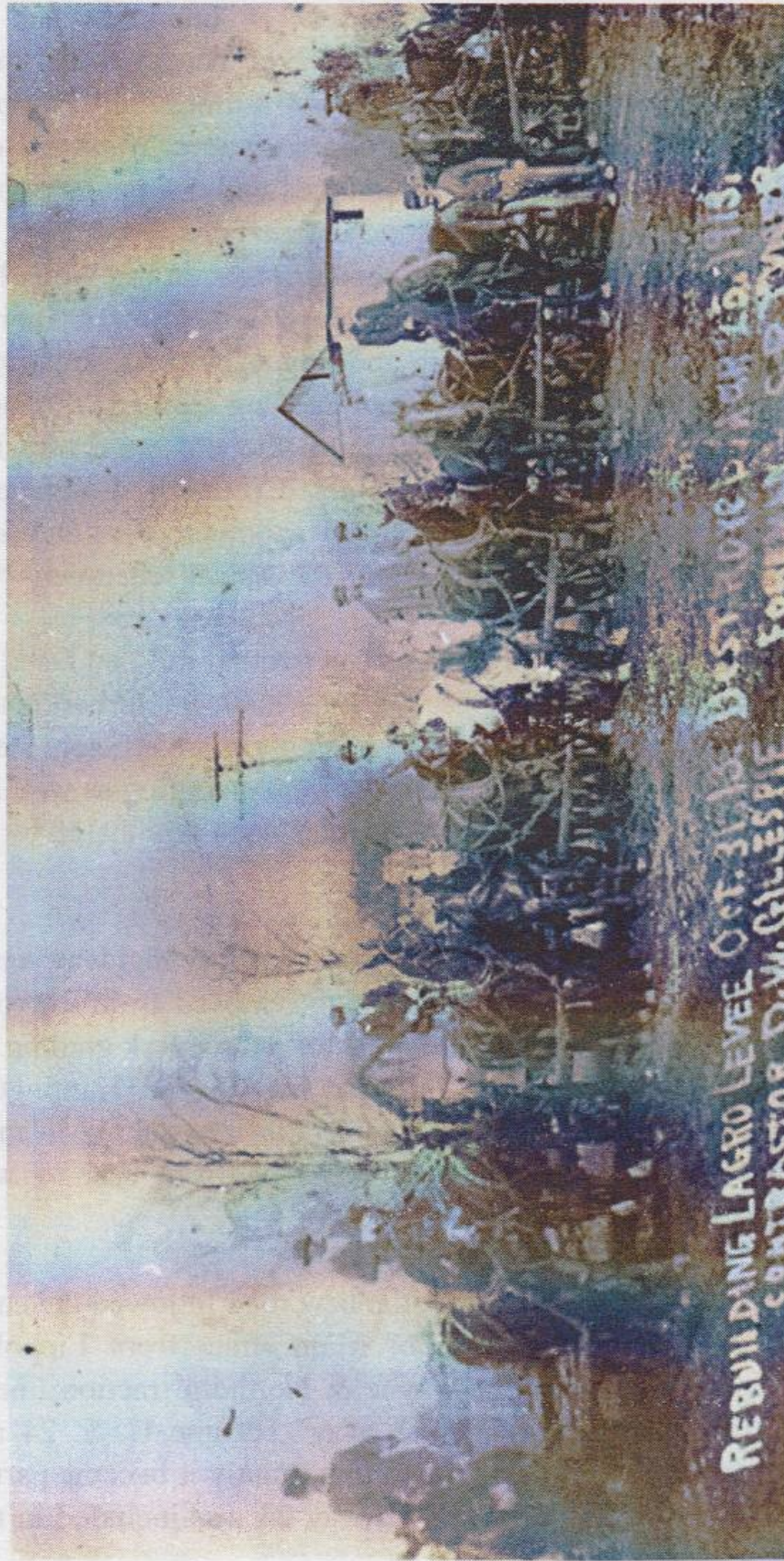
These activities marked the beginning of an electric transportation era. From 1901 until 1941 interurban electrically powered rail lines stretched to many areas of Indiana and surrounding states. One of these routes follows the Wabash & Erie Canal bed from Fort

Wayne to Wabash.³¹⁸ Peru emerged as an important hub for Indiana interurban railways. By 1912 a Fort Wayne & Northern Indiana Traction car departed Fort Wayne 14 times daily stopping at stations in Roanoke, Huntington, Andrews, Lagro, Wabash, Boyd Park and arriving at Peru. Here four times daily, a traveler could visit Kokomo, Tipton, Noblesville and Indianapolis. From Peru, the interurban visited a series of once popular ports on the Wabash & Erie. Leaving Peru twelve times a day, the Northern Indiana Traction Co., called on Lewisburg and Logansport. At Logansport it separated from the old canal route moving through Clymers, Burrows and Rockfield before rejoining the old waterway line passing through Delphi, Colburn, Buck Creek and Lafayette. Return trips from Lafayette to Peru, Indianapolis to Peru and from Peru to Fort Wayne were as frequent as the arrival schedules.³¹⁹

Ultimately, the electric interurban traction railroad faced the same fate as the old canal. Over the long haul, interurban equipment could not compete with the increasingly more efficient steam engine. Automobiles, trucks and buses were emerging as well and soon highways were paved over the routes once dominated by the towpath and the traction rail bed.³²⁰

By 1919 a proposed route for a hard surface highway across the state was underway with rocks being removed from the road, grass cut back from the edges and a tractor put to work grading the surface. Towns along the way included Fort Wayne, Huntington, Wabash, Peru, Logansport, Delphi and Lafayette, taking in more large towns in Indiana than any other line from east to west across the state.

For example, east of Peru, the new road followed the canal towpath, "being a continuation of Main street from Lippold's Crossing, paralleling the Fort Wayne & Northern traction line to Wabash." Eventually this "Wabash Way" became U. S. 24 and Indiana State Highway 25, but more importantly it became part of the 1925 Federal Highway Act. Highway 24 was included in this



Rebuilding Lagro levee dated October 31, 1913. Contractor D.W. Gillespie and foreman S.R. Tyner are shown with their work gang. Photo by E.S. Shelton. Courtesy of *Today's Catholic*, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.



Rebuilding Lagro levee dated October 31, 1913. Contractor D.W. Gillespie and foreman S.R. Tyner are shown with their work gang. Photo by E.S. Shelton. Courtesy of *Today's Catholic*, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

system of main highways connecting with other roads into Ohio and Illinois, establishing a hard surface road from Toledo, Ohio, to St. Louis, Missouri.³²²

Inspiration for this route is as old as the United States itself when General George Washington in 1784 suggested that a way be found to travel by water between the Maumee River and the Wabash River systems. Forty eight years later a historic figure's vision for a new travel route was commenced and became a reality known as the Wabash & Erie Canal.



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Abbreviations

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ACPL – Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana
CCHS – Cass County Historical Society, Logansport, Indiana
CSI – Canal Society of Indiana, Fort Wayne, Indiana
HTL – Huntington Township Library, Huntington, Indiana
IDSL – Indiana Division State Library, Indianapolis, Indiana
IHSL – Indiana Historical Society Library, Indianapolis, Indiana
ISA – Indiana State Archives, Indianapolis, Indiana
LPL – Logansport Public Library, Logansport, Indiana
TCHA – Tippecanoe County Historical Association, Lafayette, Indiana
WCL – Wabash County Library, Wabash, Indiana
WCHM – Wabash County Historical Museum

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Abbreviations

- ACPL - Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana
CCHS - Cass County Historical Society, Logansport, Indiana
CSI - Canal Society of Indiana, Fort Wayne, Indiana
HTL - Huntington Township Library, Huntington, Indiana
IDSL - Indiana Division State Library, Indianapolis, Indiana
IHSL - Indiana Historical Society Library, Indianapolis, Indiana
LPL - Logansport Public Library, Logansport, Indiana.
MCHM - Miami County Historical Museum, Peru, Indiana
ISA - Indiana State Archives, Indianapolis, Indiana
PPL - Peru Indiana Public Library
WCHM - Wabash County Historical Museum, Wabash, Indiana
WCL - Wabash County Public Library, Wabash, Indiana

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Wabash & Erie Canal: Wabash and Miami County Notes

1 A tour of the Wabash & Erie Canal following today's byways reveals the hand of man has concealed much of the old watercourse. Construction on the Wabash & Erie Canal began in Wabash County during the late 1830s. One hundred and seventy years later, the federal highway No. 24 stretching from New York to California built through Indiana in the 1920s was being improved. The highway followed the route of the Wabash & Erie Canal from north central Indiana at Logansport east across northern Ohio to Lake Erie at Toledo. During the waning years of the 1990s, U.S. 24, in order to meet the transportation demands of the day, extensive improvements were initiated.

Old highway 24 could be a dangerous experience at times. Two lanes of traffic limited to 55 mile per hour were reduced to 45 in some sections, which were designed for modern vehicle speeds. It was, however, a beautiful serpentine road first turning to the right then to the left with sweeping turns, up and down along the Wabash River's northern bluff.

Some of the Wabash & Erie Canal has been covered over by one or another of the highway's several improvements. East of the Wabash County line to the city of Huntington a newly expanded portion of the highway in 1999 obliterated the last remnants of the canal. Had the corridor's line been moved a few yards to the north of the old channel and towpath, a floodgate and what was left of a slackwater dam at Clear Creek could have been preserved. Although old U.S. 24 has been bypassed with a new four lane highway, it has fewer turns.

Before the improvement, from the Huntington County line west to the town of Lagro, the highway twisted and turned and rose to a high summit overlooking Lagro and the legal speed reduced. Bypassed by the *Hoosier Heartland Corridor*, old U.S. 24 highway has been renamed the *Blue Star Highway*.

At Lagro a highway informational sign read, "Wabash 6 miles Peru 21 miles." A new U.S. 24, or *Hoosier Heartland Corridor*, already completed at Wabash bypasses that community to the north and extends beyond Peru. Old highway 24 in places west of Wabash had obliterated the canal channel when in the 1950s it had been improved to reduce some of the road's sharp turns. In an effort to provide a safer highway, canal Lock No. 17 was buried deep within an earthen mound built to cross over

the then Wabash Railroad line. From the Miami – Wabash County boundary, the highway crosses broad flat river bottom land. The canal route can be followed by observing the electrical power lines installed on the canal towpath right-of-way.

About four miles west of the county line, the canal towpath separates from Wabash Road (old U.S. 24). Following PawPaw Pike about one mile, a road bridge crosses a creek. In July of 1998 – the road was re-paved with asphalt by September 26th – its road bridge was rebuilt and no sign of the canal was in evidence.

Once in the city of Peru, the canal line followed Canal Street east to west, and again by locating the electrical power lines, the old canal route can be traced. However, evidence of the line ceases as it crosses Wayne Street at the site of Wabash Dam No. 3. One block west beyond Water Street, there is no sign of a canal under a road and parking lot.

Driving west out of Peru on the Lewisburg Road the canal may be traced along its south berm in many places.

Returning to Old U.S. 24 now renamed *Logansport Road* west-bound, it is interesting to note that the highway does not encounter the canal line until it is intersected in downtown Logansport. The Hoosier Heartland Corridor crosses the canal route at the abutments of the bridge on the north side of the Wabash River. Highway improvements of the 1990s had little impact on increasing the loss of canal traces in Wabash and Miami counties as compared to its 1999 rerouting obliterating affect it had in western Huntington County.

Old Highway 24 however, must be accepted as the reason for having attracted development, which erased much of the Wabash & Erie. Along the highway in Wabash and Miami counties are the county roads, town streets, downtown business sections, urban development and farmers' plowing that have hidden the traces of the old canal.

² John Peter Paul, *We Run the Canal Line Being the Diary of John Peter Paul a Member of the Party Engaged in the Preliminary Survey of the Wabash & Erie Canal in the Year 1827*, (Crawfordsville, Indiana: 1933), p.3. (CSI).

³ Elizabeth Glenn, *The Forks of the Wabash An Historical Survey*, eds., Dwight and Ann Ericsson (Huntington, Indiana. Historic Forks of the Wabash, 1990), p. 17. (HTL).

⁴ Thomas B. Helm, *History of Wabash County, Indiana 1884* (Chicago: Morris 1884) p. 67 (WCHM) Note: Helm quotes General Anthony Wayne stating, "by occupying Fort Wayne, the communication

between Lake Erie and the Ohio, through the channels of the Maumee and the Wabash (which is the shortest and most direct water route from Buffalo to the Mississippi River) was cut off or completely commanded.”

⁵ Logan Esarey, *History of Indiana from its Exploration to 1850*, Vol. 1. (Fort Wayne, Indiana: 1924), p. 404. “In 1826 a corps of United States engineers, under the charge of Col. James Shriver, then at work on Whitewater, was sent to survey the portage at Ft. Wayne. All were soon sick and Col. Shriver died. Asa Moore continued the survey to Tippecanoe and then down the Maumee as far as the rapids, where he also died in his tent, Oct. 4, 1828.” Also, H.S. Knapp, *History of the Maumee Valley*, 1872, p. 397 (ACPL).

⁶ *Journal of the House of Representatives, The State of Indiana*, December 18, 1828, p. 184.

⁷ Major A. W. Moore August 6, 1829, letter to the Board of Canal Commissioners, Indianapolis *Gazette*, August 13, 1829. Note: David Burr, Samuel Hanna, Jordan Vigus. *Journal of the Senate, of the State of Indiana*, December 7, 1829, “Report of the Canal Commissioners MEMOIR” dated December 15, 1829: with operations commencing on July 1, 1829, “The line after crossing the river, was continued as far as Bad creek, when owing to the approach of the sickly season, the brigade was disbanded with the exception of one assistant, and the interval employed as far as general ill health would admit in preparing returns to the department. On the 22d of September following, the brigade was reorganized, and proceeded to the head of the rapids, where as the Department is already aware, Asa Moore Esq. the Engineer, intrusted (sic) with the execution of the surveys breathed his last.”

⁸ Paul, *We Run the Canal Line*, p. 4. Historians today are grateful to those responsible for saving the John Peter Paul diary and for the endnotes that help present-day readers locate the party’s activities. However, the June 15, 1827 entry includes endnote 6 that says that Black Loon was encamped near Wabash Town. Endnote 4 earlier in the piece states that on June 9th they, “Encamped on the wabash 1/2 mile below the forks near Black Loon’s at Camp Sharlow. The endnote relates that the party seems to have taken up the survey at the mouth of the Salamonic, here called The Forks of the Wabash. ‘Sharlow’ is evidently Paul’s rendition of the Indian pronunciation of ‘Charley’, as the camp was apparently at Charley’s Town or Takingahmeoong.” It seems that Paul did in fact mean the Forks of the Wabash at its present site because of the persons he named. “La Fontaine was a son-in-law of Chief Richardville and became chief of the Miamis after Richardville’s death. The La Fontaines retained

the farm at the forks until 1846.” These are all known personages of the Forks area. Then in endnote 6 the author writes, “(Black Loon) was probably encamped on the south bank near what is now the city of Wabash at the time of Paul’s writing.” Perhaps Black Loon was on a hunting trip, because Paul’s diary clearly states that the party moved 6 miles down river from the Forks which is too great a distance from Wabash town to be at the mouth of the Salamonie River. Paul seems to be correct because on June 11 he says that they commenced work at Forks of Wabash east of Huntington camping 1/2 mile below Forks. On June 15 moved camp 6 miles to Black Loon’s. This would place their camp near Lagro or the Salomonie. On June 28, the camp was moved 3 additional miles downstream to Treaty Grounds at Wabash.

⁹ Rex M. Potterf, *Indian Treaties as the Basis for Land Titles*, (Fort Wayne, Indiana: Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County, 1931), no page.

¹⁰ John H. Long, editor, *Historical Atlas and Chronology of County Boundaries, 1788-1980*, Vol. 2, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1984), p. 261.

¹¹ George Pence and Nellie C. Armstrong, *Indiana Boundaries Territory, State, and County*, rpt. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1967), pp. 58-63. Also, *History of Miami County Indiana*, (Chicago: Brant & Fuller, 1887), p. 272.

¹² Clarkson W. Weesner, *History of Wabash County Indiana*, Vol. I, (Chicago: Lewis Publishing, 1914), p. 235. (WCL) Also, Thomas E. Castaldi, *Wabash & Erie Canal Notebook I*, (Fort Wayne, Indiana: Parrot Printing, 2002), p. 6.

¹³ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 73, 74 - 321 (WCHM).

¹⁴ F.S. Bash, *Huntington Herald Press, Bash Newspaper Columns*, December 9, 1929 (HTL).

¹⁵ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 321 (WCHM).

¹⁶ Weesner, *History of Wabash County Indiana*, 1914, p. 114 (WCHM).

¹⁷ Weesner, *History of Wabash County Indiana*, 1914p. 411 (WCHM).

¹⁸ Bash, *Huntington Herald Press, Bash Newspaper Columns*, December 9, 1929. (HTL).

¹⁹ “Move Afoot To Restore Old Stockdale Mill”, Marion (Indiana) *Chronicle-Tribune*, May 23, 1999, reported in Canal Society of Indiana *Newsletter* September 1999.

²⁰ Jesse L. Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer Description of the Conditions of Canal at the Commencement of the Trust, to the Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal: Terre, Haute, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847. (IDSL) Note: On the Chesebro Lock level, from the lock was west were culverts 46 and 47, before a waste wier was installed. Next, another culver, this one No. 48 and then Road Bridge No. 19 followed by four culverts before Lock No. 12 lowered the water level heading west.

²¹ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 318 (WCHM).

²² Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²³ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²⁴ U.S. Census 1860 lists Robert English age 52, born in Ireland, living in Lagro, Indiana. (ACPL).

²⁵ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 358 (WCHM).

²⁶ Stearns Fisher. Report of S. Fisher, Esq., Commissioner of the W. and E. Canal E. of Lafayette, *Documentary Journal*, 1842, December 5, 1842, pp. 160-161 (IDSL). "The 'act to authorise (sic) the building of the towing-path bridge across the Wabash at Carrollton, in Carroll county, and for other purposes, approved January 31, 1842,' has not been carried into effect, in consequence of the refusal, on the part of the present contractors, to surrender their contract; which under the act, was the first step to be taken. At the time the contract was made with R. and M. English, it was designed to rest a plain superstructure upon wooden trussels (sic) placed fifty feet apart. Since then, 'Long's patent' has been adopted for the superstructure, and stone piers one hundred feet apart instead of the wooden trussels (sic). This so changes the character of the work, that the present contract prices will not apply to the new plan in a single case. This is the only objection to having the work done by the present contractors. They are as well qualified to do the work as any person, except perhaps, the patentee or his agents. The bridge will cost about 20,000 dollars; and the policy of having this amount of work done, without a contract price, decidedly bad. It is possible that a new contract might be made with the present contractors, that would be satisfactory, but it is presumed that higher prices must be paid, than if a door was opened for competition."

²⁷ U.S. Patent Office *Report from the Commissioner of Patents*, dated June 1, 1841, lists Robert English of Lagro, Indiana, patent for a

"Canal Lock Gate." Categorized: Civil Engineering and Architecture Class 9, "Comprising works on rail and common roads, bridges, canals, wharves, locks, rivers, wiers, dams, and other internal improvements; roofs, etc." (author's collection).

²⁸ Col. Ebenezer F. Lucas was born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, on February 22, 1807. On June 18, 1838, he wedded Charlotte D. Kent, parenting seven sons and two daughters. Early in his career, Lucas spent time as a government surveyor in Jones County, Iowa. After arriving in Warren County, Indiana, he taught school and later was made Deputy Clerk of the Circuit Court. In 1838 Governor Wallace appointed him to complete the term of James Cunningham who died in office. He served one term each as its County Clerk and County Treasurer. His military title, one he carried with him the rest of his days, was earned during his service in the Blackhawk War as Colonel of the Sixty-eighth Militia Regiment. Later he became general western agent for Col. James W. Seviars, of Boston, Mass., a large real estate dealer. Here he was responsible for selling and conveying over two million dollars worth of land in Indiana, Illinois and Iowa. In 1844, he was employed as Chief Engineer on the Wabash and Erie Canal during days of its construction and later was appointed a General Superintendent of the Canal. During his time as its Superintendent he was responsible for recommending such innovators as Robert English. Lucas was important in helping move such ideas as English Patent for moving lock and floodgate doors. E. F. Lucas was described as a thorough, energetic businessman, who acquired both means and position while enjoying the respect and confidence of the community in which he lived. He died in August 1871.

²⁹ E. F. Lucas, Report of the General Superintendent Wabash and Erie Canal to the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, *Documentary Journal*, 1844, December 24, 1844, pp. 75-76. (IDSL).

³⁰ E. F. Lucas, 1844 Report, p. 76.

³¹ E. F. Lucas, Report of the General Superintendent Wabash and Erie Canal to the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, *Documentary Journal*, 1845, December 1, 1845 (IDSL), p. 115.

³² E.F. Lucas, 1845 Report, p. 115.

³³ USGA 7.5' Topographical Map, Lagro Quadrangle Indiana, 40085-G6-TF-024, 1988, revised 1988 and 1994.

³⁴ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

³⁵ Paul, *We Run the Canal Line*, p.4 (CSI).

³⁶ Stearns Fisher, Report of the Superintendent of the Wabash and Erie Canal to the General Assembly, January 11, 1848, *Indiana Documentary Journal*, 1847, p. 336 (ISDL).

³⁷ Elbert Jay Benton, *Wabash Trade Route in the Development of the Old Northwest*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1903), pp. 67-74 (ACPL).

³⁸ Paul Fatout, *Indiana Canals*, (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1972), p.p. 123-125.

³⁹ Fatout, p. 164.

⁴⁰ *A.P. Edgerton Journal*, 1859-1866, Trustees Wabash & Erie Canal for use of contractors of Eastern Division, Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society. Paul Fatout lists the lessees: "In the north, the Wabash and Erie Canal Company, composed of Alfred P. Edgerton, Hugh McCullough, Pliny Hoagland, Ochmig Bird, D.F. Comparet, and others, all of Fort Wayne, took a four-year lease from the state line to Terre Haute. From there to Point Commerce, Chauncey Rose, William P. Griswold, James H. Turner, and others leased for two years. Below that point, the Southern Indiana Canal Company - Ziba H. Cook, Marvin A. Lawrence, Goodlet Morgan, and others - leased to Evansville for four years." *Indiana Canals*, p. 164.

⁴¹ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 369 (WCHM).

⁴² Mary Blair Immel, *Canalling on the Wabash and Erie Canal*, (Lafayette, Indiana: The Tippecanoe Historical Association, 1970). No page. In the pamphlet it states, "A tin horn announced the arrival and departure of the packets in a port town. This was a signal to local residents who hurried to the landing to watch passengers arriving and departing. Often there was mail brought in or sent off via canal boat. The arrival of the packet was also a good occasion to catch up on the latest news."

⁴³ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

⁴⁴ Dennis K. McDaniel, "Water over Water," *Indiana Magazine of History*, Vol. 78 (1982), December, p. 311.

⁴⁵ Treaty of St. Mary's 1818, Article 2, states, "...one reservation extending along the Wabash river, from the mouth of Salamanie river to the mouth of Eel river, and from those points, running due south, a distance equal to a direct line from the mouth of Salamanie river to the mouth of Eel river." Made and concluded at St. Mary's, in the state of Ohio, between Jonathan Jennings, Lewis Cass, and Benjamin Parke, commissioners of the United States and the Miami nation of Indiana

including Richardville, Osas, Charley, Big Body, Notawas, Wanapesha, Tathtenouga, Flat Belly, Metosma, Sun, Koesakunga, Koehenna, Stone Eater, Cabma, Ameghqua, Nawaushea.

⁴⁶ Otho Winger, *A Brief Centennial History of Wabash County 1835-1935*. (North Manchester, Indiana: 1935) pp. 5-6.

⁴⁷ Flossie Enyart Bailey, *Pioneer Days in the Wabash Valley with a Review of the Life of Gene Stratton Porter*, (Logansport, Indiana: 1933) rpt. 1972, Lagro, Indiana, p. 16. Note: Thomas B. Helm, in his *History of Wabash County*, describes Beck's quarry as being two miles west of Wabash town and in 1846 Robert D. Helm burned, ground and sold a quantity for lime but failed until mixed with a proper proportion of well slacked caustic lime for a "perfect cement."

⁴⁸ V. Friederika Van Buskirk, *The Wabash-Erie Canal 1832-1876*, p. 19 (HTL).

⁴⁹ Paul, *We Run the Canal Line*, p. 5. Also, Paul seems to have repeated June 21st as Friday's date following the same date he recorded for the previous day. His text should have read, Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd He uses June 24 for the following Sunday's date.

⁵⁰ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

⁵¹ Note: Some local persons recall that Hayes' name was pronounced, "Culley" and possibly a nickname corruption for "Cornelius" Hayes.

⁵² V. Friederika Van Buskirk, *The Wabash-Erie Canal 1832-1876*, p. 19 (HTL).

⁵³ "Topography and Statistics," *The Indiana Gazetteer or Topographical Dictionary of The State of Indiana*. (Indianapolis, Indiana: E. Chamberlain, 1849), p.283.

⁵⁴ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*. pp. 305 and 343. Also, see Helm's discussion on "Physical Geography" beginning on page 72. (WCHM).

⁵⁵ Winger, *A Brief Centennial History of Wabash County*, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁶ Wabash County Historian Ronald stated that Chief Le Gros' house in Lagro was located near the American Legion building at Washington and Dover streets and specifically in an inset in the current building. Le Gros' burial site is recorded in Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 31 (WCHM).

⁵⁷ Nellie Armstrong Robertson and Dorothy Riker, *The John Tipton Papers*, (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1942, v. 1, p. 23.

⁵⁸ Hosea Paul, *Atlas of Wabash County Indiana*, 1875, p. 8. Also, Stewart Rafert, *The Miami Indians of Indiana*, (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1996) p. 96.

⁵⁹ Tables showing distance between Wabash & Erie Canal ports. Document on display bearing the title, "Joint Toll Sheet for the Ohio and Indiana Canal," dated July 15, 1859. in Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

⁶⁰ Alan McPherson, *Indian Names in Indiana*, (Monticello, Indiana: Blasted Works: 1993) pp. 32-33. Also, Winger, *A Brief Centennial History of Wabash County*, p. 6.

⁶¹ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 303 – 304, 338, 343 & 346 (WCHM).

⁶² H.S. Knapp, *History of the Maumee Valley*, (Toledo, Ohio: Blade Mammoth, 1872) p. 345.

⁶³ Alice Nelson. Keller, *Memoirs Canal Days and Ways*, no date (CCHS).

⁶⁴ Mary C. O'Hair, "The Spring Pilgrimage," May 20, 1962, Wabash County Historical Museum, Wabash, Indiana. Also, Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 45. Also, Jack Miller, *Wabash Historical Newsletter*, Second Quarter 2003.

⁶⁵ *A.P. Edgerton Journal*, 1859-1866.

⁶⁶ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 344-345 (WCHM). Note: the author states that, "only slight and poor crops were raised, not enough for the farmers themselves, to say nothing of the host of laborers on the canal." during the first few years that the canal was being constructed. Also, Daniel Sayre a general mercantile businessman engaged in grain buying, pork buying etc., on a large scale. told Helm of his experiences of the "The men would, with slow, and tedious and tiresome progress, "pole" the vessel, step by step, mile after mile, along against the upward current of the strong and sometimes rapid Wabash until, at length, after days of severest toil, the welcome cabins would appear, and the weeks' long journey would be ended.. Mr. Sayre has taken at least seven of these "pirogue voyages" down the Wabash, consuming the time of from ten or twelve days each, though often more than that when the water was low."

⁶⁷ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 343 (WCHM).

⁶⁸ Hosea Paul, *Atlas of Wabash County Indiana*, 1875, p. 38 (WCHM). Also, Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

⁶⁹ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

⁷⁰ Van Buskirk, *The Wabash-Erie Canal 1832-1876*, p. 18 (HTL).

⁷¹ Indiana State Archives, Internal Improvements Contractors, Catalog Nos. 474 and 672.

⁷² Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

⁷³ Van Buskirk, *The Wabash-Erie Canal 1832-1876 With Emphasis on the Lagro Locks*, Wabash, Indiana 1965 pp. 17-18. (HTL).

⁷⁴ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 98 (WCHM).

⁷⁵ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 149.

⁷⁶ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 343 & 349.

⁷⁷ Jack Miller, *Duneland Notes*, (Duneland Historical Society, Chesterton, Indiana: September 1984, p. 6.

⁷⁸ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 306 & 346 (WCHM).

⁷⁹ Van Buskirk, *The Wabash-Erie Canal 1832-1876*, p. 16 (HTL). Note: Barlow came from Vermont to Lagro in 1835, Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 349. In 2004, the site of the Canal Collection Office in Lagro is at or near 850 Washington Street one-half block east of U.S. 52.

⁸⁰ Helm, *History of Wabash County, 1884*, p. 332 (WCHM).

⁸¹ Helm, *History of Wabash County, 1884*, p. 344 (WCHM).

⁸² Helm, *History of Wabash County, 1884*, pp. 363, 365, 371, 372 (WCHM).

⁸³ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

⁸⁴ Dr. Arch Porter, Wabash County Historical Society Newsletter, V. II, No.4. Winter 1984, reprinted in Canal Society of Indiana newsletter, *Hoosier Packet*, April 2003. p. 7. Note: This is the likely site where Leander Stratton drowned, which later inspired his sister Gene Stratton Porter's popular book *Laddie* (1913).

⁸⁵ Dr. Arch Porter, Wabash County Historical Society Newsletter, Volume II, No. 4, Winter 1984, reprinted in Canal Society of Indiana newsletter, *Hoosier Packet*, April 2003.

⁸⁶ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 301 – 346 (WCHM).

⁸⁷ V. Friederika Van Buskirk, *The Wabash-Erie Canal 1832-1876*, p. 15 (HTL).

⁸⁸ Helms, *Wabash County History 1884*, p.154 (WCHM).

⁸⁹ Terry K. Woods, *The Ohio & Erie Canal* (Kent, Ohio: 1995) p. 16 (CSI).

⁹⁰ Thomas Swiftwater Hahn and Emory L. Kemp, *Canal Terminology of the United States* (Morgantown WV: West Virginia University: 1999) p. 51.

⁹¹ Jack Miller, *The Paper*, February 10, 2004. Wabash, Indiana. Also, Helms, *History of Wabash County 1884*, .344.

⁹² Helm, *Wabash County History 1884*, p.344 (WCHM).

⁹³ *Wabash Plain Dealer*, April 14, 1905 interview with Captain Watkins of Lagro, reprinted in Canal Society of Indiana *1996 Spring Tour From the Forks to Paradise*, April 12-14, 1996, p. 62. Also, Jack Miller, *The Paper*, February 10, 2004. Also, Helms, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 344.

⁹⁴ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 322, 353-355 and 359 (WCHM).

⁹⁵ *Newspaper Columns* by F. S. Bash, "Charles Foster, 93, Tells of His Early Life in this Country and of Changes," *Huntington (Indiana) Herald*, January 6, 1923, reported in Canal Society of Indiana *Newsletter*, ed. Carolyn Schmidt, Vol. 11, No. 9, September 1997 (CSI).

⁹⁶ Pamphlet entitled *St. Patrick's Church Lagro, Indiana*, printed by Friends of Saint Patrick Committee, no date. Note: Oratory comes from the Latin word *oratorie*, a term used by the Roman Catholic Church to signify a small chapel often used for private prayer.

⁹⁷ Robert O'Rourke, "The Wake," *Canal Society of Indiana Newsletter*, April 1998. p. 5. Also, Helm, *The History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 334 (WCHM).

⁹⁸ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 344-345 (WCHM).

⁹⁹ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p 68.

¹⁰⁰ David Burr, Report to his Excellency Noah Noble, Governor of Indiana, Indianapolis, Indiana, *House Journal*, December 30, 1835. Also, Logan Esarey, *Internal Improvements in Early Indiana*, (Indianapolis: E. J. Hecker, 1912) pp. 94-95.

¹⁰¹ Winger, *A Brief Centennial History of Wabash County*, p. 16.

¹⁰² "Canal Riot," *Newspaper Clippings, Huntington County, 1904*, Vol. 1, Huntington Township Library, Indiana Room, Huntington, Indiana, no date. Also, Steve Jones, Marion, *Indiana Chronicle-Tribune*, "Memories of the Wabash & Erie Canal", July 19, 1987.

¹⁰³ Weesner, *History of Wabash County Indiana*, 1914, p. 236. Also Fort Wayne *Journal Gazette*, "Pioneers of 1830 Brought Happiness", January 16, 1927. Howard Houghton, Huntington, Indiana, *The Village*, November 16, 1969. Also, Helms, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 347.

¹⁰⁴ Ross F. Lockridge, *The Story of Indiana*, (Oklahoma City: Harlow Publishing, 1959), p. 280.

Note: What brought these two nations to a confrontation at Boyne. A brief review of those events of world history illustrates how religious denominations were set one against the other to facilitate politics. The roots extend back into the mid-fourteenth century. Henry VIII, of Reformation fame, had been elevated to the English throne in 1509 and his wife, Catherine of Aragon, Spain, gave birth to a daughter who would one day become Mary Stuart Queen of Scots. By 1527, Henry became dissatisfied with the Pope in Rome for not permitting him to annul his marriage with Catherine. In a dramatic move, Henry decided that he would make himself the head of a Church of England, thereby positioning himself outside an allegiance to Rome. Later, in 1547, the Parliament of Dublin named Henry VIII the King of Ireland as well as spiritual head of the Irish church. Consternation developed from this decision because the Irish population was determined to remain loyal to the See in Rome. In retaliation, Henry confiscated lands belonging to the Catholic Church, closed monasteries and distributed the lands to his supporters [*Lincoln Library*, (1951) p. 449.] Wife Catherine was removed and Henry married Anne Boleyn whose union produced Elizabeth I. Mary came to the throne of England in 1553, and was intent on establishing England as a Catholic nation once again. When Elizabeth succeeded her half-sister Mary, religious problems arose since Elizabeth had decided upon Protestantism as the official state religion. Mary found asylum in Scotland, however, Elizabeth worried that her half sister could become a symbol for her adversaries. She succeeded in charging Mary with crimes against the state and had Mary executed in 1587. [Corolly Erickson, *The First Elizabeth* (New York: Summit, 1983) pp. 354-363, Also, TLC, "Haunted History," October 29, 2000.]

Elizabeth failed to produce children so the next in line to the throne was Mary's son James. Raised Protestant, he was proclaimed James I of England in 1603. After James rule, Charles I followed in 1625, married a Catholic woman, assumed arbitrary rule and used non parliamentary like methods to finance his government. Because of these "royal

prerogative" notions, Charles I's government was overthrown and he was beheaded in 1649.

Next, Oliver Cromwell was appointed Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Ireland and Scotland in 1653. Cromwell was a supporter of rigid Puritan values and after his death in 1658 his son Richard took over the position. However, the nation began to tire of the new arrangement and elevated Charles II as the rightful king to the throne in 1661. To keep peace in the government, Charles II was determined to support the existing leadership and secure the succession of the Stuart line as the ruling monarchy. He married Catherine of Braganza, a Catholic, whose religion he also supported. However, Catherine and Charles II were unable to produce children. This placed Charles brother James next in line for the throne, and to compound the matter James had converted to the Roman Church. He became James II, who after his first wife Anne Hyde had died then remarried the Italian Catholic, Mary of Modena, in 1673. [Anne W. Carroll, *Christ the King*, (1994) p. 302] When Charles II could not persuade his brother James II to publicly embrace Protestantism, Charles II took custody of Mary and Anne the two daughters of James II and Anne Hyde. He raised the girls and later married them both to Protestant noblemen. In this way, Charles II thought Protestant citizens would accept James II knowing that he would be succeeded by a Protestant daughter. In 1688, William III, also known to history as William of Orange, the husband of James II's daughter Mary was invited to England. James II fled to France and the crown was placed upon William and Mary as rulers.

The Tolerance Act was passed in 1689 that allowed freedom of religion. However, all non-Anglicans were required to support the Anglican Church. Further, Catholics could not inherit land or own a horse and were forbidden to possess a weapon. James II would not give up the fight and traveled to Ireland in 1689 and rallied the Irish Parliament to declare its independence from England. In 1690 the Irish Army clashed with William III's troops at the Boyne River. The English crossed the river, but a contingent of Irish men battled with them while the main army made a retreat into Dublin. Although the Irish had not been beaten, James II was defeated. James returned to France and the legacy of the Battle of the Boyne found its place in history.

The Irish again took up the fight with William III's army at the city of Limerick when, finally in October 1691, the Irish were overpowered. A Treaty of Limerick was signed giving Irish Catholics the

right to religious freedom. Shortly, Parliament passed the Penal Laws forbidding Irish Catholics to hold public office, enter into a business enterprise, buy or inherit land, to earn profit from land. The Irish held to their culture along with their religion and brought all their concerns to America including their feud.

¹⁰⁵ David Daiches, *The Last Stuart*, (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1973), p. 10.

¹⁰⁶ Burr, Report to his Excellency Noah Noble, *House Journal*, December 30, 1835. Also, Dorothy Riker and Gayle Thornbrough, *Governor Noah Noble Messages and Papers 1831-1837*, (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1958), pp. 419-423.

¹⁰⁷ Charles Poinsette, *Fort Wayne during the Canal Era*, (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1969), p. 62.

¹⁰⁸ "Canal Riot", Newspaper Clippings, *Huntington County, 1904*, no date (HTL).

¹⁰⁹ Ronald Woodward, Wabash County Historian, described the location in 2004. Also, Burr, Report to his Excellency Noah Noble, *House Journal*, December 30, 1835.

¹¹⁰ "Canal Riot", Newspaper Clippings, *Huntington County, 1904*, no date (HTL).

¹¹¹ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*. p. 347 (WCHM).

¹¹² Howard Houghton, *Huntington Herald Press*, November 16, 1969, (HTL).

¹¹³ Burr, Report to his Excellency Noah Noble, December 30, 1835, *House Journal*, 1835.

¹¹⁴ Burr, Report to his Excellency Noah Noble, December 30, 1835, *House Journal*, 1835.

¹¹⁵ *New-York Spectator*, September 3, 1835. Wabash & Erie Canal Interpretative Center Archives, Delphi, Indiana.

¹¹⁶ Sanford C. Cox, *Recollections of the Early Settlement of the Wabash Valley* (Lafayette, Indiana: Courier Steam Book & Job, 1860), p. 146.

¹¹⁷ Dorothy Riker and Gayle Thornbrough, *Messages and Papers Noah Noble 1831-1837*, 1958, pp. 560-561.

¹¹⁸ Recollections of Bonnie Andrews, Fort Wayne, Ind., great-great grand daughter of Edward Kinnerk. Also spelled Kennerk, Kinneark or Kenneark. Also, Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 322, 330 and 368 (WCHM). Also, Poinsette, *Fort Wayne during the Canal Era*, pp 64-65.

¹¹⁹ J. Wesley Whicker, *Historical Sketches of the Wabash Valley*, (Attica, Indiana: reprinted from the *Attica Ledger* and by the author, 1916), p. 77. Also, Recollections of Bonnie Andrews.

¹²⁰ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 334 and 356 (WCHM).

¹²¹ Helm, *History of Wabash County, 1884*. pp. 149, 303, 307, 332, 337 & 340. Also, Hosea Paul, *Atlas of Wabash County Indiana*, 1875, p. 55 (WCHM).

¹²² Jesse L. Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer to the Board of Trustees Wabash and Erie Canal: Terre, Haute, December 6, 1849, *Documentary Journal*, 1849 (IDSL).

¹²³ Note: "Culvert No. 56, of timber, 2 spans, 12 feet by 2-1/2 feet – submerged. Culvert No. 57, of timber, 10 feet by 2 feet – submerged." Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847. (IDSL).

¹²⁴ Peru *Observer*, September 7, 14, 28, 1844.

¹²⁵ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL). Baskin, Forster 1876, *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Indiana* (Chicago: 1876), Indiana Historical Society.

¹²⁶ McPherson, *Indian Names in Indiana*, p. 9.

¹²⁷ The Indiana Legislature took notice of Governor Ray's violation of its Constitution by the acceptance of a federal commission to negotiate a treaty. The Indiana House was presented with a resolution that Ray had forfeited his right to continue as governor. The motion was defeated 28 "yeas" to 30 "nays". See, *Indiana 1930*, (Board of Public Printing: Indianapolis, 1930), p. 17. Also, *The Indiana Gazetteer*, Third Edition (Chamberlain: Indianapolis 1849), p. 126.

¹²⁸ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 93.

¹²⁹ Fort Wayne *Gazette* June 15, 1878.

¹³⁰ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 89-90.

¹³¹ Dorothy Riker and Gayle Thornbrough, *Messages and Papers relating to the Administration of James Brown Ray Governor of Indiana 1825-1831*, (Indianapolis, Indiana: IHB 1954), pp. 11-12 (IHB).

¹³² Paul, *We Run the Canal Line*, p. 6 (CSI).

¹³³ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 93-94 and 96.

¹³⁴ Jack Miller, Curator of Wabash History Museum, City of Wabash presentation, 1998.

¹³⁵ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 94. Helm speculates that the first mail route to include Treaty Ground was established in 1829

between Logansport, Indiana, and Fort Wayne, Indiana, after which Job B. Eldridge won the contract to carry the mail. A second contract in 1830 was made to Jonathan Keller for carrying mail between Marion in Grant County, Indiana, to Treaty Ground.

¹³⁶ Weesner, *History of Wabash County, Indiana*, 1914, p. 235.

¹³⁷ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 96 (WCHM).

¹³⁸ Leola Hockett, *Indiana Magazine of History*, "The Wabash and Erie Canal in Wabash County," 1928, v. 24 (40) pp. 296-297.

¹³⁹ The Internal Improvements Board made the following assignments of its members: "The President was appointed the Acting Commissioner on the Jeffersonville and Crawfordsville road; Mr. Woodburn on the Madison and Lafayette Rail-road; Mr. Clendenin on the New Albany and Vincennes McAdamized road; Mr. Long on the White water canal; Mr. Hall on the southern division of the Central canal; Mr. Blake on the Cross-cut canal; Mr. Johnson on the Wabash and Erie canal from Georgetown to Lafayette; Mr. Lewis on the Wabash and Erie canal from Huntington to the state line, and on the Erie and Michigan canal; and Mr. Burr on the middle division of the Central canal at Indianapolis, and also on the Wabash and Erie canal between Huntington and Georgetown. It is here proper to remark, that ... Mr. Hall has withdrawn from the Board, and Mr. Clark been appointed in his place..." Report of the Internal Improvements Board to the Senate and House of Representatives of the General Assembly of Indiana, *Documentary Journal*, 1836, December 17, 1836 p. 5 (IDSL).

¹⁴⁰ Hockett, pp. 296-297

¹⁴¹ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 96. Also, Weesner, *History of Wabash County*, 1914, p. 235.

¹⁴² Jack Miller, Wabash Museum, City of Wabash presentation, 1998.

¹⁴³ In 2003, local historian Jack Miller visited the spring at Paradise Treaty Ground and stated that in 1932 he saw water running through a wooden box at the base of the west edge of the monument that originally marked the site. The marker in 2004 is fifty feet southeast of the original site. From the new marker, the original site can be located at 330° NNW.

¹⁴⁴ Hosea Paul, *Atlas of Wabash County Indiana*, 1875, p. 45 (WCHM).

¹⁴⁵ Wabash Census records and Duplicate Tax records, held in the Wabash County Historical Museum.

¹⁴⁶ *The Indiana Gazetteer*, 1849, p.421.

¹⁴⁷ Hugh T. Hanna, *Partition of the Estate of Samuel Hanna Dec'd*, Fort Wayne, Ind., no date, appears on the 51st page of unnumbered first section, held in the Allen County Fort Wayne Historical Society library. It reads: "Your petitioner further showeth unto your honor that the said Samuel Hanna at the time of his death was the owner in fee simple of the undivided half of the following described Lots in the county of Wabash State of Indiana of Lots numbered Five (5). Ten (10). Twelve (12) and Fourteen (14) in the Southern addition of the Town of Wabash also the undivided one half (1/2) of Outlots One (1). Three (3). Five (5). Seven (7). Nine (9) and Eleven (11) in The Southern addition to the Town of Wabash of which Hugh Hanna the brother of said Samuel Hanna was and is the tenant in Common owner of the other undivided half of the same.

¹⁴⁸ Frank S. Bash, *History of Huntington County*, (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1914), p. 77.

¹⁴⁹ Tables showing distances between Wabash & Erie Canal ports. Document on display bearing the title "Joint Toll Sheet for the Ohio & Indiana Canals," dated July 15, 1859 (ACFWHS).

¹⁵⁰ Linda Robertson, ed. *Wabash County History Bicentennial Edition 1976*, (Marceline, Missouri: Wabash County Historical Society and North Manchester Historical Society: 1976), p. 13.

¹⁵¹ DeWitt C. Goodrich and Charles R. Tuttle, *An Illustrated History of the State of Indiana*, (Indianapolis: Richard Peale, 1875), p. 430. Also, E.V. Shockley, "County Seats and County Seat Wars in Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History*, Vol. (1914), March, p. 31. Also, Pence and Armstrong, *Indiana Boundaries*, p. 795.

¹⁵² Hockett, p. 298.

¹⁵³ Hockett, p. 295.

¹⁵⁴ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 95 & 306 (WCHM).

¹⁵⁵ Hosea Paul, *Atlas of Wabash County Indiana*, 1875, p. 9 (WCHM).

¹⁵⁶ Hockett, p 299. Note: "...a general celebration was held at Treaty Grounds, ended off in a grand ball in the little room over Col. Hanna's store, in the evening." *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 95

¹⁵⁷ Jack Miller, Wabash Museum, City of Wabash presentation, 1998.

¹⁵⁸ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 95 (WCHM).

¹⁵⁹ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847. Sanborn Map & Publishing Co, Wabash Indiana, Oct. 1887, (New York: Baskin 1887).

¹⁶⁰ Robert C. Kriebel, *Old Lafayette 1831-1853*, (Lafayette, Ind: Tippecanoe County Historical Association, 1988), p. 127, Also, a pamphlet written by Mary C. O'Hair, *Court Houses of Wabash County, Indiana 1835 – 1960, dated 1960.*, Also, Winger, *A Brief Centennial History of Wabash County*, 1935, p. 14.

¹⁶¹ George P. Clark, ed., *Into the Old Northwest Journeys with Charles H. Titus, 1841-1846*, East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1994, p. 63.

¹⁶² Miami County *Sentinel*, June 20 and June 21, 1840, from Ross H. Lockridge, Book III: *Hoosier Historic Roadside Sites*, manuscript form, Bloomington, Ind. August 15, 1938, p. 7.

¹⁶³ Ronald L. Woodward, *Wabash County Historian*, June 2, 2004. Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 96. Also, Weesner, *History of Wabash County*, 1914, p. 235.

¹⁶⁴ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

¹⁶⁵ Ron Woodward and Gladys Harvey, an untitled manuscript, based on an 1879 Wabash newspaper article.

¹⁶⁶ Distance estimates based on a map created by Sanborn Map & Publishing Co, Oct. 1887.

¹⁶⁷ Mildred E. Hipskind, *Mark C. Honeywell: Citizen, Builder, Philanthropist*, (Wabash, Indiana: Honeywell Foundation, 1970) p. 1.

¹⁶⁸ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp.239 and 247. Robertson, *Wabash County History Bicentennial Edition 1976*, p. 301.

¹⁶⁹ Jack M. Miller, *Duneland Notes*, "Wabash Indiana – Putting it all Together", (Duneland Historical Society, Chesterton, Indiana: June 1984) p. 4.

¹⁷⁰ Sanborn Map & Publishing Co, Wabash, Indiana, 1887.

¹⁷¹ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, December 6, 1849, *Documentary Journal*, 1849 (IDSL).

¹⁷² *A.P. Edgerton Journal*, 1859-1866.

¹⁷³ Fort Wayne (Indiana) *Daily Sentinel*, June 20, 1872.

¹⁷⁴ Miami County Historical Museum file No. 625 PUP, p. 348.

¹⁷⁵ McPherson, *Indian Names in Indiana*, p. 9. Also, Winger, *A Brief Centennial History of Wabash County*, 1935, p. 6.

¹⁷⁶ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

¹⁷⁷ Note: The meeting with Ed Watson of Wabash took place on April 15, 2000.

¹⁷⁸ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 96. Local residents say that there are several locations through the area that feature stone outcroppings, however, "Stone Bluff" may refer to one located near the mouth of Helm Creek. Also, Hockett, pp. 296-297.

¹⁷⁹ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

¹⁸⁰ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

¹⁸¹ Ronald Thrush, *Richvalley Historical Chronology 1795-1995*, "The Richvalley Story," (Wabash, Indiana, Richvalley United Methodist Church: 1995), p. 13. Also, Ronald L. Woodward, Wabash County Historian interview.

¹⁸² Obituary of Stearns Fisher, "Obituary," *Wabash Plain Dealer*, August 3, 1877 (WCL). Also, Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 248-249. (WCHM).

¹⁸³ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

¹⁸⁴ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

¹⁸⁵ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, pp. 94 and 363 (WCHM).

¹⁸⁶ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

¹⁸⁷ O'Hair, "The Spring Pilgrimage," Wabash County Historical Museum, May 20, 1962, Wabash, Indiana.

¹⁸⁸ C.A. Anderson, "Old Canal Lock, Oral history of personal knowledge and observation made by F. E. Tobias, Richvalley, June 1936.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas Arthington, *History of Logansport and Cass County*, (Logansport, Ind: 1987), p. 139. (LPL).

¹⁹⁰ Thrush, *Richvalley Historical Chronology 1795-1995*, p. 13.

¹⁹¹ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, December 6, 1849, *Documentary Journal*, 1849 (IDSL).

¹⁹² Ronald Thrush, *Richvalley Historical Chronology 1795-1995*, p. 12. Also, Jack Miller presentation to the Wabash County Historical Society, May 20, 1962. Also, Ron Woodward, *A Brief History of Wabash County*, (Wabash, Indiana: Wabash County Historical Museum, 1986).

Also reported in the Duncland Historical Society newsletter, September 1984.

¹⁹³ For a book length account of this legend, see Elisabeth Hamilton Friermood, *The Wabash Knows the Secret*, (Garden City NY: Doubleday: 1951).

¹⁹⁴ Ronald Thrush, *Richvalley Historical Chronology 1795-1995*, pp. 14 – 15. (WCL) Also, Wabash County Historian Ronald Woodward interview.

¹⁹⁵ *Newspaper Columns* by F. S. Bash, *Huntington Herald*, Vol. 1, p. 214. Huntington Township Library, Huntington, Indiana. Also, "... doctors robbed Hubbard's body from the grave." Ronald Woodward, Wabash County Historian, August 16, 2004 correspondence.

¹⁹⁶ Ron Woodward, an untitled manuscript, 2004.

¹⁹⁷ Benj. Stuart, *History of the Wabash and Valley*, Logansport, Indiana: Longwell-Cummings, 1924), p. 16.

¹⁹⁸ "Transportation Park Eight Miles East of Peru Possesses Significance," *Peru Republican*, Peru, Indiana, July 14, 1953 (MCHM).

¹⁹⁹ Josephine Hostetler King, *Down Memories Lane, A History of Erie Township, Miami County, Indiana*, "History of Erie Township", by author, no page, 1872 (MCHM).

²⁰⁰ John Peter Paul, *We Run the Canal Line*, (Crawfordsville, Indiana: 1933), pp. 7-8 (CSI).

²⁰¹ Tipton Papers, v. 1, pp. 561-2. Note: Tipton to Editor of Indiana Journal *ca.* July 15, 1826, wrote about the advantages for Marion and Hamilton counties if a canal route from, "...at or near the mouth of the Mississinaway (sic) river on the Wabash to the seat of government of the state, than to waste the public money and the labour of Mr. Shriver and his brigade, now about to commence their labors, on such useless surveys as the Kankikee (sic) and Yellow river, from the St. Joseph of the Lake to the Maumee at Fort Wayne, and from the head of White river to St. Mary's?"

²⁰² Tipton Papers, v.1, p. 562

²⁰³ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL). Note: Williams' report does not state the names of the creeks that each of these culverts served. By consulting extant maps, topographical maps and field observations, the names of these streams are offered as the most likely possibility by the author. In 1916, a Frank Daniels, purchased from Joseph H. Shirk, "the canal bed, towpath, side cuts, berm bank and feeder dams" in Township 27, North of range 5 East, which lies adjacent to or runs through the lands

now owned by Daniels herein and situated in Section 19 and 20 Godfroy's Reserve No. 15, J. Richardville's Reserve, and J. Richardville Reserve 14 all in Township 27 N of Range 5 E.

²⁰⁴ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²⁰⁵ Miami County *Sentinel*, Peru, Indiana, June 26, 1851.

²⁰⁶ *A.P. Edgerton Journal*, April 1859-1866, Trustees Wabash & Erie Canal for use of contractors of Eastern Division.

²⁰⁷ Carolyn Schmidt, "Adkins Pinpoints Wabash & Erie Canal Culvert," Canal Society of Indiana *Newsletter*, Vol. 14, No. 1, January 2000, pp. 1-2. Note: Adkins reported that he first discovered the timbers in November 1999 (CSI).

²⁰⁸ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847. Lock No. 18 and Culvert No. 69 per Canal Society of Indiana Spring Tour May 23, 1982. Culvert No. 70 In July 1998, PawPaw Pike which parallels the canal line was re-paved and the road bridge was rebuilt, however, there was no evidence of the canal structure. Note: "Shrock Creek" and "Schrom Creek" are separate eastern Miami County streams.

²⁰⁹ John A. Graham, *Historical Atlas of Miami County Indiana*, (Kingman Brothers: 1877), pp. 31, 48 and 90 (PPL).

²¹⁰ Miami County *Sentinel*, December 13, 1849 and January 10 1950.

²¹¹ Ralph D. Gray, *Transportation and the Early Nation*, "The Canal Era in Indiana," (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1982), p. 120.

²¹² "Central Canal," Miami County *Sentinel*, Peru, Indiana, November 20, 1851.

²¹³ Hal C. Phelps, 1940.150.8.102, Miami County Museum Manuscript, May 4, 1925. Note: "Lepold's Crossing" is also spelled "Lippold's Crossing" see The Peru *Republican*, April 18, 1919 (MCHM).

²¹⁴ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²¹⁵ Jesse L. Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer to the Board of Trustees Wabash and Erie Canal, Terre, Haute, December 6, 1849, *Documentary Journal*, 1849 (IDSL).

²¹⁶ Karl Hartisch, "Historical Society: Canal through Peru," no date, Miami County Historical Museum, "Canal" file.

²¹⁷ Quit Claim Deed dated January 29, 1915 Joseph H. Shirk and Helen R. Shirk convey and quit claim to C.W. Spangler and Anna Lippold. Annotation reading, "1/4 acre of 'Buttermilk Lock' pd by note 1/30/14 due 30 days pd 2/4/14." The January 29, 1915 Quit Claim Deed gives a description of (Erie) Township 27 N, Range 5 E, that begins at a point on the range line between sections 19 and 24 at the intersection of the south line of the Wabash & Erie canal southwestwardly 408.4 feet along south line of the canal.

²¹⁸ Ronald P. Thrush, *The Bicentennial*, "Something About an Author," Commercial Printing: Lagro, Indiana, p. 42. Also, Graham, *Historical Atlas of Miami County*, 1877, pp. 37 and 90.

²¹⁹ Document on file in the Miami County Historical Museum.

²²⁰ *Peru Republican* "One Man Died for Every six Feet of Length of Wabash and Erie Canal Society: Canal through Peru", Vol. XCVI, No. 37, before August 2, 1854 (MCHM).

²²¹ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²²² Carolyn Schmidt, "Buttermilk Mystery Solved," Canal Society of Indiana *Newsletter*, Vol. 15, No. 6, June 2001, pp. 1-3. Rachel Cole is buried in Peru's Mount Hope Cemetery in the Cole family plot. Markers: Rachel/wife of Jas. O. Cole/Nov. 29, 1837/Jul. 22, 1890; James O Cole/Dec. 23, 1828/Feb 3, 1923; Samuel F. Porter/ Apr. 26, 1858/Aug. 18, 1927; Kate Cole Porter/Jan. 27, 1862/Aug. 2, 1952; Cole Porter/Jun. 9, 1891/Oct. 15, 1964.

²²³ Nursery rhyme recalled by Richard Duke in 2004 as a tune his mother, Irma Arrick, born in 1915, had heard as a child in Peru, Indiana. It was sung by her uncle, Frans Richardson who was born in 1875 and had learned the verses from his family.

²²⁴ *A.P. Edgerton Journal*, 1859-1866.

²²⁵ Graham, *Historical Atlas of Miami County*, 1877, p. 13 (PPL).

²²⁶ John A. Graham, *Pioneer History of Peru and Miami County*, (*Peru Republican*: Peru, Indiana, 1877), rpt. Omar Holman, 1935. Also, *Peru Republican*, "One Man Died for Every Six Feet...", before August 2, 1854 (MCHM). Note: Because of a courthouse fire on March 16, 1843, all the county records were burned with the building.

²²⁷ *History of Miami County Indiana*, (Chicago: Brant & Fuller, 1887), pp. 363-364. Also, Graham, *Historical Atlas of Miami County* 1877, pp. 13-16 (PPL).

²²⁸ Robert H. Ulery, *Tales and Trails of the Land of the Miamis*, Peru, Indiana: Miami County Business and Professional Women's Club, 1968. pp. 43-45. Also, Graham, *Historical Atlas of Miami County*, 1877, p. 13 (PPL).

²²⁹ *The Indiana Gazetteer or Topographical Dictionary of The State of Indiana*. (Indianapolis, Indiana: E. Chamberlain, 1849), p.357. See "Peru Landing" chapter for additional distances.

²³⁰ House Report of the Commissioners of the Wabash and Erie Canal to the General Legislature, December 31, 1834, pp. 3-4.

²³¹ J. L. Williams, Principal Engineer, Indianapolis, December 10, 1835, Report to the Board of Canal Commissioners of the Wabash and Erie Canal, *Indiana House Report* 1835, p. 16. (IDSL).

²³² J. L. Williams, Principal Engineer, Indianapolis, December 13, 1836, *Documentary Journal* of Indiana Reports 1836, Report of the Engineer on Canals, p. 3 (IDSL).

²³³ Carolyn Schmidt and Casey Drudge, eds. "Dam # 3 Water Lease for Peru Mills," *Indiana Canals*, Vol. 13, No. 1, (2002), pp. 24-32 (CSI).

²³⁴ Peru, Indiana, *Forester*, November 4, 1837 (CSI).

²³⁵ Indiana State Archives, Internal Improvements contracts, Cat. Nos. 618 and 769.

²³⁶ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²³⁷ J. L. Williams, Principal Engineer to the State Board of Internal Improvement, December 5, 1837, *Documentary Journal*.1837, p.2 (IDSL).

²³⁸ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²³⁹ Peru, Indiana, *Miami County Sentinel*, April 26, 1844.

²⁴⁰ Miami County Historical Museum, "Canal File," news clippings, dated January 1849 and 1852.

²⁴¹ Graham, *Historical Atlas of Miami County*, 1877, p. 14. Also, *Peru Daily Tribune*, "Corn Crackers Taken From Pump House Site," May 5, 1931.

²⁴² *Miami County Sentinel*, July 10, 1851.

²⁴³ Peru *Forster*, November 4, 1837.

²⁴⁴ U.S. Census of 1850. Also, "Obituary", unidentified newspaper clipping in Miami County Historical files marked "1870s". Note: Buckley is mentioned in a February 5, 1876, *Peru Daily Times* news story

stating that he called the council's attention to the fact that the recent high waters had destroyed the dams in the canal (MCHM).

²⁴⁵ *A.P. Edgerton Journal*, 1859-1866.

²⁴⁶ "Plat of Mill Lots at Peru", held in the Miami County Historical Museum.

²⁴⁷ *A.P. Edgerton Journal*, 1859-1866.

²⁴⁸ Jesse L. Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer to the Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal: Terre Haute, December 23, 1856, *Documentary Journal*, 1856 (IDSL).

"The ice freshet of last spring carried off about seventy feet of the lower slope of the dam across the Wabash River at Peru, leaving it for the time being with a perpendicular fall of thirteen feet. The secure manner in which the foundation of this dam had been placed, in its first erection, saved the structure from being undermined, though resting at this point on a gravel bottom. In the repair, it was deemed necessary to renew the lower slope of the dam for its whole length of 400 feet, giving it the new and improved form of the apron crib, as adopted in the repair of the Delphi dam in 1848." Also, U.S. Census Reports for 1850 and 1860.

²⁴⁹ Jesse L. Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, December 6, 1849, *Documentary Journal*, 1849 (IDSL).

²⁵⁰ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, December 6, 1849, *Documentary Journal*, 1849 (IDSL).

²⁵¹ Jesse L. Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, January 4, 1861, *Documentary Journal*, 1860 (IDSL).

²⁵² Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²⁵³ "Base of Large Dam Built Here In 1842 Uncovered," unidentified newspaper in the Miami County Historical Museum's "Canal" file 1940 197. (1827.37), Peru, Indiana, 1940.

²⁵⁴ Another spelling of Metocinyah is Metocina – a name meaning "Living Being", according to Stewart Rafert, *The Miami Indians of Indiana*, (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1996).

²⁵⁵ George P. Clark, ed., *Into the Old Northwest Journeys with Charles H. Titus, 1841-1846*, East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1994. p. 63.

²⁵⁶ Otho Winger, *The Last of the Miamis* (North Manchester, Indiana: Winger, 1935), pp. 10-12 & 18. Also, Warder Crow, *Indians of Wabash County* (Wabash County Historical Museum, 1985), p. 3.

²⁵⁷ Sanford C. Cox, *Old Settlers, Recollections of the Early Settlement of the Wabash Valley*, (Lafayette, Indiana: Courier Steam Book & Job, 1860), pp. 144-146.

²⁵⁸ Winger, *The Last of the Miamis*, p.18. Graham, *Historical Atlas of Miami County*, 1877, p. 14.

²⁵⁹ Graham, *Historical Atlas of Miami County*. p. 14 (PPL).

²⁶⁰ Tables showing distance between Wabash & Erie Canal ports. Document on display bearing the title, "Joint Toll Sheet for the Ohio and Indiana Canal," dated July 15, 1859. in Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

²⁶¹ "Arrival in Peru on Canal Boat Seventy-One Years Ago Today is Described by Civil War Veteran, Peru *Daily Tribune* , Peru, Indiana, April 17, 1925.

²⁶² Miami County Historical Museum documents, 267 PUP, p. 65 and 329 PUP, p. 222

²⁶³ Ulery, *Tales and Trails of the Land of the Miamis*, pp. 15-16, 34 & 39.

²⁶⁴ Ulery, *Tales and Trails of the Land of the Miamis*, pp. 45-48.

²⁶⁵ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²⁶⁶ Ulery, *Tales and Trails of the land of the Miamis*, p. 47.

²⁶⁷ Elbert Jay Benton, *Wabash Trade Route In the Development of The Old Northwest*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1903, pp. 60-61 (ACPL). Also, *General Laws of Indiana 1841-2*, p. 3 (IDSL).

²⁶⁸ Paul Fatout, *Indiana Canals*, (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1972), pp. 101-102.

²⁶⁹ Benton, *Wabash Trade Route*. p. 60. (ACPL). Also, Graham, *Pioneer History of Peru and Miami County*

²⁷⁰ Graham, *Pioneer History of Peru and Miami County*, no page. (MCHM).

²⁷¹ Fatout, p. 39, Also, Sparks, *Writings of George Washington*, p. 109 (ACPL).

²⁷² Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²⁷³ "Catastrophe – Almost", *Miami County Sentinel*, July 11, 1850.

²⁷⁴ *Miami County Sentinel*, May 20, June 19, and September 9, 1952.

²⁷⁵ DeWitt C. Goodrich and Charles R. Tuttle, *An Illustrated History of the State of Indiana*, (Indianapolis: Richard Peale, 1875), p. 580.

²⁷⁶ *Centennial Celebration of Peru-Miami Lodge No. 67 Free and Accepted Masons 1848-1948*, program, June 10, 1948, Peru, Indiana.

²⁷⁷ *Peru Republican*, "One Man Died for Every Six Feet..." before August 2, 1854 (MCHM).

²⁷⁸ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²⁷⁹ *Centennial Celebration of Peru-Miami Lodge No. 67*, program.

²⁸⁰ *Indiana Statesman* reprinted in the *Miami County Sentinel*, May 27, 1852.

²⁸¹ Miami County Historical Muscum scrapbook holding an unidentified newspaper clipping, "Fired First Engine", circa 1909.

²⁸² Marilyn and William Coppernoll, *The Old Stone House*, (Peru, Indiana: Miami County Historical Society, 1994), p. 7.

²⁸³ Shirley Donley Harris, *George and Mary Streper Zern The Old Stone Canal House Family of Miami County, Indiana*, (Fort Wayne, Indiana: Donley-Bell Family Books: 2001), 7-9.

²⁸⁴ Coppernoll, *The Old Stone House*, p. 8.

²⁸⁵ Harris, *The Old Stone Canal House*, pp. 10, 61 & 62. Also, *History of Miami County Indiana*, (Chicago: Brant & Fuller, 1887, p. 488.

²⁸⁶ Harris, *The Old Stone Canal House*, p. .25 & 26.

²⁸⁷ Coppernoll, *The Old Stone House*. p. 5.

²⁸⁸ Harris, *The Old Stone Canal House*, p. 12 & 13, and Coppernoll, *The Old Stone House*. p. 9.

²⁸⁹ In 2004, the Old Stone House is owned by, Christians Life Fellowship of Miami County.

²⁹⁰ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²⁹¹ Graham, *Historical Atlas of Miami County*, 1877, p. 14.

²⁹² Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²⁹³ "The Floods", *The Peru Republican*, Peru, Indiana, June 17, 1858 (MCHM).

²⁹⁴ Williams, Report of the Chief Engineer, November 1, 1847, *Documentary Journal*, 1847 (IDSL).

²⁹⁵ Report of S. Fisher, Esq., Commissioner of the W. and E. Canal E. of Lafayette, *Documentary Journal*, 1842, December 5, 1842, p. 155 (IDSL).

²⁹⁶ Miami County Historical Museum File #45 PUP, page 340, notes that Alpha Buckley later served as a Peru councilman of the 2nd Ward.

²⁹⁷ A.P. Edgerton *Journal*, 1859-1866.

²⁹⁸ Helm, *History of Wabash County 1884*, p. 344 & 346 (WCHM).

²⁹⁹ Williams, Chief Engineer's Report to the Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal, December 23, 1856, *Documentary Journal*, 1856 (IDSL).

³⁰⁰ Ulery, *Tales and Trails of the Land of the Miamis*, p. 34. Also, Canal Society of Indiana *Newsletter*, ed. Carolyn Schmidt, Vol. 11, No. 9, June 2001, "Buttermilk Babe" Fort Wayne, Indiana. Josephine Hostetler King, *Down Memories Lane, A History of Erie Township, Miami County, Indiana*, states "It was not long until extensive repairs were needed all along the line, but there was no money for the work and the last boat made its trip in the summer of 1872." Also, Hal C. Phelps, Miami County Museum Manuscript, May 4, 1925.

³⁰¹ Benton, *Wabash Trade Route*, Johns Hopkins Press, 1903.p. 86 (ACPL).

³⁰² Logan Esarey, *Internal Improvements in Indiana*, (Indianapolis: E. J. Hecker, 1912) p. 153. Also, Donald F. Carmony. *Indiana 1816-1850: The Pioneer Era*, Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1998, p. 761.

³⁰³ B.J. Griswold, *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, (Chicago: Robert O. Law, 1917) p. 394 (ACPL).

³⁰⁴ Benj. Stuart, *History of Wabash and Valley*, (Logansport, Ind: Longwell-Cummings, 1924), pp. 55-56 (LPL).

³⁰⁵ *The Wabash Plain Dealer*, "In Favor of the Shirks," January 26, 1894.

³⁰⁶ Miami County Historical Museum "Canal" files.

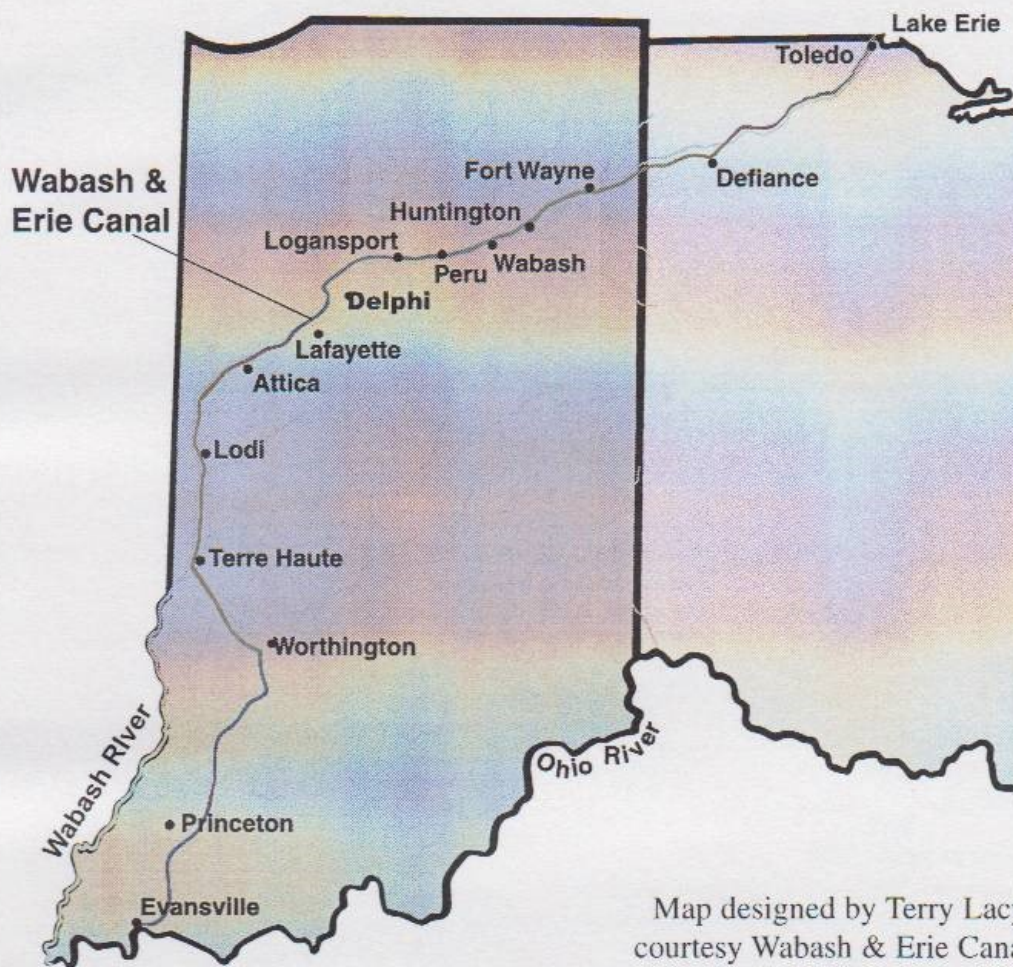
³⁰⁷ George K. Bradley, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*, "Trolley Bows Out of City's Transport", January 1, 1961. Also, Roy Bates, *Interurban Railways of Allen County Indiana*, (Fort Wayne, Indiana: Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County, 1958), pp. 18 and 27.

³⁰⁸ Indiana Interurban Railroads and Connecting Lines, Official Time Table, The Electric Railways Pub. Co. Inc., Lafayette, Ind., October 1912, pp. 26-27.

³⁰⁹ Pete Eshelman and Scott M. Bushnell, *Roanoke, The Renaissance of a Hoosier Village*, (Indianapolis: Guild Press Emmis Books, 2003), p. 23 (ACPL).

³¹⁰ The Peru (*MCHM*), "Wabash Way Route East Along Canal," April 18, 1919 (*MCHM*)

WABASH & ERIE CANAL: 1832 - 1876



Map designed by Terry Lacy,
courtesy Wabash & Erie Canal
Interpretive Center – Delphi, Indiana.

In 1827 the federal government made a land grant to the State of Indiana for what was to become the Wabash & Erie Canal. Ground was broken in 1832 during a ceremony in Fort Wayne, Indiana. By 1843, the canal was opened from Lafayette, Indiana to Toledo, Ohio on Lake Erie thus providing an avenue of commerce with the harbors on the eastern seaboard. The canal was completed in 1853 to Evansville, Indiana on the Ohio River. From Toledo to Evansville, the Wabash & Erie Canal reached a length of 468 miles, making it the second longest canal in the world. Later, its decline was accelerated by railroad improvements. Eventually the canal was abandoned by the State in 1874 and the right-of-way was sold by 1876.

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