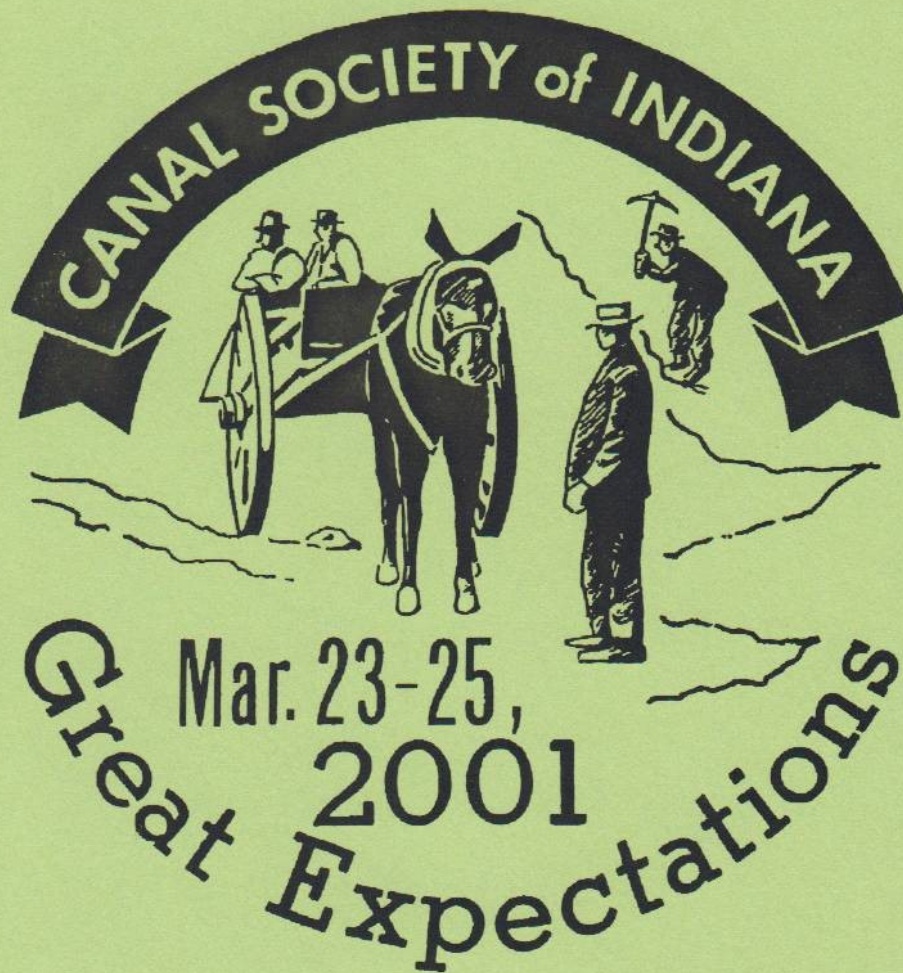


# WABASH & ERIE CANAL

Warrick & Vanderburgh  
Counties



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



My sincere thanks to those who researched canal sites, contributed newspaper articles, and furnished maps, diagrams, and pictures or photographs.

**Bob Schmidt**  
**Stan Schmitt**  
**Nate Tagmeyer**  
**Wendell Woods**

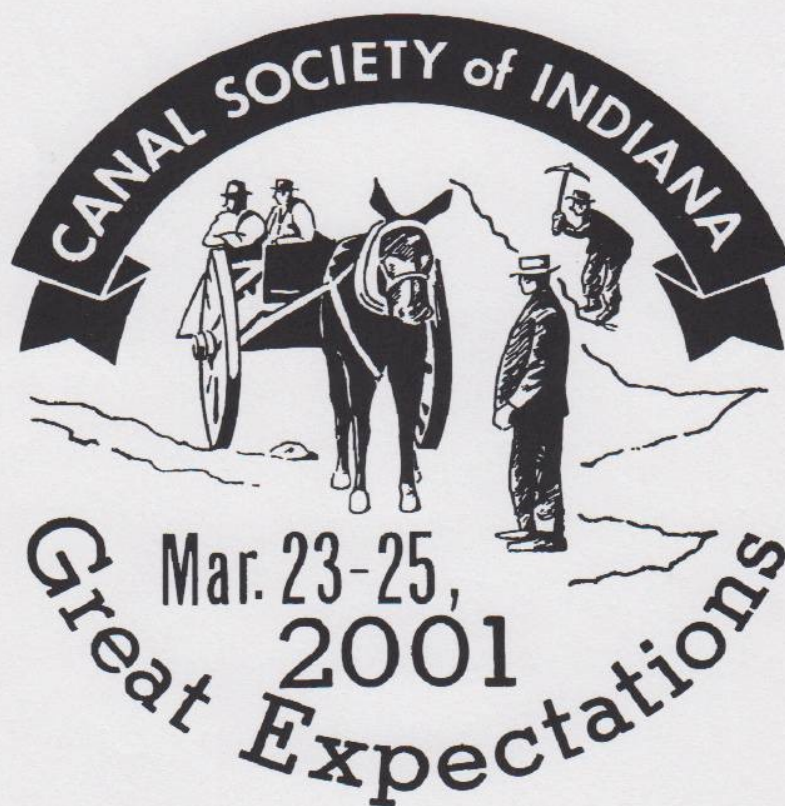
A very special thank you to **Stan Schmitt**, who since 1980 has been collecting newspaper clippings about the Wabash & Erie Canal from microfilm and has provided copies of those clippings to be included within this book. Without all of your help this book would not have been possible.

**Carolyn I. Schmidt**



# WABASH & ERIE CANAL

## Warrick & Vanderburgh Counties



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# FOREWORD

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Each tour given by the Canal Society of Indiana attempts to relate the history of the canal and point out the location of its structures in a particular area of Indiana or in a neighboring state.

The tours also include other canal related buildings and the early history of the counties and towns being toured. They usually have a theme—something that ties the area together.

What could be a more appropriate theme for this section of the Wabash & Erie Canal than “Great Expectations”? There was much excitement when it was announced that the Central Canal would pass through Warrick and Vanderburgh counties. Towns were platted along its proposed route where there had never been towns before. Newark, Millersburgh (Canal Post Office), Rochester and Warrickton in Warrick county and Evansville, Lamasco, and Smyrna in Vanderburgh county were to be stops along its towpath. Some of these towns failed before they ever really got started. In this book the original spelling of their names is usually used.

A boat builder came to Evansville to build a boat long before the 18 miles from Evansville northward were completed. He anticipated building many boats. Businessmen, farmers, and people from

all walks of life joined in a grand celebration when this section was opened.

Although the building of the Central Canal was discontinued due to lack of state funds in the late 1830s, it was later announced that the Wabash & Erie Canal would be joined to the already built portion of the Central out of Evansville. We will sometimes refer to this portion of the canal as the Central/Wabash & Erie Canal within this book. People were at first skeptical about the proposed completion of the Wabash and Erie, but, through the efforts of area newspapers, the citizens were once again filled with high expectations. Boat docks and warehouses were built. Another celebration was held when the canal boat “Pennsylvania” arrived at Evansville after coming all the way from Toledo.

When the canal started to fall into disrepair, the Southern Canal Company still had faith they could make it work with a few repairs. Later the Evansville Canal Company thought they could operate it, if not as a transportation canal, as a hydraulic canal providing water to the town’s manufacturers and drinking water for its citizens.

Sit back, relax, think back to the 1830s-1870s and learn more about the **Great Expectations** the citizens of that time had of the canal. Welcome aboard!

Carolyn Schmidt



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# GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

## SATURDAY TOUR ROUTE

This route is written in the following manner. The direction of the turn is given first. The abbreviations are as follows:

R = Right,  
L = Left,  
I = Interstate,  
US = Federal Highway,  
SR = State Road,  
CR = County Road,  
St. = Street,  
Bus. = Business  
N = North, S = South, E = East, W = West

### Baymont Inn Parking Lot

Get as many people as possible in as few cars as possible. Tie ribbons on antennas. Set walkie-talkies to same channel.

Exit parking lot

L from Inn parking lot onto Division

R on Cross Lake Drive

L on Virginia

Left on Cross Pointe Blvd.

L onto Lloyd Expressway

R (N) on I-164

R on Exit 9 Morgan Ave. Boonville-Chandler exit

L at light to Chandler (travel about 7 miles)

L on Interrieden

L on Warrickton Rd.

**STOP 1** See the Wabash & Erie Canal bed, the old meanders of Pigeon Creek, and the old towpath at the intersection of Warrickton and Towpath Rds. Take a short hike to the north along Towpath Rd. toward Squaw Creek

L (S) on Towpath Rd. Follow the Canal and the meanderings of Pigeon Creek that have been cut off from the current channelized creek. The canal is on your left, the creek is on your right. You are traveling atop the towpath.

L (E) on Heim Rd.

R (S) on Interrieden Rd.

R (W) on IN SR62 Watch for canal on your right in the trees ahead as we turn onto this road. The road crosses the canal at the trees and the canal will then be seen on left along the railroad tracks further down. You will be able to see it off and on all the way into Evansville. There is

the road, then a ditch, then the railroad tracks on the towpath, and then the Wabash & Erie Canal that was originally built as the Central Canal.

Pass Green River Road and then a golf course on your left. Look for a huge flag on the left.

L (S) on Boeke

L (E) into Wesselman Park

**STOP 2** Wesselman Park, very short rest room and snack break. We will return later in the day to walk the canal bed within the park. This park is noted for having a stand of virgin timber.

L (S) on Boeke Rd. to Lloyd access road

R (W) on Lloyd Expressway access road

**DO NOT GO UNDER THE EXPRESSWAY**

(W) on Lloyd Expressway, IN 66

R at Exit Sign that says Division St./Garvin/Main St. Continue along exit road past Garvin to Governor St.

L on Governor **GO UNDER THE EXPRESSWAY**

L on Walnut (light)

R on Canal (by Subway)

L on Governor St.

R on Lincoln which becomes Liberty Way after 8th St.

R on 6th St.

L into Welborn Campus of St. Mary's Hospital

**STOP 3** Canal sign in hospital parking lot. The canal made a 90 degree turn under the building to 5th street. An arm of the Central Canal continued straight for a few blocks but was filled in later on. The Canal was 60 feet wide at this point. This helped the canal boats make the turn. The canal company agreed to build larger bridges over this wider section of the canal in 1850 if the city would maintain them.

Leave parking lot

L on 6th St, cross Cherry then turn into lot

L in lot in center of next block through parking lot The canal made a 90 degree turn at 5th St.

R on 5th St. You are now on the canal. Look out for Sycamore St. The canal basin started at Sycamore and passed through the left half of the old courthouse square when you stand at the marker on 5th and Vine.

**STOP 4** Park on 5th or in the parking lot across from the old courthouse. The basin was 20 feet deep. After it was filled in the old courthouse was built atop it. The builders had trouble getting a firm

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

- footing for the courthouse in the basin area.
- Continue down 5th St. and you will cross Court St. This street was originally called Division St. because it divided the towns of Evansville and Lamasco.
- L on Ingle  
L on 3rd  
R on Carpenter St. Pass by the canal era home of Willard Carpenter. There is a sign in the yard stating it was an underground railroad station. It is now FOX 7.
- R on 2nd  
R on 3rd  
R on Bond You will pass behind Carpenter's home
- L (N) on 4th St. which becomes First Avenue as it goes under the Lloyd Expressway. We will pass Willard Library on the right built and donated by Willard Carpenter to Evansville. It supposedly has a ghost. It has a great genealogical collection. On the left is the City Market where farmers bring their produce, baked goods, plants, etc. to sell. It is quite a popular place.
- L (W) on Indiana You are now on the canal  
L (S) on Fulton Avenue and get in the right lane. At the corner of Fulton and the Lloyd Expressway was a brewery during the canal era. It was town down in 1999-2000. One of its old buildings can still be seen along the canal.
- R (W) on Lloyd Expressway Stay in the right hand lane  
R into Corporate Center Parking Lot just before bridge over Pigeon Creek. This was 7th avenue.
- STOP 5** See long drop into Pigeon Creek which received runoff from the canal basin to the North. The Reitz saw mill was located to the left of the bridge on the creek. A salt well was located up the creek several blocks. It became a resort area.
- R (W) on Lloyd Expressway  
R on access road to Barker Ave.  
L (S) on Barker Ave. to second street past light  
L on Austin Ave. to Parking Lot B
- STOP 6** Reitz Overlook - See how the city of Evansville is located on the horseshoe bend of the Ohio River, hear about the building of the LST's in the Evansville boat yard, see how Pigeon Creek enters the river, view spire of courthouse to locate canal basin
- L on Austin Ave.  
L on Dreier Blvd.  
L on Claremont Ave.  
L on Ray Becker Parkway and see Bristol Myers-Mead Johnson (SQUIBB) which makes vitamin drinks for hospital patients and infant formula
- R on Ohio St. past bridges  
R across RR tracks at Mulzer Crushed Stone sign and park in lot by bridges
- STOP 7** Pigeon Creek at Ohio River  
R on Ohio St.  
L on Fulton Ave - There are turn lanes so stay to the right
- L on Fountain (NO SIGN) follow caravan  
L in center of block to parking lot
- STOP 7** Lunch at Germania Mannerchor You can get coffee free at the bar. Cash bar for cokes, beer, mixed drinks. They are not charging for the room if we purchase drinks. You may use rest rooms on either floor.
- R out of parking lot  
R on Fountain  
R on Fulton Ave to river - it becomes Riverside  
L on Riverside past Casino Aztar We will continue down Riverside if it is open. We will likely need to make the following detour.
- L on Court St. (Remember this was originally Division St., dividing Evansville and Lamasco)  
R on Second St.  
R on Cherry (stoplight) to Riverside
- STOP 8** Enter Sunset Park and park in front of the Pagoda Visitors Center or on the other side of the Evansville Museum. Gather in the parking lot to be divided into groups.
- Group A walks several blocks to First and Chestnut to the Reitz home carriage house to see the video about the Reitz saw mill and the wealth it brought the family, then tour the home (You will be divided into smaller groups)
- Group B walks to the EMTRAC building on the other side of the Evansville Museum to see a docent led tour of Evansville's transportation history from canoe, flatboat,

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

canal boat, riverboat, streetcar, railroad, airplane, etc.

A time will be set for the groups to leave and walk to the other tour.

Meet back at the Pagoda and go to the top of it for a great view of the Ohio River.

Exit museum lot on Cherry

L on Martin Luther King

R at TO 62 E sign just before Lloyd Expressway

Get on Lloyd Expressway (E)

R off Lloyd Expressway to Boeke Rd.

L on Boeke Rd. **GO UNDER EXPRESSWAY**

R into Wesselman Park - stay in right lane - at Iowa St.

**STOP 9** We will hike along the canal bed. You may remain in the park as long as you like. You have the choice of:

Going directly to dinner at 6 p.m. at

Western Rib-eye and Ribs, which allows for more hiking time in the park.

R on Boeke leaving park

Cross canal and RR tracks

R into Western Rib-eye

Going to hotel and then dinner at 6 p.m. at Western Rib-eye and Ribs, which allows for a chance to clean up or rest

L on Boeke to Expressway

**GO UNDER EXPRESSWAY**

Stay in left hand lane

L at East 66 to I-164 sign

(approx. 3 1/2 miles)

L at Cross Point Blvd. (Light before I-164)

R immediate on Division St. to Inn

**Have a good nights sleep.**



## SUNDAY TOUR ROUTE

Gather at 8:30 a.m. to car-pool. Get into as few cars as possible. Set Walkie-Talkies

Leave Baymont Inn

L on Division

R on Cross Lake Dr.

L on Virginia

L on Cross Pointe Blvd.

L on Lloyd Expressway

**Go Under I-164**

R (N) on I-164 to Exit 15 (approx 6 1/2 miles)

R on Boonville-New Harmony Rd. Follow this all the way to Pigeon Creek, cross the

Wabash & Erie Canal **STOP 1** Site of Canal Post Office (Millersburgh) The entire town was removed for strip mining. Remnants of the canal and the old town cemetery still remain.

Turn around and follow Boonville-New Harmony Rd. back to I-164.

L (S) on I-164

R on 662 Exit 5 to Newburgh

(E) on 662 past Angel Mounds sign (park closed to build new visitors center to open in May)

R on IN SR 66

R on State St. in downtown Newburgh

L on Water St. Look for the Civil War sign on your right and then we pass the control building for the old lock and dam that has been removed

R into Newburgh Dam parking lot

**STOP 2** Tour locks (DO NOT LEAN ON RAILING)

Leave Lock and Dam parking area

L on IN SR 66 to I-164 and back to hotel

May we suggest lunch on your own at the Edgewater Grill at 11 a.m. and get a great view of the Ohio River or at its brunch across the street served from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (\$9.95) Located on Water Street.

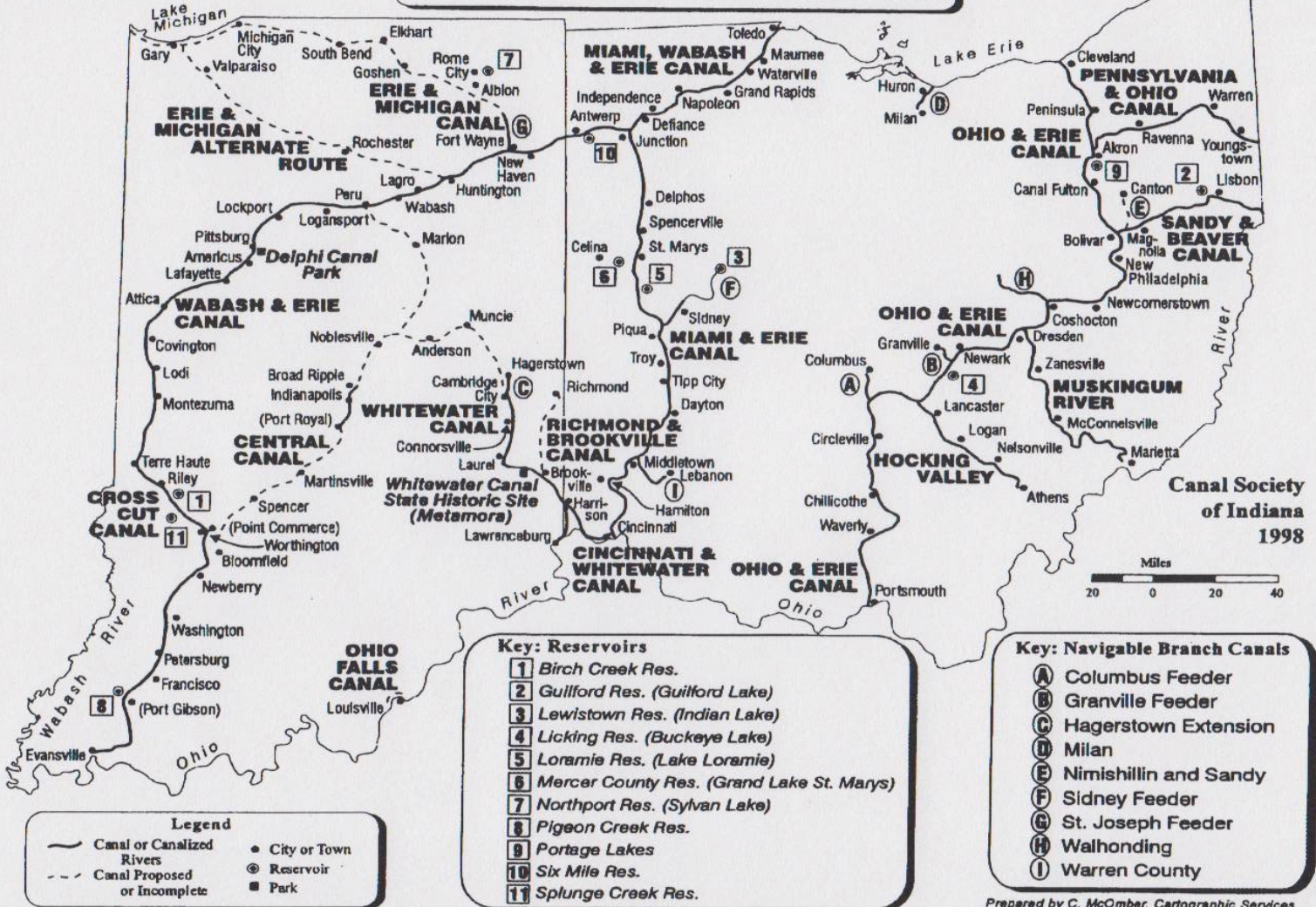
Another possibility is Nob Hill Tavern if it is open on Sunday. Located on 662.

Fast food restaurants can be found along 261 near the bypass

**SEE YOU THIS FALL  
ON THE WHITEWATER CANAL!**



# Canal Systems of Indiana and Ohio



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

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# WABASH & ERIE CANAL 1853 REPORT

Information from the report is in regular type. Current information is in bold type.

**WARRICK/VANDEBURGH COUNTIES** Culvert No. 217. Timber, rectangular, submerged.

**Aqueduct No. 18 (Big Creek): (Near SR 68)**

Big Creek Aqueduct, No. 18. This work consists of three spans of 26 feet clear between the bents and abutments. The trunk is supported by two double bents resting on foundation timbers in the bed of the creek, planked up and filled with stone, and two timber abutments, resting on foundation timber six feet below the bottom of the Canal. The back, sides, and wings of the abutments are sheet piled and well planked. The foundations are protected with brush and stone. The superstructure is a simple trunk, consisting of string pieces, posts, and caps, being 18 feet in the clear, and adapted to four feet water above bottom.

**Lock No. 72 (Big Creek Lock):**

**Remnants were visible in the 1980s when Pigeon Creek was dredged.**

Lock No. 72, of 6 feet lift; built of timber on the crib plan.

**Road Bridge No. 157:**

Road bridge No. 157.

**Culvert No. 215:**

Culvert No. 215, one space 9 by 2 feet clear. Length of culvert 96 feet; top of culvert 2½ feet B.

**Culvert No. 216:**

Culvert No. 216; two spaces 10 by 2 feet clear. Length of culvert 96 feet; top of culvert 2½ feet B.

**Lock No. 73:**

Lock No. 73, of 6.8 feet lift; built of timber on the crib plan.

**Road Bridge No. 158:**

Road bridge No. 158.

**Head Gates:**

**Rochester, some remnants**

Head gates to pass water into the Canal from Pigeon Creek dam.

**Pigeon Creek Dam:**

Pigeon Creek Dam.

**Culvert No. 217:**

**Culvert No. 218:**

Culvert No. 218. Timber, rectangular, submerged.

**Culvert No. 219:**

Culvert No. 219. Timber, rectangular, submerged.

**Culvert No. 220:**

Culvert No. 220. Timber, rectangular, submerged.

**Culvert No. 221:**

Culvert No. 221. Timber, rectangular, submerged.

**Culvert No. 222:**

Culvert No. 222. Timber, rectangular, submerged.

**Road Bridge No. 159:**

Road bridge No. 159.

**Waste Weir:**

**Newark**

Waste weir at Newark, built on plan last described.

**Culvert No. 223:**

Culvert No. 223. Timber, rectangular, submerged.

**Culvert No. 224:**

Culvert No. 224. Timber, rectangular, submerged.

**Road Bridge No. 160:**

Road bridge No. 160.

**Culvert No. 225:**

**Squaw Creek. Stone was removed and some is at Millersburgh.**

Culvert No. 225. Arch of cut stone.

**Culvert No. 226:**

Culvert No. 226. Rectangular, timber, submerged.

**Culvert No. 227:**

Culvert No. 227. Rectangular, timber, submerged.

**The canal is still visible from culvert 228 through culvert 234. There is a marker is Wesselman Park.**

**Culvert No. 228:**

Culvert No. 228. Rectangular, timber, submerged.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

**Culvert No. 229:**

Culvert No. 229. Rectangular, timber, submerged.

**Culvert No. 230:**

Culvert No. 230. Rectangular, timber, submerged.

**Culvert No. 231:**

Culvert No. 231. Rectangular, timber submerged.

**Road Bridge No. 161:**

Road bridge No. 161.

**Culvert No. 232:**

Culvert No. 232. Rectangular, timber, submerged.

**Culvert No. 232:**

Culvert No. 233. Rectangular, timber submerged.

**Culvert No. 234:**

**Parts may still exist underground at Division Street.**

Culvert No. 234, at Division street, in Evansville. This culvert is an arch of 5 feet chord (springing from abutments 2½ feet high, to correspond with a sewer in the city leading to the river) of cut stone masonry. The foundation is a pavement of stone 12 inches deep, settled into gravel. The ring of the arch is 12 inches deep, abutments 18 inches thick. The arch is plastered on top with hydraulic cement, and covered over with gravel. The culvert is 100 feet long, connected at both ends with a brick sewer built by the corporation of Evansville.

**Road Bridge No. 162:**

Bridge No. 162, one mile above Evansville.

**Road Bridge No. 163:**

Bridge No. 163, Walnut street in Evansville.

**Road Bridge No. 164:**

Bridge No. 164, Locust street in Evansville.

**Road Bridge No. 165:**

Bridge No. 165, Main street in Evansville.

**Road Bridge No. 166:**

Bridge No. 166, Sycamore street in Evansville.

**Canal basin located at Road bridges 167-168. Marker on lawn of old court house about the canal.**

**Road Bridge No 167:**

Bridge No. 167, Vine street in Evansville.

**Road Bridge No. 168:**

Bridge No. 168, Division street in Evansville.

**Road Bridge No. 169:**

Bridge No. 169, Ingle street in Stockwell and Ingle's addition to Evansville.

**Road Bridge No. 170:**

Bridge No. 170, Second avenue in Lamasco.

**Road Bridge No. 171:**

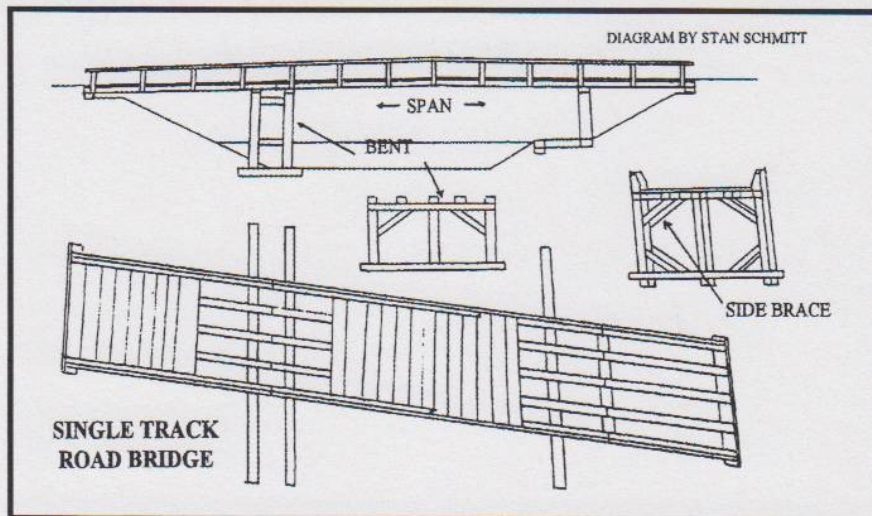
Bridge No. 171, Third avenue in Lamasco.

**Road Bridge No. 172:**

Bridge No. 172, Fulton avenue in Lamasco.

**Basin- waste gate site at Indiana Avenue.**

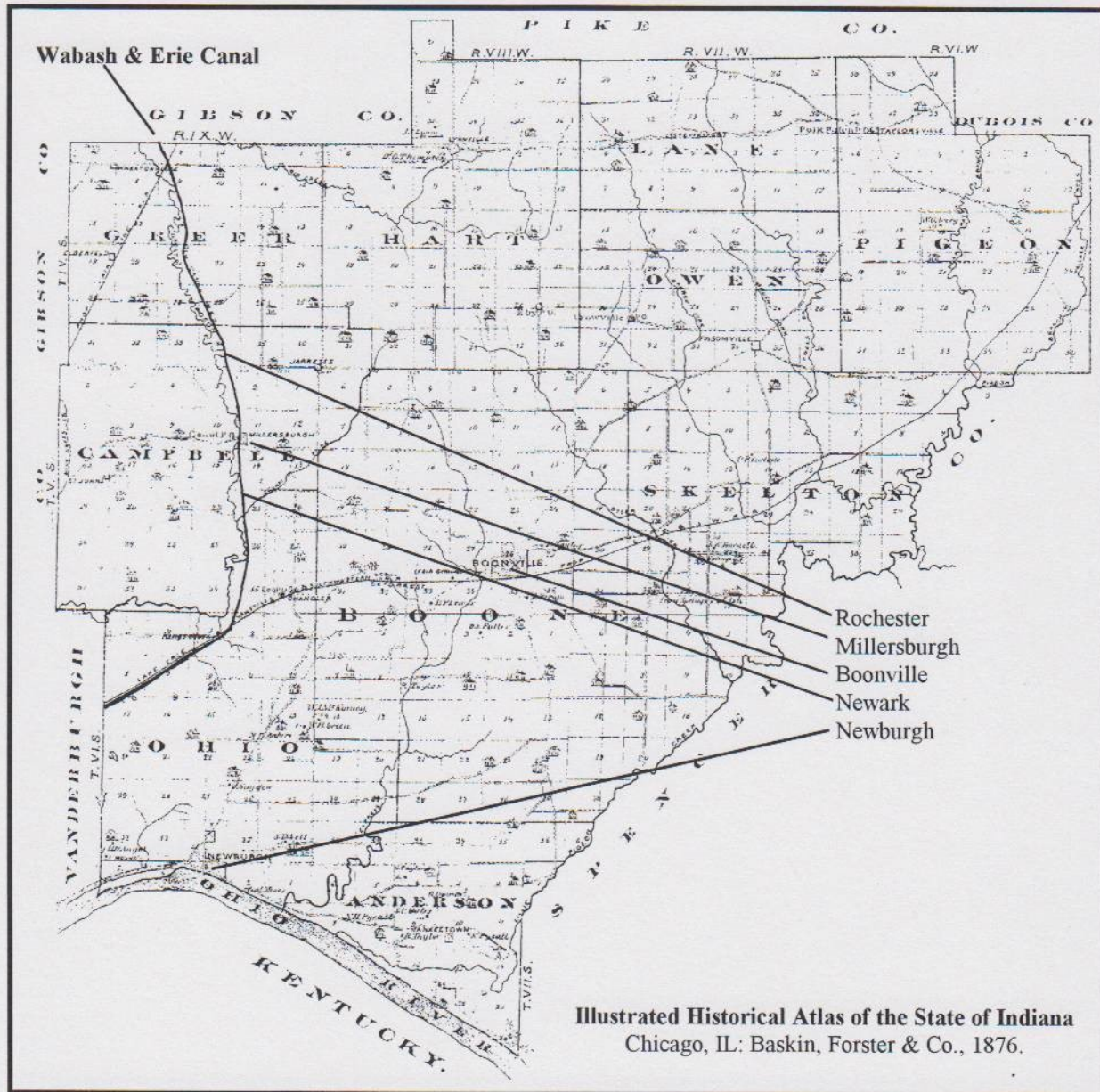
This ends the account of the mechanical structures on the Canal from Coal Creek to Evansville, including the feeders.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# WARRICK COUNTY

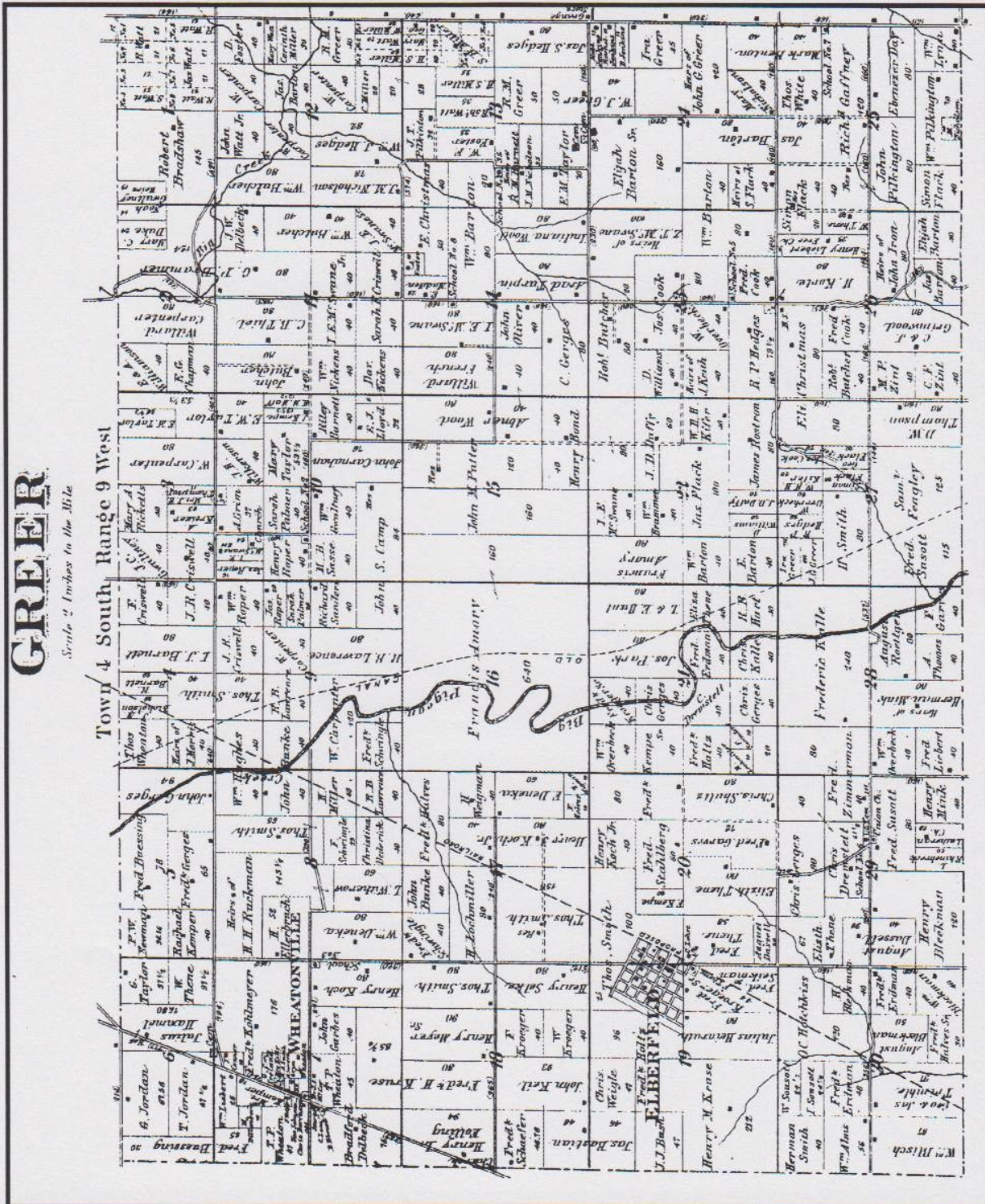
The route of the Wabash and Erie Canal through Greer, Campbell and Ohio townships of Warrick County is marked with a dark line through the left side of this 1876 map. This portion of the canal was originally dug as a part of the Central Canal in 1836-1839. Indiana had financial difficulties. It never joined this portion of the canal to that dug at Indianapolis, IN. A dam was built across Big Pigeon Creek near Millersburgh to feed this level. This section of canal was joined to the Wabash and Erie Canal via the Cross Cut Canal from Terre Haute, IN. to Point Commerce (Worthington), IN., and from Point Commerce to the dam at Rochester. A large reservoir was constructed at Port Gibson in Gibson County to supplement the canal. The canal became active as the Wabash & Erie in 1853. Note also: 1) Newburgh, which, in its day, was a bigger river port than Evansville; 2) Boonville, which became the county seat; 3) Millersburgh (Canal Post Office).





# GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

The Route of the Wabash and Erie Canal can be seen to the right of Pigeon Creek in this 1880 map of Greer township from A Standard Historical Atlas of Warrick County, Indiana.





## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# WARRICK COUNTY

John Sprinkle, who was born in Pennsylvania and moved to Kentucky in 1772, came to Indiana and settled at the site of an Indian village overlooking the Ohio river in June 1803. He actually was a squatter since Warrick County was not surveyed until 1805. The land was not placed for sale by the government until much later. In 1812, as an assignee of General W. Johnston, he received a patent for the land. He founded Mount Prospect or Sprinklesburg in 1818 in Ohio township. A ferry landing on the Ohio river below the village became known as Sprinkle's Landing. He was the first blacksmith in the county. He and his family of ten children lived there until his death in 1821.

Warrick County was named to honor Capt. Jacob Warrick, who was shot through his body during the Battle of Tippecanoe in November 1811. According to a report of the battle written by Governor William Henry Harrison, Warrick was taken to a surgeon and his wound dressed, but he insisted on going back to head his company for the few hours he had remaining to live.

Nearly all of southern Indiana was abandoned by the Native Americans following the Battle of Tippecanoe near Lafayette, Indiana, which crushed their power. Slowly squatters infiltrated the area.

Around 1811 Warrick county had less than a dozen families living within its huge boundaries. Manual labor, the rifle, axe and plow were used to furnish their needs. As time passed the county progressed in growth and quality of life.



The first mail route was established in 1812 from New Harmony, Indiana, to Louisville,

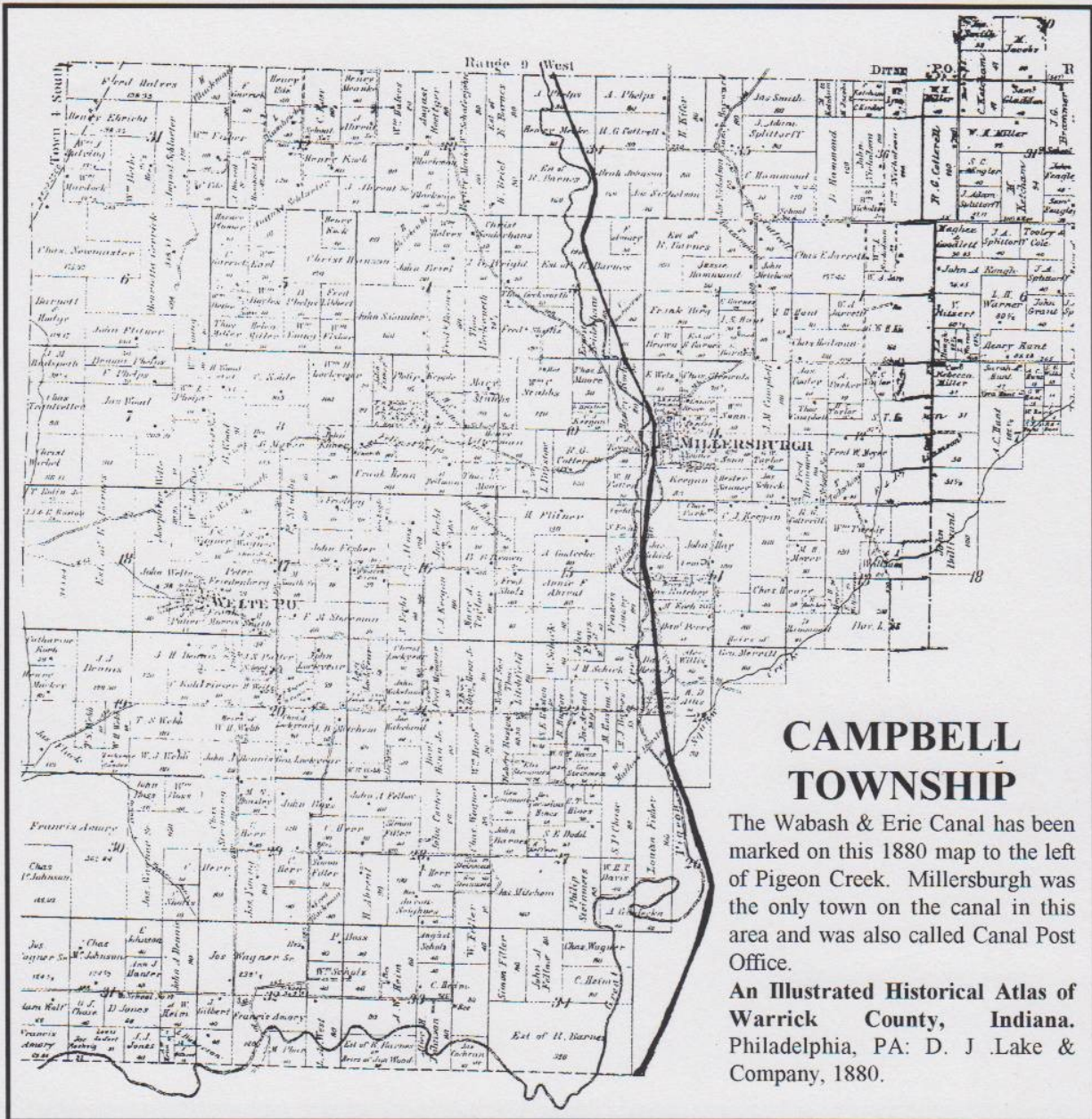
Kentucky, and passed through the place where Boonville now stands. John Williams, the mail carrier, made the round trip on horse back every two weeks. He was often delayed by harsh weather or swollen streams, which often soiled the mail. There was a postmaster, whose name is unknown, who would put the mail in his pocket or keep it at his home until the settlers called for it. When Evansville was made the Warrick County seat, the mail route changed to New Harmony to Evansville to Boonville to Louisville and shortly thereafter a new route was set between Evansville and Corydon.

Warrick and Gibson counties were authorized in 1813 by the Indiana legislature to be carved out of Knox county. At first Warrick county contained all the land that now makes up Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Spencer and Perry counties plus a portion of Crawford county. It was ninety-miles long and 45 miles wide. Five men, all from Knox county, were appointed commissioners and were to locate the county seat. Before this time circuit riding lawyers and court officials rode horseback to various places to settle disputes. A county seat would have a court house. In June 1814 the commissioners met at Jonathan Anthony's mill on Pigeon creek, but a majority did not show up. Other men substituted for them and selected Evansville for the capital of this huge county. The selection was probably influenced by Col. Hugh McGary's donation of a hundred acres of land and a number of lots on which they should locate the courthouse.

McGary had come by canoe in 1812, bought a land grant from the Federal Government, and laid out lots in the lower part of what was to become the downtown business section of Evansville. He was its first post master. He also served as Associate Judge and Judge of Boonville from 1814 until later.

A mere three months after Warrick county was divided, it was split again having almost all of Posey county on the west and Perry county on the east taken from its area. It was still quite large containing Vanderburgh, Warrick and

# GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

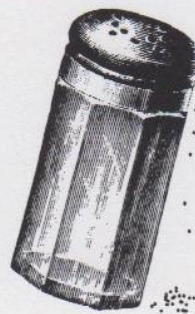


## CAMPBELL TOWNSHIP

The Wabash & Erie Canal has been marked on this 1880 map to the left of Pigeon Creek. Millersburgh was the only town on the canal in this area and was also called Canal Post Office.

An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Warrick County, Indiana. Philadelphia, PA: D. J. Lake & Company, 1880.

Spencer counties, but now the county seat was located in the far west corner of the county. The territorial legislature, seeking a more centralized location, moved the seat in October of 1814 to the mouth of Little Pigeon creek (Darlington) about four miles above Newburgh. Though at the southern end of the county it was near the Ohio river, an important commercial route. The removal of the county seat from Evansville was hard on that fledgling community.



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successful, would have proved highly profitable. They noticed that about two to three miles from the Ohio river, on the bank of Cypress creek, deer and other animals came to lick salt. They decided to bore for salt, but, after boring for a considerable depth and not receiving any satisfactory results,

A great enterprise was undertaken in 1814 by a group of men which, if it had been become discouraged and gave up the project.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

A county jail was built in 1814. The county court house was completed in 1815.

The county boundary was once again changed in 1816. It extended farther north with the creation of Pike county out of Gibson, Knox and Perry counties.

### MILLS

Life for the early settlers was hard. Even when their crops were good, they had no mills to grind their grain. They had to go to Mr. Vannada's "hand-mill" in Kentucky to have their corn ground or even further to Panther Creek in Kentucky. Hand-mills and hominy mortars produced the first meal on which these pioneers existed. John Hale had a hand-mill in 1815 near Chandler that did little but crack the corn. In 1816 a "horse-mill" was built in Spencer county Indiana, but that too was not very close.

The first water powered mill was built on Cypress Creek about a mile from Darlington in 1818. Bread was practically unknown until 1819 when a trader brought thirty to forty barrels of flour down the river hoping to exchange them for anything, except corn meal, that the settlers had. He asked for three dozen chickens in exchange for one barrel of flour. About ten families gathered their chickens and received two barrels of flour, which they divided amongst themselves. The flour was used sparingly and lasted about two years.

Finally, in 1820 a flouring mill was erected in Henderson, Kentucky. Farmers who had grown wheat in the Darlington area, took about seventy-five bushels of it in canoes to Henderson to be ground for their own use.

It would seem that anyone could build a mill anywhere in the wilderness, but this was not so. Application to build one had to be made to the court. James Anthony was authorized to erect a mill dam on Big Pigeon creek where Millersburgh was later platted after he applied to the Warrick Circuit Court in Darlington on June 23, 1817. The court issued the following announcement:

"On motion of David Lawrence, proprietor of the Sw. Qr. section 11--5-9, 160 acres, it is order that a writ of ad quod damnum

do issue to the Sheriff of Warrick County to summon a jury as the law directs, and inquire into the situation of the stream of Pigeon whether it will work a public or private inconvenience to erect a saw and grist mill on said stream on said land, and if any damage, what and how much, and to whom, which writ must be executed on the second day of August next."

There is some dispute as to whether this mill dam was ever built by James Anthony. If so it was later taken over by Philip Miller.

### VANDEBURGH COUNTY CARVED FROM WARRICK COUNTY

When Vanderburgh and Spencer counties were carved out of Warrick county in 1818, its northern boundary was moved still further to the north. Once again the county seat was not centrally located. Commissioners were appointed to relocate it. Jesse Boon donated a large tract of land and several other men also donated land. It was named Boonville for Jesse Boon and not for his father Ratliff as is often mistaken. Men such as Ratliff Boon, John Barker and Pinkney Anderson, who owned lots in Darlington, soon exchanged them for lots in Boonville. A jail was built in 1818.

Ratliff Boon, a cousin of Daniel Boone, was one of the earliest settlers of Warrick county and probably the first settler of Boon township. He was a gunsmith by trade. He was appointed treasurer of the county in 1813 and held the office until 1820. In 1816 he was elected to represent the county in the first state legislature. He was twice elected Lieutenant Governor of Indiana (1819-1824) and filled the unexpired term of Governor during his second term. Ratliff Boon's home, built in 1831, still stands in Boonville.



Coal was discovered in 1818 on the bank of Pigeon creek, two miles from the Ohio river near Evansville. A little was mined, but that venture soon was

given up. A second mine was opened on

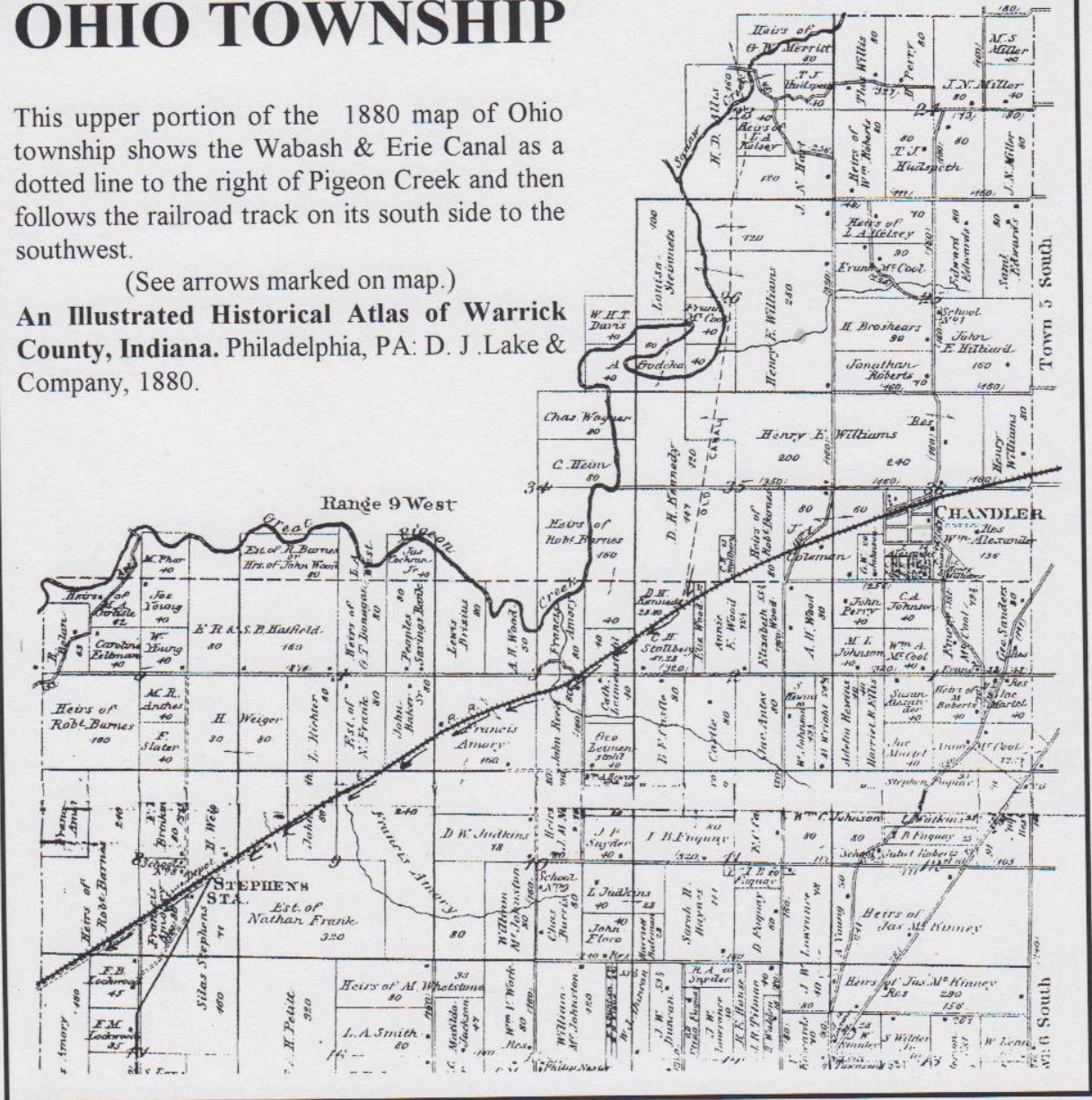
# GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

## OHIO TOWNSHIP

This upper portion of the 1880 map of Ohio township shows the Wabash & Erie Canal as a dotted line to the right of Pigeon Creek and then follows the railroad track on its south side to the southwest.

(See arrows marked on map.)

An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Warrick County, Indiana. Philadelphia, PA: D. J. Lake & Company, 1880.



the same tract of land, was more profitable than the first, but was abandoned due to the distance to the river. In 1850, "Phelp's Coal Bank" was discovered and a shaft dug on the bank of the Ohio river in Newburgh. It proved to be a profitable venture and soon numerous large mines were opened and operated at a profit within the county.

Philip Miller went to where Anthony's mill was assumed to be built. In 1824 he is shown as the owner of a mill on Big Pigeon

Creek in that location. He either built another mill near Anthony's mill or simply operated Anthony's mill. (Anthony's mill was later owned by a man named Cox.) At about the same time Luke Grant also built a mill there, so the name Millersburgh was doubly appropriate. Building a mill was a tremendous undertaking and considered a "great enterprise." Before long mills began popping up all over the county.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

### MILLERSBURGH

Millersburgh, one of the earliest settlements in the county, was located in Campbell township nine and a half miles northeast of Boonville, Indiana. It was settled by Philip Miller. Some sources say he laid out the town in 1824 for his heirs while others say that Ann Cox, executrix of the estate of John Cox, laid it out on the 1st day of October, 1850.

John Razor was the first merchant and Samuel Parker and Moses Condit were the first school teachers in the area. The Methodist Episcopal church was erected in 1859 in Millersburgh though the county's first church was built in 1824 just west of Boonville. The town erected a school house in 1873.

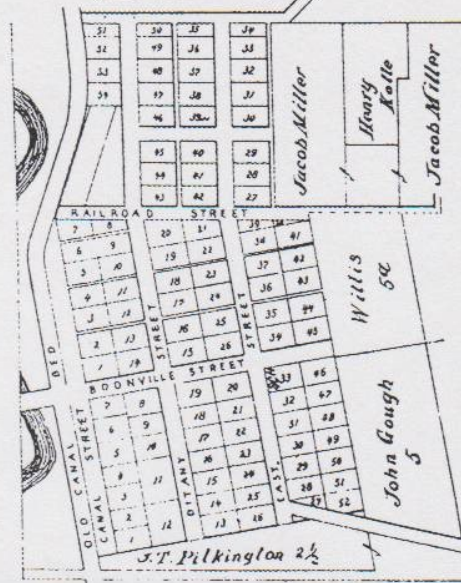
Millersburgh became the most prosperous when the Wabash and Erie Canal passed through it. The canal provided the town and others along its route in Warrick county with a principal means of travel and freight transportation. By 1881 the population of Millersburgh was 105 and it contained about thirty houses, two churches, a school, a Masonic Hall, two dry goods stores, a tobacco warehouse, a blacksmith shop, a bar, a grist mill, a coal mine and three physicians.

The physicians were Dr. Runcie, Dr. Keegan, and Dr. Charles Parke. Dr. Keegan located in Millersburgh after he graduated from medical school in 1857. He was President and charter member of the Warrick County Medical Society. Dr. Parke was born in Ireland in 1836 and came to Vanderburgh county in 1841. He entered the State University at Bloomington, IN. in 1853, served in the Civil War, and continued his studies at Miami Medical College in Cincinnati. He graduated from Miami in 1867 and began practice in Millersburgh.

By 1885 Millersburgh had declined. It only had three dry goods and grocery stores, two blacksmith shops and NO saloon. R. G. Cotterell still ran a good grist-mill. The Masons and Odd Fellows lodges still flourished, and there was an ordinary district school.

### MILLERSBURGH

(CANAL P. O)



This 1889 map shows how Millersburgh was situated on the Wabash and Erie Canal. **An Illustrated Standard Atlas of Warrick Co., IN.** Evansville, IN: Tillman & Fuller Pub. Co.

Millersburgh, also known as Canal Post Office, was the largest town through which the Wabash & Erie Canal passed in Warrick County. The canal followed Pigeon Creek through the following townships: Greer, named for Richard Greer who settled there in 1825; Campbell, for its somewhat disputed first resident; and Ohio, named for the Ohio river. The abandonment of the canal and the remote location of the village from commercial outlets impeded its growth.

Campbell township, in which Millersburgh is located, contains about thirty-nine square miles that is watered by Big Pigeon Creek flowing across from north to south and along most of its southern boundary and by Squaw Creek flowing along its eastern boundary. The creeks made this a good agricultural area with well watered and drained arable land.

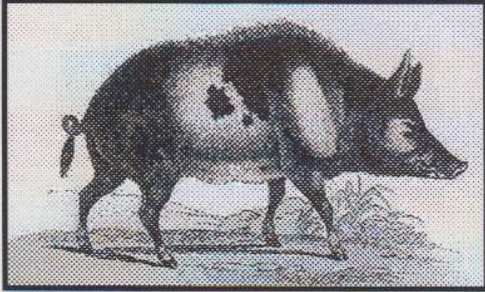
The township was full of wild game and wild hogs that roved the woods eating the fallen fruits on the forest floor. There were more hogs in Campbell township than in the other townships in Warrick County. This was probably the result of Big Pigeon Creek overflowing its banks and





## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

of Big Pigeon Creek overflowing its banks and depositing many nuts that were easily obtained by the rooting animals. The hogs were the main meat supply of the earlier settlers in the area.

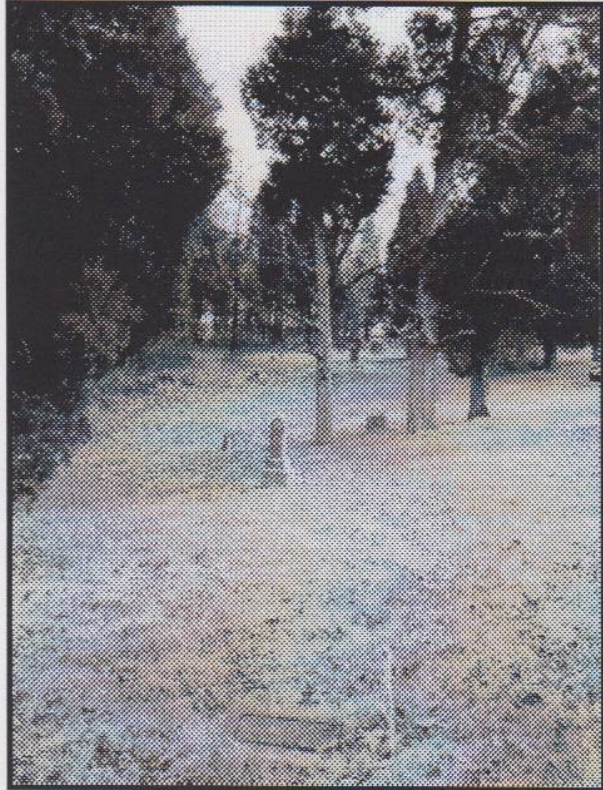
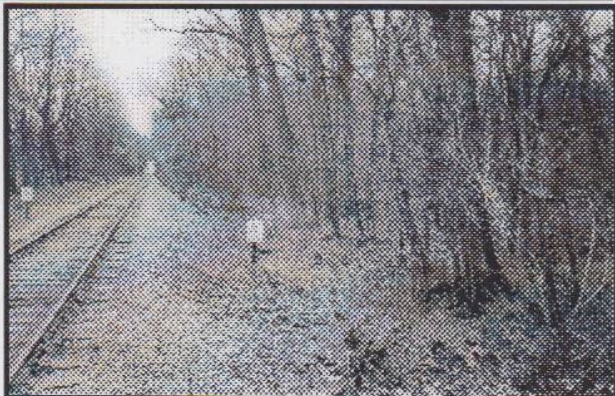


Even today the above mentioned townships are extremely rural and much of the land is owned by coal companies. The covered bridge across Pigeon Creek at Millersburgh was razed in 1951 and its school closed in 1965. Elmer Brown and his family were the last to live there, but moved in 1983 to land along the canal south of the town. Today Millersburgh is a mere memory after being strip mined by Peabody Coal. Its little cemetery sits high atop a hill with a few trees and gravestones. Surrounding it is fairly flat barren land where soil dug out to remove the coal has been bulldozed and leveled. A rock mining road runs for miles along the forgotten canal bed and is marked "No Trespassing."

Top Right: Millersburgh cemetery sits above the surrounding strip mined land now owned by Peabody Coal and has a few stones. One has the name of Hiram H. Miller who died of February 24, 1856. He was 23 years old.

Bottom Right: The town of Millersburgh, located to the right of the gravel round, was destroyed and the land on which it stood strip mined. The Wabash and Erie Canal is in the low area by the tree line. Photos by Bob Schmidt

Below: The railroad runs atop the old towpath at Millersburgh. The canal and town were to its right.



## NEWBURGH

Although not located on the canal, the little town of Sprinklesburg with John Sprinkle's blacksmith shop and Sprinkle' Landing grew up along the Ohio River. In 1818 Jacob Keels ran the first ferry that crossed from the landing to Kentucky. In 1824 a ferry license was given to John Hathaway for Mount Prospect, another name for Sprinklesburg. The ferries brought trade to the small town. In 1829 Abner Luce platted a town called Newburgh that was adjacent to Sprinklesburg. Around 1832 its first tavern was opened by James McMurtry. In 1837 the two

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

towns were merged by the state legislature with a median strip of land owned by Samuel Short. From then on it was known as Newburgh.

Pork-packing was one of the leading industries for Newburgh. However, with the coming of the Wabash & Erie Canal to Evansville, much of the commerce ordinarily received at Newburgh was diverted to Evansville. This took away pork-

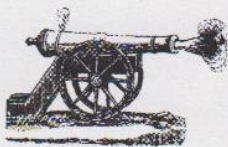


packing as an important branch of business for the town and was the first blow to the town's business interests. The second blow came when the railroad was built from Evansville to Boonville letting Newburgh sit high and dry. Newburgh residents had fought against the railroad instead of trying to get it to come to their town.

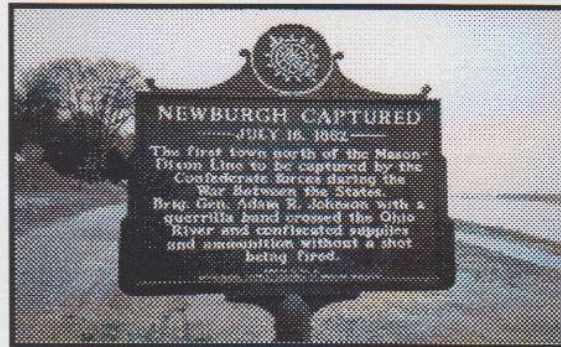
Newburgh was incorporated in 1849, dissolved in 1851 and re-incorporated 1852 due to some defect in its earlier incorporation. It was the first town in Warrick County to "assume the duties and responsibilities of an independent body politic."

In 1856 an agricultural organization was incorporated known as the Warrick County Agricultural Association. It built a half-mile race track, buildings to support the track and a large amphitheater that seated 3,000 persons. It was a source of pleasure and profit to Warrick farmers.

On July 18, 1862, during the Civil War, Adam R. Johnson over ran Newburgh. This was the first time southern troops entered Indiana. Johnson fooled the Union soldiers by using fake cannon made of stovepipes on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River. Thereafter he was called "Stovepipe Johnson." He raided the commissary, took hospital items, and gathered ammunition, sabres and pistols. Today a marker stands along the river that reads:



NEWBURGH CAPTURED  
—JULY 18, 1862—  
The first town north of the Mason-Dixon Line to be captured by the Confederate forces during the War Between the States. Brig. Gen. Adam R. Johnson with a guerrilla band crossed the Ohio River and confiscated supplies and ammunition without a shot being fired.



Newburgh was captured during the Civil War without a shot being fired. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Agriculture was big business for Warrick county. "During the year 1867, 2824 hogsheads of tobacco were shipped from this county. This tobacco, worth on an average, at least \$120 per hhd. amounts to the snug sum of \$338,880.

"The same year 139,100 bushels of corn were shipped from this county, which at the average price of 66 cents, amounted to \$91,806. The same year 2,000 tons of hay were shipped from the county, which, at the average of \$12 per ton, amounted to \$24,000.

"The above articles were shipped from Newburgh and one or two other points on the river, while the pork, &c., for which there was no market in the County, was hauled to Evansville and other markets."

1860-1870 were probably the most prosperous early years of Newburgh when farmers shipped their produce via the Ohio river. Wharves and streets were busy. The population of 1830 was only 37 people but by 1868 had reached 2,000. It had one printing office, six dry goods stores, seventeen grocery stores, four crockery stores, two hardware stores, three drug stores, four large flouring-mills, two extensive saw-mills, one brewery, one shingle factory, two plow factories, two wagon factories, one tannery, six boot and shoe manufactories, three saddle and harness establishments, two tin and sheet iron manufactories, four millinery shops, one large tobacco warehouse, etc.

The coal industry in the 1900s and the erection of Lock and Dam 47 on the Ohio river in the 1920s spurred it on. However, motorcycle gangs, fires, and businessmen moving elsewhere in the 1970s scared away the retail business that once flourished.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



Newburgh's current lock and dam on the Ohio River.

Photo by Bob Schmidt

A new larger Lock and Dam was completed in 1975 and the old one destroyed by dynamite. The community banded together to get a four-block-square area of town on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. They also created Historic Newburgh, Inc. that advertises the town and offers visitors maps to see the old homes and businesses that are marked with green historical markers. It is located on Jennings Street where buildings once used as a factory warehouse and a church are reborn as a unique shopping center and condominiums overlooking the Ohio river. Antique, craft and novelty shops line the street and have spilled over into nearby streets. One of the oldest brick buildings is the Country Store built in 1862, the year the town was captured by the Confederates. To learn more of the street and town see their website at [www.newburgh.org](http://www.newburgh.org)

In 1870 Warrick County had about the same population as Spencer and Gibson counties, but it forged ahead. In the 1950s ALCOA (Aluminum Company of America) became its major industry. By 1970s its population had increased by 48%. In 1983 it was larger than Spencer, Gibson, Posey, and Knox counties due to coal. It produced twice the amount of coal than any other Indiana county at the time and ranked 7th in recoverable coal reserves. AMAX and Peabody Coal are still its major producers.

Warrick County's crop-rich bottom farmland produces soybeans, corn and some tobacco. Its gently rolling hilly uplands are good for grazing livestock. Its towns include Boonville (county seat), Chandler, Elberfeld, Folsomville, Lynnville, Newburgh, Selvin and Stephenston.

### Wabash & Erie Canal

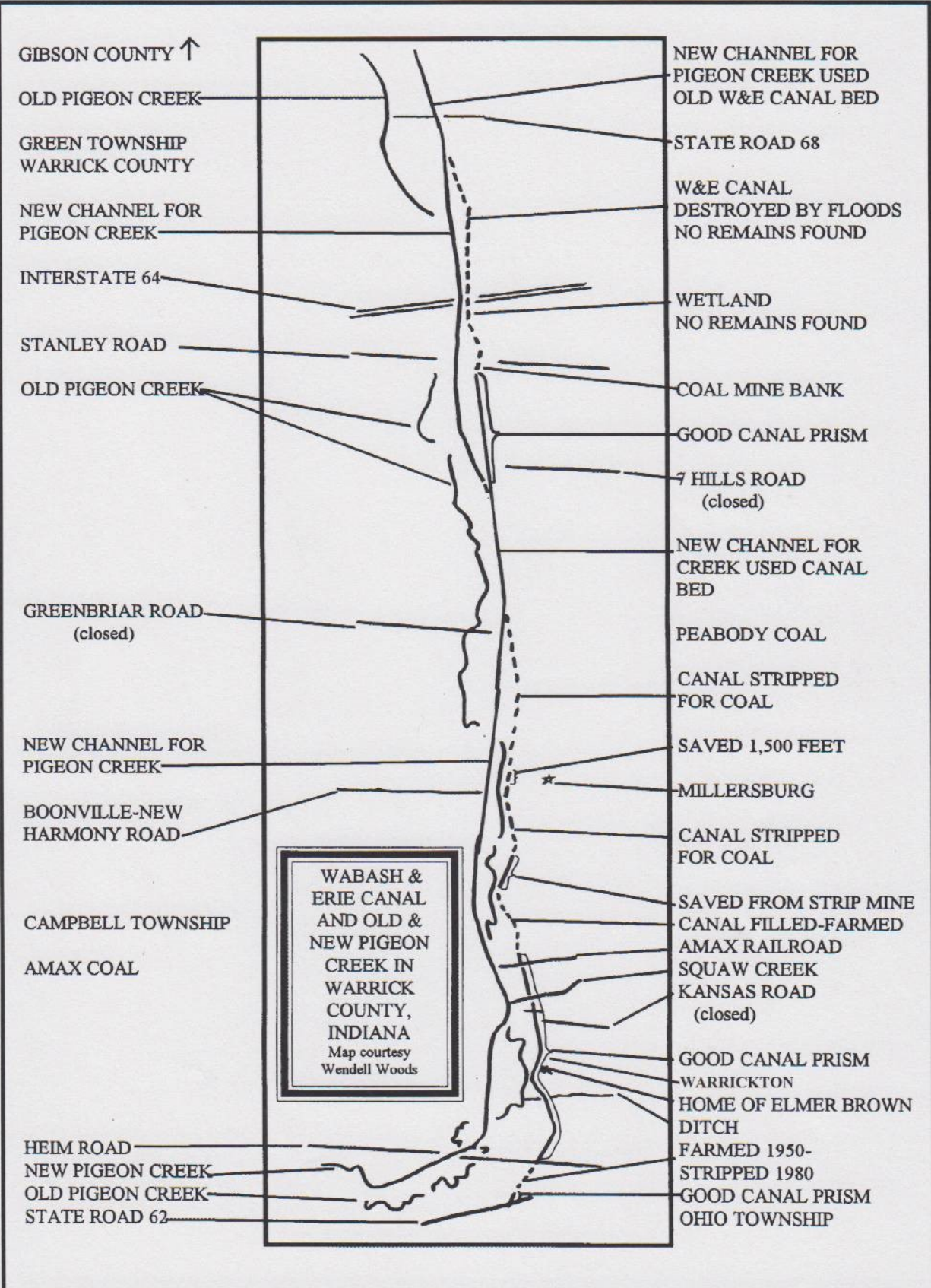
The Wabash & Erie Canal enters Warrick county near the present day U. S. 68 northeast of Elberfeld and follows the valley of Pigeon Creek until it reaches the Norfolk and Southern Railroad at Chandler. It then is to the south side of the tracks into Vanderburgh County. Due to the coal companies owning much of the county and strip mining the land, the canal is difficult to reach in Greer and Campbell townships unless one would walk it on foot. It can be reached by towpath road from Squaw Creek south.

In the 1950s AMAX purchased 10,000 acres of land on the west side of the Wabash and Erie Canal and the Peabody Coal Company purchased the land on the east side. The land along the canal near S. R. 62 west of Chandler was farmed in the 1950s, strip mined in 1980, and has been put back into farmland. The towpath was developed into a county road from Kansas Road to Heim Road and was used until about 1980 when the bridge over Squaw Creek



The Wabash and Erie Canal still has water in its bed above and below Warrickton Road. This area needs to be marked with a historical marker. Photos by Bob Schmidt

# GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville





## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

was removed. About a two mile stretch of Towpath Road is still in use between Warrickton Road and Heim Road. Portions of it are dirt and almost impossible to get through in wet weather.

Pigeon Creek was channelled in 1915. The old canal bed was used for a portion of its new channel. The old meanders of the creek are now a great wildlife habitat. In other portions of the canal bed there are water and fallen trees.

When Peabody coal strip mined portions of Warrick and Vanderburgh county, veins of coal were dug from deep, long trenches. The mining operation left behind deep quarries and stripper pits, tall mounds of earth and 50-foot cliffs. The Victoria mines were closed in the 1960s. If no attempt were made to reclaim the land, it would take Mother Nature hundreds of years to make it productive again. She began by filling some 80 acres with water forming strip ponds.

Luckily the Victoria Mine property was near the up-scale housing at Newburgh, which in the past twenty years has become the address for many of Evansville's wealthy businessmen and women. Today those strip mine pits dug by Peabody Coal in its Victoria Mine have been turned into a world class 18-hole golf course. Tom Fazio, a well known golf course designer, laid out plans to dig, shape, and move the rough, overgrown hilly terrain, which had sheer cliff drop-offs, into a flawless course. The spoil mounds were covered with grass and mature trees planted. Resting stations were built at underground mine shafts complete with mining accessories.

Victoria National opened to member play on the Fourth of July, 1998. The same grass that is used on the Augusta National course grows at Victoria and is maintained by a computer controlled Sub-air-in-the-ground vault system that cools the greens when they get too hot and warms them when they get too cold. The strip ponds add to the beauty and challenge of the course. A railroad trestle bridge and a stone bridge add to the scenic quality of the course.

### MURDER ON CANAL BRIDGE

On April 3, 1900 Nora Kifer was last seen at the bridge across the Wabash & Erie

Canal in Warrick County. A book was published about the Keith Murder Trial from which we quote in its entirety the following about her disappearance:

"To those used to city ways and refined airs this girl might have appeared unsophisticated and possibly uncultured, but in her native heath she was the queen of all the maids. Her sobriquet of "Pretty Nora Kifer" was not amiss, and as she walked away from her home at the closing of this April day, dressed in her new spring costume, she was conscious of the power that lay within her.

"Telling her mother that she was going to a spelling bee at the district school, Nora Kifer walked slowly down through the meadow and over to the towpath. As she walked and listened to the music of nature and to the song of triumph within her own bosom her face blowed (sic) with intermittent gleams that transformed it into the beautiful. Although ostensibly bound for the schoolhouse did she not know she was to meet a man whom she had brought under her spell? Ah! What happiness for her! To be loved by any one was better than all things else.

"On down through the long avenue of vivid green Nora wended her way. The evening shadows had begun to fall, and the laborer, tired of this work, was plodding homeward to his evening meal. Once, the girl stopped at the home of a neighbor and after a chat on indifferent topics continued her walk to the southward. She passed a number of her admirers but was in no mood for conversation, and left them again without much ado.

"At last the long, narrow road was reached, and the girl stopped as if in contemplation of the beauty of the scene which met her eyes. The gorgeous colors of clouds and sky, the tiers of living green mounted away to the westward hills formed a picture that would baffle the skill of the artist to emulate. The girl stood enraptured for a few moments, and then walked rapidly to the old canal bridge. Here she paused. Her thoughts flew back to the note she had read a few hours previously. A note written by a married man and said: 'Meet me at the bridge at dusk,' and signed, 'Joe.'

"The old bridge was made a trysting place by this girl and illicit lover. Under the cover of the gray dusk they would meet at eventide and tell of the love which would, in the end, scorch their very souls. Little they reckoned of the consequences when they allowed this cankerous growth to spring up within their lives. Nor did the lover care as he would press the kisses of his

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

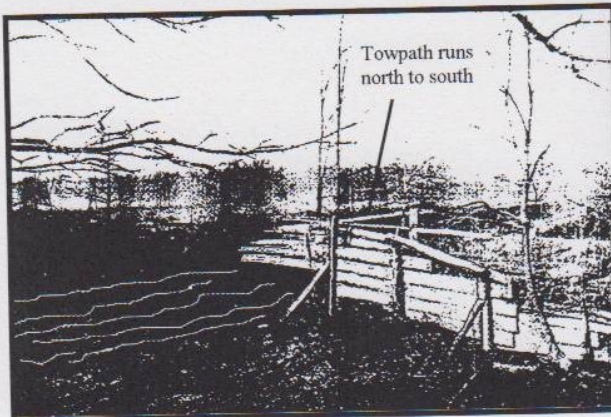
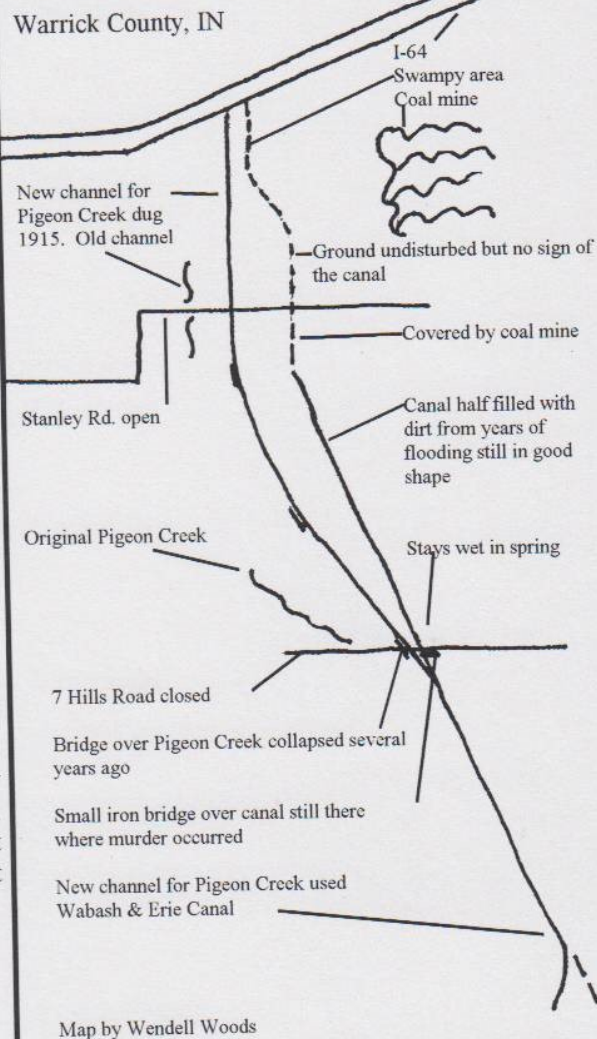
hot passion on those lips which had until then been pure and unsullied. He did not remember those

*"Angelic youths of old,  
Who turned for maids of mortal mold,  
Bewilder's, left the glorious skies,  
And lost their heaven for woman's eyes."*

He believed he had lost his heaven, already, and would drain the cup of love to its very dregs, be what they may. He had fantastically dreamed of being wafted away over some unknown sea where not a pulse but their would beat, and not a cloud would obscure the sun of love. He could not understand why heaven had mingled two souls and earth had rent them asunder by prosaic marriage vows. In his fancy's wanderings he had longed to escape the thralldom that kept him trammled, and hoped for a freedom that would let him live again!

"The girl knew these moods and must have smiled as she walked to and fro on the bridge and thought of the silken net she had woven for this recalcitrant lover of hers. She waited impatiently a few moments longer, and taking a last glance down the long, brown road, she crossed to the towpath and the next moment was lost to view. It was pretty Nora Kifer's last walk.

"She was never again seen alive."



Above: Old iron bridge across canal used until 1980s when Seven Hills Road was closed due to coal mining. December 1998 photo courtesy of Steven Godeke.  
Left: Nora Kifer disappeared among the bushes to the left of the old canal bridge. Photo looks north-west.



# GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

## 1870 Statistics of Warrick County

	Population
Newburgh	1,817
Greer Township	1,000
Campbell Township	1,138
Ohio Township	2,400
Total in entire county	14,791

## 1880 Warrick County Census

	Population
Millersburgh (Canal)	105
Campbell Township	1,536
Greer Township	1,214
Ohio Township	3,423
Total in entire county	20,160

Name, town, job, live in, where born, date

Frederick Cook, Canal, Trustee, Greer Twp., Cambridgeshire, Eng. 1851

W. H. T. Davis, Canal, Farmer, Ohio Co., Kentucky, 1833

Constantine Heim, Canal, Farmer, Eisfeld, Germany, 1853

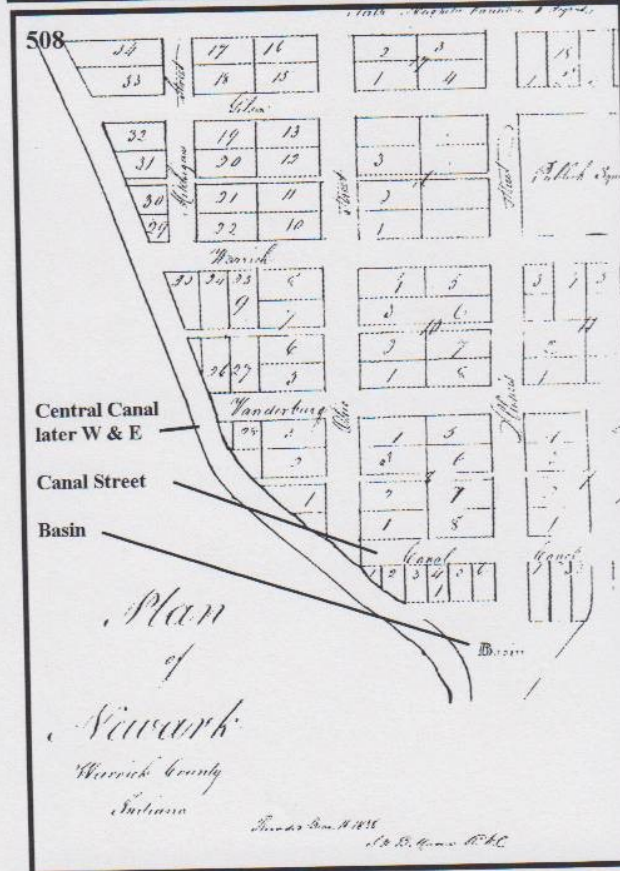
Adolph W. Heim, Canal, Trustee, Campbell Twp., Eisfeld, Germany, 1853

C. J. Keegan, Canal, Physician, Vanderburgh Co., 1858

Emory McCool, Chandler, Farmer, Warrick Co., 1838

Charles Parke, Canal, Physician, Westneath Co., Ireland, 1865

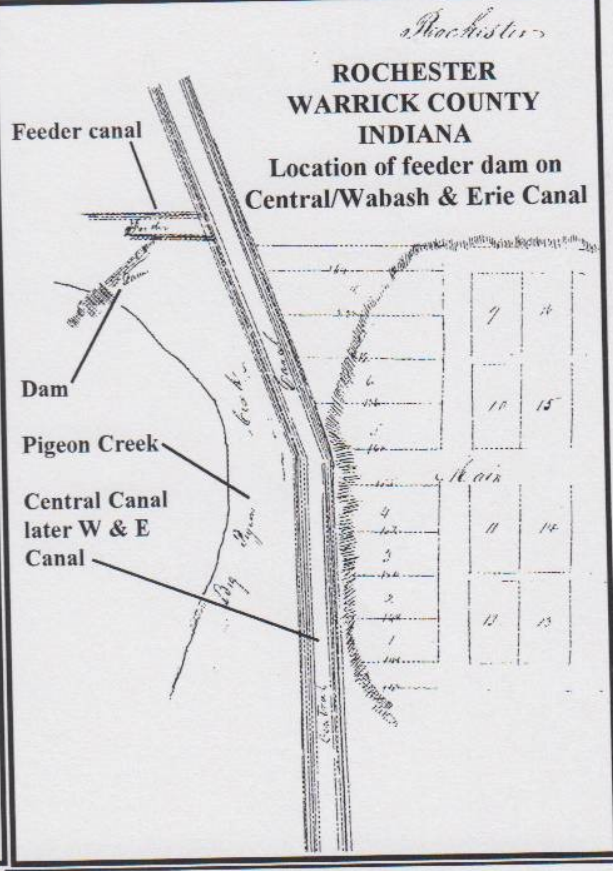
Wm. C. Stubbs, Canal, Farmer, Campbell Co., Ky., 1844



**Plat of Newark  
Warrick Co, Indiana**

Recorded Mar. 16, 1838

J. W. B. Moore R. W.C.



**A Plat of Rochester, Indiana  
Warrick County**

Note the dam across Pigeon Creek 18 miles above Evansville that backed up water and the short feeder canal that put the water in the mainline of the Central Canal, which later became the Wabash and Erie Canal.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# RIVER LOCK & DAM

### The Newburgh Lock & Dam By Stan Schmitt

One of the stops on this tour is the modern Ohio River lock and dam at Newburgh, Indiana. At this site it is possible to see in a large scale most of the mechanical structures associated with canals—locks, dams, waste weirs and flood gates.

The present facilities at Newburgh are the result of federal river improvement projects beginning in 1824. In that year Congress passed the first civil works program by appropriating \$75,000 for channel maintenance on the lower Ohio and Mississippi River. A year later the Louisville and Portland Canal Company was chartered to build a canal and lock around the major Ohio River obstruction at Louisville. In 1874, Congress recognized the importance of navigable rivers to the growth of the country and assigned its management to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. This included the purchase of the Portland Canal and the constructing of locks and dams on the Ohio River. Between the

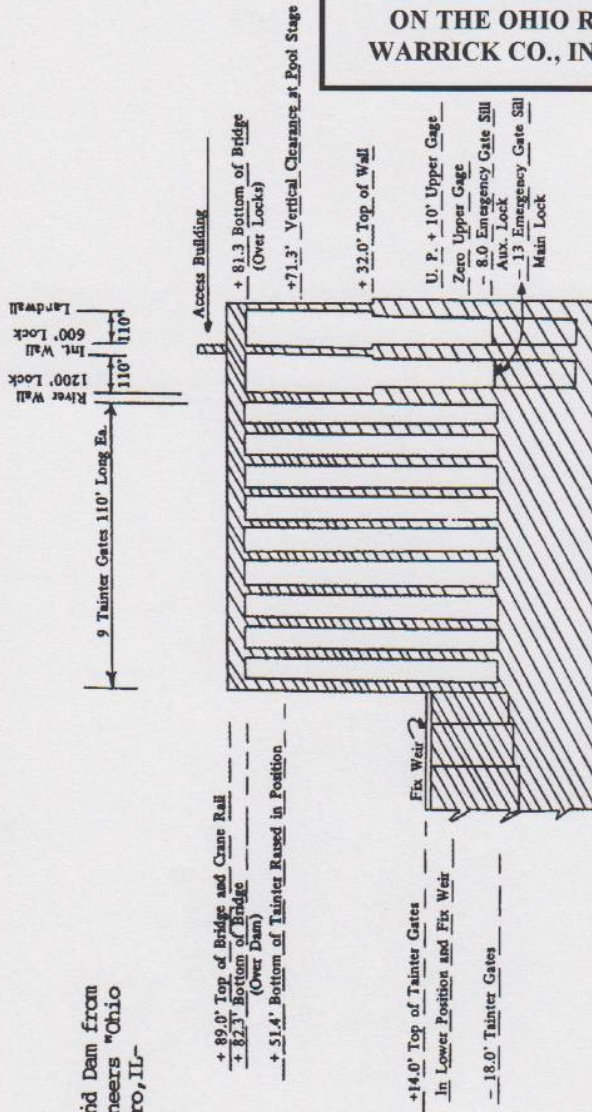
completion of the first lock near Pittsburgh in 1885 and 1910, Congress provided for 12 more navigation locks and dams on the Ohio. In 1910, the increasing value of the river was recognized and the government authorized 54 locks and dams to provide a navigable depth of 9 feet from the mouth of the Ohio River to Pittsburgh. By the early 1930s this project had been completed.

The present structure was authorized in 1962 to replace two of the existing dams. Construction was begun in 1965 and completed 10 years later at a cost of almost \$105 million. The dam consists of a gated section 1,152.5 feet long and a fixed weir section 1,123.2 feet long. The gated section has 9 tainter gates 110 feet wide by 32 feet high to control the flow of water. When the locks are closed by high water, navigation passes over the fixed weir section of the dam. On the Indiana side of the river are two parallel locks with chambers of 110 x 1200 feet and 110 x 600 feet. These locks can be filled or emptied in 8 minutes and have a lift of 16 feet. With present river traffic reaching near capacity levels, studies are underway for the possible enlargement of the auxiliary lock at Newburgh.



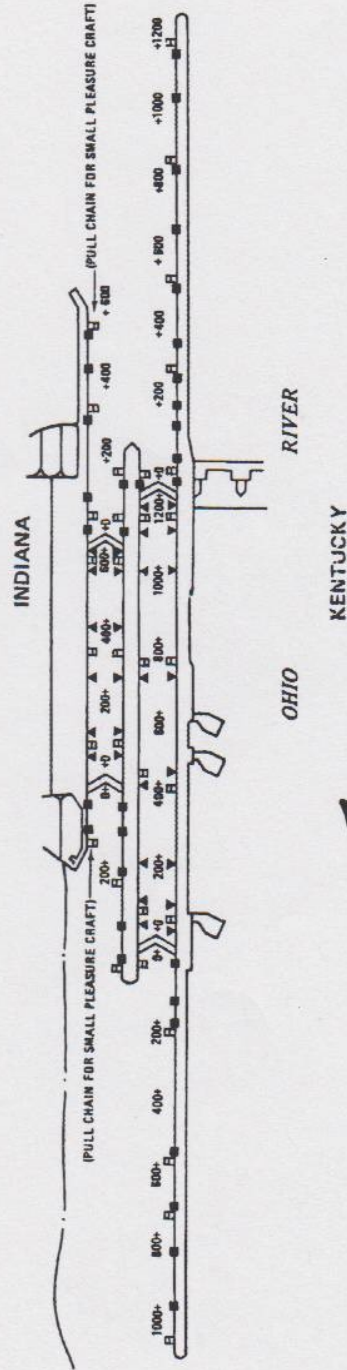
# GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

## NEWBURGH RIVER LOCKS & DAM ON THE OHIO RIVER WARRICK CO., INDIANA



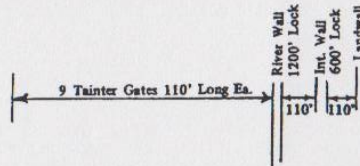
Plan of the Newburgh Lock and Dam from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers "Ohio River Navigation Charts, Cairo, IL - Foster, KY"

NEWBURGH LOCKS	
UPPER GAGE:	
ZERO ELEV	= 348.0
N.P. (NEWBURGH)	= +10.0
LOWER GAGE:	
ZERO ELEV	= 330.0
N.P. (UNIONTOWN)	= +12.0

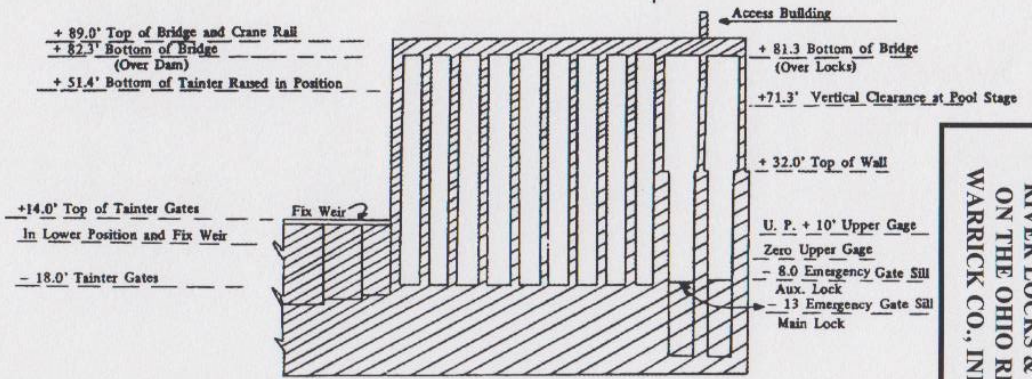


Legend  
 L Ladder  
 ▲ Floating mooring post  
 ■ Check post

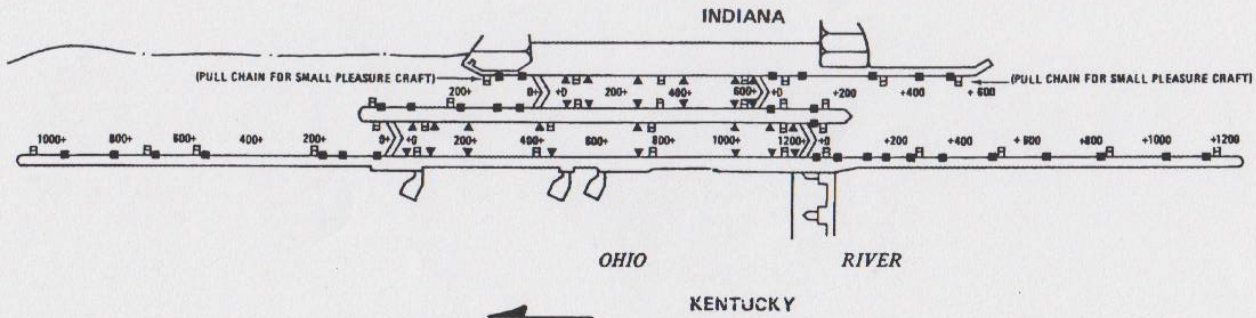
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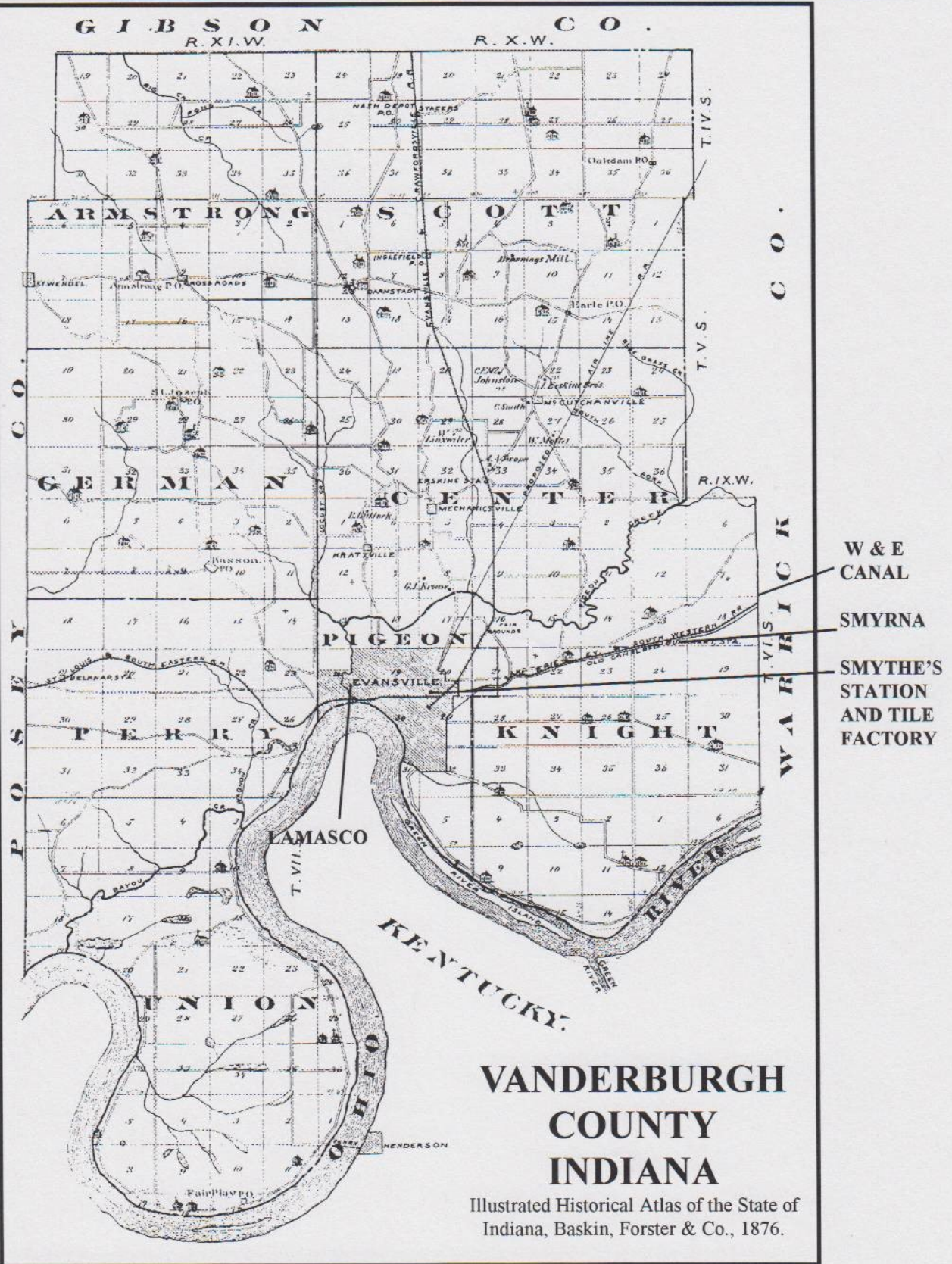


**NEWBURGH  
RIVER LOCKS & DAM  
ON THE OHIO RIVER  
WARRICK CO., INDIANA**



**Legend**  
 R Ladder  
 ▲ Floating mooring post  
 ■ Check post

# GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# VANDEBURGH COUNTY

A man of foresight, Hugh McGary purchased 441 acres at the horseshoe bend of the Ohio River in 1812. He hoped to establish an important river port. Two years later he got his friend Robert M. Evans, a territorial legislator, to persuade the newly created Warrick County commissioners to choose his land for the county seat. The new town was named Evansville in honor of Evans. It is the most southerly located city of the North being south of both St. Louis, MO and Louisville, KY.



**ROBERT M. EVANS**  
1889 History of Vanderburgh County, IN

Wild hogs were prolific in southern Indiana at the time Evansville was settled and the woods behind it were full of them. Often a sow strayed into the woods so often to eat the nuts or "mast" that she went wild. At the time nuts were so plentiful that the hogs hardly made a dent on them and millions went to waste each year.

The farmers set up a system of marking the ears of their drove of hogs that roamed freely on the range near their farms and registered the marks on the county books. When they rounded up the beasts in the winter and took them to market, they could prove which hogs were theirs. They also had to declare whether they were "mast" fed or corn fed, the latter tasting less wild.

As pork became more available, the settlers gave up eating bear meat even though the bear meat was easier to keep, needed less salt and was thought to be superior to corn-fed pork. Its oil was even richer than pork lard.

These wild hogs were vicious and would come right out in the open to fight. Stories abounded about attacks by these creatures or

often by the entire drove. When caught and penned up they would gnaw through their pens and escape. Running wild they performed the service of ridding Indiana of lots of snakes, rattlesnakes included. They were immune to the poison of the snakes and would eat them.

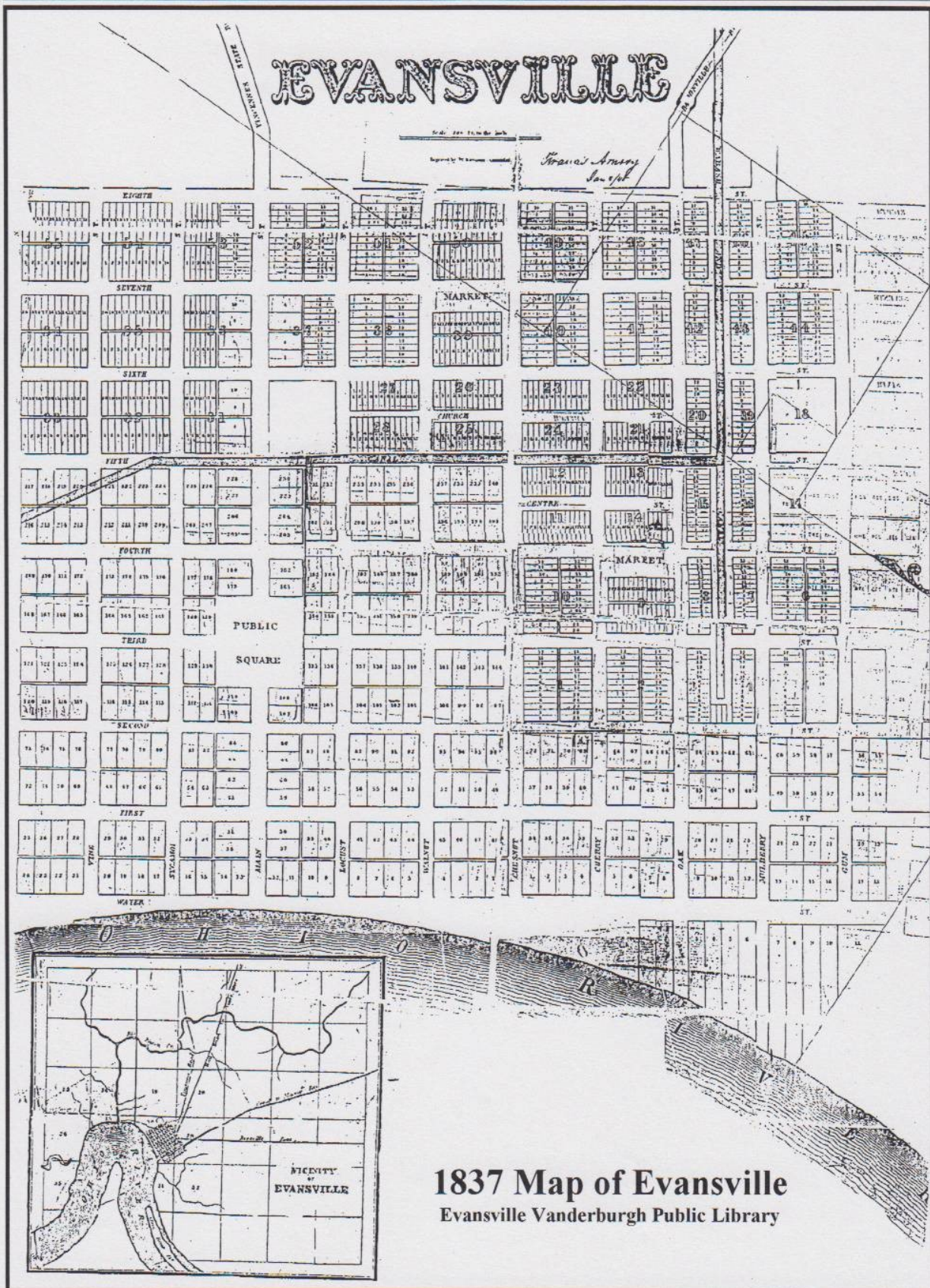
McGary married the daughter of Jonathan Anthony, the builder of the first mill on Pigeon Creek where settlers had their corn made into meal. McGary, who was said to be of Irish disposition, established ferries across Pigeon creek and the Ohio river and began selling lots in earnest. However, when Posey and Perry counties were taken out of Warrick county, Evansville was no longer centrally located. The commissioners moved the county seat to Darlington that is above present day Newburgh.

Evansville lost some of its citizens to Darlington. McGary himself bought a lot there although he continued to live in Evansville, which in 1817 consisted of about a dozen cabins some of which were uninhabited. He closed his ferry across the Ohio but kept the Pigeon ferry running and opened a store.

Deeply in debt, McGary was forced to sell 130 acres of his finest property to Robert Evans and James Jones. The three men re-platted the town and sought a way to regain the county seat. They appealed to Ratliff Boon, a landowner in Warrick County with high political aspirations. Boon agreed that he would redraw the county lines and give the county seat back to Evansville if he was elected a state senator. He kept his word and in 1818 Vanderburgh County was carved out of Warrick County as Indiana's 22nd county. It was named for Henry Vanderburgh, who was head of the Northwest Territory Legislative Council in 1799, was a judge in the territory, and was a trustee on the first board of Vincennes University.

When Evansville was selected as the county seat there were only 25 votes cast. Elisha Harrison, the county's first state assemblyman, obtained the first town charter. By 1819 the

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1837 Map of Evansville  
Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library

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population had increased to 100 people. Civic activity centered around McGary's trading post and home where he held the first church service and where, over the years, he acted as postmaster, circuit court clerk, county recorder, associate judge, and president of the town trustees. By 1820 Evansville extended from Sycamore to Walnut and from Water to Third streets.

The 1820s were hard times for Vanderburgh County. Property and produce decreased in value. Tax-gatherers often had to take skins or other articles for payment of taxes. Toward the end of the decade prosperity was returning with good health and the coming of immigrants

But all was not well for Hugh McGary. It is ironic that McGary, the man who built Evansville's first jail, was accused of horse stealing in 1832 and other crimes for which he was acquitted, but these cases broke his spirit. He profited little from his business ventures, became ill and, practically destitute, moved to the South to live his remaining years with his daughter.

An early discovery of a salt spring by Elisha Harrison and James W. Jones along Pigeon Creek led them to bore a 322 deep hole in the ground to obtain the salt water. In this hole they placed the hollow trunk of a sycamore tree. They erected crude sheds and began boiling the water. This should have been a great find since before this time settlers had to travel to the Saline Banks in Illinois for their salt. Although the first salt they made was of an excellent quality, there was a high demand for it. They decided to sink their well to a depth of 577 feet where they struck another vein of salt. This water unfortunately contained something besides the saline properties. Mr. Worsham packed the meat of several hogs in the salt and discovered that, although the flesh remained good, the salt ate the rind off the dressed pork turning it into a slimy mass that covered the good meat. The salt also dissolved when exposed to the open air.

The salt enterprise was given up. About twenty years later (about 1842) the property was purchased by Nathan Rowley and he and Thomas Gifford turned the land into a private resort. It

changed hands several times. The salt pool drew crowds of patients seeking its medical properties. Today there is a baseball field located at the site.

About 1830 flat boating was quite heavy in the county with boats filled with produce coming down the Wabash and White rivers to converge at the Ohio river at Evansville. It was soon known as the "Landing for the Wabash." It had a tavern, new county buildings, and a stage line, but lacked other necessities in attracting settlers or businessmen. In 1832 county tax receipts were \$600 with money from licenses and other sources making the total amount received at \$1,006. That year about 11 percent of Evansville's population died during a cholera epidemic. The following year property values plummeted to lower than in 1819.

Around this time the industrious and frugal settlers began purchasing the public lands of Vanderburgh county. Many were of German descent, but others came from elsewhere in the world. The town was beginning to grow.

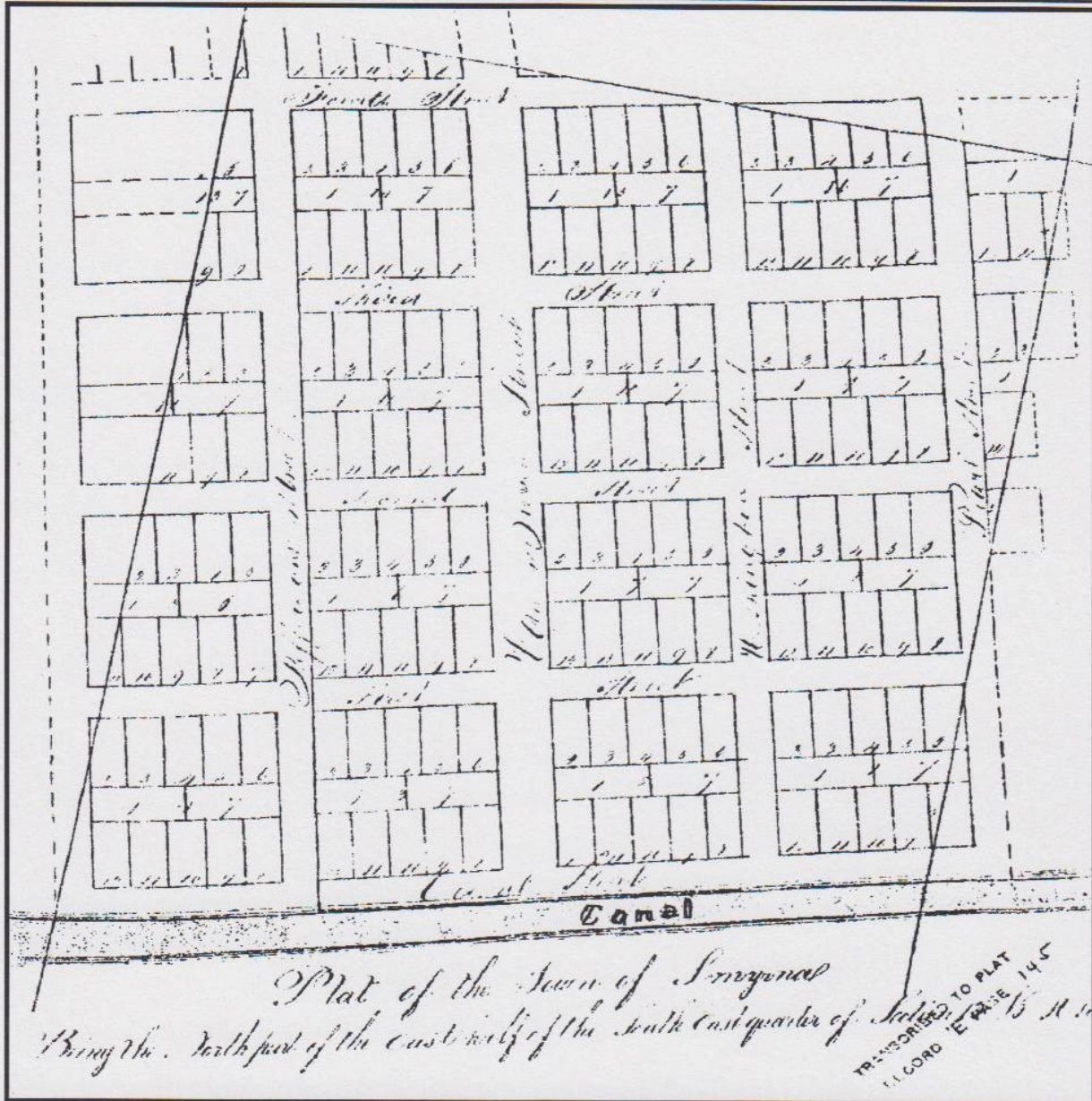
Cholera struck Evansville and the county in 1832. Though not as fatal as in some places, there were between 25 and 30 deaths in a population of about 250. It reappeared sporadically between 1849 and 1852. The Germans, who lived in more crowded conditions, suffered the most deaths. It is estimated that around 1000 workers died along the canal line between the Patoka River and Evansville in 1852. Its appearance in 1866 and 1873 brought about very few deaths because of improved sanitary conditions.

Even though Evansville saw its first locally built steamboat launched, its **Evansville Journal** founded, and a state bank branch gotten, it was the 1834 arrival by stagecoach of a letter announcing the plan for the Central Canal terminus to be located at Evansville that brought about a resurgence of growth. Public land was selling at \$1.25 an acre and was quickly purchased by people from Kentucky and the eastern states.

Following the canal announcement a date was set and a grand celebration was held on May 4, 1834 according to several old histories. However, a newspaper article published on June



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



### Plat of the Town of Smyrna Being In North part of the East half of the South East quarter of Section No. 13

On April 1, 1837, William Walker laid out the town of Smyrna in the southeast quarter of section 13, township 6 south, range 100 west. It was surveyed by Vanderburgh County Deputy Surveyor William Whittlesey and recorded by Charles A. Bowne.

This was one of the towns platted around the time of the announcement of the construction of the Central/Wabash & Erie Canal. The east-west streets were Canal, First, Second, Third and Fourth. The north-south streets were Jefferson, Van Buren, Washington and Pearl. The canal, located at the south edge of town, was supposed to have lifted the place to greatness, but the town was abandoned with the decay of the waterway.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

**EVANSVILLE, March 22, 1836.**

CAPT. Jas. Newman.

—Sir: The citizens of Evansville, Impressed with a belief that the act passed at the last session of the Legislature, “to provide for a General System of Internal Improvements”—is one that will promote the wealth and prosperity of the people of Indiana, and redound to the honor and glory of the State; and winning publicly to manifest their high regard for the service rendered to the State at large, as well as to their own town by the acts of Executive and Legislative departments of State, in regard to Internal Improvements, have resolved on giving his Excellency the Governor, his Honor the Lieutenant Governor, and all of the members of the General Assembly, who supported the Internal Improvement Bill, a Public Dinner, on the 4th day of May next. Believing

that you sir, entertain the same enlightened and liberal views, that have characterized the proceedings of the Executive and Legislative council of the State, during the passed (sic) session of the General Assembly, we, in behalf of the General Assembly, we, in behalf of the citizens of Evansville, respectfully invite You to join with us to paying a tribute of respect to exalted merit.

SILAS STEPHENS,  
IRA FRENCH,  
JOHN SHANKLIN,  
JAMES LOCKHART,  
JOHN M. LOCKWOOD,  
F.E. GOODSSELL,  
V.K. PHAR,

Committee.

INVITATION

### **Description In 1853 Newspaper**

Capt. Newman lives no longer, Silas Stephens, John Shanklin, and James Lockhart, are living in this city, and all enjoying prosperity and health. Ira French lives in Cincinnati, and is an enterprising citizen there as he was here. John M. Lockwood, to whom we are indebted for the above circular, lives within a few miles of this city. F. E. Goodsell resides at Bowling Green, KY., V. K. Phar, is living at Boonville, in this neighborhood. So much for those directly connected with this circular.

Of our old citizens who were active in getting up this celebration, which was called the Canal Celebration, although the circular does not allude to that particular improvement we may mention the following persons in addition to those only now alive and known by our citizens. Madison F. Bray, Alanson Warner, Horace Dunham, John S. Hopkins, James G. Jones, John M. Stinson, John Mitchell, Robert Barnes, John B. Mansell, W. Brown Butler, Samuel Hall, John Douglas, A. B. Carpenter, A. J. Ellis.

On the 4th day of May the celebration came off. A large crowd was present, among whom was a number of distinguished guests. At 11 o'clock a pennant forty feet in

length, with “Internal Improvements” inscribed thereon, was raised, mid loud shouts and the firing of cannon. The procession moved to the grounds selected, where an elegant dinner was prepared by Edward Hopkins, father of the present mayor of Evansville, and now deceased. Maj. Clark, President of the meetings, made the opening speech before the reading of toasts. His speech is published in the **Evansville Journal** of May 12, 1836. After this came the toasts. Thus reads one:

The Rushville and Vincennes Railroad!—Demagogues may prate, fools may scoff, and honest men may doubt; but time and perseverance will put them all to rights.

We are pleased to announce that this road will be completed next fall: Time certainly has had a good deal to do with this enterprise, but time and remarkable perseverance will carry it through.

Here is another toast:

Evansville.—With one foot on Lake Erie, and the other on the Ohio, with her 400 miles of canals she is destined err long to become one of the great commercial emporiums of the West.

So is she becoming, if she may not be already called thus. At that time

the completion of the Canal and Railroad was looked upon as a speedy triumph.

In reply to the toast—“Our Lieutenant Governor,” Gov. Wallace made an excellent speech.

Gen. Milton Stapp also made a speech in reply to a toast complimenting him as an “enlightened and liberal statesman and a faithful representative to the great interest of his constituents.” Gen. Evans who was present, was highly complimented in both speeches. Col. Thos. J. Evans made a speech being toasted as the Chairman of the Committee on Internal Improvements. Ellihu M. Huntington also made a speech. Jus. R. Craig was toasted as “a faithful representative of the great interest of the South of White River,” to which he replied.

A large number of letters were read and volunteer toasts offered, some by persons whose names are given above. The editor of the **Journal** particularly alludes to the fact this celebration of 1836 must have in drawing attention to the “town of Evansville.”

In the evening a grand ball was given, “at which there was assembled an array of youth, and beauty seldom surpassed”. They danced all night according to the old fashioned way.

2,000 LABORERS  
**WANTED**  
ON THE CENTRAL  
**CANAL**  
Of Indiana.

THE great Central Canal of Indiana is intended to connect the waters of Lake Erie and the Ohio river, and will be about 400 miles in length. In addition to that part already completed and under contract in the middle and northern part of the state, TWENTY miles commencing at Evansville, on the Ohio river, its southern termination, and extending into the interior, were put under contract in November last; since which time the work has been steadily progressing.

No section of country holds out greater inducements to the industrious laborer than the state of Indiana, and particularly that portion of it contiguous to the Central Canal, from the fact that there is much of the land belonging to the general government remaining unentered, which may be purchased at one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre; affording to those who are desirous of doing so, an opportunity of securing to themselves, with the avails of a few months' labor, a permanent home in this flourishing and rapidly growing state.

The contractors are now paying \$20 per month, and the fare and lodgings furnished, is of the most comfortable character. It may not be amiss to say that the acting commissioner reserves, by an express provision in all contracts, the right to see that every laborer receives his just dues; therefore, no man need lose one dollar of his wages, if he pursues a proper course.

It is probable that more of this Canal will be put under contract during the coming fall or spring, when an opportunity will be offered to those who show themselves qualified of proposing for work.

Laborers coming from the south can take passage to Evansville, and find immediate employment upon their arrival. By order of JOHN A. GRAHAM, Act. Com. Canal Office, Evansville, May 1, 1837. C. G. VOORHIES, Res'dt Eng.

EVANSVILLE JOURNAL, PRINTER.

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11, 1853, includes the previous invitation that was sent to officials and others throughout the state. It is dated March 22, 1836. The newspaper said it was probably the only place where one of these invitations still existed at the time the article ran. The wording of the invitation and an account of what happened are given here. Note that the railroad as part of the Internal Improvements is included.

This celebration was a big event even for those who were not invited. A crowd stood and watched as local dignitaries and some from afar gathered at the courthouse to proceed to walk to the place where the huge dinner was served. The dinner was described in the 1899 History of Vanderburgh County, IN as follows:

"Strong drinks were freely indulged in, as was customary at that time, and as a result, so remarkable was the occasion, nearly every man in town, it has been asserted, was reeling, staggering, whopping drunk in the streets. The senators, representatives, and other invited guests, with reckless abandon, gave themselves up to the most unbecoming indulgences. The event exceeded any demonstration of popular joy that up to that time had been witnessed in the town."

Vanderburgh County experienced a prosperous period between 1833 and 1838. Indiana's legislature approved a number of internal improvements in 1836 and work began immediately on the 18 miles from the canal terminus northward. By 1837 land speculation was rampant. Canal boat building, cabinet-making, and a steam sawmill businesses were established. Public lands were taken. Capital was invested in different enterprises. The wealth of coal and timber with facilities to transport them was magnificent. Just as things seemed to be improving, there was the financial "Panic of 1837" which shut down further canal construction. However, that portion of the canal that was completed remained in service. Business growth halted. Fifty citizens died of pneumonia during the winter of 1837-1838. Population growth slowed down. There were only 2,121 residents in 1840.

The "state system" broke down soon after and all the canal did was provide an

excellent skating place for Evansville's boys in the winter. A passenger boat that was built and ready for business when the canal opened was launched into the canal and floated until it rotted away.

Several men are listed in the Vanderburgh County histories that were connected to the canal. One lists **Charles Voorhees** as the civil engineer who laid out the Wabash and Erie Canal completed in 1837.

One of the first promoters of the canal, **Captain P. G. O'Riley**, owned a wharf-boat business in Evansville which was the largest of its kind between Pittsburgh and New Orleans. His boat "The P. G. O'Riley" was a floating dock and warehouse that sat on the bank of the Ohio River. Steamboats unloaded and loaded through this boat.

**Marcus Sherwood** was born in Munroe, Fairfield Co., Connecticut on May 28, 1803 to David Sherwood, a stone-mason and a member of the Connecticut Legislature. While Marcus was growing up he worked for his father during the summer and attended school



MARCUS SHERWOOD

during the winter. Although his father wanted him to become a blacksmith's apprentice, Marcus chose to go to Indiana after hearing the account of his uncle's visit there.

Marcus and his uncle started for his new home. After spending 58 days driving an ox-team to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, they arrived with both man and beast worn out. His uncle went in with a group of friends and purchased a flat-boat. They loaded the boat with all their possessions and floated down the Ohio River to Evansville arriving on June 6, 1819.

When Marcus landed at Evansville he



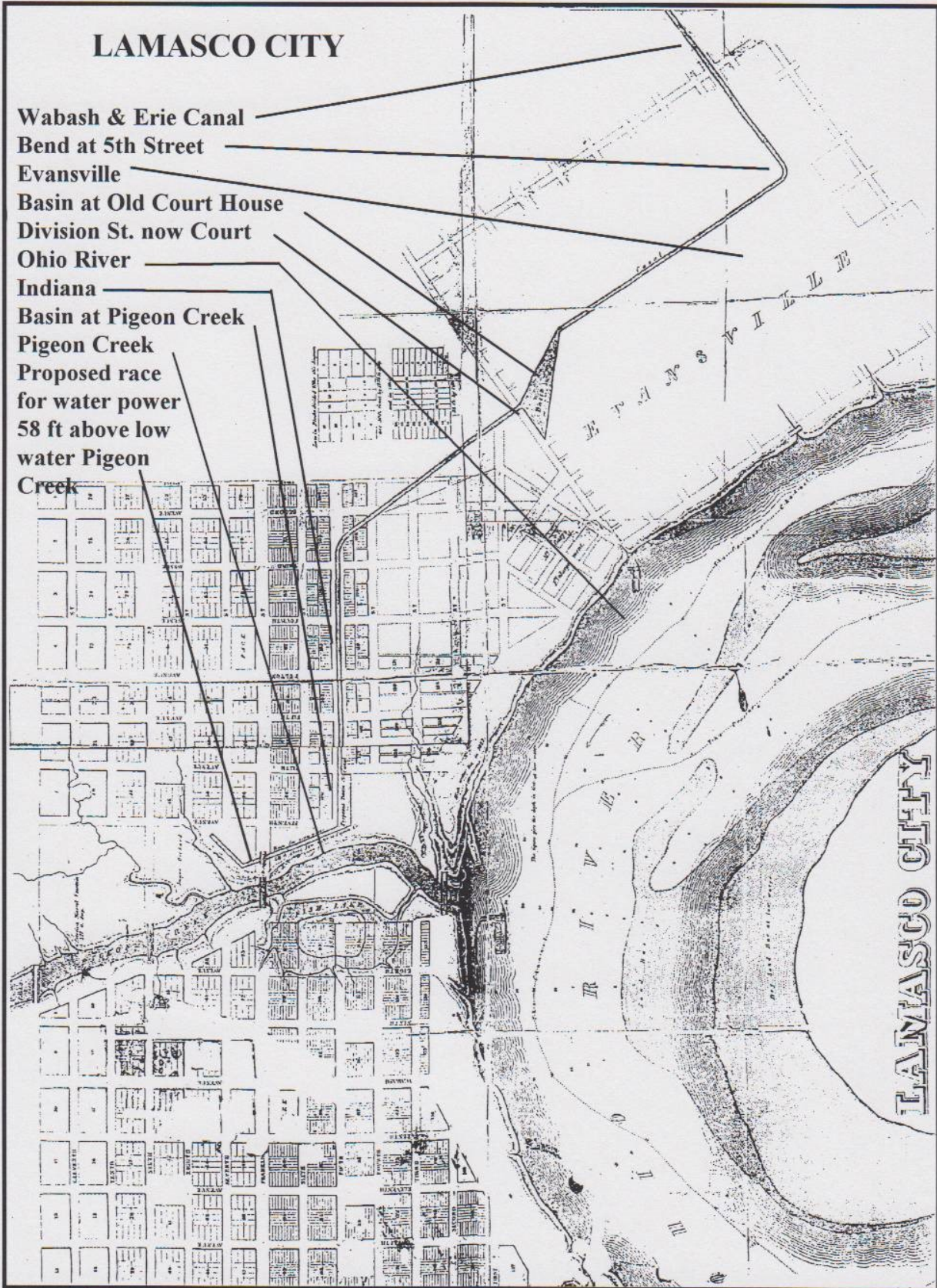
# GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

## LAMASCO CITY

Wabash & Erie Canal  
Bend at 5th Street  
Evansville

Basin at Old Court House  
Division St. now Court  
Ohio River

Indiana  
Basin at Pigeon Creek  
Pigeon Creek  
Proposed race  
for water power  
58 ft above low  
water Pigeon  
Creek



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

**Nathan Rowley** was born in Shoram, Vermont, on the 28th of September, 1788. He worked on his father's farm and also learned the shoe business. In 1819 he decided to seek his fortune elsewhere. When the flatboat on which he was traveling stopped at Evansville to "wood up" he decided to stay.

Nathan used what little capital he had to establish a shoe and boot shop on Water Street in 1820. He ran the shop for eight years, saved his profits, and accumulated several hundred dollars. During this time he was a justice of the peace and was often consulted by those prone to quarrel.

From 1828 to 1831 he operated a drug and grocery business with different partners at various times: John Shanklin, Dr. Trafton, and Gen. Evans. In 1831 he built a store-house and the following year opened a dry goods store in the building in company with Marcus Sherwood. In 1832 he purchased property, which at a later date he platted as Rowleytown of the North-eastern Enlargement.

In 1838 Nathan sold out his interest in the dry goods store to take a contract on the Central/Wabash & Erie Canal. His contract stipulated that he had to dig seven half-mile sections, and to finish the part which ran through Fifth street to Division in 1839. He faithfully completed this contract. He was the toll collector on the canal for several years. He will be remembered for his effort to relieve the State of Indiana from the "odium of repudiation in connection with its debts."

Governor Noah Noble appointed Nathan a Probate Judge in 1840. He was reelected to the office by a large majority the following year, but resigned the latter part of 1841. He was not as learned as some of his brother officials, but he was highly commended by all who dealt with him in a probate capacity.

In 1842 Nathan rented the Indiana Flour Mill. There he conducted a large and profitable business until fire destroyed it in 1844. The over ten thousand dollar loss did not stop him. He rebuilt the mill, ran it for a year and then sold it to open the Salt Well Park, in company with John Gifford. This venture became a very popular resort. He was instrumental in making

Crescent City Spring a leading public resort.

Nathan was a promoter of the Evansville & Crawfordsville Railroad in 1849 and liberally subscribed for its construction. He also contributed \$2,000 in 1853 to the Straight Line Railroad.

In 1865, at the expiration of his term of justice of the peace, he retired from his active career. He died at the home of Thomas D. Smythe, his son-in-law, on January 12, 1872.

**Thomas Smythe** (also spelled Smyth, Smith) was born in Ireland in 1824 and came to America at the age of fourteen in 1838. He was a canal boat captain on the Wabash & Erie Canal and also served as superintendent for district number nine on the canal.

In 1848 Thomas married Mary Rowley, who was born in Evansville in 1824. She was the daughter of Nathan Rowley, a politician and probate court judge who was influential in canal matters.

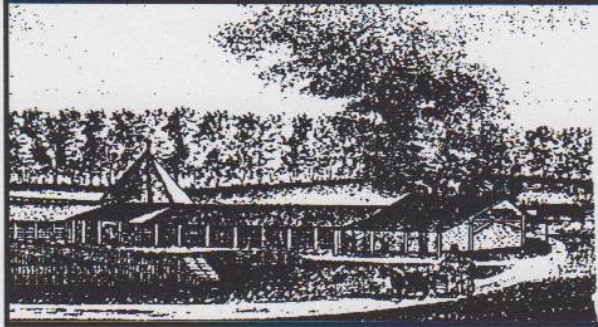
**Henry B. Smythe** was born to Thomas and Mary on March 21, 1849 in Evansville, Indiana. At age fifteen he attended Behme's Commercial College in Evansville.

Thomas Smythe served as a soldier in the Civil War. On his return to Indiana he took an active interest in the public welfare and participated in politics by voting for the Republican Party.

In 1864 when the canal supposedly closed, Thomas moved his family to a farm east of Evansville on the bank of the canal. He purchased two hundred acres on June 22, 1863, from William Walker for \$5,200.00. He built a house on what is now Green River Road, which today is Evansville's major shopping and restaurant strip. Unfortunately the land was wet and not good for farming. He knew that if he tilled the land and drained it, it would be good farm land.

In 1871 Thomas and son Henry started the Thomas Smythe Tile Factory located near the corner of Green River Road and Morgan Avenue, just down the road from their house.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



The Smythe Tile Factory from Griffing's Atlas 1880

Smythes are buried in Oak Hill Cemetery.

We do not know how long the tile factory operated. We do know that the business was not on city maps in 1899.

During the 1840s there was a huge number of German immigrants, mostly Lutherans, who came to Lamasco. Their culture effected the original English and Scotch-Irish settlement. Their customs, food, and architecture greatly influenced the city.

Their factory was very successful since much of the land in that area needed draining. It provided jobs both at the factory and on the farms. At that time the Wabash and Erie Canal was no longer in operation and the tracks of the Louisville, Evansville & St. Louis railroad were atop the old towpath. A stop along this track was known as Smythe's Station. It offered a way of transporting the tile made at Smythe's factory as far as Kentucky and Tennessee.

The tile was made by forcing clay through a mold to shape them. They made several sizes ranging from two and a half inches to six inches in diameter.

Henry Smythe married Emma Stroud on March 13, 1872. She was born in Union Township on March 16, 1854 to Benjamin Franklin and Sarah Stroud. Sarah's maiden name was Cloud. Emma was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Henry's land covered 176 acres. He had put in six to seven miles of tile on this land. It probably had more under-drainage than any other piece of land in Evansville.

Henry and Emma's daughter Maybel married a Mr. Bell in 1908. They had two daughters, Henrietta and Betty.

When Thomas grew old he moved to Kansas because he thought it would be better for his health. He died on May 14, 1880 at 4:15 a.m. at the age of 56. Henry was left to run the tile factory.

Henry deeded his land back to his mother, Mary, on March 18, 1897. He died in 1922 at the age of seventy-three. All of the

A huge fire swept Evansville in 1842 destroying all the homes between First and Second streets that fronted on the east side of Main street. There were no fire engines. Buckets of water were carried from a nearby cistern.

Following the financial crisis, work on the Wabash and Erie Canal was continued, but work on the other canals was not. The Wabash and Erie was completed to Lafayette in 1841. Evansville's city fathers decided they wanted their canal completed.

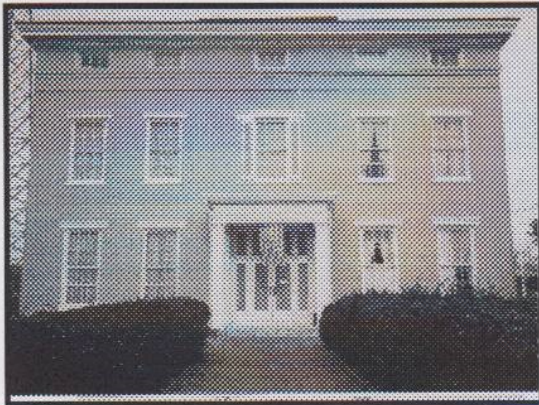
**Willard Carpenter**, born in Stratford, VT, on March 15, 1803, set out into the world in 1822 and reached Albany, N. Y. There he invested in notions and continued his journey through the Mohawk valley to Buffalo, N.Y. and on to Salem, OH. He cleared land that fall receiving \$5 per acre cleared. He also learned the tanner's and shoemaker's trade but did not enjoy them. He returned to New York and helped build the Erie canal. He didn't mind the hard work or the wages, but the accommodations were so poor that he became a school teacher. He later moved to Troy, N.Y. and engaged in merchandising with his brother. In 1837 he arrived in Evansville to work in the wholesale dry goods and notions business. Leaving to settle some earlier business in Detroit, he returned to Evansville and found it in a "deplorable condition." After a public meeting in 1842 that resolved to ask for an appropriation of lands to aid in the completion of the Wabash & Erie Canal, Mr. Carpenter circulated the petition through five different legislatures and in seventeen different states. He personally paid for all the expenses he incurred while doing so. In the following years Willard Carpenter was involved in the Evansville & Terre Haute railroad, as a partner with O.H.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Smith in the Evansville to Indianapolis "Straight Line" railroad, founded the Christian home for homeless girls, established a poor house system, was elected a member of the state legislature in 1851, and gave Evansville the magnificent Willard Library. He died on November 6, 1883.

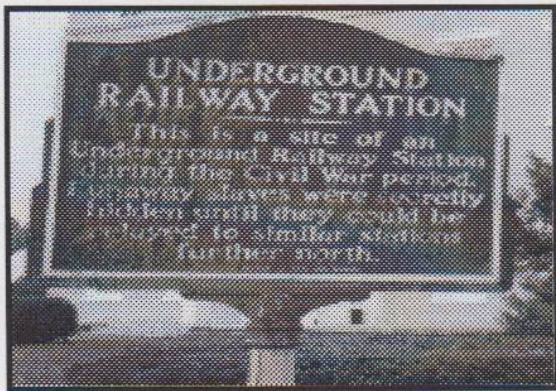
### WILLARD CARPENTER HOUSE



Once a stop on the underground railroad, it is now home to a television station. Carpenter gave Evansville the Willard Library. The historical marker reads:

This is a site of an Underground Railway Station during the Civil War period. Runaway slaves were secretly hidden until they could be relayed to similar stations further north.

Photos by Bob Schmidt

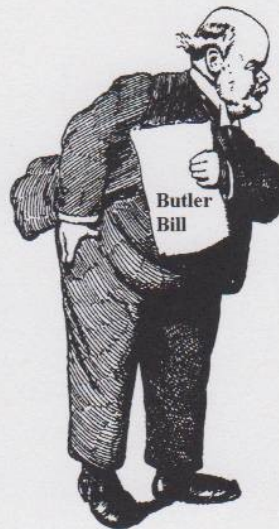


In 1837 Indiana's Board of Internal Improvements was reduced to three members. An act of January 28, 1842 abolished this board altogether and also got rid of the "Fund Commissioners" and the "Chief Engineer" of the canal, Jesse Lynch Williams. It then provided for the continuance of several public works and a

commissioner to take charge of the Wabash and Erie Canal east of Lafayette. An earlier provision was made for the completion of the canal west of Lafayette.

Hon. Conrad Baker, Gen. Joseph Lane, Hon. William Brown Butler, Willard Carpenter, and other prominent men from Evansville did their best to effect an honorable settlement of the state debts and sought favorable legislation by congress. In 1845, a third round of land grants was made of one-half of all unsold lands in the Vincennes district to be sold and to guarantee the completion of the canal.

The acts of January 19, 1846 and January 27, 1847 provided for the funded debt of the state and for a "board of trustees of the Wabash and Erie canal," and for its completion to Evansville. This "Butler Bill," the first of these acts, was offered at a meeting in Evansville in 1845. Charles Butler, Esq. representing the bondholders reiterated his debt compromise at that meeting. Charles Butler fought to present his bill to the state legislature. Finally his proposals were incorporated in a bill introduced in both the Senate and House. A two week long debate ensued. It finally passed on January 19, 1846.



"The measure provided for refunding the entire bonded debt: outstanding bonds to be surrendered for new long-term bonds bearing 5 percent, of which 2½ percent was to be paid by taxation, 2½ percent by income from the Wabash and Erie Canal; arrears of interest to be funded from 1841 to 1847 in like bonds, on which the state would pay interest of 2½ percent provided a tax levy of

twenty-five cents and a poll tax of seventy-five cents furnished sufficient assets. Creditors were required to contribute \$2,225,000 to complete the canal to the Ohio River, taking as security some eight hundred thousand acres remaining of a federal donation."



## THE CANAL BILL **SIGNED!**

We just learn by a private letter from Washington, dated the 5th. inst., that President Tyler HAS SIGNED THE BILL for a grant of Lands for the completion of the Wabash and Ohio Canal from Terre-Haute to this place. This grant gives to the State of Indiana something over 900,000 Acres, and will be amply sufficient to complete the work.

### ILLUMINATION.

Our friend, THOS. SCANTLIN, has on hand and for sale upwards of two barrels of sockets, made expressly for the Canal Illumination, we advise the citizens to give him a call as he will sell as cheap as the cheapest.

## CANAL BALL. POSTPONEMENT.

We are requested by our friend, WILLARD CARPENTER, Esq., to say that the Ball which he proposes to give to the Citizens of Evansville and others, at the Exchange Hotel, is postponed until to-morrow evening, (Friday,) at which his friends and the public are respectfully invited to attend.

This postponement is deemed prudent in order that more extended arrangements may be made for the accommodation of the company. Managers will be in attendance to receive the company, and the commencement of the Ball will be announced by the firing of cannon,

3-13-1845

# LAND GRANT TO COMPLETE WABASH & ERIE CANAL

## BUTLER BILL

### STATE DEBT BILL PASSED.

It will be seen by reference to our correspondence in another column, that the State Debt and Canal Bill finally passed the Senate on the 20th ult., by a vote of *twenty-five to eight*—that body receding from its amendment attaching the Central Canal to the Bill—and has received the signature of the Governor.

This result has been known to our citizens for several days, and we heartily congratulate them and the State at the prospect that we not only have of the speedy completion of the work, which, when finished to the Ohio river, must add incalculably to the prosperity of our people, but also that a door is thus opened through which the State can pass to the high and honorable station she should occupy as a debt paying Commonwealth. The passage of this Bill and the amount of bonds which are to be surrendered under the act, leaves it in the power of our people, without burthening themselves with taxes beyond what they are well able to bear, to meet the interest on the remainder of the debt, and provide also for its final liquidation.

1847

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Fatout, Paul. Indiana Canals

Thus being assured of the canal's completion, anticipating its benefits to the town and county, and the fact that the state legislature granted the citizens of Evansville a city charter on January 29, 1847, businessmen, speculators, and men of all classes flocked to Evansville in an attempt to better their conditions. The city covered an area of about 280 acres and had within its limits a population of about 4,000 people. Real estate values in Evansville and the county rapidly advanced. "Life, hope, and energy were infused into every branch of business."

"Long lines of wagons from points as far inward as Vincennes, La Fayette, and Terre Haute came to Evansville to effect these exchanges (tea, coffee, sugar, spices and manufactured goods for farm products) Magnificent steamers daily landed at the wharf and lay for hours discharging and receiving freight. The levee as soon as it was constructed, in 1848, and prior to that time the river bank in front of the city, from end to end was stacked with produce of all kinds. This was the commencement of Evansville's career as a great commercial city."

History of Vanderburgh County, IN. Brant & Fuller 1889

Evansville needed a good wharf to accommodate all the business. In 1848 a 2,000 foot long wharf was built. This dignified the "city."

By 1850, Evansville sported 10 grist and saw mills (four were propelled by water), about 100 stores, groceries and warehouses; 3 printing offices with each publishing a daily newspaper; 15 lawyers; 16 physicians; 13 preachers; and a large variety of mechanical, manufacturing and mining laborers. Although the announcement of the canal led to this growth, the strange thing was that there seemed to be little interest in preparing warehouses or wharfs to load and unload the boats. Newspapers chastised the citizens of Evansville for not preparing for canal business. Some of these reports may be found below. Perhaps it was the earlier failure to complete the canal that they didn't want to take the risk. Another factor could have been the proposed construction of the Evansville and Indianapolis Railroad which commenced in 1850

as the Evansville & Crawfordsville Railroad.

12-18-1852

The Canal.

The Canal will doubtless be in full operation from the Lake to Evansville by the 1st of April. Such at least are the prospects now. In view of this fact, we have already called the attention of this public, to the matter of providing accommodations for the immense trade which will, on the completion of this canal, pour in upon us. As we heard a citizen remark yesterday, it is doubtful whether a man in Evansville has any definite idea of the effect of this canal on the business of our city. As a community, we do not appear to realize its importance. As businessmen we seem to place certainly too low an estimate on its trade, and the importance of having the necessary accommodations to properly manage it. All along the line of the canal above, businessmen appear to realize the probable effect of this improvement on Evansville, more than do our own citizens, and they express unmitigated surprise that we are not erecting warehouses to accommodate its business.

Indeed, we shall be in the condition of Terre Haute, when the Canal was opened to that point. For two years, they had not the proper warehouse accommodations, of course to the great detriment of business, and the consequent injury of the business interest of the city.

What is doing in Evansville, in view of the speedy opening of this great artery of commerce? Literally nothing, with the exception of the building of two or three canal boats. Not a warehouse is going up. Not a single improvement of any nature, to take care of or assist the business of the Canal.—If our own capital be all engaged in other matters, we should invite capital from abroad, and offer it inducements for coming here and providing that which we are unable to do ourselves. We are sure capital from abroad might bring a handsome interest if invested in matters connected with the business of this canal.

4-27-53

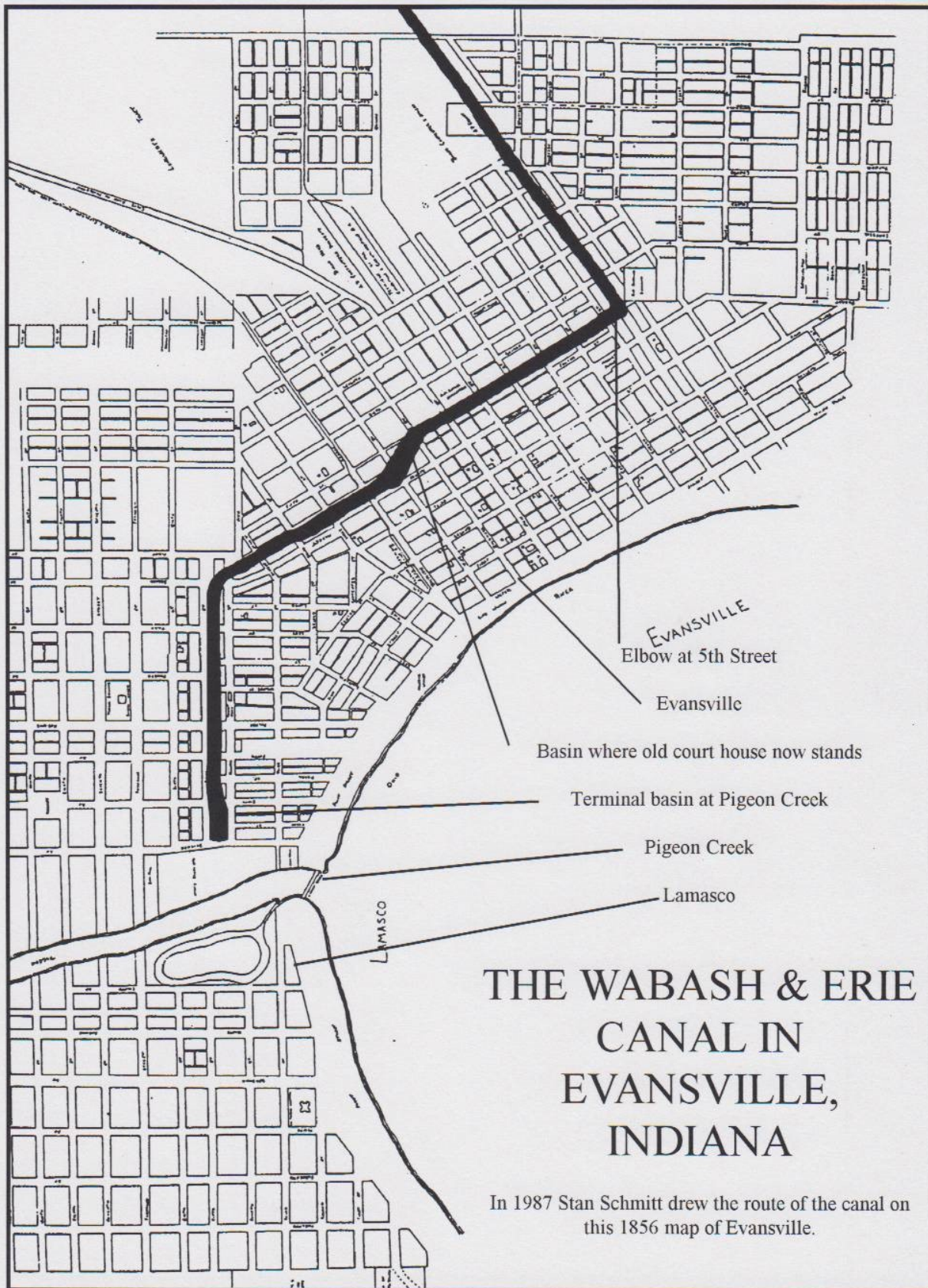
[For the Journal]

MR. EDITOR:—As the great Wabash and Erie Canal approaches as nigh toward completion, the subject of rates and tolls, the amount of freight that will pass through it, the new branches of trade and industry that will be called for activity—in fact, every subject connected with it, should elicit the immediate attention and action of our business men and capitalists, a few, and but very few, of whom seem to have been aware of the important bearing this great work will have upon the business and property of our city.

At all other important points along the line, from Toledo to Terre Haute, the note of preparation has been condoned, and in the latter city, a company has already established a daily line of packets to Evansville, and are now putting on the stock,—while here not the first move has been made to facilitate the business which none can be so simple as to deny, must center on this point.

The sluggishness and indifference on the part of our able and energetic citizens, to this great work—so great and vital in its importance to them and to our city, is a

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



### THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL IN EVANSVILLE, INDIANA

In 1987 Stan Schmitt drew the route of the canal on  
this 1856 map of Evansville.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

wonder and surprise to strangers, and can only be accounted for by reason of the delays and disappointments heretofore attending this work. Now, longer indifference is inexcusable.

A correspondent writing from Terre Haute under date of the 10th inst., says: "I saw Mr. Donnelly, the superintendent, at Newberry to-day, who says the whole line will be ready in a short time—say 1st of June. The packet Pennsylvanian, one of the Terre Haute and Evansville line, will leave here for the port of Newberry to-morrow at 7 A.M. So you can say to your Evansville friends that the Canal is looking up."

Another, writing from Toledo, the 14th inst., says: "Have the goodness to inform me the usual steamboat freight from you place to St. Louis. The object is to ascertain whether the St. Louis goods can be carried as cheap via Evansville as by other routes.—Tolls will undoubtedly be reduced, &c."

Allow me here to ask, is there any significance in these communications and enquiries? What do they mean, and what do they imply? Why, sir, they mean and imply, that at all the principal points on the canal, with the solitary exception of Evansville, a strong effort is about to be made to secure the reduction of rates and tolls, and thereby to influence an immense amount of transportation over this canal., to the benefit of what persons and what points our citizens are as well able to decide as I am to affirm.

Now, are we all as immersed in business, so dazzled with past projects, the accomplishment of which must lie for the dim future, that we must remain stone blind to the advantages already thrust upon us. Are there none amongst us to agitate, none to correspond with parties at other prominent points on the line, and, with them, to unite in a concerted movement for the establishment of low rates and tolls, in order to secure the greatest possible amount of transportation via our city? For unless these objects are attained, and that speedily, it is folly to suppose that this route will make business for us, or divert freight from other routes equally cheap and more expeditious.

The advantages Evansville possesses as a point for re-shipping, are well known to our own citizens; but should this communication meet the eyes of those uninformed as to our facilities, I will instance the current rates of freight on shipments this season to New Orleans: Flour 25a30c, and pork 35a40c per bbl.; oats 12 1/2a15c, and corn 16a20c per sack; tobacco \$2.50-\$3.00 per hhd.; pound freights 18a20c per 100 lbs.

Now, I confidently insist that, with those advantages in connection with the canal, and with a proper degree of spirit and enterprise on the part of our citizens, evinced now, Evansville, within five years, will equal, if not surpass, in point of shipments of produce and provisions any other city on the Ohio river.

In conclusion, I have only to add, let our citizens ask one another can we secure the carrying trade over our canal, from the east to points on the lower Ohio, and even to Saint Louis—from the Lakes and all the towns on the canal to the Southern markets? And can we not secure the carrying of sugar and molasses from the South to the Upper Wabash and even to the Upper Lakes—and tobacco from Kentucky and cotton from Tennessee to the whole Eastern seaboard? Is

this not worthy and effort?

These enquiries, repeatedly put, I cannot but believe will result in some prompt and decisive demonstrations on the part of those among us who have so much at stake depending on the growth and prosperity of our city. Action, once commenced and faithfully persisted in, will accomplish almost any desired end.

J. B. HOPKINS, Mayor

Attest: Geo. H. TOPP. Je14osw.

These pleas to get started on the building of warehouses, wharfs, etc. were finally heard by citizens of Evansville. The article below written the following summer speaks to this fact.

6-14-1853

Our Canal At Last

This great inland channel only now be said to be completed, and the water from the different feeders above Petersburg, has been "let in," and is now "dragging in a slow length along" towards our City. Judge Forerr, who has just returned from a visit to Pike County informed us that the heavy work at the "Summit" was finished, and also at the Bluffs below." The Water will soon reach Evansville and our business community, we fear, are much better prepared for the "meeting of the water" of the great Lake with the Ohio than for the vast amount of business that will immediately follow. But let the water come—and the business too!

Evansvillians have always proved themselves equal to every emergency, and they will not now fail in accommodating the Canal business, although it may be attended with some inconvenience to themselves, for want of suitable warehouses, etc. Those, however, will soon be provided, as several of our most enterprising citizens have already turned their attention to the subject and are building both docks and warehouses of large and spacious accommodations. The rapid sale of property at greatly advanced rates, in two or three blocks below Main street on either side of the Canal, shows the effect that this new prospective business has upon real estate in that vicinity. Many of the best locations are already secured by individuals who will improve them immediately.

Messrs. Eggleston & Co's., Foundry is now ready for operation, and is by far the most extensive establishment of the kind in the city. In rear of that is Eight street, which has recently been laid out 80 feet wide with a view to better accommodate the business which will naturally concentrate there. It will be the "Broadway" of that part of the city. There were two lots sold a few days since for a good price, in close proximity to each other in the blocks above mentioned,—one for a Methodist Church, which is already in process of building, and the other for a Brewery. Which will be most successful, time only will determine. Much of the improvement of this section of our city, is owing to the indefatigable industry and perseverance of John Ingle, Jr. Esq., who is a giant of a businessman though like, ourselves, small in his physical proportions.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

The next day the newspaper carried the following notice about building a canal wharf. Evansville was finally attempting to ready herself for the coming canal. She would soon have a 468 mile long connection with Lake Erie instead of just the 18 miles to the Pigeon Reservoir.

6-15-1853

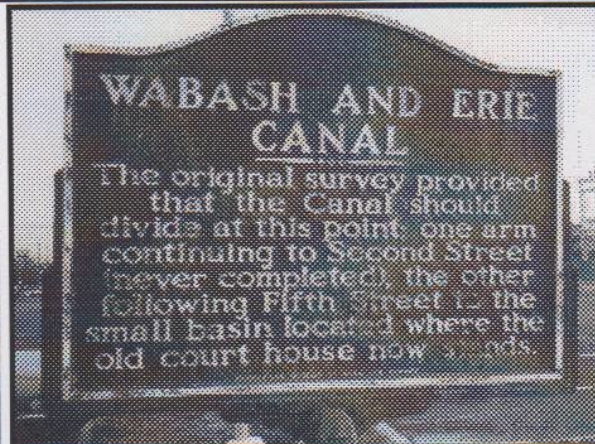
### PUBLIC NOTICE.

TO OWNERS OF LOTS IN BLOCKS NOS. 12 AND 13 EASTERN ENLARGEMENT.

And now here the Common Council of the City of Evansville hereby declare their intention to make a Wharf or Landing fifty feet in width along the Southern flank of the Canal within the corporate limits of the City of Evansville; which Wharf or Landing will extend from the Western line of Chestnut street to the Eastern line of Oak street in the Eastern Enlargement of said City, and to construct said landing it will be necessary to appropriate Fifty feet off the Northern or North-Western end of each of the lots in Blocks Nos. Twelve and Thirteen in the Eastern enlargement of said City, and in order that persons aggrieved by the making of said Landing or Wharf may have an opportunity of applying to the Common Council for redress. It is further ordered, that a copy of this order, signed by the Mayor and signed by the Clerk, be published for six weeks in the **Evansville Journal**, a public newspaper printed and published in said City, Dated, June 11, 1853.

When the 18 miles of the Central Canal were completed to Evansville in 1836, the canal stopped near today's Welborn Campus of St. Mary's hospital. Later as construction resumed as a part of the Wabash and Erie Canal, the canal was continued on into Evansville by creating an elbow in the canal at this place and extending the canal westward to a terminal basin at Pigeon Creek. A marker has been erected at the Welborn site. It says: "The original survey provided that the Canal should divide at this point; one arm continuing to Second Street (never completed), the other following Fifth Street to the small basin located where the old court house now stands. It probably is not completely correct in what it says. We are fairly certain an arm was built that extended to Second Street. Whether it was filled in with dirt at the time the elbow was built or later is not known for sure.

Canal Street School was built on Third and Cherry Streets in 1855. This was near the elbow. It cost about \$15,000. Its third floor was home to Evansville's high school until July 1863 when enrollment in the lower grades required more space and the high school moved



This canal marker is located on the Welborn Campus of St. Mary's Hospital in Evansville. The Canal School was built here at a later date. Photo by Bob Schmidt

elsewhere. Later it was known as Wheeler School after Horatio Q. Wheeler, who was the "father of public schools" in Evansville. It was razed and is now a parking lot for the Welborn Campus.



Canal Street School built in 1855 Courtesy Willard Library

When canal construction resumed a graveyard was located where the old court house now stands. The graves were moved and a large basin excavated. Today a marker stands on the corner of the old court house grounds that reads: Completed from Lake Erie to Evansville, 1853. Used till 1865. Passing from 5th St. to 1st Ave., canal widened into basin for docks covering part of this square.

The basin is where canal boat building began for the town. John Hewson, Nathan Rowley, Robert Barnes, Stephen Hopkins, John Mitchell, John Douglas, A. B. Carpenter, Thomas Scantlin, John M. Lockwood, Marcus Sherwood and another gentleman formed a stock company

GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

CHARGEABLE ON THE REVENUES OF THE CANAL.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.  
STATE OF INDIANA.  
DEFERRED  
FIVE PER CENT. SPECIAL CANAL STOCK.

Under two acts of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, entitled "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," passed 19th January, 1846, and "An act supplementary to" said act, passed 27th January, 1847.

Be it known, That the WABASH AND ERIE CANAL, and all tolls, lands and effects appertain-  
ing thereto, from the State line to Evansville, on the Ohio River, and all the property of the State of Indiana  
therein, are irrevocably pledged, to W. H. Bell & Co.

or assigns, for  
the sum of Twenty five Dollars,  
(being stock issued for Dollars of interest, under foregoing acts) with interest upon the same at the rate of FIVE  
PER CENT. per annum from the first day of January, 1853, payable semi-annually in the City of New York, by the  
Trustees of said Canal, on the first days of January and July in each year, as prescribed in the acts aforesaid  
such payments of interest, however, to be contingent upon the funds realized from time to time from the Canal, applic-  
able thereto, and the completion of the Canal to Evansville, as set forth in said acts.

This debt is duly recorded, and is transferable only in the City of New York, in books provided for that pur-  
pose by the State, by the holder hereof, or ..... duly constituted Attorney, according to such rules and forms as are  
or may be prescribed for that purpose: an endorsement on the back hereof, by the holder, in the presence of two witnesses,  
being in all cases a sufficient Power of Attorney to authorize a transfer, upon a surrender and cancellation of this  
Certificate.

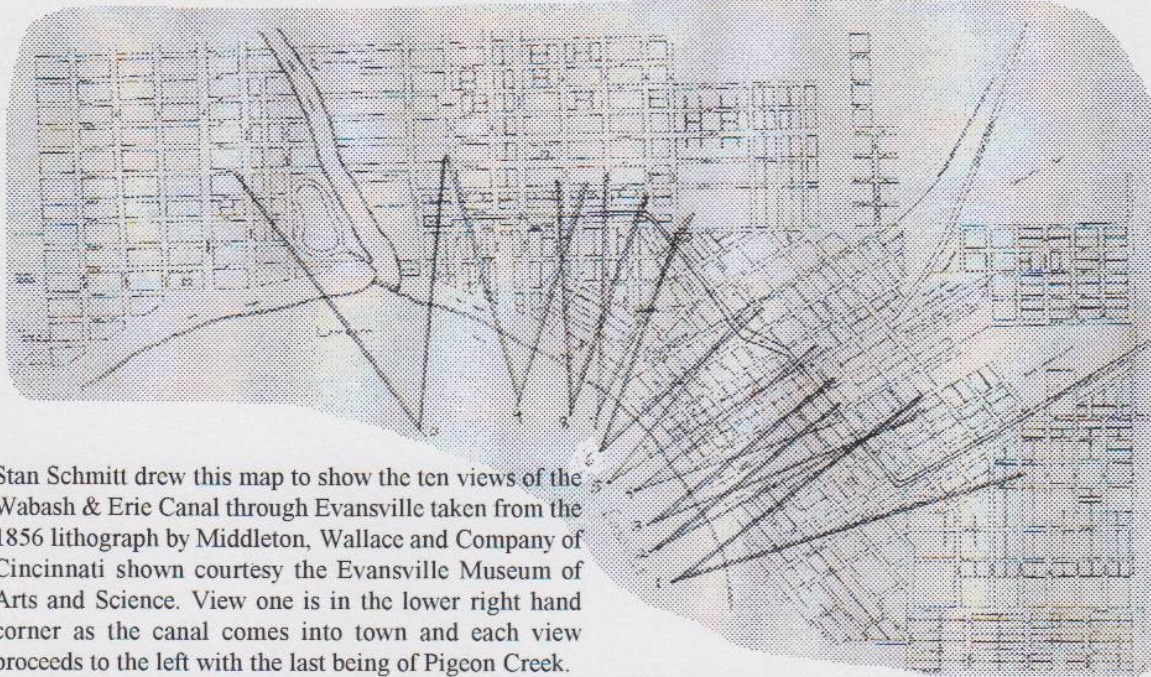
In Witness whereof, The Treasurer and Auditor of State of said State of Indiana, have hereunto subscribed  
their names and affixed the Seal of said State, at Indianapolis, this Eighteenth day  
of December 1852

COUNTERSIGNED:  
[L. R.]  
A. May Agent of State.  
Wm. H. Marshall TREASURER.  
D. Maguire AUDITOR.

Wm. Van Nostrand, Printer, 28 William-st., N. Y.

CERTIFICATE FOR INTEREST MONEY

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



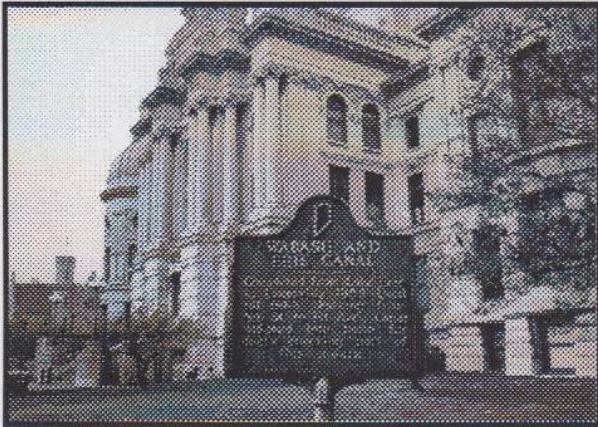
Stan Schmitt drew this map to show the ten views of the Wabash & Erie Canal through Evansville taken from the 1856 lithograph by Middleton, Wallace and Company of Cincinnati shown courtesy the Evansville Museum of Arts and Science. View one is in the lower right hand corner as the canal comes into town and each view proceeds to the left with the last being of Pigeon Creek.

The Wabash & Erie Canal took a 90° turn beneath the current Welborn Campus of St. Mary's Hospital. By 1856 its prism had been filled with dirt where it had run straight ahead for a few blocks as part of the Central Canal.





## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



The basin where the canal boats were built was beneath where the old court house was built. The basin for the canal was filled with dirt to build this building. They had trouble with the section of this court house that sat atop the fill. The other part of the building was on firm ground. A marker now identifies the site of the basin.

Photo by Bob Schmidt

that was limited to \$1,500 with thirty shares of stock selling at \$50 a share. They hired experienced canal boat builders from the east. The first boat they built named "Rowley" honored the superintendent of construction, Nathan Rowley. The second boat was called "Evansville." A complete section on canal boats is found elsewhere in this book.

The canal was almost completed, but little had been done in planning a celebration for the opening of it from Lake Erie to Evansville. The newspapers told the people of Evansville they had better start planning an event for the culmination of this great project.

5-30-1853 **Evansville Journal**  
Canal Celebration.

The **State Journal** is copying our article about the Wabash and Erie Canal, with the suggestion of a celebration in honor of the completion of the Canal, thus remarks:

"The Wabash and Erie Canal is indeed a mighty work. It will bear the same relation to the State as the spine does to the human system. A celebration of its completion will be justified by the importance of the consummation of the work. We should like to see a celebration, and suppose the Pocket City will be the place. No doubt it will be attended by many persons living off the line of the Canal."

The celebration will doubtless "come off" in due course of time. If our own citizens do not act in the matter, and energetically, we hope some more Northern city on the canal, will get up a celebration worthy of the great improvement.

6-11-1853 **Evansville Journal**  
Canal Celebrations - Old Times

We guess, if the forefathers of Evansville, when they had their great Canal celebration in 1836, over seventeen years ago—a celebration intended to commemorate the commencement of this magnificent enterprise in connection with other improvements—had been told that their children would not celebrate its completion, they might have given the \_\_\_ to the asserter of so seemingly slanderous a statement. Yet even so does it seem, that we are to have no celebration of the great event. On the completion of a railroad, which was probably only the enterprise of a couple years, towns interested generally mark their joy by public meetings, a commingling of feeling, and a rich treat of congratulations and victuals. But when we are about to see the last shovel full of earth thrown from the mightiest public improvement in the West, if not in the whole country, and which has been nearly a quarter of a century in the thoughts of the people and building—a canal connecting the Lakes at the north with the Ohio river at the south—no one but a pour devil of an editor raises his voice for a celebration, and he is left alone to set the ball in motion.

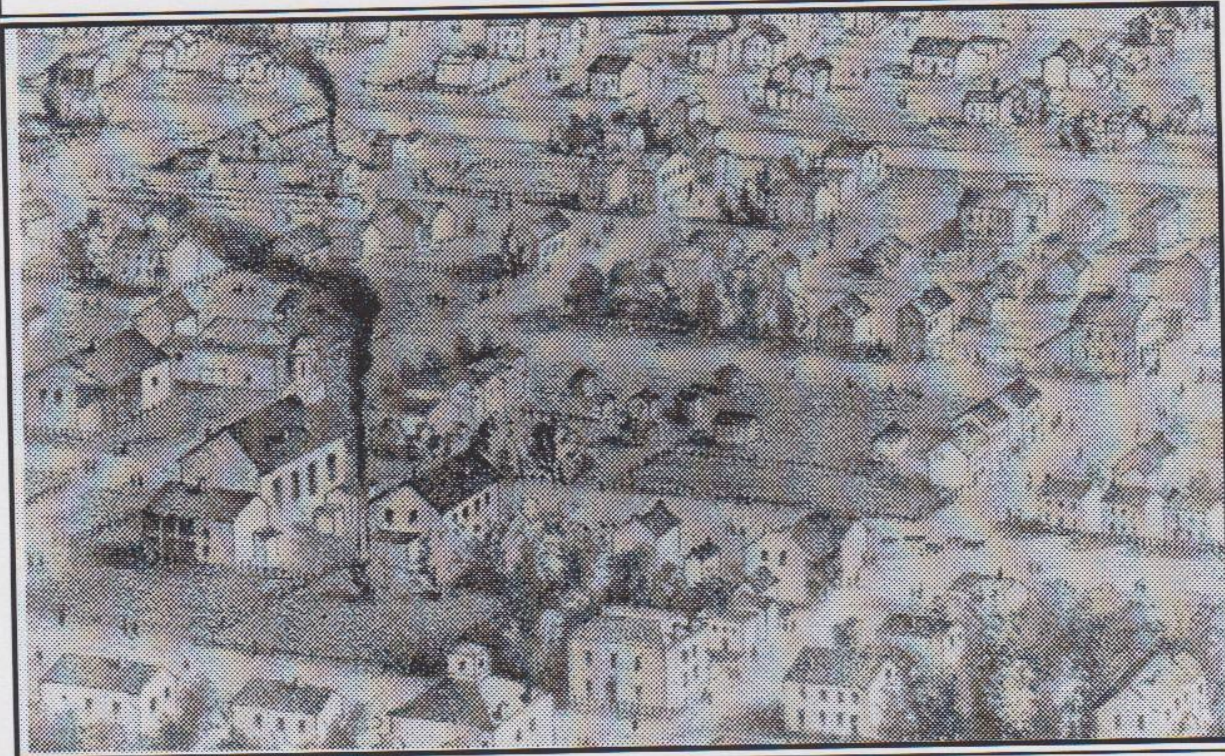
Probably in the next half century to come, no event will transpire so important to the interests of Evansville, as to final completion of the great Wabash and Erie Canal, having its lower terminus at this point.—We do not desire a celebration as a mere exhibition of joy, on the part of our fellow citizens, but to let the world know in a loud manner, that the magnificent enterprise is completed, and to let it know too, how great is the work's importance to this city. It will help turn the eyes of the public to Evansville. We may draw here for a few days, hundreds from every part of the State, and distinguished men from adjoining states. They will go home to talk of the great improvement, and of Evansville where it terminates. The eyes of thousands will turn here, that never regarded us with special interest before.—The effect will undoubtedly be highly beneficial to us, and that's enough.

The canal was finally opened to Evansville in 1853. The day water was let into the canal was met with great rejoicing. As water filled the channel and basin raising the boats, a resounding cheer was heard from the crowd of well wishers. The first boat left Evansville and went as far as the White River.

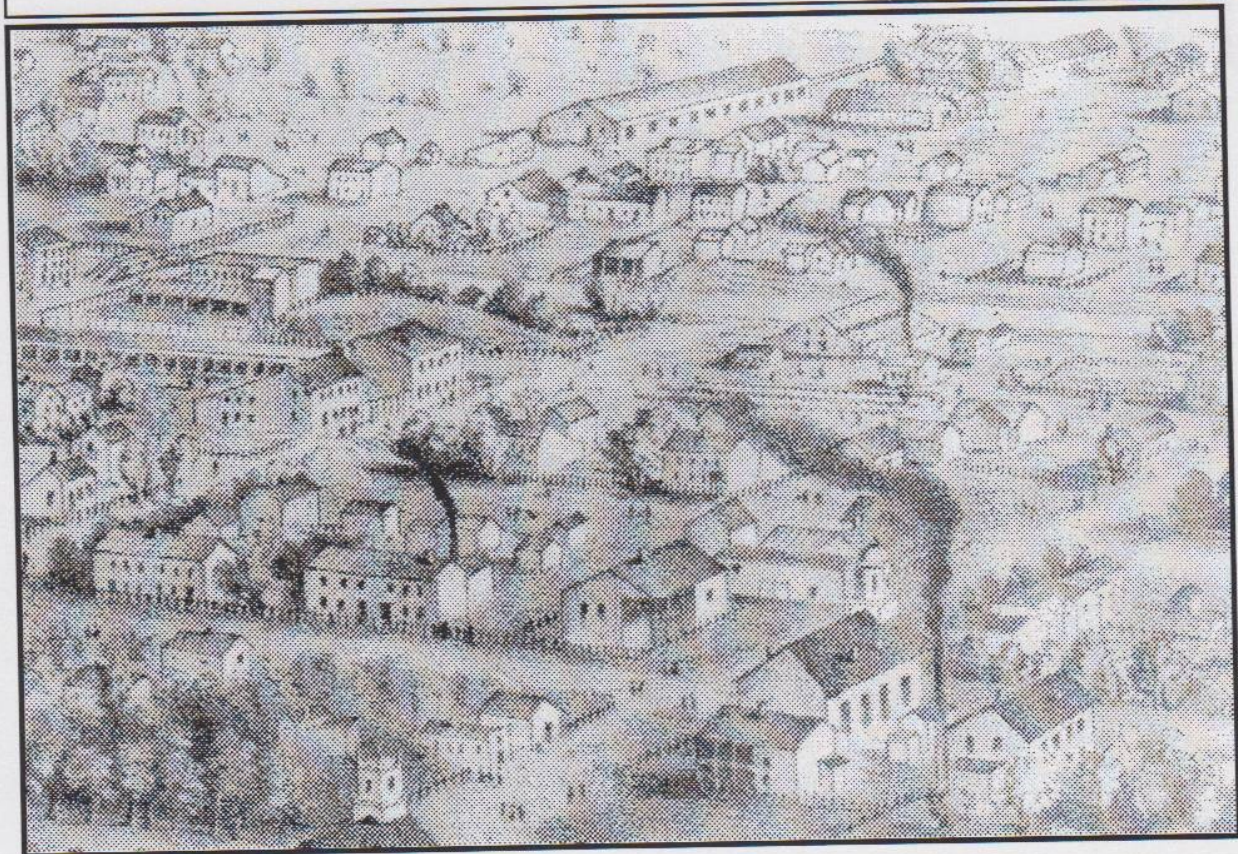
The boats were pulled by mules. Mace Newman, a man who always wanted in the lime-light, usurped the position of riding a mule with a canal boat in tow. The first trip only consisted of guests. They had their guns and fishing tackle with them. They picnicked, shot deer, turkey, and other game.

The first boat to reach Evansville from Lake Erie arrived on September 22. It was the "Pennsylvania." It had to be dragged from Fifth

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

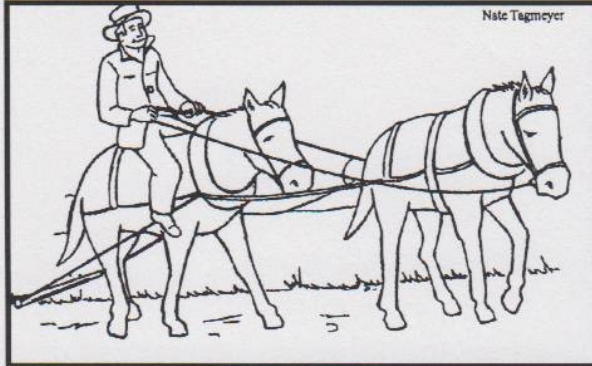


View 2 above shows the Wabash & Erie Canal in the background.  
View 3 below shows a bridge over the canal at the left. This is probably on Chestnut St.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Street to the terminus by oxen because the water level was so low. According to history books, only two boats every made the entire Toledo to Evansville route. In the boat section of this book, you will see that a few more made the entire trip if you read the newspaper articles.



Horses or mules pulling the canal boats walked in tandem rather than as a team. When boats got caught on shoals often teams of oxen pulled them free.

At first all the men who pushed for the completion of the canal were proud of their work. However, one source says that they were even prouder of the day when it was filled with dirt. This was especially true on the southern portions, which not only had winter freezing over and spring floods like the northern portions, but also had insufficient water, soils that gave way or wouldn't hold water and citizens determined to get rid of the reservoirs.

Businesses were built along the canal. One of these was the Union brewery located at Sycamore street. It was one of Evansville's first

breweries but did not succeed. It was a large building that stood on the bank of the canal from which it easily used water; however, it never had a large production of beer. The neighborhood children would line up outside the building to get yeast for their mothers to make buckwheat cakes. After it was closed for some time

### **PADDEN & CO.,** Manufacturers of **Soap, Candles & Lard Oil** EVANSVILLE, IND.

Factory on the Canal, near Elle's Mill.  
Highest Cash Price for Tallow, Fat and Grease.

PADDEN & CO'S Genuine Yellow Erasive Soap saves time, labor money and patience. It is sold by all Respectable Grocers.

### **TRIBLE, MEYERS & BRO.,** Proprietors of the **SOUTHERN PLANING MILL,**

Manufacturers and Dealers in  
Sash, Doors, Blinds, Frames, Moulding, Scroll Sawing, etc.,  
Also Dealers in DRESSED and UNDRESSED LUMBER,  
Cor. of Water and Goodsell Sts., Opp. Lamasco Wharf,  
EVANSVILLE, - - - INDIANA.

All Orders will receive prompt personal attention and will be done at the shortest notice. Special attention to all kinds of Steamboat work.

### **GEO. MILLER & CO.,**

Wholesale and Retail

PLAIN AND FANCY

### **BOOTS AND SHOES,**

38 MAIN STREET, - - EVANSVILLE, IND.

Children's Shoes a Specialty.

### **BLEMKER, TILLMAN & CO.,** **EXCELSIOR STOVE WORKS,**

Wholesale Manufacturers of

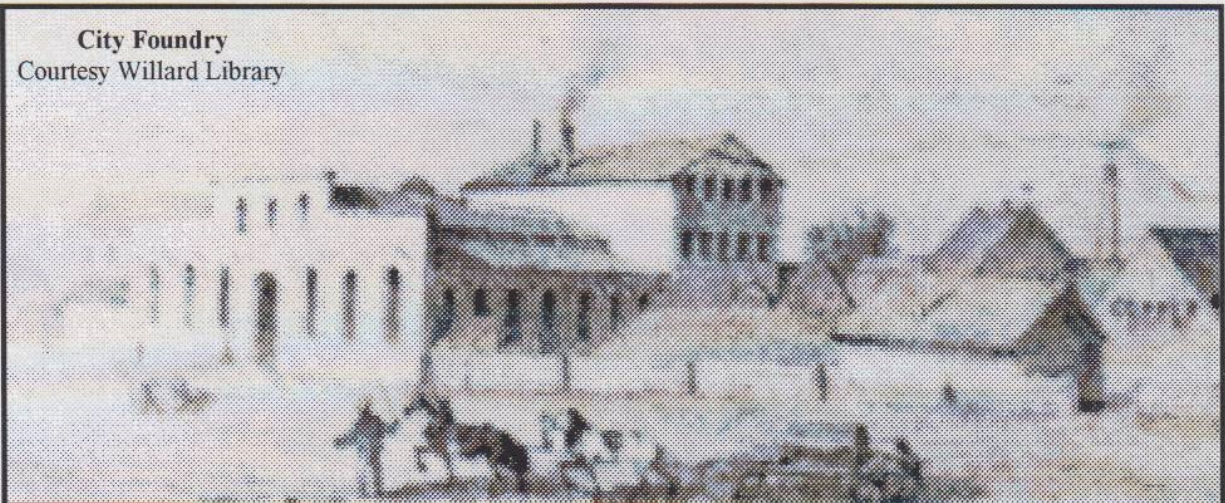
STOVES, CASTINGS, HOLLOW WARE, TIN WARE, &c.

AND DEALERS IN TINNER'S STOCK.

Sample Room No 14 Second St., EVANSVILLE, IND.

4

City Foundry  
Courtesy Willard Library



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# "PENNSYLVANIA" MAKES FIRST TRIP BETWEEN LAKE ERIE AND EVANSVILLE

**FIRST BOAT THROUGH!** The Evansville ENQUIRER, of the 23d. inst. says:

'We had the pleasure this morning of entering the corporate limits of the city of Evansville on the next passenger packet *Pennsylvania*, Capt. Alexander Sharra. She is the first boat that has ever reached this point from Lake Erie. She came within a short distance of the city yesterday evening, but there was not water enough to let her down further until this morning, when by the aid of a few yoke of oxen, tendered by the proprietor of the saw mill, Mr. Iglehart, she was brought into the city this morning with a good trip of passengers, who had gone up to meet her.

'This boat was built fifty-six miles above Pittsburgh, Pa. and was brought down the canal to the Ohio river, and then down the Ohio to Cincinnati; at Cincinnati she entered the Miami canal and proceeded up that canal to the junction of the Wabash and Erie canal; by that canal she proceeded to Lake Erie from which point she came direct to this city. At that point she entered the Wabash and Erie canal about the first of last April, and this morning, the 23d day of September, we had the pleasure of boarding her a mile back of town, and entering on board of her on her first trip to this city. She had not, however, been all this time on the one trip—having been engaged in the packet trade above Terre Haute.

'She was relieved to-day at the Main Street bridge, by firing of cannon, and excellent music by the Brass Band, and general cheering and rejoicing from a large crowd of people.

Above: September 23, 1853

Top and bottom right: September 24, 1853 Princeton, IN Democratic Clarion



### THE FIRST BOAT THROUGH!

**WABASH AND ERIE CANAL OPEN—THE LAKES AND EVANSVILLE CONNECTED!**—The canal boat *PENNSYLVANIA*, commanded by Capt. SHARRA, says the *Evansv. Jour.*, arrived here yesterday evening at 6 o' clock. Capt. Sharra has the honor of having brought the first boat through the great Wabash and Erie canal, and the arrival of his boat authorizes us to pronounce this stupendous and magnificent public improvement completed.

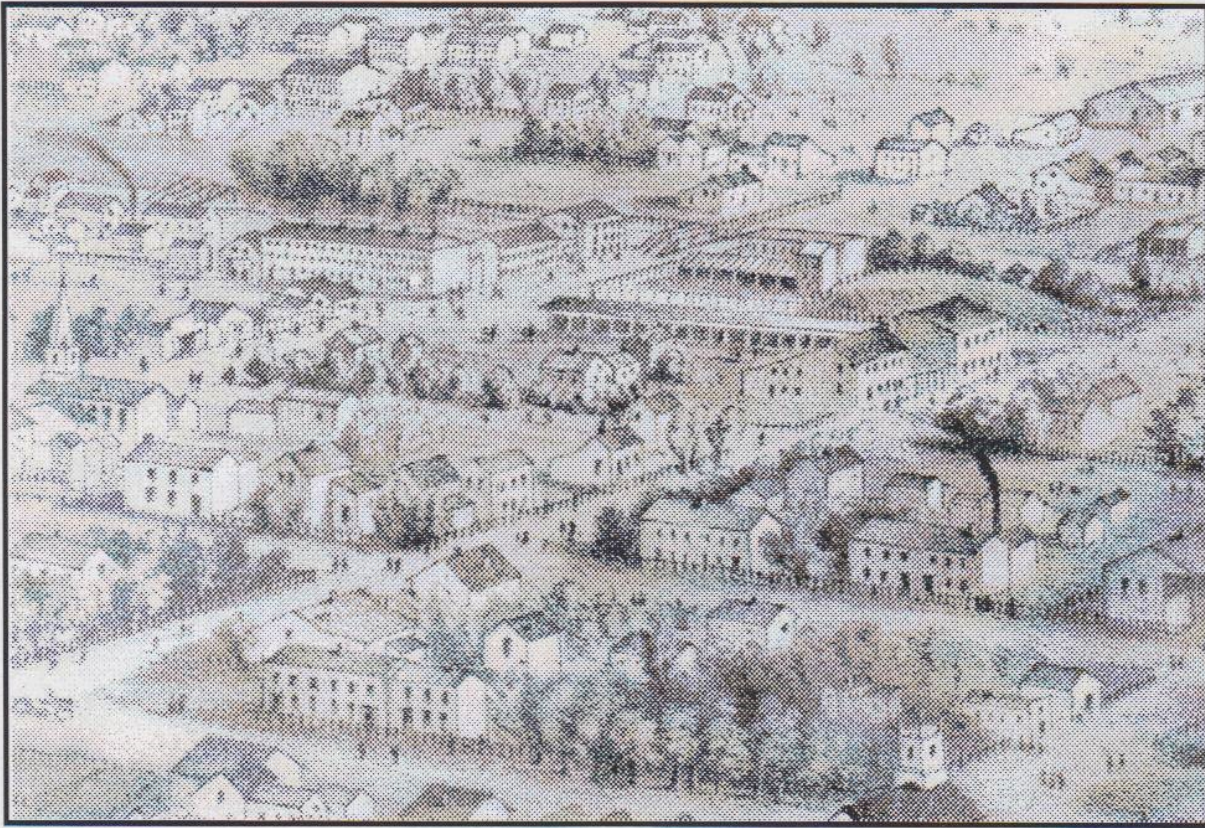
The Wabash and Erie canal was commenced in 1832, and completed to Lafayette in 1841; to Coal Creek in 1847; to Terre Haute in '49; to Point Commerce, '51; and to Evansville in '53, the first boat arriving at this city Sept. 22, 1853—over twenty-one years after the commencement of the canal!

The length of this canal in Indiana is 375 miles; and in Ohio, from the State line to Toledo, on Maumee Bay, 84 miles; thus the whole canal being 459 miles long. Its course is through the richest portions of Ohio and Indiana, and it interests a number of other public improvements, which become more or less tributary to its usefulness.

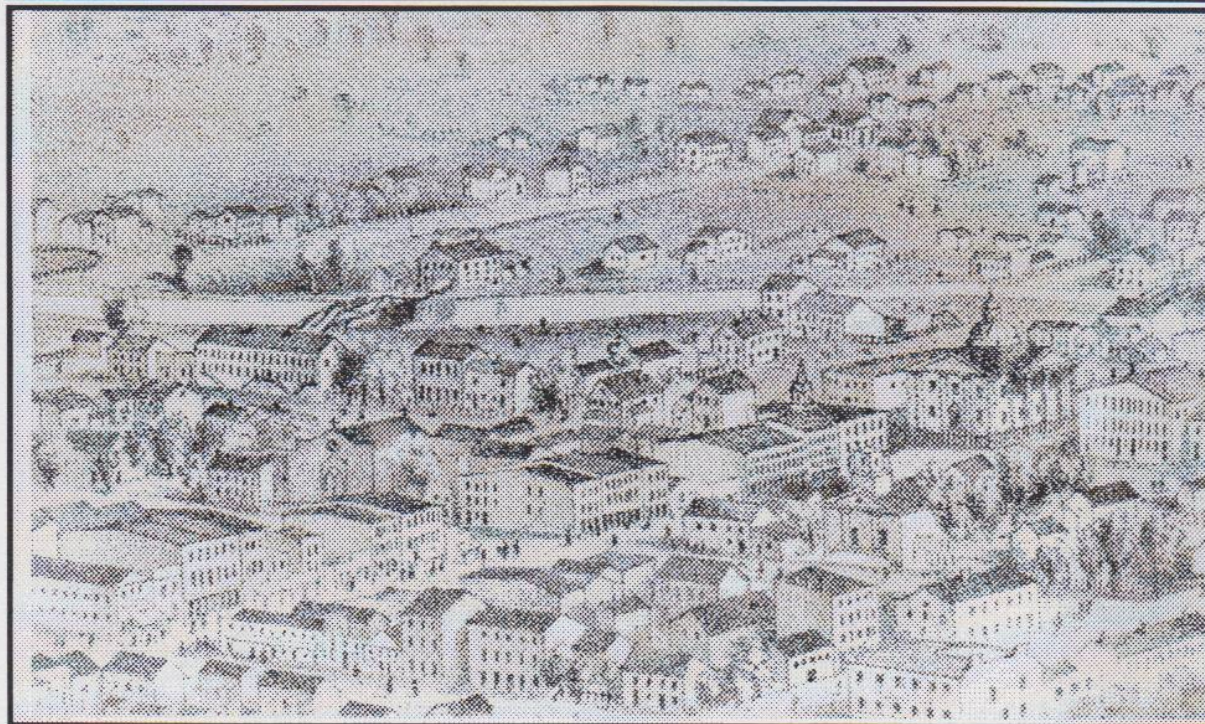
On the completion of so great a public improvement as is this, and one calculated especially to have so excellent an effect upon the interests of Evansville, it appears to us that a public celebration would not only be becoming and politic in us, but is rather expected by the towns and cities and communities on the route of the canal. There is no longer an excuse now for postponing this celebration. We suggested it months ago, in view of the speedy completion of the canal, and have several times urged it since. But we were told to wait, wait, till the water was in. It has arrived! We now leave the celebration in the hands of citizens. Zealously shall we aid them if necessary—but no more have we to say till others have spoken.

**THE CANAL—FIRST BOAT.**—Yesterday morning, says the "*Evansville Journal*," the water was in the Canal to within six miles of here, and coming on. The canal boat *Pennsylvania* was slowly traveling towards this city. She will be here to-day pretty sure if she has not already arrived when our paper is issued. If she get through first, she will be the first canal boat which has arrived at Evansville through the great Wabash and Erie canal. It was reported some time ago in the Wabash papers that one boat had passed through this canal and arrived here. This was a mistake as then said. We shall help immortalize the man who first loads at Evansville a canal boat from the Lake.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



View 4 above shows another bridge across the Wabash & Erie Canal.  
View 5 below shows a bridge across the widened basin on Vine Street. There also appears to be a bridge at the right across Sycamore Street.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

the Evansville Medical Society used the building rent free. An era of grave robbery and dissection of bodies within the building created such a large pile of bones with no place to dispose of them that they were buried in the cellar.

About the time of the Civil War quite a few blacks, who came across the river from Kentucky, were housed there. It is said that when one of them found the buried bones the exodus from the building was "worse than a stampede of cattle." It was then used as a hospital during the war.

The pottery of A. & L. Uhl stood a little below the level of the canal. It was built in 1849 and operated by horse power.

Frederick Cook built the first brewery in southern Indiana in 1837. It was located in Lamasco near the terminus of the Wabash and Erie Canal, which was being constructed at that time. Later, after his brewery relocated to a new building, which had a lager beer cellar and a large malt-house, he brewed southern Indiana's first lager.



One of the first pork-packing establishments in Evansville was that built by Samuel Orr in 1835 on the corner of Water and Vine streets. He was the principal pork-purchaser in southern Indiana buying hogs from Posey, Gibson, Warrick and Vanderburgh counties.

Although Evansville's earliest mill was built by Jonathan Anthony, it was purchased by David Negley and became known as "Negley's Mill." It ground corn between two huge revolving stones called burrs. It was located on Pigeon Creek. When Levi Igleheart moved to Evansville in 1853, he established a flouring mill at the corner of Fifth and Locust in 1856. At the time



IGLEHEART BROTHERS - ESTABLISHED THEIR FIRST FLOUR MILL ON THIS SITE IN 1856 - THEY PRODUCED SWANS DOWN FAMILY FLOUR HERE IN 1879, SWANS DOWN CAKE FLOUR IN 1895 -  
Photo by Bob Schmidt

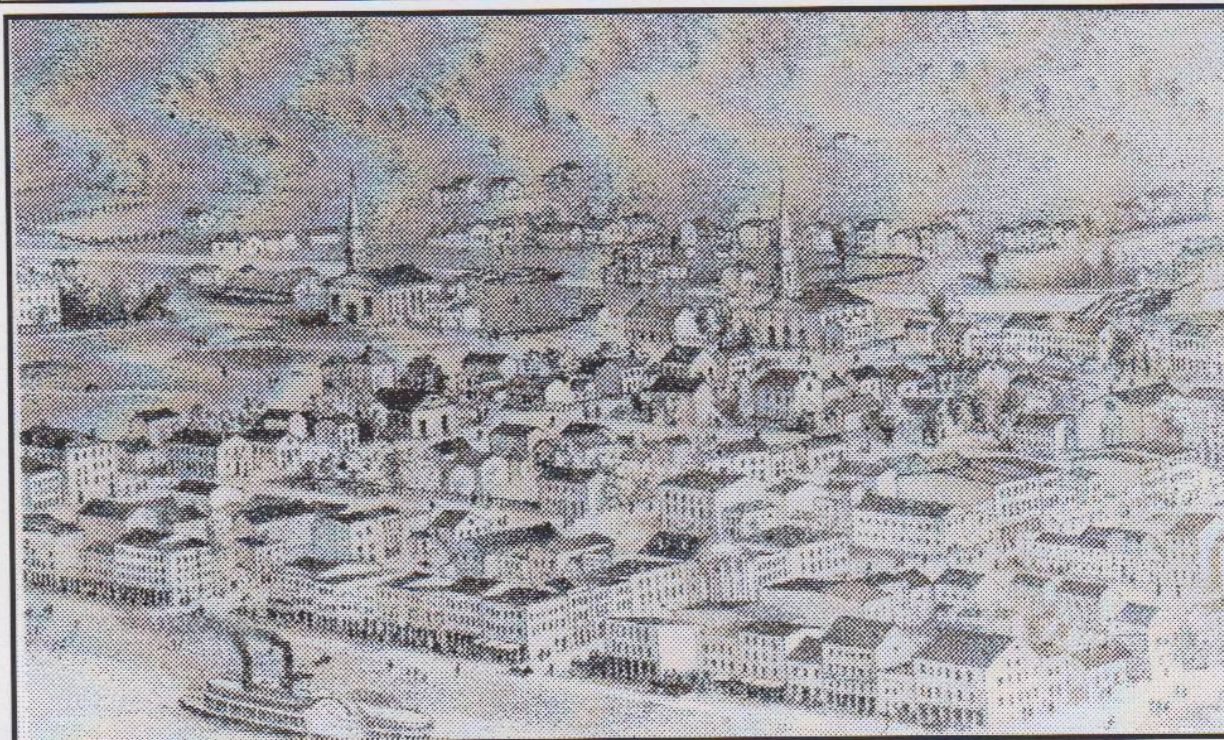
the Wabash and Erie canal was expected to be the means of receiving grain and shipping flour. However, so little wheat was grown in southern Indiana that it was difficult to get a sufficient supply to keep the 100 barrel mill supplied.

In 1856 he and his brothers William and Asa established the Southern Mills located on the canal. Levi and William chose to spell their name Igleheart and Asa went by Iglehart. Igleheart Bros. became quite a firm, was the first to use the purifier on winter wheat, and was one of the first who used rolls on such wheat. It was famous for Swans Down Cake Flour. It became a subsidiary of General Foods, Inc.

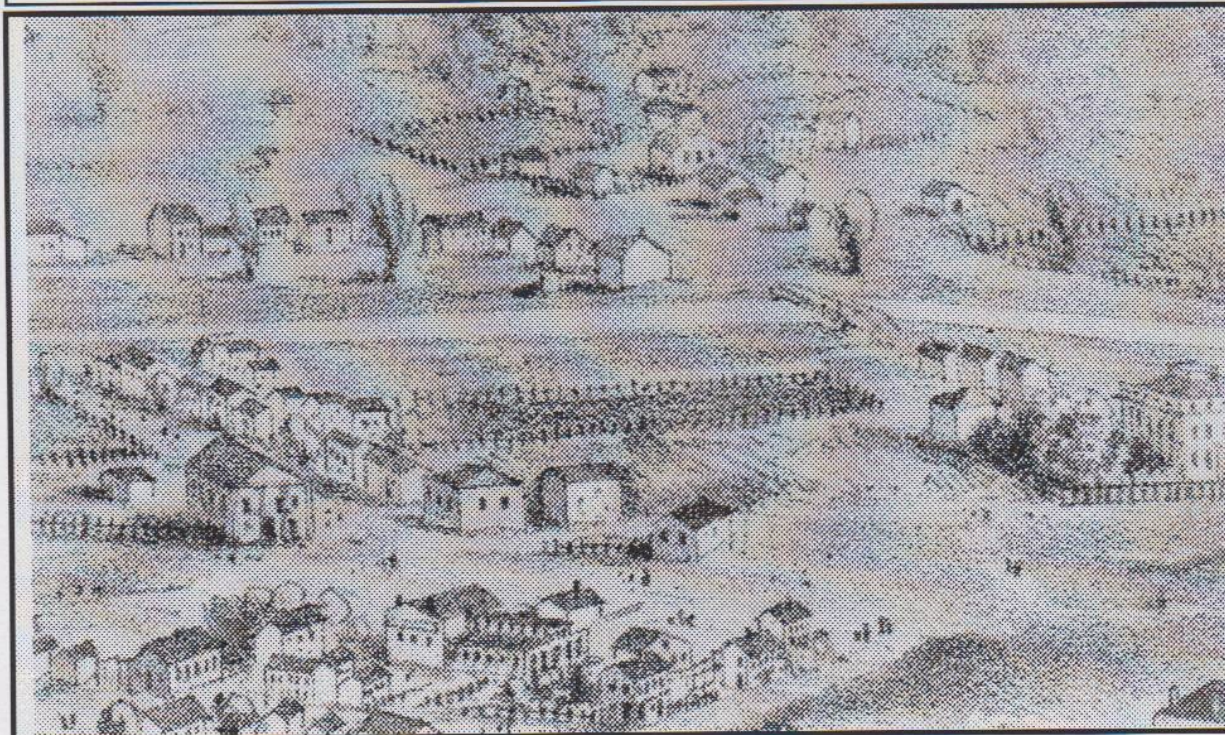
Igleheart's mills was followed by eleven flour and gristmills by 1890. One of the earliest was August Elles' Canal Mill at Eight and Canal streets.

Evansville's first fire department had a little hand engine that four men could work even before the time the town had fire cisterns. On

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



View 6 above shows a bridge on the right over the canal at Division St. (now Court Street) that once divided the towns of Lamasco and Evansville and a bridge behind the church on Ingle Street. View 7 below shows the bridge over the canal at Second and Market Streets as the canal turns toward the west and Pigeon Creek. An 1856 map by A. G. Adelsberg and J. D. Saunders shows bridges crossing the canal at Boonville Rd. at Canal St., Eighth St., Chestnut, Walnut, Locust, Main, Sycamore, Vine, Division, Ingle, Market at Second Ave., Third Ave. and Fulton Avenue. The canal was 60 feet wide in places which made the bridges more expensive to maintain.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Fireman's day they would parade this and a larger engine that were decorated with flowers through the streets and down to the big dock at the canal basin. There they had contests between engines to show which engine could throw the higher stream.

In 1850 the exports from Evansville, though not all produced in Vanderburgh County, were about 600,000 bushels of corn, 100,000 bushels of oats, 1,500 tons of hay, and 1,500,000 pounds of pork and bacon. The expenses of the county that year was over \$3,600 for such things as public buildings, highways, bridges, charities, books, stationery, advertising, county officers, courts, interest on indebtedness, etc. Its receipts were \$38,000. The county continued on into the 1890s always showing a profit.

During the 1850s coal was mined beneath Evansville and within a 30 mile radius. There were as many as 50 different mines. The canal was dug through coal deposits along its route. Coal could be profitable if shipped by canal boat to Evansville. The following newspaper articles praise the high quality of the coal.

### 11-17-1853 **Evansville Journal**

#### Coal on the Canal

On several occasions, we have added to the immense quantities of excellent coal, on the line of the Wabash and Erie Canal, which will be opened to this market by the completion of this structure. There are immense coal fields at points not far distant from Evansville, directly on the canal, and one, two and three miles, from its banks. We recollect the late Mr. Burbank, owner of a Foundry here, telling us he had tried coal brought from some fifteen or twenty miles up the canal, which he pronounced as good as the Pittsburgh coal for his use. It is known to the generality of our readers, that the coal found on the banks of the river between this place and Louisville, cannot be used to advantage by foundries, although some of it is excellent coal for steamboats and family consumption. Mr. B. had his foundry on the canal, and arrangements made before his death, for the convenient reception of coal by canal. He made the remark to us once, that he never expected to use a pound of Pittsburgh coal again after the opening of the canal, as better coal could be got here to sell by the quantity at five or six cents per bushel, highest rate.

Lately, we have heard of the discovery of more coal farther up the canal. Mr. O. H. Cannon, a young man of New Albany, brought us evening before last, some specimens of coal found on some property he has lately purchased, on the canal, about a mile above Dongola, and

forty-five miles from Evansville. He says an old coal man has tested it, and pronounced it equal if not superior to the Pittsburgh coal. A large bank of it lies immediately on the canal, and can almost be thrown by the shovel into boats, from where it lies. The bank runs, horizontal with the canal a short distance, then laps off into the country. The specimens shown us, looked very much like the Pittsburgh article. In making the canal embankment, nearly all the dirt has been taken from the top of the layer of coal, and it is therefore accessible without trouble. In that region, there is a great deal of coal, but this is the only bank we have yet heard of in that vicinity, right on the canal. There are valuable mines a mile from the canal, near Dongola. Farther up there are yet more mines. By next winter, we anticipate Evansville will receive her principle supplies of coal, for manufacturing and family purposes, by canal, and at a price half that which has generally been paid here for Pittsburgh coal, say six or seven cents. This will prove one of the great advantages Evansville possesses for manufacturing. There are large quantities of excellent iron ore on or near the canal, some of which has at intervals for years past, been brought to the city by White River steamboats, and sold here to advantage, and even shipped to Cincinnati. This canal will open immense mineral wealth to the city, and of that we shall hereafter speak fully.

### 3-26-1855 **Evansville Journal**

**COAL.**—A couple loads of coal have been brought down the canal from the Petersburg mines, Pike county. We have tried this coal, and from this experiment and what we have heard from others, we should judge it to be of excellent quality, and as well adapted for the stove or grate perhaps, as the Pittsburgh coal. It is sold at the canal for nine cents, or about ten cents delivered!—Messrs. Bollus & Co. have leased these coal mines for ten years, and have now put them in active operation. This coal, from its excellence and cheapness, will be likely to interfere considerably with the sale of Pittsburgh coal.

### 4-2-1856 **Evansville Journal**

#### **COAL.**

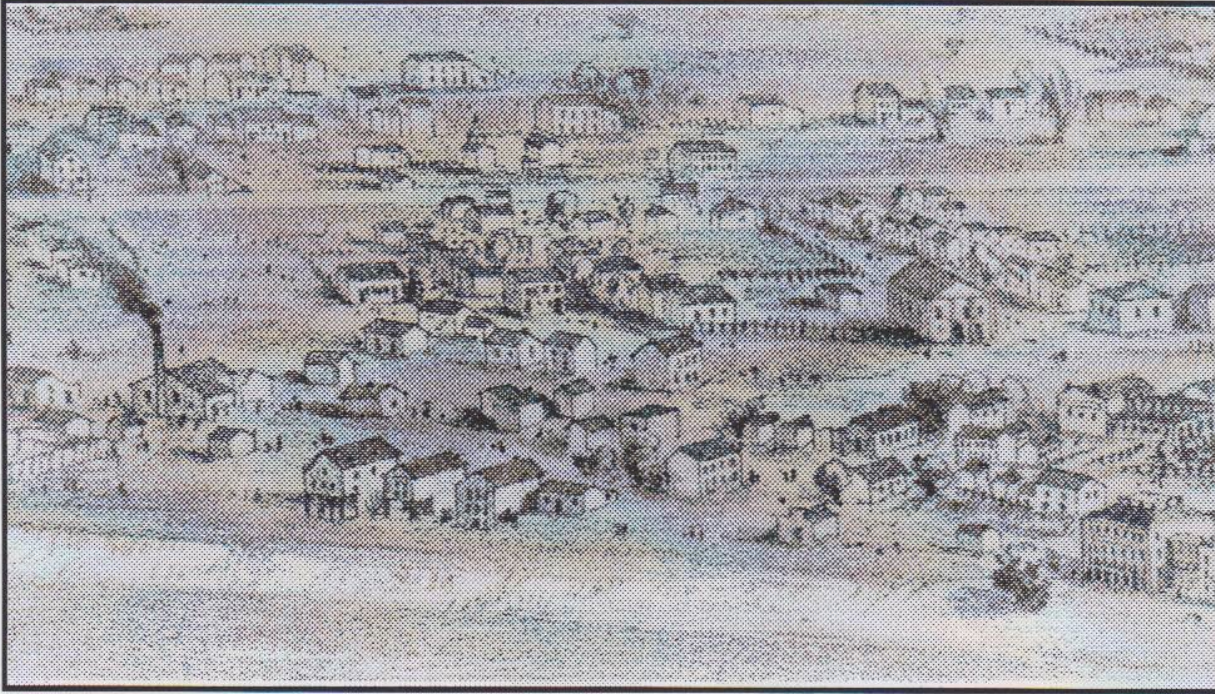
The Messrs. Hughes, on Main street, are now delivering in this city some of the coal from their mines on the Canal near Petersburg. We noticed on Monday, a boat load and on Friday before a load had also arrived, all of which was taken as fast as it could be loaded into carts.

These mines were opened last fall and some coal taken out, but it was not brought down on account of the freezing of the canal, till now. The coal we have tried and know it to be of most excellent quality, little if any inferior to the Youghoigheny coal for either blacksmith's fire or for gas. As a fuel it burns remarkable clear, giving a bright flame, and being full of oil, burns very freely. It is a very superior article of coal.

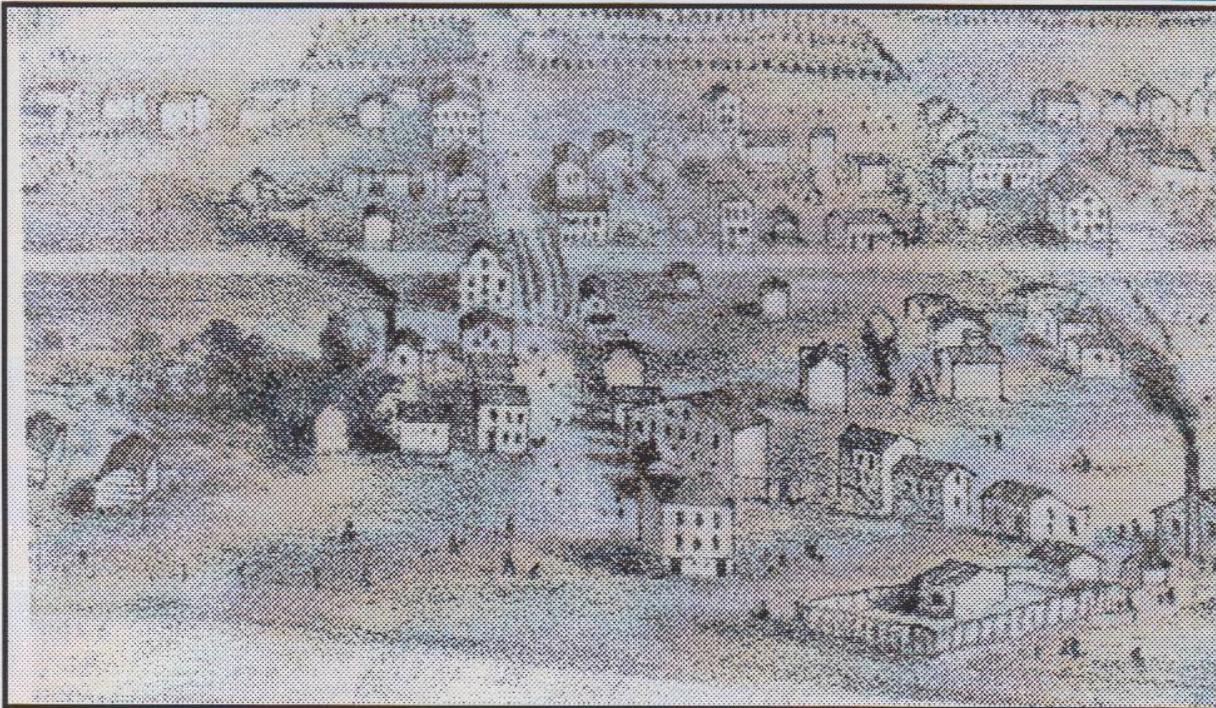
It will be regularly supplied at the canal now for consumers, and during the summer a yard will be filled for the demand next winter. This coal will be another source of wealth to our city.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



View 8 above shows the canal as it passes through the Lamasco area on its way to Pigeon Creek  
View 9 below shows the canal crossed by a bridge on Fulton Avenue. The canal ends in a basin further to the left. Its excess water overflows and drops way down into Pigeon Creek and proceeds into the Ohio River. Canal boats never entered the creek or the river at this point. The bluff was too steep and the canal would have had to lock down into the creek. The canal had a limited water supply from Pigeon Creek Reservoir. It couldn't supply enough to lose the 100 thousands gallons of water it takes each time a lock operates. Remember there were no locks on the section (originally built as the Central Canal) below the dam that first fed the canal. The reservoir was added when the Wabash & Erie took over this section. Also canal boats are not built to operate in a swiftly moving river.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

F. J. Reitz High School was built atop Coal Mine Hill in 1918. Today a large part of downtown Evansville sits atop water-filled coal shafts.

In 1853 when the canal was opened its entire length the toll collector was Nathan Rowley. Tolls were used to keep the canal in repair and hopefully to be great enough to make a profit for the bond holders.

### 7-19-1853 *Evansville Journal*

All boats now running any distance up the Canal are obliged to pay toll. Nathan Rowley, Esq. is the Collector, and his office is on Third street, near Squire Walker's.—The toll operation commenced last week.

In 1854 the citizens of Evansville and elsewhere sought to have their mail delivered by canal boat. They thought this would be more reliable than their current mail delivery.

### 6-12-1854 *Evansville Enquirer* Canal Mail.

Petitions have been circulated at Terre Haute, as we learn from the *Journal*, and numerous signatures obtained, to secure a tri-weekly mail between that city and Evansville. The canal runs through the counties of Vigo, Clay, Greene, Daviess, Pike, Gibson, Warrick and Vanderburgh, and touches at the towns of Lockport, (Riley P.O.), Kossuth, Johnstown, Worthington, Point Commerce, Fairplay, Newberry, Old Prairie, Maysville, Kinderhook, Petersburg, Dongola, Francisco, Reservoir, Port Gibson, Boston, Millersburgh, Newark, Warrickton, Smyrna to Evansville. The *Journal* thinks there is not a mail route in Indiana where a small expenditure would confer a greater public convenience, or where a mail route would be hailed with greater approval, than this. We agree with the *Journal*, and hope the prayers of the petitioners will be answered. We call the attention of our Representative to this matter.

In 1854-55 the first public school building was erected at Third and Cherry streets. It was called the Canal Street School.

In 1855 Hermann Fendrich opened a cigar factory and made "La Fendrich" brand cigars. This was probably Evansville's most widely known product. At one time over 100,000 cigars were produced daily. The cigar is being produced elsewhere today.

The Canal Bank was located on Water Street. It issued its own paper money. Its 1853

one-dollar bank note shows a workman holding a hammer sitting beside a boiler with a factory in the background, a woman with a staff and liberty cap, and a portrait of Benjamin Franklin. The bank later became the National City Bank. Who knows what it is currently called with the many mergers that took place at the end of the 1990s and have continued to do so into the 2000s.

Evansville at the beginning of the 1860s had few public improvements. The streets were still unpaved, horses polluted them with their droppings, cattle passed over them on their way to pastures along Pigeon Creek, and pigs wallowed in mud puddles along the streets.

The canal had its problems. There were continual breaks and attempts to destroy the reservoirs. Probably the newspaper article that best relates the problems is the following one:

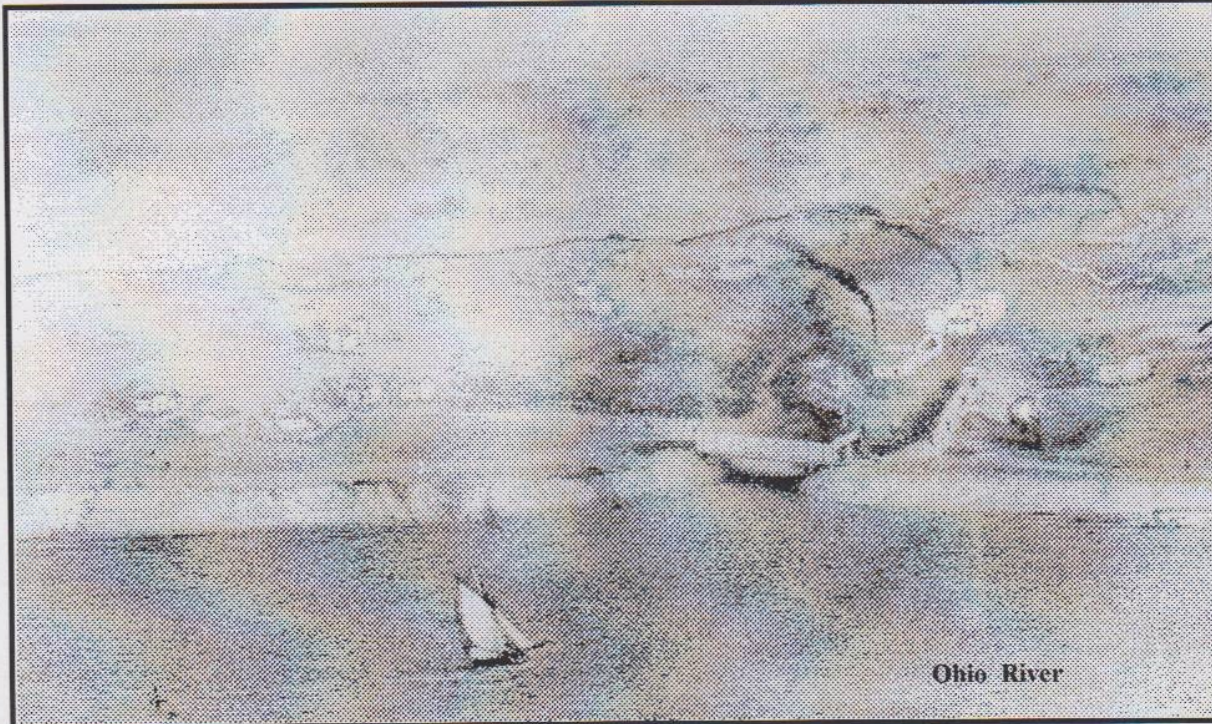
### 3-21-1854 *Evansville Daily Enquirer* The Canal.

Although the following letter was not intended for publication, yet we have taken the liberty of inserting it, as it is of public interest.

TERRE HAUTE, Feb. 25, 1854.

FRIEND SANDERS: \_ I NOTICE AN ARTICLE IN YOUR PAPER, IN REGARD TO THE CANAL, UNDER THE CAPTION OF "Something Wrong." I am not surprised that there should be some disappointment at Evansville in the results of the canal, but I think as yet, the officers in charge of it are not justly censurable for the failure. In the first place during the last season, there were so many breaches in the heavy embankments between Petersburg and Maysville, that no power on earth could have kept the canal in order. We would scarcely get a tolerable supply of water below Petersburg, before a breach would occur, cutting off the source of supply and suspending navigation. That things went on until the canal was frozen up in the winter. After the canal was sufficiently cleared of ice to allow boats to come up to Petersburg, the water was let in and would have been quickly regulated but for the unwarrantable interference of the boatmen. First, Mr. Paul Downing, in order to break the ice on a level between Maysville and Newberry, opened one of the waste weirs and before the superintendent ascertained the fact and could arrest it, the level was nearly drawn down. Of course it took several days to fill up the level and pass on a supply of water to the Petersburg level. Next, a Mr. Ruggles, in getting down with a load of pork from Petersburg, left open the first lock he passed through, and again there was an interruption of navigation. You will say "that is just what we complain of; why don't your lock tenders to their duty and see that the locks are kept shut!" You are not perhaps aware that we do not keep lock tenders of the canal, either North or South of Terre Haute. Neither are there lock tenders on the Ohio & Miami canals. The business has never justified it. If

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



Pigeon Creek and the Water Street Bridge, the end of W & E Canal Basin in Lamasco, Evansville and Ohio River are seen in View 10 of the 1856 lithograph by Middleton, Wallace & Company of Cincinnati. Courtesy, Evansville Museum of Arts and Science. Note that the bridge is a double-track covered bridge across the creek.

boatmen are so unreasonable and wicked as to wantonly obstruct the navigation of the canal, we must indict the penalties of the law. BUT I should hope, that after we once get things regulated again, they will see their own interest in doing all in their power to assist us, rather than increase our difficulties. I know the canal has been in bad order, and its navigation has been a sphere of vexation and trouble, resulting in no profit to the boatmen. I hope you and they will be assured that this is deeply regretted by the officers of the canal. But the trouble has arisen mainly from causes beyond our control. We could not give the canal a full supply of water last fall in consequence of the hazardous condition of the embankments about Petersburg. We could not prevent its freezing up and we shall not, I fear, be able to stop the opening of waste weirs, and drawing of water at the locks, until we catch the delinquents at it, and fine them severely. You remark that a threatened breach at Petersburg was "repaired by the people." We are thankful for information that may \_\_\_ breaches in the \_\_\_\_\_.

Various accidents took place along the canal's banks. Though not really the cause of these accidents, they all contributed to the local citizens desire to have it filled. Breaks, vandalism, accidents, water shortages, lack of profit, sickness, railroads-- all led to demands to fill it.

### 6-26-1847 **Evansville Journal**

Drowned.—A young lad, 17 or 18 years of age, by the name of George Hewson, a nephew of Mr. John Hewson, was drowned in the basin of the Canal last evening about sunset. He was bathing at the time and it is supposed cramp seized him; and no one but a small boy being present, assistance could not be got in time to save him. His body was found about two hours afterwards and handed over to the Coroner. Verdict, accidental drowning.

### 9-7-1852 **Evansville Journal**

Messrs. Morgan, Wales and Wilkinson, were returning from a pleasure ride in the country last Sunday evening, and when near the city their horses took fright and ran furiously away. The gents at once became so enveloped in dust that they could not see their danger, until realized in a most striking manner, by being thrown violently upon the pavement. Mr. Morgan and Wales were but slightly injured, while Wilkinson was seriously, but not dangerously stunned and bruised. The horses continued their made course until they plunged over a precipice of 10 or 12 feet into the canal and stopped uninjured. The buggy was demolished.

### 5-8-1855 **Evansville Journal** CORONER'S INQUEST.

A CORONER'S inquest was held on the 14th of April, 1855, in Pike county Ind, over the dead body of a man found in the Canal the evening previous, when the jury

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

reported the following verdict, to-wit, that they believe the deceased came to his death by voluntarily going late the Canal and drowning, and that from papers found among his effect, they suppose his name to be Henry Bash, a Dutchman, a peddler, about 40 years of age, dark complexioned, about five feet eight inches high. Deceased had on cotton clothing of a mixed color.

There were found of his effects the following, to wit

In Bank Notes on broken banks.....	\$54.00
In Specie	.24
Certificate of deposit in Crescent City Bank	350.00
--In merchandise, jewelry, notions, etc.....	64.14
E.P. BOONE, J. P, Pike co. my8	

### 12-19-1857 **Evansville Journal** MYSTERIOUS DEATH.

On Sunday night last, a young man, a German Jew, named Abraham Meyer aged about 27 years, who had been for some days quite sick of a fever, left the house of a brother with whom he was staying and wandered out on the street. Not coming back as he was expected, search was made for him during the night but he was not found until Monday morning when he was discovered lying under the Sycamore street bridge in the canal, his head upon the bank out of water and his body in the water. He had evidently walked into the canal and perished in his effort to get out. It is supposed he was delirious with fever.

### 6-7-1858 **Evansville Journal**

Yesterday a boy, whose name we have not learned, accidentally fell into the canal. Mr. Matthew McInnery promptly jumped into the water and rescued him. A minister whose church on Sabbath evenings is crowded by boys and girls who while services are progressing do considerable sparking, did on this same evening improve the incident to his purpose of impressing on the minds of the juvenile lovers that life is uncertain, and death by accidental drowning without previous preparation is followed by a precipitation into the boiling cauldron which Old Nick incontinently keeps a sizzling in the lower regions for the unconverted souls of drowned boys.

The canal was a major source of water power during the 1850s. It turned the millers' grind stones and the factories' machines. The water rents provided a stable income as long as the canal was kept watered.

### 4-23-1855 **Evansville Journal**

**GREAT SALE OF TOWN LOTS IN THE TOWN OF HOSMER, IND.**  
A SPLENDID OPPORTUNITY TO INVEST MONEY TO ADVANTAGE.

The above sale of town lots will take place on the premises, at said town, on Saturday, the 19th day of May, 1855, at 10 o'clock A. M., when will be offered at public sale, seventy-five lots in said town, located at the only lock in Pike

county, Indiana, on the Wabash and Erie Canal, five miles south-west of Petersburg, and forty-five miles north-east of the city of Evansville, by canal; also immediately contiguous to the Evansville, Indianapolis and Cleveland Railroad, which is located within one hundred yards of said town. There is at this town a company commenced and in rapid progress of completion a large Flouring Mill, also a Saw Mill and Carding Machine will be connected with this mill, to be propelled by water from said canal. As the water power will be extremely good, and of a permanent character, with these excellent improvements completely connected with this town, and being in the center of a superior farming country, it is but reasonable to suppose that persons generally and especially the Mechanic and Business Man, would but seldom have equal advantages in the purchase of town property.

The undersigned agent, residing in Petersburg, has plats of the property for examination, and is ready at all times to give an information desired in relation thereto, previous to or on the day of the sale.

TERMS.—One-fourth cash, the balance in equal payments of one, two and three years, the purchaser giving noted with approved security, either mortgage or personal. Maps can be seen at the office of Crawford Bell in Evansville till day of sale.

WILLIAN HAWTHORN. Agent for S. R. Hosmer & Co. ap21-1wdtaw

### 6-22-1859 **Evansville Journal**

Rate of water rents fixed by the Board of Managers of the Southern Division of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

For the 1st superficial inch or under...	\$25.00
“ “ 1st additional ,	.... 8.00
2	8.00
3	8.00
4	8.00
5	6.00
6	6.00
7	6.00
8	5.00
9	5.00
10	5.00
11	5.00
12	5.00

The above rates were ordered by the Board of Managers June 6th 1859.

W. D. DOWNEY, Sec'y

On motion of Councilman Wolflin, the report was referred to a special committee to compare the rates of tariff with those formerly paid by the city, and to ascertain whether the former rate has expired. Councilmen Wolflin and Sullivan were appointed said committee.

### 9-6-1859

The Canal.

The canal boats Morgan and Princess both passed the Summit level on Saturday, and have arrived here with cargoes from Petersburg. The canal is now in good order from here to Toledo. We understand from Mr. Lawrence that he has over 300 tons of freight on the way from the lake. Shippers might

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

now, we think, order their heavy freights by the way of canal without fear of any undue delay. The work is now in better condition that it has ever been. A new era in our canal navigation has, we trust, begun.

We understand that the calls of 50 per cent on the subscriptions to the canal have been promptly paid, except those of four persons in this city, whose obligations amount to about \$1100. This calls of 50 per cent on this sum, with the water rents now due, would liquidate the balance due for the repairs, and leave the Board of Managers nearly free of debt. It is mortifying that some of our own citizens should be the only ones to repudiate a contract that has resulted in so much good to the city. The whole cost of repairs to the Lower Division of the canal has been about \$12,000; most of the work has been done at nearly half the estimates made for it by the Trustees. The leaks along the whole line have been thoroughly and effectually stopped and a heavy waste of water thereby prevented.

The City Council ask the right of filling the public cisterns from the canal for a certain sum, with the power to grant certain privileges to citizens to tap them for private uses. As this would deprive the canal managers of a great many smaller water rents, they properly refused to comply, unless the city pay over to the (canal?) portion of what they collect on the sub-leases.

9-6-1859 **Evansville Journal**

Councilman Iverson presented the following rates of tariff for water rent from the Southern Canal Company.

CITY OF EVANSVILLE TO SOUTHERN CANAL COMPANY DM

To Water Rents for Pipes tapping the W. & E. Canal in the city of Evansville, as follows:

Fulton Avenue pipe; from the first of April to the first of October—12 cubic inches \$46.50

Leet street pipe; from first of April to the first of October, 1859—12 cubic inches 7.75

Bond street pipe; from first of April to the first of October, 1859—12 cubic inches 46.50

Sycamore street pipe; from first of April to first of October, 1859—12 cubic inches 46.50

Main street pipe; from first of April to first of October, 1859—12 cubic inches 46.50

Canal street pipe; from first of September to first of Oct., 1859—12 cubic inches 7.75 \$201.50

By order of the Board of Managers. WM. D. DOWNEY, Secretary.

EVANSVILLE, Sept. 3rd, 1859.

On motion of Councilman Elliott the above report was referred to a special Committee, consisting by appointment, of Councilmen Elliott and Wolfelin

On motion of Councilman Cook the Mayor and Councilman Elliott were authorized to confer with Kratz & Heilman relative to the proceedings of the Council of the 18th day of August last.

9-6-1859 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal.

We rejoice to learn from the Manager that the Canal is now in good order through to Terre Haute and ready for any amount of fall business. The heavy work this side of Petersburg has been completed at great labor and expense, and yesterday two boats came through, finding plenty of water along the whole line.

We are informed that the two levies, twenty five per cent each, already imposed upon the subscribers to the Canal fund, with the levy for water rents, if all paid up will be just about enough to liquidate the indebtedness incurred in making the recent repairs. But a large part of the two levies remain unpaid, and hence the Board Of Managers are perplexed with a heavy debt which they are not at all able to liquidate, nor will not be unless the subscribers come forward and pay up. We hope they will do so. It will require promptness as well as liberality to sustain this great and important public work.

A question is now exciting some attention, whether the City of Evansville has a right to permit private individuals to tap the pipes and cisterns which are supplied from the Canal without the consent of the Canal Company.—We certainly are of the opinion that the city has not that right. The water of the Canal is a part of the property of the Canal Company. They may let the use of it to whomsoever they please, but the parties cannot divide their privilege with others. Any of our manufacturers may contract with the Canal Company for the use of the water, but they cannot lay pipes to supply other establishments than their own. The City is no privileged character. She has the same rights as other parties using the water of the Canal, and no more.

At the Council meeting last Saturday night a committee was raised to examine this subject, and their report will be looked for with interest.

## NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.

### '76' FOR LAFAYETTE.

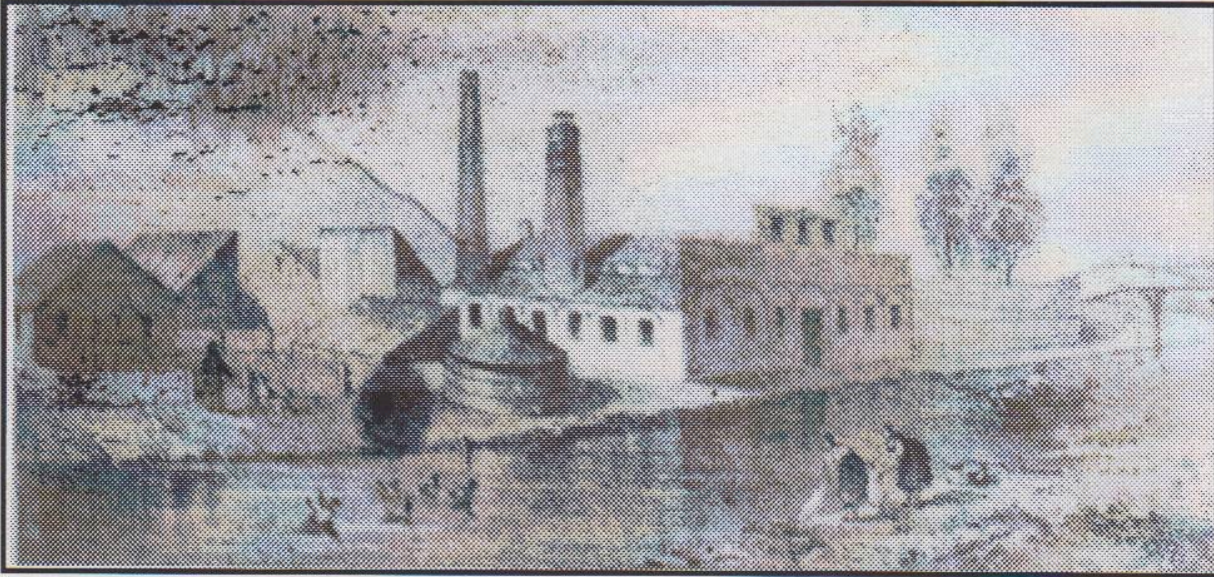


THE staunch canal boat '76.' Hamilton, Master, will leave Evansville for Terre Haute, Thursday, May 10th. She will load at Wabash river rates.—

For freight etc. apply on board, or to my9

JOHN S. MITCHELL, Ag'ts

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



The Eagle Foundry was located on the Wabash and Erie Canal at what is now 5th Street and Sycamore Street in Evansville. Note the women doing laundry in the canal, the man in the rowboat, the five ducks, the man with the dog at the fence on the left, the bridge over the canal on the far right.

Photo courtesy the Willard Library

### A SIGHT-SEEING TRIP IN EVANSVILLE BY CANAL BOAT

Quoted from an article by Daniel W. Snapp in *Was It Yesterday?* by James Morlock, 1980.

"In order to better understand the direction of the city's (Evansville) growth in 1855, and to experience to some degree the excitement of travel by canal boat, we will take an imaginative visitor on a sight-seeing trip down to the small basin.

"Our visitor gets on the boat at the corner of the present Walnut and Canal Streets. The boat is pulled by three horses hitched in tandem fashion. A rider is mounted on the horse nearest the boat. The pilot takes his place at the rudder and gives the go-ahead sign to the driver. The 250 foot line is drawn taut and they are on their way through partial woodland.....

"Our visitor is now moving towards Governor Street. On his left he can see the Old Elles Mill, more recently known as the Brizius Mill.

"At Seventh Street our visitor passed under a bridge, and since it is sufficiently high, the boat clears it without the captain giving the usual warning, 'All Duck.'.

"Proceeding further he will notice on his left a cemetery, the northern point of which crosses present Mulberry Street. The bodies buried in this cemetery were moved to Oak Hill Cemetery in the early 1850s.....

"The canal began a gradual turn on to Fifth Street. It should be noted that the original survey provided that at this point the canal was to divide, one arm continuing down to Second Street; this part was never completed.

"Returning now to our visitor who was left stranded in his boat at Cherry and Fifth Streets, he has been looking down Cherry Street toward the Ohio River. He sees smoke gushing from the chimney of a factory. It is Hunnel's Planing Mill, located on Cherry and Third Streets.

"As the boat moves northwestward on the canal, our visitor is privileged to see a number of the better homes of the city. Among these are the homes of John Specht of 208 Fifth Street, and the home of Robert Evans, which occupied the lot extending from Fifth to Sixth Streets and from Main to Locust Streets. The city was named after Robert Evans. The Central Library is now located over a portion of this block.

"Our visitor will see on the southwest corner of Locust and Fifth

Streets the wholesale grocery and warehouse of Matthew Foster, Today (1974) a parking lot covers a portion of this block. On the northwest corner of these same streets is the Igleheart Mill. The Majestic Theater later occupied part of the block.

"Now our boat crosses Main Street and heads down towards the basin, which at that time covered a portion of the block on which the old courthouse now stands. In doing so, it passes by the old Eagles Foundry on the right, near Sycamore Street. About halfway between Sycamore and Vine Streets, the canal begins to widen as it approaches the small basin. A small brewery at that time stood on the left side of the junction of the canal and the basin.

"When the boat docks at the basin, our visitor, a complete stranger to the city who has been viewing the sights from the canal boat, disembarks to get a closer view of downtown Evansville. Meanwhile, the boat continues its journey down First Avenue (Fourth Street) to Indiana Street and finally into the large basin where it discharges its cargo."



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Try as they may, the canal superintendents weren't miracle workers and couldn't keep the canal in repair. Then in 1859 Thomas Dowling, a canal trustee, came up with the bright idea of leasing the canal to groups of individuals who would repair and rebuild structures as directed by the chief engineer. The canal trustees would retain ownership, control and keep the tolls collected in reserve for the lessees in a reserve fund until the end of their lease. At that time the lessees would receive the net earnings from the lease period. In Evansville a group of men including Ziba Cook, Marvin Lawrence, and Goodlet Morgan formed the Southern Indiana Canal Company, took a four year lease on the canal from Evansville to 95 miles north of town and elected Canal Managers.

### 10-8-1859 **Evansville Journal** Canal Election.

Pursuant to previous notice, a small majority of the stockholders of the Southern Division of the W. & E. Canal met at the Court House, in Evansville, on Wednesday evening, the 5th last, at 7 o'clock, for the purpose of electing five Managers for the ensuing year.

The meeting was organized by Wm. Hawthorn taking the chair, and Wm. D. Downey Secretary.

On motion of Judge Foster, the Secretary of the Board of Managers was called upon to read the report of the receipts and expenditures on the Southern Division of the W. & E. Canal, from the first of April up to the first of October, 1859, being the time the Company has had said portion of the Canal under control. The report was read and received.

On motion the meeting proceeded to the election of Managers.

The following gentlemen were nominated as candidates before the voters of the house.

M. A. Lawrence, Geo. Foster, of Evansville; L. Grant, of Millersburg; Wm Hawthorn, of Petersburg; and D. A. Bynum. The following was the result of the first ballot: For Lawrence, 65; Foster, 86; Grant, 74; Hawthorn, 86; Bynum, 82; R. Barnes, 22. Therefore,

Resolved, That the following gentlemen be decried, by the Chairman, as unanimously elected Managers of the Southern Division of the W. & E. Canal:

M.A. Lawrence

Geo. Foster

L. Grant

Wm. Hawthorn

D. A. Bynum.

On motion the proceedings of this meeting be published in the city papers.

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

WM. HAWTHORN, Chm'n.

WM.D. DOWNEY, Sec'y.

For a short time things seemed to improve on this southern portion. Tolls in 1859 and 1860 were about \$4000, which was high for Evansville, but many necessary repairs weren't being done. The lessees had had people in Evansville subscribe for Southern Indiana Canal Company stock. When collection time came to pay the first installment two refused to pay. Others refused to pay later installments. By the end of 1860 the lessees had so little in their treasury that they asked to be released from their contract. (See other clippings under Southern Indiana Canal Company)

### 7-20-1859 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal \_\_\_strs.

We are very sorry to learn, by the Board of the Managers, that any of the subscribers to the Canal fund had raised quibbles against the payment of their subscriptions. This was unexpected, when the promises of the enterprise had become so flattering—after it had been ascertained that the costs of repairs would not be one-half the original estimates and after an unusually abundant harvest had secured the prospects of a much larger business than was calculated upon when the subscriptions were made. The prospects now are that only one half of the amount originally contracted to be given for the works will be required to complete the repairs. The managers did not contemplate calling only for the first and second installments, unless some unforeseen accidents should make unexpected expenditures necessary. To refuse to pay under these circumstances would indicate that there was not intention of paying at all when the subscription was made.

Such proceedings places the managers, who have entered into contracts and incurred personal liabilities, in an embarrassing position, from which honorable associates will feel it an imperative duty, at any personal costs, to relieve them at once. The circumstance is to be regretted also for its influence upon the county subscribers. Our business men have not enjoyed the highest reputation in the country for liberality and public spirit, and the facts disclosed by the Board of Managers are not calculated to remove these impressions or inspire a higher degree of confidence between town and country in future joint enterprises. Those who entail this discredit upon the character of the city should be held responsible in public opinion for the damage they have done to the honor and good name of the city. The course which the managers announce is the right one; the subscriptions are legally valid and good faith to all interested, makes it the duty of the Board to enforce payment without respect to persons.

While the Board of Managers tried their best to keep up canal structures, prevent breaks along the line and get the subscribers to pay, Evansville was being caught up in the slavery issue. Some of Evansville's most prominent men assisted runaway slaves to cross the Ohio

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

### SOUTHERN CANAL COMPANY

1-14-59 **Evansville Enquirer**

Elliott, from committee on that subject presented a report, embodying the rates that water will be furnished the city by the Southern Canal Company, and also fixing the rates at which water will be furnished for manufacturing purposes. The committee also agree to release the Canal Company from all liability in keeping up repairs of bridges, or erecting any bridges. The amount charged for water, was fixed at \$25 per superficial inch per year.

The report was laid over for one week by consent.

The committee on that subject reported that they did not consider that Mr. Grosch was physically able to attend to the duties of engineer to the steam fire engine, and that they had employed Mr. Perkins for which they agree to pay him a salary of \$1,000 per year.

Council Orr, moved that the report be concurred in, and Mr. Perkins employed.—Which was agreed to.

Messrs Elliott & Orr were appointed a committee to settle with Mr. Grosch.

An ordinance, providing for the election of, and defining the duties of the city surveyor, was read and adopted.

An ordinance relative to turn table, or pivot bridges, setting forth certain penalties for opening and leaving them open, was read and adopted.

11-14-59 **Evansville Enquirer**  
AN ORDINANCE.

An Ordinance for the regulation and protection of turn-tables or pivot bridges. Passed November 12th, 1850.

**Section 1.** Be it ordained by the Common Council of the City of Evansville, That whenever any person or persons may have occasion to open any of the turn tables or pivot bridges within the City for the purpose of passing any boat, or for any other purposes, it shall be the duty of such person or persons to close the same immediately.

**Section 2.** It shall not be lawful for any person or persons to attach or hitch any horse, mule, or other animal to the lever, or to any other part of any of said bridges for the purpose of opening or closing the same, or in any manner to open or close any such bridges by such animal power.

**Section 3.** It shall not be lawful for any person or persons to injure, deface, destroy or remove any index or inscription which the Common Council may cause to be placed upon any such bridge.

**Section 4.** Every person who shall neglect any of the duties prescribed by, or violate any of the provisions of this Ordinance, shall for every such neglect or violation forfeit and pay not less than five nor more than fifty dollars.

W. Baker, Mayor Attest. P Burke, Cl'k

5-21-59 **Evansville Enquirer**

The following is a list of subscribers' names in Evansville, to the support of the Wabash & Erie Canal, from Evansville to Newbury:--

WM. D. Downey, Sec'y

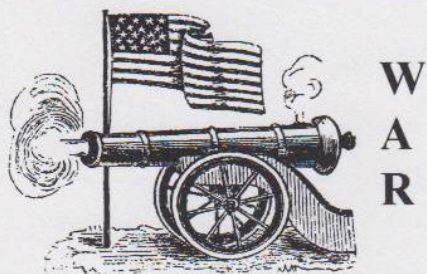
Name	Am't	Chas S Wells	100	G W Rathbone	100
Robert Barnes	\$500	Johyn A Reitz	100	Philip Decker	100
P G. O'Riley	500	Roelker, Kluskman & Co	100	G Copeland	100
Geo Foster & Co	500	James Urie	50	John J Chandler	100
M A Lawrence	500	L Kahn	50	Marcus Sherwood	100
Iglehart & Bro	500	J S Hopkins	50	Conrad Baker	100
John Ingle jr	500	Bisch & Kollenberg	50	Allen C Hallock	100
Kratz & Heillman	500	Wilkshire & Krabka	20	Wm H Walker	100
Orr & Dalzell	300	Wm Bierbower	50	Wm E French	100
Brown & Aikman	300	A Dunhan	50	A Reis	100
Preston & Bro	300	Wetzel & Klintwort	50	E H Sabin	100
F Kron	200	W Baker	50	Francis Amory	200
Wheeler & Riggs	230	Littles & Ervin	200	J B. Mesker	100
Keen & Preston	200	Wm Hunnel	200	Archer & Nackey	50
J S Jaques & Co	200	James Steel	200	Chas Babcock	50
E S Babcock	300	J Oakley & Son	200	George S Sonntag	50
Cook & Rice	200	I R Mills & Co	200	J Healy	50
I & D Heiman	100	Babcock & Lagow	100	Thos E Garvin	50
H Q Wheeler	100	U W Armstrong	100	Solomon Kahn	50
Hollingsworth & Bro	100	J P Elliott	100	Thos Scantlin	50
J H & W W Norgan	100	E Lewis	100	John F Glover	50
Anspacher & Plout	100	Robt Furgus	100	Scantlin & Stephens	50



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

River in fishermen's boats, hide them in cellars, and move them by night in a wagonload of hay. These "conductors" on the underground railroad included Willard Carpenter, Samuel McCutchan, and Levi Hooker. Many of them were justices of the peace. Judges Andrew Robinson and James G. Jones assisted them by defending in court those who were caught transporting slaves.

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The Civil War in 1861 made Evansville as important a port as St. Louis or Louisville. It shipped produce and provisions on weekly river packets to Cairo and maintained river packets to Bowling Green, KY on the Green River and on the Wabash River. It also shipped on the Evansville and Crawfordsville railroad and on the Wabash and Erie Canal. It served as a shipping hub from a radius of about 75 miles.

The war changed Evansville's circle of trade. There was little communication with the Lower Mississippi valley, or with the Green river area with the closing of business relations with the South. The use of the railroad became less important as did the canal. Evansville's once bright future was covered with gloom.

Following the war Evansville's black population soared with many freed slaves coming to Vanderburgh county where they found work as farm hands. By 1900 it had the largest proportion of blacks of any Indiana city. They lived along the filled-in canal bed around Liberty Baptist Church, which was founded in 1865.

The surge in the black population, the arrival of another wave of Germans, and the annexation of the town of Independence greatly increased the population. By 1870 Evansville had grown to be the second largest city in Indiana.

The railroads provided the transportation system in the late 1860s and 1870s with several

new lines coming into Evansville. The rail cars had to be put on a boat and floated across the Ohio River to go south through Kentucky.

The canal became stagnant. In 1862 the deteriorating bridges were replaced with box culverts with fill dirt over them. In 1864 the local doctors thought it caused disease and agitated for filling it with dirt. Property values declined. However, those who rented its water for power were opposed to filling it. Some citizens wanted a water works. Letters and editorials appeared in the local papers giving the arguments for and against its closure. (See other articles under Nuisance.)

6-18-1863 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal Again.

Strange as it may appear, there are a number of men in this city, who maintain that the Wabash and Erie Canal Company, composed of foreign capitalists, has the right to maintain, in the heart of Evansville, a nuisance, compared with which all the other nuisances of the city, soap factories, slaughterhouses, and hog holes are insignificant. Every intelligent physician in the place knows that the malaria arising from the canal in its present state, cannot fail to largely increase the percentage of sickness this summer. The fact is, that the canal ought to be filled up immediately. The Canal Company was not chartered to maintain in the limits of this city a ditch covered with a green slime, sending forth its deadly miasma, and I do not believe that the company could recover one cent from the city for damages, if the canal is filled up.

But it is urged that the company, having a charter to build a canal, this franchise cannot be interfered with. This is true and if the canal was to any intent or purpose a canal, no one would think of urging its discontinuance. But if the company has a right to maintain the ditch in its present state, then the company by this argument, could run an open sewer along the same route. Shall we be imposed upon by this company any longer? Shall we assist them in maintaining the ditch in its present condition, in order that the people may be brought to take in all their hands? The best way to block this game is to fill up the ditch and let the company sue and be defeated.

7-19-1864 **Evansville Journal**

To the Citizens of Evansville.

We, the undersigned physicians desire to call your serious attention to the nuisance and cesspool extending the whole length of our city. We refer to the canal. Shall it be longer submitted to?

It is a frightful source of disease in your midst; no one is free from the influence of malaria arising from the filth and mud ever exposed to the sun. This fact gives every stranger arriving here an unfavorable opinion of the health of our city; whereas were this nuisance removed, we believe that Evansville would be as healthy as any city in the West.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

It is a heavy and direct tax upon you all, in the shape of physician's bills, and we do not hesitate to declare that the saving to you in this item alone would, in a very short time far more than repay the expense of filling up the canal as well as to make up for the inconvenience to mills, &c., now dependent upon it for their supply of water.

Your city laws forbid filth of any kind to be deposited or left in your streets or alleys, and yet the evil arising from such would be trifling compared with that under which you are constantly suffering from the canal.

The sickly season is now upon you, and you should neither hesitate nor delay but at once instruct the City Council to take the necessary steps to abate the nuisance.

S. W. Thompson, M. D.;

M. J. Bray, M. D.;

J. B. Johnston, M. D.;

J. P. DeBulet, M. D.;

C. C. Tyrrell, M. D.;

J. J. Pennington, M. D.;

G. B. Walker, M. D.;

H. G. Jones, M. D.

[Times and Union please copy.]

7-25-1866 **Evansville Journal**

FILLING UP THE CANAL. - Every one who has seen the canal in its ancient grandeur, half filled with filthy water, covered with a green slime, the whole intermingled with the half putrid carcasses of hogs, dogs, cats and all manner of wild beasts, creeping things and fowls of the air, will rejoice with us in seeing that prolific source of disease and death filled up.

Three squares, from Sycamore to Walnut, have been filled up, and the square above Walnut is now being filled. A little portion in front of Roelker & Blount's foundry needs a few cart loads of earth when, if leveled down properly, Fifth Street would be fairly opened from Walnut down. We hope to see the good work go on until the entire filthy ditch is filled up. The benefits derived there from in a sanitary point of view will be incalculable.

7-20-1864 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal.

Editors **Journal**:

No one denies that the canal is a nuisance, but at the same time, the whole manufacturing interest of the city are dependent upon it for water to run their machinery, and hence it is as much a matter of public interest, that means be provided for a supply of water for manufacturing purposes, and for the public cisterns, as that the nuisance shall be abated. One would think from the tenor of the communication in the morning's **Journal**, to which a number of our physicians were pleased to lend their names, that the inconveniences of manufacturers was a matter of little moment; but any one who will take the trouble to look round for an hour, will be surprised at the number of engines that are propelled by water from the canal. Indeed every one who is intelligent on the subject knows that preliminary to filling the canal, some provision must be made for a supply of water. It is well known that there are some legal reasons which have operated to

prevent the filling of the canal, but if the Trustees waive them I presume no citizen will interpose any objection, provided the manufacturing interests are respected; but those who are interested in the use of the water from the canal, will not tamely submit to the sacrifice of their interests upon a hue and cry raised by parties who voluntarily buy property and settle in the presence of the nuisance.

But I think there need be no conflict here; for ten of fifteen thousand dollars works can be constructed, which with a trifling annual expense, will supply the necessary amount of water both for manufacturing and for the uses of the city.

But the question arises, who is to construct the works? I answer, the city should do it for many reasons; first, because she will be the largest customer,--secondly, because, to enable the city authorities to command what ever they need for public use, they ought not to be left to the mercy of private individuals, thirdly, because it is a matter of public interest, and affects every property owner; fourthly, the city charter confers the power and imports a corresponding duty "to provide for the furnishing of the city and the inhabitant thereof with water;" fifthly, because we have no law authorizing the organization of a private corporation for any such purpose, and without such an organization no prudent man would risk his money in such an enterprise, especially as the city having the power to construct the water-works, the investment might be rendered valueless by the Council at any time by a simple vote.

Sixthly, because as the city has complete jurisdiction of the whole subject, and can therefore have a monopoly, it will be perfectly competent and fair for her to impose such a water rent to be paid by consumers as will defray current expenses and pay a good interest on the amount inverted.

To prevent any misapprehension I may say that the estimate I make has reference to the plan converting the canal basin into a reservoir and supplying it from Pigeon creek by an engine and pipes.

I make these suggestions for the consideration of the Mayor and Council, who have the control of this matter. If they shall see proper to set on foot some plan for the supply of water which will meet the public wants, every citizen will co-operate with them in filling the canal as fast as it is practicable, otherwise it is useless to hold public meetings.

It would be difficult to imagine any interest more vital to the public welfare of the city than that of the manufactures, and yet the correspondents of the **Journal**, including our learned physicians, seem to think it an unimportant matter to cut off their supply of water.

Bad publicity, public conflict and disruptions in service apparently were overlooked by some of Evansville's more prominent businessmen. In June of 1866 a group of these men met and formed the Evansville Canal Company that was to lease 32 miles of the Wabash and Erie Canal from Evansville to the north for a period of five years.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

6-2-1866 **Evansville Journal**  
CANAL MEETING.

—There was a large attendance of the manufacturers of the city, at the Council Chamber last night, to take into consideration the subject of repairing the canal as far as the reservoir. The meeting was called to order by Mr. J. A. Reitz, who stated that he had caused articles of association to be drawn up for the formation of a company for the above-named purpose. Mr. Butterfield proceeded to read the articles, which, when the blanks were filled, were adopted. Quite a number of manufacturers signed the articles of association, and the company was formed. The name and style of the company, as agreed upon, is the "Evansville Canal Company."

The shares of stock are to be \$10 each, and each man is entitled to a vote for every share taken, or subscribed. Those subscribing the sum of \$100 are required to give four notes of \$25 each, to be paid as called upon by the Company, or as the money may be required. In case that any man should fail to subscribe the amount sufficient to pay for the water used, it is provided that such may be assessed the full amount of this share, according to the amount he uses. There are to be, and were selected, nine Managers, who have power to select a President. The articles of association provide that toll may be charged all boats navigating the canal and that the Managers shall have power to sub-let water privileges to such as are not stockholders.

It was proposed to repair the canal for a distance of thirty-two miles or to the reservoir, and to procure a lease from the Wabash and Erie Canal Company for a period of five years.

On behalf of the Committee appointed to examine the condition of the canal, and to report the number of breaks, and the probably cost of repairs, Mr. Reitz reported that he, with the two Mr. Smith's and Mr. Kratz, had made a survey and an estimate, and that the canal could be repaired at a cost not to exceed \$1,265.80.

6-2-1866

**OFFICERS OF EVANSVILLE CANAL COMPANY.**—At a meeting held at Evansville, Indiana, June 1st, 1866, the articles of association of the Evansville Canal Company, were approved, and the following managers elected, viz.: J. A. Reitz, J. C. Smith, C. Kratz, George Mentzer, Alf. Bollis, H. E. Blemker, Dr. Kennedy, C. Slaum, and James Uris; also J. A. Reitz, Wm. Hunnel, Thomas Bullin and Fr. Morris, assisting, were elected to proportionate the sum to be subscribed by each person.

The Managers of the Evansville Canal Company met June 2d, 1866, and elected the following officers; J. A. Reitz, President; C. Kratz, Treasurer; and H. C. Blemker, Secretary.

The Evansville Canal Company sought to keep the canal in good repair but experienced more difficulty than they had imagined. With a great deal of labor and patience they got water to the manufacturers and filled the public cisterns for fire purposes. They said keeping the canal watered was a precarious situation and that the

city should construct a permanent water works.

The canal never was a profitable venture for investors or a real success for transportation. Running parallel to the Wabash River in northern Indiana and somewhat parallel to the Ohio River in the southern part of the state, transportation on these rivers, especially in southern Indiana, was improved by the invention of the steamboat.

Also in competition with the canal were the railroads. In fact, the Straight Line out of Evansville eventually occupied the bed of the canal.

Evansville began building in earnest following the war. It also advanced in business, industry, schools, and quality of life. The five story St. George hotel, which boasted a bathroom on every floor, was one of the finest between Pittsburgh and New Orleans. The Evansville Opera House could accommodate 1,000 people. Other theaters were soon erected.

On February 24, 1876, an auction began that sold the Wabash and Erie Canal in lots with one lot being from the Ohio/Indiana State line to Lafayette and then the rest in eleven lots from Lafayette to Evansville. Reservoir lands, locks and quarries were sold. The bondholders received a mere \$160,096 total.

Soon schemes and speculation on both canal property and canal bonds arose. There were public property sharks trying to obtain legal titles to the canal property by "colluding with public, state and federal officers, advertising public sales of these properties in the eastern newspapers, and then, on the day of sale, buying them in." Legal battles raged for the ensuing twenty years.

In Evansville the early settlers had acquired a title to the canal lands by right of easement, which was for a period of twenty years or more. Suits were filed to get possession by some of the brightest attorneys in the county.

John Shanklin filed one of the first suits against the city of Evansville on November 7, 1871. It claimed that on October 18, 1837 Shanklin was the owner of all the real estate within the limits of the eastern enlargement of

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Evansville. He gave part of this enlargement for public use as the bed of the Wabash and Erie Canal. Water was in the canal bed from 1838 until 1859 when the canal was abandoned. He claimed that the city of Evansville then forcibly entered and filled in the canal bed. He claimed this land should then revert back to him and that Evansville should be "perpetually enjoined from setting up any claim thereto."

Evansville said Shanklin originally owned the land but that the city became owner of the canal bed, filled it up at her own expense, built a street and maintained a street on it. Judge D. L. Laird finally decreed that Shanklin owned the land prior to October 16, 1837, that he, with Robert Evans and other adjoining proprietors, laid off the boundaries of the eastern enlargement, which included the tract claimed by Evansville, in town lots, streets and alleys and recorded the plat. Shanklin then sold one-half of the platted lots and still owned the other half. The land in controversy, Canal Street, was used for the canal shortly after it was platted. That the canal was abandoned about 1864 and Evansville began filling it up until it was completed from Second street to Eighth street, which was shortly before this law suit. Purchasers of the lots on Canal street had erected buildings and a public school that fronted on the street. Evansville had kept the street open and improved as a public street. He found in favor of Evansville keeping the street open, improved and maintained as a public street.

The case was appealed to the Indiana Supreme Court. It sustained Judge Laird's decision.

Other major question arose when what today we call the "old county court house" was built. It was built on the canal basin. The case Collett vs. the board of commissioners of Vanderburgh county was taken to the Indiana Supreme Court under Justice Mitchell. Joseph Collet had appealed to the court that the property of four lots in Evansville upon which the commissioners were erecting the court house was property acquired by the state upon which to build the canal. He said that the Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal was given the right, title, and interest of the state to the canal by the governor on July 31, 1847.

The court decided earlier in the May term of 1866 that the state acquired only an easement upon which the canal was constructed and that the fee continued in the former owners. And therefore those who seemed to be the owners proceeded to fill up the canal, which cost about \$2,000 in 1867. The lots were taxed against the owners until 1873 when Vanderburgh County acquired the title from those who possessed the titles.

The court handed down this decision: "When a canal, instituted by the state and afterwards conveyed by it to a corporation known as the Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie canal, for public purpose, who abandoned as a highway, and possession was afterward taken by abutting lot owners, who filled up the channel and rescued the property at great expense and in good faith, from becoming a public nuisance, and retained exclusive and continuous possession for twenty years, they acquired title by prescription as against one asserting a mere proprietary interest in the land formerly occupied by the canal."

Therefore the decision was in favor of the public spirited citizens of Evansville who had filled in the nuisance. The court affirmed the findings of the lower court.

One of the newspaper reports of the "Canal Muddle" in the courts contained the following description of the route of the canal through Evansville:

5-5-1877 **Evansville Journal**—The canal bed in the city begins at Garvin and Canal Street, where it enters the corporation line; and runs thence down Canal or Boulevard Street to Fifth; thence down Fifth to the corner of Sycamore; thence diagonally across two blocks occupied by Barenfanger & Lennert's manufactory and Caden's stone yard, and the Court House site to Fourth Street; down Fourth Street to Indiana Street, and thence down Indiana Street to the old basin at the intersection of Indiana Street and Seventh Avenue. This is a distance of a little more than two miles. The bed averages fifty feet in width, though in some places it is 150 feet wide. That portion from Garvin Street to Sycamore, is in the street, while from Sycamore Street to Seventh Avenue much of the bed is infringed upon by blocks. Where the line crosses the block occupied by Caden and others the width of the bed is 150 feet, which cuts the block diagonally across. It will take off the entire southerly third of the Court House block, and thence for nine blocks below the squares infringe some forty-five feet upon the bed as claimed by Col. Hudson.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

By 1880 annual sales in Evansville were estimated from merchants' reports as:

- \$3,550,000 Groceries
- 2,800,000 Dry goods and notions
- 1,800,000 Boots and shoes
- 1,500,000 Clothing
- 740,000 Drugs
- 700,000 Pork packers
- 500,000 Leather
- 500,000 Hats, caps and furs
- 350,000 China, glass and queensware
- 180,000 Hardware

At this time there were seven flouring mills that produced flour at a cost as small as that of the mammoth mills in Minneapolis. There were eleven sawmills and lumber interests. The city was the largest hardwood lumber market in the United States for the time. Some of this hardwood was used by Evansville manufacturers in the production of furniture and woodenwares.

Evansville also produced large quantities of brick and ornamental brick shipping from 600,00 to 1,000,000 a month to states in the South. Coal and tobacco were also shipped in large quantities.

The building of a railroad bridge across the Ohio River in 1885 brought in people from Henderson, Kentucky. By 1890 Vanderburgh county had 167,515 residents with 130,496 of them residing in Evansville. Down through the years Evansville has maintained its position as supply center and mercantile capital of the tri-state area of Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois.

By 1884 some streets and homes had electricity. In 1892 the electric Evansville Street Railway Company was in operation.

Evansville entered the 1900s with auto manufacturers that built cars with names like Zentmobile, Simplicity, etc. It had an electric interurban by 1903.

Because of the county's wonderful hardwoods it had over 300 furniture factories by 1910. Globe-Bosse-World Furniture Company was created when three of them merged forming the largest furniture business in the world. Today only the Kargess Furniture Company founded in 1886 still produces furniture, but its high quality

wood, other than poplar grown closer to home, has to be shipped in from California or South America. It makes some of the finest and most expensive furniture available. The company painstakingly hand carves each piece. Some are even customized to match a buyer's wallpaper pattern. It takes 27 different steps to put the finish on one piece. The average piece costs about \$3,000. A large wall unit may run as high as \$30,000. Kargess employees just over 100 people who produce around 3,000 pieces a year. Gross sales in 1999 were \$9.4 million.

A great flood in 1913 devastated much of Evansville's southeast side but didn't seem to deter businesses from locating in the town. The first 10-story skyscraper was built by Citizens National Bank. Edward Mead Johnson of New Jersey, a producer of baby foods, moved into the old Evansville Cotton Mill and began making its dietary supplements. Over the years they made Pabulum, Vi-Sol vitamins, Metrecal, Nutrament, and Oracon.

The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Coliseum was dedicated in 1917. Evansville College opened its doors in 1919.

Prohibition closed down many of Evansville's breweries and bottle makers. A whiskey ring, composed of over 70 men with the chief of police included, was organized. And in 1920 the Ku Klux Klan founded its first klavern in Indiana. D.C. Stephenson, a coal salesman, became Indiana's Grand Dragon.

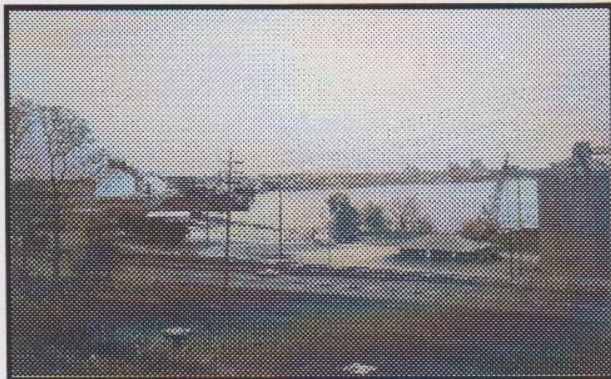
Evansville began manufacturing refrigerators in 1922 which led to the Servel Corporation. Another refrigerator maker was Sunbeam Electric.

The 1937 flood on January 31 reached a record 53.74 feet in 36 hours. It was a devastating disaster that covered over 500 city blocks and severely damaged seventy-five hundred homes. It was followed a short eight days later by tornadic winds that damaged an additional seventy homes.

Being located on a large bend in the Ohio River, Evansville became home to a large shipyard at the foot of Wabash Avenue. It produced the Landing Ship Tank (LST) for World War II. The

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

first ship was launched in 1942. When at its peak the shipyard produced two vessels every week and created 15,000 jobs for area residents. The shipyard was destroyed by fire a mere five months after the war ended.

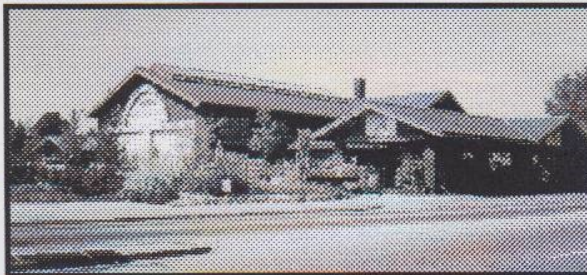


From high atop Reitz or Coal Mine Hill one can see that Evansville lies on the east side of a huge bend in the Ohio River. The shipyards that built the LST were located at the left side of the picture. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Evansville continued to grow and make improvements throughout the 20th century and is similar to other cities its size in the United States. Although the canal was the impetus to Evansville's early growth, the canal has long been forgotten by its citizens. The only reminders that the canal once operated in Evansville are the street signs at Canal and Water streets and the historical markers on the grounds of the old courthouse, in the parking lot of the Welborn Campus of St. Mary's Hospital, and in Wesselman Woods.

During the past decade, some of Evansville's historic buildings have been renovated. The 1875-1877 Old Post Office and Customhouse was renovated and houses the Metropolitan Evansville Chamber of Commerce. It is probably Evansville's most recognizable structure. The 1890 Old Vanderburgh County Jail and Sheriff's Residence sat vacant for 28 years, was renovated, and reopened in 1997 through a public-private partnership.

Today shoppers can visit the old Farmer's Market built in 1918 during Mayor Benjamin Bosse's administration. For years farmers brought their meat and produce to the semi-open air market to sell. Supermarkets brought about the decline in its use. From 1954-1980 it was Fire



The Farmers Market relives the past. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Station No. 3. From 1980-1988 it housed the Metropolitan Evansville Transit System. In 1997 a Denver brewery purchased it to convert it into a restaurant and micro-brewery, but that never materialized. It sat, deteriorated and was saved just in the nick of time from the wrecking ball. The 13,000-square-foot structure was purchased for \$10,000 and nearly \$750,000 was spent to renovate it. It reopened as a Farmer's Market in August of 1999.

Other buildings that were restored were the turn of the century General Cigar Building, the 1908 Parsons-Scoville Building, the Peoples Bank Building, the Fifth Main Financial Plaza, the Civitas Insurance Building, and the old Eagle's Lodge Home that most recently housed Lockyear's Business College. Beautiful old homes, as well as commercial buildings, have also been restored to their former grandeur.



Today the Pagoda is home to the Evansville Convention and Visitors Bureau. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Many of these historic homes are located in the Riverside Historic District. An Evansville Foot by Foot walking guide is available at the Convention and Visitors Bureau located in the restored 1912 Pagoda at 401 SE Riverside Drive. The 35 homes listed in the guide include the home of Marcus Sherwood, who worked on the canal and later operated the Sherwood House, a hotel, and the 1871 Reitz Home Museum, which

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville



The Marcus Sherwood home above and the J. A. Reitz Home below are on a walking tour. Photos by Bob Schmidt



became the property of the Daughters of Isabella upon the death of the last of John Augustus Reitz' children. In 1944 it was purchased for Evansville's first bishop. The Catholic Diocese of Evansville donated the the home to the Reitz Home Preservation Society in 1974. They restored it and listed in on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.



An old hardware store on Franklin Street that finally closed its door in the 1990s is home to the Gerst Bavarian Haus Restaurant. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Another historic district is West Franklin Street, which was once a small settlement called Independence. The Laval block was erected in 1884 as the first commercial building on the street. It included six storefronts with living quarters above. An old hardware store has been reborn as the Gerst Bavarian Haus restaurant and bar. The street comes alive during the first full week of October when the West Side Nut Club holds its Fall Festival. All sort of food booths are set up by charitable organizations and there are rides in the park.

If you would rather see water and wildlife take ar walking tour of Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve or of the first section of the newly opened Pigeon Creek Greenway Passage. Besides hiking along the Boonville Trail, part of an abandoned railroad bed and the towpath for the old Wabash and Erie Canal, you can see a rare hardwood forest within an urban environment in Wesselman Woods. The stand of timber is the only one of this size and quality in the United States making it a national natural landmark. Three employees and over 200 volunteers maintain the park with its more than six miles of trails.

In 1975 a plan was recommended to take the Pigeon Creek Flood Control Project and turn it into a park. It was to be a continuous pedestrian/ bicycle trail that related natural areas along the entire levee route between Angel Mounds and Stringtown Road. It will eventually have neighborhood linkages and cross-town connector trails. One branch will connect Lamasco Park and Garvin Park, another will extend to Fendrich Golf Course and Wesselman Woods, and a third will go to Angel Mounds State Historic Site.



Carolyn Schmidt and Stan Schmitt stand before a Pigeon Creek Greenway Trailhead sign. Photo - B Schmidt

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

One of the best preserved Native American sites is Angel Mounds. The mounds, built as platforms to elevate buildings, were occupied from 950 A.D. to 1450 A.D. when the people abandoned them. They served as a religious, political and trade center. About three per cent of the site has been excavated by archaeologists. They found over 2.4 million artifacts. One is the Kneeling Man, a fluorite statue that is unique to Angel Mounds.

Archaeologists have many unanswered questions about the site, which is becoming more and more endangered by rain runoff and floodwaters due to the rapid growth of Evansville's East Side. It is currently listed as "Priority One" on the National Historic Landmark's Endangered List. The main 44-foot-high mound has a serious erosion problem. It was the home of the chief and the largest of the eleven mounds.



This historical marker is placed outside of the Angel Mounds park entrance. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Renovation of the old interpretive center began in the fall of 1999. A new \$2.5 million center is being built next to the old one. When complete the complex will look like a small-scale Mississippian village with winter and summer houses. The mounds site, which encompasses 500 acres, is closed until May 2000 when renovations are expected to be completed.

Another "must see" is the 1885 Willard Library, the oldest public library building in Indiana. James and Merritt Reid, architects of the famous Hotel del Coronado in San Diego designed the building in the Victorian Gothic Revival style. It has pointed arches, an off-center tower, a steep roof, and terra-cotta owls, which symbolize wisdom, on the side gables. It was built by Willard



The Willard Library was a gift to Evansville of Willard Carpenter and houses a wonderful genealogical collection. Photo by Bob Schmidt

Carpenter as "a public library for the use of the people of all classes, races, and sexes, free of charge forever."

Now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is said to have been a stop on the underground railroad. Today it is a regional genealogy center and has Carpenter's collection on abolition and slavery.

The library is said to be haunted by the "Lady in Grey." Probably Louise, a daughter of Willard Carpenter, the apparition was first noticed by a library employee in 1937 as he fired the furnace in the basement of the building. He saw a veiled lady dressed in glowing grey with grey shoes. Apparently she was jealous of the money her father left for the library, wanted the building and sued its Board Of Trustees for influencing her father in establishing the library when he was of unsound mind. Some claim she will continue to haunt the library until it is turned back to Carpenter's living heirs.

Many staff members have seen the grey shadow of a female that appears suddenly and then vanishes. One librarian heard water running with great force above her after the library was closed. She found that a faucet in the second floor bathroom had somehow been turned on. Then in 1983 the faucet was again turned on while a librarian was in the room. The grey lady's strong perfume was smelled by two genealogists while they were working on cemetery records. She has ridden the elevator and flung books from the shelves. During the renovation of the library's children's room, the ghost actually followed one



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

employee home. The employee and her sister felt a cold draft of air, an unseen presence and smelled the strong perfume.

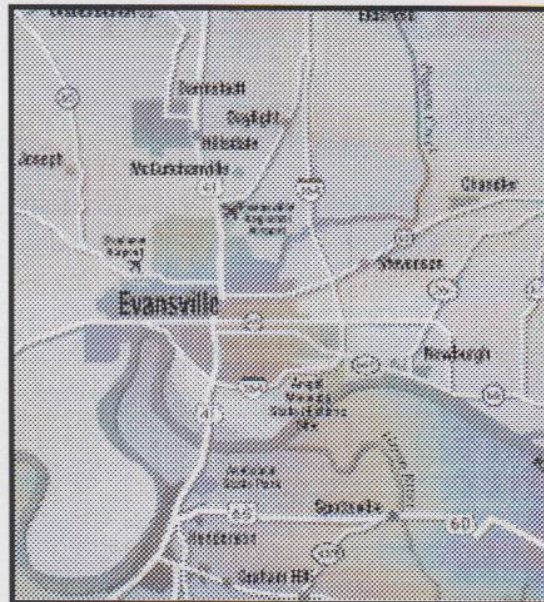
The library now has a Ghostcam. It has attracted international attention on the Internet and has resulted in the library receiving E-mail from every continent except Antarctica. See if you can see the Grey Lady at [www.willard.lib.in.us](http://www.willard.lib.in.us)

The Evansville Museum of Arts and Science is worth a stop, especially the newly opened EMTRAC (Evansville Museum Transportation Center). EMTRAC opened in April 1999 after 30 years and \$1.4 million. It traces the evolution of transportation from before Evansville was founded in 1812 to the present. At that time canoes and flatboats on the Ohio River or creeks were the primary mode of travel. The canal opened the town to better markets. Later the roads were improved. The first airplane arrived in the city in 1911. All kinds of transportation are covered, but the main focus of the museum is the railroad. The first train arrived in 1853 providing cheap and quick access to distant markets. The exhibit has three outdoor train cars—a 1908 switch engine, a 1924 Tennessee Club Car and a 1900 caboose.

Mesker Park Zoo and Botanic Garden is Indiana's largest zoo. It has two and a half miles of walking paths, features over 600 animals, has a Children's Zoo, a tram, paddleboats, a bird house, and a rain forest in the Discovery Center.

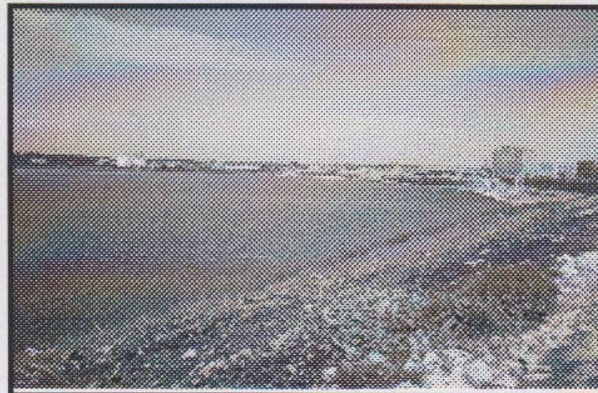
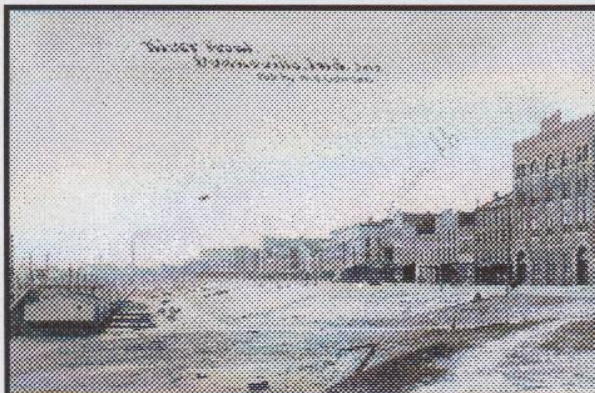
Evansville had the first casino boat in the state. It opened in 1995 and resembles an old-fashioned paddle-wheeler on the Ohio River. Perhaps Casino Aztar will someday become a part of Evansville's history.

A tourist brochure of Evansville printed in 2000 gives the population of the city at 126,000. It says "Historians claim Evansville's early growth in the 1830s was spurred by plans to have the Wabash and Erie Canal terminate at the Ohio River here. Despite the canal's eventual failure, Evansville's industrial base had begun to develop, aided by hardwood forests and the river." Indeed the early residents had "Great Expectations" when the building of the canal was announced.



The postcard on the left, mailed in 1909, shows a town that was almost 100 years old. Evansville was founded in 1812. The photo on the right, taken in November 2000 from the Pagoda, shows how the city has grown along the river front. Only farm land is located on the Kentucky side of the river for it floods almost every year.

Postcard courtesy Carolyn Schmidt's postcard collection. Photo by Bob Schmidt. Map courtesy Evansville Convention & Visitors Bureau.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# CANAL BOATS

BOAT NAME	CAPTAIN	FROM	TO	TYPE	BUILT BY
Adelia		Evansville			
Archer	Grant	Evansville	Worthington	Freight	
Ashland		Evansville	Lafayette		
Bay State			Evansville	Freight	
Ben Bolt		Lafayette	Evansville	Freight	
Bill Cornwell		Toledo	Evansville	Freight	
Black Diamond		Evansville		Freight	
C. B. Milroy				Freight	
Collier		Evansville		Freight	
Coulton					
Craftsman				Freight	
Eclipse				Freight	
Eurichy		Bloomfield		Line Boat	
Express	Smith	Terre Haute	Evansville		
Evansville		Worthington		Line Boat	
Fillmore		Hosmer	Evansville	Scow	
Fontenella (Fontella)		Plainville		Line Boat	
Ford		Bloomfield		Scow	
Fox				Freight	
Friendship		Terre Haute			
G. Morgan	Albert Smith		Evansville	Line Boat	
G W Chapman		Terre Haute			
Gilson		Evansville			
Gulnare		Evansville		Freight	
H.G. Tralice		Evansville		Freight	
Helen Mar		Toledo	Evansville	Freight	
Holcomb		Port Gibson			
Imperial		Francisco	Worthington	Line Boat	
Jas. Laughlin			Evansville	Freight	
Jim Crow			Evansville	Freight	
J. Fuller			Evansville	Freight	
Joe Rowley	Joe Glasgow	Evansville	Maysville	Packet	
John Burtis	M. Longbotham			Freight	
John E. Taylor	Clarkson Start	Evansville	Lafayette	Line Boat	Robert Webber
John Harris				Freight	
Johnson		Terre Haute			
J Laughlin Jr		Dongola		Line Boat	
Judge Prince		Evansville	Maysville	Passenger/Freight	



**CANAL FREIGHT BOAT**

Diagram by Paul Baudendistel

The canal freight boat was designed to carry freight on open decks between cabins. Each boat differed according to its master's needs. The generic boat above has two cargo bays, a cabin for the captain, a stable for the horses or mules that were changed about every ten miles, and a cabin for the crew. When the cargo bays were full of timber, marble, coal, etc., the only way to get from the front of the boat to the back was by crossing a narrow walkway above the bays. Sometimes these bays might hold a cow or pigs if a family was moving their belongings. The tiller at the back of the boat was the only way to steer it. The steersman stood at the back and took orders from the captain. The boat was pulled by a tow line connected to the top side of the front cabin. This was not directly in the middle of the cabin roof because, if it were pulled from the center, the boat would have headed into the canal bank. The mule driver called the "hoggee" usually walked along the towpath. Crew sizes varied. Freight boats often stopped at night along the canal.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

BOAT NAME	CAPTAIN	FROM	TO	TYPE	BUILT BY
Julia Dean		Evansville		Freight	
Lady Jane		Terre Haute			
Lewis Howes	C. Start, Jos. Howes	Lafayette	Evansville	Packet	
Live Oak		Worthington	Evansville	Freight	
Lorilla		Terre Haute	Evansville	Freight	
Luke Grant				Freight	
Marion		Terre Haute	Evansville	Freight	
Mary & Elizabeth		Worthington		Line Boat	
Moselle		Lafayette	Evansville	Freight	
Nathan Rowley	Tom Smith	Lafayette	Evansville	Freight	Formerly Joe Rowley
Neptune				Freight	
North Star		Toledo	Evansville	Freight	
Our Uncle		Evansville			
Pennsylvania		Evansville	Terre Haute	Packet	
Paul Jones		Terre Haute			
P Caswell		Evansville			
P. G. O'Riley	W.H. Robinson			Freight	
P.H. Woodward		Evansville	Lafayette	Freight	
Princess		Newberry	Evansville	Freight	
Red Rose				Freight	
Red Rover				Freight	
Reindeer				Freight	
Romeo				Freight	
Rosanne (a)		Petersburgh	Evansville	Freight	
"76"		Evansville	Lafayette	Freight	
Scow Boat		Maysville		Scow	
Scow Boat		Petersburgh		Scow	
Scow Boat		Hosmer		Scow	
Southern Indiana		Newberry	Evansville	Line Boat	
Spartan		Francisco	Evansville	Freight	
State Bank		Toledo	Evansville	Freight	
State Boat				Repaired Canal	
Tennessee			Evansville	Freight	
Tobacco Plant		Evansville			
Udora		Petersburgh	Evansville	Freight	
Visitor	Howe	Evansville	Petersburgh	Passenger/Freight	Robert Webber
Washington	Lutz	Evansville	Petersburgh	Freight	
Wm. Archer				Freight	
Wing & Wing		Worthington		Line Boat	



**PACKET/PASSENGER BOAT**

Diagram by Paul Baudendistel

A packet boat got its name because it carried packets of mail. It usually traveled both day and night to get the mail and the passengers to their destination more quickly. The long cabin was divided inside into a front cabin for the captain, a long dining cabin in the center, and a cabin for the crew in the back. The dining cabin served as the passengers' bedroom at night. Berths of canvas were attached to the walls in tiers of three at night. The women and children slept in the area closest to the captain's cabin and a curtain was pulled between them and the men who slept near the crew's cabin. When the berths were full, passengers slept on the floor and sometimes on top of the dining tables. The boat was about 14 feet wide since a lock was only 15 feet wide and it had to be able to pass through the locks. A lock was 90 feet long. Boats usually ranged in the 70-80 foot length. There was a cook on board as well as the standard crew. She had a small iron stove on which to cook maybe as many as 70 meals. Chamber pots and water pitchers and bowls were provided. During nice weather passengers often strolled or sat on benches on the boat's roof. They had to be careful and duck when approaching a low bridge across the canal. Mosquitoes were a problem.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

In preparation of the canal reopening as the Wabash and Erie Canal at Evansville, Robert Webber built the Visitor, a packet/passenger boat. He arrived a little early since the canal did not open until 1853, but he ran excursions up the existing portion of the canal. He also established a boat building yard and advertised in earnest. Later on he had monetary difficulties as you will see in some of the following newspaper articles.

The articles also show the establishment of packet lines that ran on specific days and times. Packets carried both passengers and packets of mail. Many of the boats were freight boats bringing to Evansville the produce from the farms to be shipped elsewhere. The list of boat cargoes shows what was grown or produced in Indiana during the canal era.

Navigation was often halted on the canal by natural or manmade breaks. The articles show whole groups of boats unable to get their cargoes to their destinations. Often the cargo was lost.

The articles show that navigation on the canal continued into 1860. It also shows that more than one or two boats made the entire 468 miles from Toledo to Evansville. Some of them brought marble from Lake Erie.

The name of the boat, its captain, where it originated and its destination are highlighted. This was done by your editor and not the newspapers in which the articles appeared.

### 11-28-1850 **Evansville Journal** **The First Canal Boat.**

Last Tuesday night the first Canal Boat destined for this end of the Wabash and Erie Canal, arrived at Evansville. She is a neat, new and pretty packet, intended for the passenger trade. She was built at Dayton, O., by Mr. Robert Webber, and floated from Cincinnati to this place. She will be placed on the Canal directly the water is let into the first nineteen miles, which will be about the first of February. This packet is called the **Visitor**, and a strange looking visitor she is in these parts. She will commence running as a packet if the prospects are good, on the finished part of the line next February. Mr. W. lived in Evansville eight or ten years back, and built then a Canal boat here. We wish him success in this enterprise.

### 6-11-1851 **Evansville Journal** **PLEASURE TRIP.**

**Mr. Webber**, of the canal boat **Visitor**, proposes to leave on a pleasure trip, tomorrow, up the Canal twenty miles.

Mr. W. has been at considerable expense in bringing his boat to this place, and we hope that a large crowd will go. The **Visitor** will leave tomorrow, and spending the night up the Canal, will return on Friday. The woods abound in game, and fish are plenty. If you want to enjoy yourself, be on hand.

### 6-12-1851 **Evansville Journal**

The **VISITOR** will leave Saturday morning, as early as possible, on a pleasure trip up the Canal. We hope that all will patronize **Mr. Webber**, as he had been at considerable expense in bringing his boat to this point, and lying idle so long. A band will be in attendance, and everything will be delightful. The boat returns Saturday evening.

### 3-25-1852 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal Boat **Express** brought down twenty-three hogsheads of Tobacco on Saturday, from Millersburg, consigned to O'Riley & Mitchell. **Mr. Smith**, commander, says they are hauling tobacco as far as twelve miles to **Millersburg**, to ship it by canal to **Evansville**, and if the water had been in at the proper time, probably 1,000 hogsheads would have been brought to Evansville this spring by canal from that region. He thinks that about 500 will be brought down anyhow.

### 5-6-1852 **Evansville Journal** **Canal Boats.**

The **Madison Courier** of last Saturday says that on the day previous **six canal boats** and one flat boat passed Madison bound for **Evansville**. They are concentrating at the focus of commerce, preparatory to the opening of the canal. The water is in the canal, so far as it is finished from this end. Only one packet and one freight boat are now running. Another freight boat is building at this place, and probably more. The Canal will certainly be completed by next November, when look out for a rush of boats of all shapes and sizes.

### 1-12-1853 **Evansville Journal**

**EVANSVILLE & PETERSBURGH CANAL PACKET**  
**THE NEW AND SPLENDID CANAL PACKET, Jo. Rowley, Glasgow, Master**, will run the ensuing season as a regular packet from **Evansville to Petersburg** and intermediate landings. It is expected that she will be able to commence running the fore part of January as far as the reservoir in Gibson county, and extend her trips to Petersburg and Washington as soon as the canal is completed. As her owners have used every exertion to have their boat completed and ready for business as soon as the canal was in navigable order, they hope the public will award to them a liberal patronage.

For freight or passage apply to **ROWLEY & GLASGOW** or the owners on board.  
Dec 29wtf

### 5-11-53 **Evansville Journal**

Next Saturday, the fine packet **Joe Rowley** under command of **Capt. Joe Glasgow**, will go as far as the Reservoir up the Canal. Those wanting to ship either their persons or freight up that way, would do well to take advantage

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

of the occasion. Anglers might find rare sport up at the Reservoir.

5-14-1853 **Evansville Journal**  
(For the **Journal**)  
May Party on the Canal.

Early on Friday the 13th, Mr. Knight's school, with a number of guests, took passage on the Canal packet **Joe Rowley, Capt. J. Glasgow**, for the ground previously selected.

The upward trip was enlivened by music from members of the several choirs in the city. Mr. Knight's scholars sang several pieces in a manner which showed that they had been taught, and that too by one, who understood the art. On arriving on the ground, tables were erected, and the foods, of which there was a bountiful supply spread—when all partook.

After dinner, the scholars recited a part of pieces they had prepared for the occasion. — Master Walters read a composition of his own, that would have been a credit to an older head. All however, who participated, did well and showed that a competent teacher had had them in care. Time being short, many of the scholars could not exhibit their skill in composition and declamation. After the exercises, the queen was crowned according to ancient usage. There were no fairies, but the fairest of the lady was there, and not a lad was there but was willing to do all that a page is required to do.

Knights—well there was one Knight there, and all seemed to be aware of it. Cupid was shooting his arrows all around, and some will date their first wound from that day. We had Night and Morning too, and Spring was there in all her glory.

After the coronation, the girls used the swing put up for that occasion. Young ladies and married ones too jumped the rope and the men and boys joined in a game of Town Ball. The company numbered about two hundred and forty, and all seemed to enjoy themselves in the fullest sense of the term.

**Capt. Glasgow** and **Joe Rowley** seemed as though they outdid themselves in doing the agreeable. They are both old bachelors and as there were some single ladies on their boat this may account for their politeness and desire to make every body happy.

I am sure, Mr. Editor, had you been there, you would have enjoyed yourself vastly, and could have written a more faithful account of the excursion than I have. INVITED.

6-25-1853 **Evansville Journal**  
AN ECLIPSE CANAL BOAT.

The regular **Evansville** and **Terre Haute** canal packet "**Lewis Howes**" is now completed and will be ready for service as soon as the canal opens, when it is expected she will make the first trip through and carry off the "horns" if the larboard engine don't go blind. The **Lewis Howes** is named after a "fast man" and is consequently bound to be a fast boat in every particular. She is commanded by **Capt. C. Start**, a gentleman who has been running on the Eastern canals for sixteen years, and who understands his business thoroughly. With **Capt. Start** in command, and **Corporal D. Still** at the engine, passengers and shippers will find it to their interest to give the boat a trial.

9-23-1853 **Evansville Journal**

FIRST BOAT THROUGH! The **Evansville ENQUIRER**, of the 23d. inst. says:

"We have the pleasure this morning of entering the corporate limits of the city of **Evansville** on the next passenger packet **Pennsylvania, Capt. Alexander Sharra**. She is the first boat that has ever reached this point from **Lake Erie**. She came within a short distance of the city yesterday evening, but there was not water enough to let her down further until this morning, when by the aid of a few yoke of oxen, tendered by the proprietor of the saw mill, **Mr. Iglehart**, she was brought into the city this morning with a good trip of passengers, who had gone up to meet her.

"This boat was built fifty-six miles above **Pittsburgh, Pa.** and was brought down the canal to the **Ohio river**, and then down the **Ohio** to **Cincinnati**; at **Cincinnati** she entered the **Miami canal** and proceeded up that canal to the junction of the **Wabash and Erie Canal**; by that canal she proceeded to **Lake Erie** from which point she came direct to this city. At that point she entered the **Wabash and Erie canal** about the first of last April and this morning, the 23d day of September, we had the pleasure of boarding her a mile back of town and entering on board of her on her first trip to this city. She had not, however, been all this time on the one trip—having been engaged in the packet trade above **Terre Haute**.

"She was received today at the **Main Street bridge**, by firing of cannon, and excellent music by the **Brass Band**, and general cheering and rejoicing from a large crowd of people.

9-28-1853

**DAILY JOURNAL.**

Canal Shipments.

By **JOE ROWELY**.—5 sacks coffee, 1 bbl rice, 8 kegs nails, ½ bbl. Madder, 9 bble paper, 1,575 lbs. Castings, 300 lbs. Fine salt, 2 bbls cement, 5,500 shingles, 2,000 ft lumber, 1 bale domestic.

By **LEWIS HOWES**—15 bbls whiskey, 1 bbl fish, 789 lbs cotton batting, 1 bbl molasses, 330 lbs coffee, 536 lbs Sugar, 200 lbs leather, 121 lbs sundries.

Canal Receipts.

BY **ROME**O—12 ½ cords wood, 5 bbls tobacco, 100 bush oats, 1,500 clap-boards.

9-29-1853 **Evansville Journal**

SPECIAL NOTICES

**CANAL BOAT PAINTING.**

We are abundantly supplied with all the necessary CUTS, TYPES, &C. to print large Canal Boat Bills and Canal Blanks of all kinds, in the latest style and with dispatch, having one of the finest job Offices on the **Ohio River**.

9-29-1853 **Evansville Journal**

Canal Receipts.

By **LUKE GRANT**—783 bus. wheat, and 11,000 staves.

Canal Shipments.

By **LUKE GRANT**—6,000 shingles and 700 feet plank.

By **PENNSYLVANIA**—3420 lbs glassware, 12 kegs nails, 955 lbs. Manufactured tobacco, 2 bbls oil, 16 kegs

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

10-24-1853 **Evansville Journal**

We are pleased to announce again that our canal is in fine boating condition—plenty of water and any amount of business. The "**Lewis Howes**," **Capt Start**, arrived on Friday night from **Maysville**, and there have been numerous arrivals since; several from Terre Haute. The banks are now considered secure. Hope they are (!)

11-16-1853 **Evansville Journal**

TERRE HAUTE AND EVANSVILLE PACKET LINE,

Commencing at Terre Haute with the **Toledo, Lafayette and Terre Haute Packet Line**, Terre Haute and Richmond Railroad, and Daily Lines of Stages to Springfield and St. Louis, through in thirty-six hours.

A Boat of this Line will leave **Terre Haute** and **Evansville** every MONDAY, WEDNESDAY and FRIDAY, at 7 o'clock P.M.

The Canal is now in good navigable order, and the Packets are of the finest class, and commanded by gentlemanly and experienced captains. An **express** is also established on the Packets for carrying light freights.

H. R. SMITH & CO., Proprietors.

LIVINGSTON & Co., Agents and Consignees, Terre Haute.

JOPHN S. MITCHELL AND LEWIS & GRAY, Agents Evansville

(nov8-6wd) [Enquirer copy.]

12-18-1853 **Evansville Journal**

--The water was again let in the Canal last Thursday, from White river, but the water will not get down fully for some days yet. Pigeon Creek is too low to be able to spare any water of consequence to assist in the good work.

--**Capt. Joe Glasgow**, owner and commander of the excellent canal boat **JOE ROWLEY**, is preparing to do a large business with his boat till the raging stream he navigates is closed by ice. **Capt. Joe** is too well known in the community, and entirely too popular, to require recommendation. His faithfulness and honesty should bring him a large business.

2-7-1854 **Evansville Journal**

FOR PETERSBURGH.

THE Regular Canal **Packet JOE ROWLEY, Capt. Glasgow**, will leave as above Saturday, Feb. 7. For freight apply to: GEO. FOSTER & CO. Agents, Feb6 2t

2-10-1854 **Evansville Journal**

BY THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL.

Shipments.

BY **ROMEO**—23 bales gunnies. 1 bbl fish, 1 do crackers, six thousands lbs. Mdse. 8 bbls lime, 2 do ale, 1 do plaster, 325 castings, 1 dz brooms, thirty bbls salt, 160 lbs. Coffee, 2 bbls whisky, 170 lbs. Tobacco, 1 cornsheller

BY **W.M. ARCHER** - 1 cornsheller, 1 bale gunnies, five hundred ft. lumber, 1 sk coffee, one hundred and fifty lbs sundries, 4 bbls salt.

BY **FOX**-- three thousand one hundred and twenty lbs pottersware, ten bbls salt, two thousand four hundred lbs sugar, 1 ½ bbls. Ale, 2923 lbs mdse., Three hundred and fifty lbs casting, two thousand five hundred lbs house goods

Receipts

BY **W.M. ARCHER** - 7803 lbs pork, six thousand lbs tobacco, one hundred lbs butter, two hundred eggs

2-13-1854 **Evansville Journal**

BY THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL, CLEARED

- Feb. 10, **L. Grant** \_\_\_ shingles, 1 bbl. Flour, ½ do. Feb. 11th, **Joe Rowley**, 3 bbls whisky, 12 egg bbls, 2 bxs tobacco.

ARRIVED - **L. Grant**, 37000 lbs bulk pork, 46 sacks oats. Feb. 11th, **Joe Rowley** 30 lbs. Eggs, 450 do butter, 571? Bbls flour, \_\_\_ bush corn, 16 sacks wheat, **Lewis Howes**: 237 bush wheat, 527 do corn, 3 bbls cider, 1 cow and calf, \_\_\_\_, lbs feathers, 564 bush oats

**L. Grant** 450 scks corn, 5 do. Oats, 2 bbls lard, **Milroy**, 117 \_\_\_\_, 51 whole pork, 58 do green apples.

2-16-854 **Evansville Journal**

BY THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL,

Receipts

Per **JOHN BURTIS** - 70 bbls lard, 144 sks corn, 76 do oats, 4 bbls 5 sks shorts, 10 empty bbls.

**L. GRANT** - 139 sks corn 50 do oats, 51 cords wood, 20 sacks wheat

**JIM CROW**- 12 cords wood

Shipments

Per **C. B. Milroy**- 1 bbl. Molasses, 2 do sugar, 4 sks coffee, 3 kegs nails, 1 dz. \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_ tobacco, 8 \_\_\_\_, 4 bales gunnies, 1 \_\_\_\_, 1 \_\_\_\_,

Per **L. Grant** - 1 bbl whisky, 1 do molasses, 1 sk coffee, 1 bhd sugar

Per **VISITOR** \_\_\_\_\_

**JOHN BURTIS** - \_\_\_\_\_ 1 bbd sugar, 264 lbs castings, 5 ppk \_\_\_\_, 1 bbl whisky, 1 bx cheese

2-17-1854 **Evansville Journal**

BY THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL.

Receipts

Per **JOE ROWLEY** - 201 sks wheat, 26 do oats, 40 do dried apples, 625 lbs. Dry hides, 412 do feathers, 4 sacks beans, 1 bbl tallow, 64 lbs deer skins, 84 sacks corn, 300 doz. Eggs.

2-21-1854 **Evansville Journal**

BY THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL,

Receipts.

Per **L. Grant** - 20 cords wool; per **Wm Archer** - 6600 hoop poles, \_\_\_ staves, 2 cords wood, 15 bush oats, 16 do meal, 1 bbl eggs, Per **Lewis Howes** - 1110 bush corn, Per **Romeo**-- \_\_\_ bbls pork, 17 bu flax seed 26 bbls wheat and bran, 717 bu wheat, 25 do oats Per **Visitor**—191 bush corn, 2 bbls eggs, 2 kegs beans, 6 do dried apples, 9 dry hides.

Shipments.

Per **Jos.. Rowley** - 3 sks coffee, 2 bbls salt, 2 do molasses, 4 bales gunnies, 2 bbls whisky, 1 half do sugar, Per **Wm. Archer** - 110 lbs castings, 18 gals potters ware, 100 lbs sugar, 1 bbl molasses, 1 bale batting, 1 do bunnies, 600 ft. lumber.

2-27-1854 **Evansville Journal**

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

BY THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL.

white lead, Sundries 600 lbs, merchandize 908 lbs, do 2 bales and 3 bxs. 1 bale domestic, 5 bxs liniment.

By **VISITOR**—2185 lbs wrought marble, 2 bxs mdze.

By **ECLIPSE**—4 bbls whiskey, 428 lbs. Mdse. 1 hhd sugar, 1 stove, 8 bbls molasses, 2 bags coffee, 5 bdle lead, 2 bxs tumblers, 1 lot of paper, 5 bbls salt, sundries 557 lbs., 4 bxs tea, 4 bbls sugar, ½ bbl do., 2 trunks, 24 plows, 1 buggy, sundries, groceries, and merchandise 5,027 lbs.

Receipts.

Per **Jim Crow** - 8 cords wood, 500 lbs house goods, 3,000 staves, Per **Romeo**—76 cords wood, **Joe Rowley**—546 sks corn, 1 bbl eggs, **Reindeer** -- 467 sks corn, 4 sks wool, 40 bbls, **John Harris**—30 bbls pork, 76 do wheat, 25 do apples, 75 sks corn, 156 lbs feathers, 14 sks wheat, **Milroy**-- sks corn, \_\_, **Louis Grant** - 144 sks corn, 22 cord wood

Shipments

**Visitor** - 50 bbls salt, 2 do whisky, 6 b\_\_ rice, 3 sks coffee, 16 bales gunnies, 2 do twine, 3 do rope, 2 bbls sugar, 1 keg nails, 1 b\_\_, 3 pkgs **Joe Rowley** - 13 bbls whiskey, 14 pkgs 1,500 lbs castings, 125 do mdse.

3-8-1854 **Evansville Journal**

CITY OF EVANSVILLE

WEDNESDAY MORNING MARCH 8

The wires have been down for the past two days which accounts for the non-appearance of dispatches in our columns.

**Canal Packet Line.**

J. D. Downers Esq. Of Terre Haute, is in the city and will call to day upon our merchants and others interested in the establishment of a regular packet line between this city and **Terre Haute**, to aid by a very moderate subscription in carrying the project into immediate operation. The citizens of Terre Haute, with H. B. Smith Esq., a well known commission merchant as principle, have already engaged liberally in stocking several boats for the Line, and are desirous of having the citizens of Evansville take a substantial interest with them in establishing and encouraging the enterprise.

The company will ask the citizens of Evansville to subscribe some twenty-five or thirty shares of \$100 each to the stock, which, in view of the importance of a daily line of packets between the two cities, we trust will be readily taken. We hope our citizens will confer with Mr. Downer, and give the subject that consideration which its importance demands.

4-7-1854 **Evansville Journal**

**John E. Taylor.**

**Capt. Clarkson Start** brought down to the Canal Wharf a couple days ago, the best canal freight boat that has yet visited our city. It was **built a Evansville by Capt. Webber**, and is the finest boat he ever turned out.—She is built in the most substantial manner, of well seasoned and sound timber, and combines the ornamental with the useful better than any freight boat we ever saw. Her dimensions are 80 by 15½ (sic 41½) feet. Her model is very fine, and on the water she looks like a fancy packet. The finish of her cabin, cookhouse, &c. in the rear, would be creditable indeed to the finest packets. She is under command of **Capt. C. Start**, her

owner, formerly of the **Lewis Howes**. He has the confidence of those who have known him, and will be enabled to secure for his boat, we are sure, a large share of patronage. He has named this fine vessel **John E. Taylor**, and if that name don't make her popular, then truly there's nothing in a name. The **John E. Taylor** will leave **Evansville** to-morrow for **Maysville**. Shippers would do well to avail themselves of this boat. We will warrant her engines to be in excellent condition. The canal will be in good navigable order to Maysville by Saturday, and shippers need not fear detention.

4-12-1854 **Evansville Journal**

JUDGE PRINCE

MESSRS. JONES & SHOOK having fitted up their new boat **Judge Prince** in first rate style for carrying freight and passengers, will make regular strips between **Evansville** and **Maysville**, on the W. & E. Canal. They promise to attend faithfully in all business entrusted to them, and solicit a share of public patronage.

The **Judge Prince** will leave for **Maysville**, Wed. , the 12th inst. [ap11-21]

6-13-1854 **Evansville Journal**

**Terre Haute and Evansville Packet Line.**

This line is now in full operation, and canal packets arriving and departing regularly three times a week. The company have excellent boats and good stock on the line.—We are gratified to learn that they are already being well patronized, and are proving a great convenience to our citizens, and to persons living along the line of the Canal. Mr. Price is agent for this city, and will soon have an office convenient to the packet landing, at the corner of Main street. All the boats on this line are under the direct control of experienced and clever canal men.—**The Pennsylvania** will leave this evening at 7 o'clock for **Terre Haute**. Those wishing a pleasant trip to that city, or to any intermediate point, would do well to take her.—These packets leave Evansville every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. An advertisement of the Company will be found in to-day's **Journal**.

6-15-1854 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal.

The Wabash and Erie Canal, which has thus far since its completion, been the source of so much vexatious complaint, again promises better things in the future. The serious breaks caused by the late spring freshets have all been repaired and the water let in—and yesterday morning our citizens had the pleasure of welcoming the **Marion** to our docks, all the way from **Terre Haute**.

The **Marion** brought down what is termed a Crab Locomotive, to be used as a construction engine on the E. and C. Railroad.

There have been several arrivals and departures during the present week, and freight is being shipped and received in good earnest. These is a large repair force kept at work on the whole line under the direction of competent and vigilant superintendents; and since the season of danger is over we have reason to hope that navigation will not again be seriously interrupted during the summer.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

6-16-1854 **Evansville Journal**  
FOR WORTHINGTON.

The splendid and fast Canal Boat **JOHN BURTIS**. **M. LONGBOTHAM**, Master, will leave this morning June 16, as above with quick dispatch. For freight or passage apply on board or to GEO. FOSTER & CO'S Warehouse. E16-1t

6-22-1854 **Evansville Journal**

Messrs. Geo. Foster & Co. have a large amount of produce, &c. in their immense canal warehouse. Yesterday there were **three or four boats** at one time lying at the wharf in front, receiving and discharging. We are glad to see the canal business "looking up." Accommodations for an immense quantity of business can be found at Foster & Co.'s warehouse.

6-22-1854 **Evansville Journal**

The canal boat **Joe Rowley**, under command of **Capt. Joe Glasgow**, that old sea veteran, left yesterday morning for **Maysville**, with a large cargo of groceries, &c.—She is one of the best freight boats on the canal, and Capt. Joe is an invaluable auxiliary to her getting along straight.

8-23-1854 **Evansville Journal**

**BREAK IN THE CANAL.**—The reported break in the canal is no great affair after all, and will not obstruct navigation, except that passengers will have to walk around the Big Aqueduct, a distance of one mile only. There is plenty of water on both sides of the break, and there will not be half an hour's delay on the trip.

The "**Tobacco Plant**" running out from this city, will connect with the "**Coulton**" now lying above the break. Other boats will make like connection.

11-10-1854 **Evansville Journal**  
CANAL BOAT FOR SALE.

The new and substantial Canal Boat **LEWIS HOWES** will be offered at private sale, with or without horses, on easy terms. She is an excellent boat in every particular, being strong, roomy and light. For further particulars enquire of **NATHAN ROWLEY**. Aug 9- 1m

11-10-1854 **Evansville Journal**  
FOR TERRE HAUTE.

The Canal Boat **LEWIS HOWES** **Capt. Joseph Howes**, will leave for **Terre Haute** on Thursday at 5 o'clock P. M. For freight or passage apply on board or to **HILL & HOLLADAY** agents. Nov8-2t

11-15-1854 **Evansville Journal**

**WABASH A& ERIE CANAL TRANSPORTATION TO NEW YORK, BOSTON, PHILADELPHIA, and BALTIMORE.** As undersigned Agent, will receipt for the activity THROUGH of all kinds of Produce and Merchandise from this city by the "**Troy and Western Line**," of Canal Boats on favorable terms. **JOHN S. MITCHELL**, Agent. Nov 13-tf

5-3-1855 **Evansville Journal**  
CANAL ITEMS.

The **Moselle** arrived from **Lafayette** last Monday night with 1,750 bushels corn for John S. Mitchell.

The **Ben Bolt** came down from **Lafayette** Wednesday, with a load of corn.

The canal boat **N. Rowley**, formerly **Joe Rowley**, with Mr. **Tom Smith Capt.** Got down from **Lafayette** Monday night, having on board 1900 bushels corn, 250 bushels wheat, and a lot of marble. She is preparing to return today.

**The Archer, Capt. Grant**, departed yesterday with a good load for **Worthington** and intermediary ports.

**The Visitor** will be ready to leave today for **Petersburgh. Capt. Howe** will endeavor to make passengers comfortable.

The canal continues in first rate boating order, and we anticipate no serious interruption in its navigation during the summer, for any great length of time. Business is increasing on the canal, and at last many beginning to realize that it is really a very accommodating ditch.

**The P. H. Woodward** left Tuesday evening for **Lafayette**, loaded with groceries, full 55 tons.

**The John E. Taylor** left yesterday for **Lafayette**, also loaded with groceries, to the amount of 55 tons.

**The N. Rowley** will leave this evening probably, for **Terre Haute**, and perhaps points above, with about 50 tons of groceries, &c.

**The Rosanna** was loading yesterday with 110 bbls salt, and a lot of machinery, for **Montezuma**.

**The Judge Prince** arrive here Tuesday with 1200 bushels coal from the mines near **Petersburgh**. More will be started down directly she returns.

**The Moselle** was loading yesterday for **Lafayette**, and will have a first rate load.

4-6-1855 **Evansville Journal**

The canal boat **Fox**, which left on Monday morning last with several hands on board to dig shade trees, a trick got up by the Know Nothing party to run a few Democratic voters out of the city, has been mulcted in a fine of \$10, for leaving without a clearance and discharging without a permit. This trip must have cost that party about \$75, and we wonder who foots the bill. [**Enquirer**.

Well, let us see how much this trip for forest trees cost those whose enterprise carried it through so successfully, premising that the expenses have been cheerfully paid. But here is the account current:



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Cr.

By 120 forest trees @ 25 cents each .....	\$30.00
Expenses Dr.	
To 13 forest tree diggers @ 1.....	\$13.00
Fine for not obtaining clearance.....	10.00
10 trees gratuitously stuck up before doors of Old Liners, @ 25c                      2.50                      25.50	
Total amount distributed among Forest Tree Stockholders.....	\$4.50

We might also put on the credit side, on "native" councilman, in place of an incompetent German, and an American majority thus obtained in the city council, the value of which cannot be properly estimated in figures. It seems to us, that it wasn't such a bad speculation after all!

4-7-1855 **Evansville Journal**

[For the **Journal**]

Mr. Editor:

If the editor of the **Enquirer** is anxious to know who foots the bill of the canal boat **Fox** on the shade tree expedition last Monday, I would inform him that the bill is footed and all hands paid off—that the proceeds of the cargo of Shanghai shade trees has not only paid all expenses and elected a councilman, but left a balance or profit of three dollars, which amount the **Enquirer** man can probably borrow by applying at the Know Nothing Council at their next meeting. Notwithstanding the amount is small, it will afford him some relief, and will be serviceable in paying some of his many small bills of long standing in this city. SHANGHAI.

4-9-1855 **Evansville Journal**

ONE OF THE SIGNS.

—About a month ago the canal boat **P. H. Woodard** started up the canal with a trade cargo, among which were about twenty barrels of whisky. She returned last week with thirteen of the twenty barrels. The people above, many of whom were thought to use whisky as milk, refused to take it at any price. They said they went in for this new liquor law, and were going to give it a fair trial, and didn't want any more whisky? If that is not one of the signs of good times coming and the better feeling prevailing, we do not know what could be called such

4-17-1855 **Evansville Journal**

Canal Matters.

We have several times had occasion to notice **Capt. R. Webber's Canal boat dock** on the canal near this city. Mr. Webber some time ago made a good dock, and has since been engaged in building and repairing boats. We need not say that in doing this he has accomplished something of real practical benefit to the city. He is an excellent workman, and has built several of the best boats on the canal. But as in most all new enterprises, he has had great difficulties and losses to encounter. He has now on the stocks one of the best built boats on the canal, so far as it is completed. But he has run out of means, and now much needs some assisting hand by whose aid he may complete the boat ready for sale. A small advancement

made him, would assist him in getting out of present difficulties and going on with his business. Certainly there are men in this city, who could spare him the capital for a brief time.

The Belle Sheridan (riverboat ?) was at our wharf Sunday night. She took on a large quantity of freight here, and departed for the South with a good trip.

The Canal boat "76" left last Sunday morning, drawing three feet water. She was loaded with groceries, &c. for **Terre Haute, Covington and Lafayette.**

We presume the **Lewis Howes** will be loaded for **Lafayette** by Mr. Hill. This boat has been lying idle sometime, if we mistake not.

A break in the canal occurred last Saturday night along Millersburg. The accident only produced a fall of two inches water here, and the break was to have been repaired by yesterday afternoon. Mr. Fuller is wide awake on such occasions.

5-3-1855 **Evansville Journal**

CANAL ITEMS.

**The Moselle** arrived from **Lafayette** last

Monday night with 1,750 bushels corn for John S. Mitchell.

**The Ben Bolt** came down from **Lafayette**

Wednesday, with a load of corn.

The canal boat **N. Rowley, formerly Joe**

**Rowley, with Mr. Tom Smith Capt.**

Got down from **Lafayette** Monday

5-11-1855 **Evansville Journal**

We are glad to see our remarks about **Capt. Webber**, the pioneer canal boat builder here, have had the proper effect. A physician of this place has advanced him a sufficient sum to go on with his enterprise, and without expecting any profit from his liberality more than assisting the general progress of the city. We have not heard the name of the gentleman, but he is a good citizen.

5-15-1855 **Evansville Journal**

The canal is in first rate order now and considerable business doing on it. In the next two weeks there will be an immense amount of corn and produce brought down, judging from present prospects. **The Visitor** and "76" were preparing to start yesterday, the former to **Petersburgh** and the other to **Lafayette.**

The canal while in first rate order here, is not so good above. The water is low on the **Petersburgh** level. **The Lewis Howes** had been aground there four or five days, with but little prospect of getting over. **The Eclipse** and a **State Boat** laden with iron for the foundries of this place, are waiting for the **Lewis Howes** to get out of the way.

The **Ashland** left last Saturday with 160 bbls salt, and 10 tons of groceries for **Lafayette**, shipped by Geo. Foster & Co.—a big load.

**The Archer** arrived here Sunday last from **Worthington** with a big load of pork and bacon and wheat, consigned to Geo Foster & Co. **Capt. Grant** informs us he will

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

go out tomorrow.

6-4-1855 **Evansville Journal**

CITY OF EVANSVILLE

MONDAY MORNING---JUNE 4.

More outrages on the Canal—Canal Bank cut away and Aqueduct Burned by a Mob—Reward for Governor's Head Lynching and threats of Lynching, &c &c.

(see first part of article under reservoir)

The following boats were compelled to return to Terre Haute. They were all laden for **Evansville**"

**Archer, Capt. Grant**, loaded with oats and corn

**N. Rowley**.—3,000 bushels oats.

**Lorilla**, --1,800 bushels corn

**L. Howes**, --1,700 bushels corn and 400 bbls. Flour

**Craftsman**,--1,700 bushels corn'

**Neptune**,--1,800 bushels corn

**The Ben Bolt**, loaded with Groceries from this city, is left high and dry on Summit Level.

4-12-1856 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal.

The Canal is now in a fair stage and open from Terre Haute down to this city. We can congratulate the Canal Trustees and Superintendents for the precautions that have been taken to prevent accidents and breaks from occurring, and the promptness with which they have been repaired when they did occur. There are six or eight inches more water in the canal than ever previously at this season. The thanks of the community are due to **Capt. Albert Smith** of the canal boat **G.**

**Morgan** for the prompt and efficient manner in which he with the assistance of his crew stopped a break which promised to be a serious one. The accident alluded to occurred about three miles above Francisco, and when discovered by Capt. Smith, he immediately stopped his boat and turned out with all his hands and prevented further damage. We anticipate a large business on the Canal this year.

9-24-1857 **Evansville Journal**

Ho! For Petersburg.

The canal packet **Washington, Capt. Lutz**, will leave Laughlin's warehouse on Main street, on Tuesday morning, Sept. 29 at 8 o'clock, taking delegates to the democratic district convention at Petersburg, to be held on the 30th. The number will be limited to fifty. Fare up and back, including board \$3. Persons wishing to go should secure berths early, by registering their names with James Laughlin Jr. The **Washington** is an excellent boat, and the good condition of the canal guarantees a pleasant trip, and no inconvenience from bad weather or want of hotel room.

4-13-1858 **Evansville Journal**

CANAL RECEIPTS

April 12 -Per canal boat **Washington**, 875 bush wheat, Iglehart Bros; 4 bbl eggs, Z H Cook & Son; 1 box bacon, J C Jewell & Co.

Per **J. Fuller**, 150 bbls flour, 4 bbl eggs, Brown & Aikman, 100 bags wheat, Iglehart Bros.

Per **Bay State**, 215 bbls flour, 3 tons bran, Brown & Aikman, 2000 staves owner aboard.

4-15-1858 **Evansville Journal**

CANAL RECEIPTS.

Per Canal boat **Evansville**—600 bushels wheat

### NUMBER OF BOATS NAVIGATING & OWNED SOUTH OF A LINE DRAWN AT TERRE HAUTE OR RUNNING ON DIVISION 9 IN JULY 1, 1858

1 Adelia	Evansville
2 Gulnar	Evansville
3 Jim Crow	Evansville
4 J. Fuller	Evansville
5 Princess	Evansville
6 Tobacco Plant	Evansville
7 Rosanna	Evansville
8 Collier #1	Evansville
9 Washington	Evansville
10 Red Rover	Evansville
11 Gilson	Evansville
12 Bay State	Evansville
13 Evansville	Evansville
14 P Caswell	Evansville
15 Our Uncle	Evansville
16 Judge Prince	Evansville
17 Black Diamond	Evansville
18 Fox	Evansville

1 J. Laughlin Jr.	Dongola
2 L Grant	Millersburg
3 G Morgan	Petersburg
4 Fontella	Plainville
5 Imperial	Francisco
6 J E Taylor	Bloomfield
7 Wing & Wing	Worthington
8 Fillmore	Hosmer
9 Holcomb	Port Gibson
10 P H Woodard	Bloomfield
11 Friendship	Terre Haute

#### Owned north of the line

1 Paul Jones
2 Lady Jane
3 Johnson
4 G W Chapman

18 Boats owned and running at Evansville

11 Boats running on Div. 9 owned South of T Haute

4 Boats running on Div. 9 owned North of T Haute

33 Boats total

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Iglehart Bros; 11 bbls eggs, 2 bbls lard, 1 bbls beans, 1 bbl furs, 116 lbs bulk pork. Jas Laughlin Jr.

Per Canal boat **Collier**—108 bbls pork, 7 kegs lard, 17 sks bran, 4 sks shorts, 220 bbls flour, Brown & Aikman; 1 hhd tobacco, Jas Laughlin jr; 50 sks wheat, J S Jaquess & Co.

Per Canal boat **G. Morgan**—25 csks pork, 110 kegs lard, 4 bbls. Eggs, 1 bbl butter, Geo Foster & Col; 110 bags wheat, 1 hhd cracklins, ½ lot bags and dried fruit, J S. Jaquess & Co.

Per **Jas Laughlin**—\*1 csks pork, 16 tierces lard, 6 bbls. Pork, 22 bbls eggs, Gen Foster & Co.

12-16-1858

Cleared—Per **Gulnare**, 1 Stove, 47 Pork Barrels, 20 Lard Kegs, 8 bbls Molasses, 40 bushels Lime; per **Princess**, 7,050 lbs. Mdse. 1 bbl Whiskey; per **Black Diamond**, 8 bbls Salt, 6 live Hogs; per **Fontenella**, 4,400 lbs Mdse.

Arrived—Per **Gulnare**, 71 bbls Pork, 15,200 lbs Bulk Meat; per **Fontanella**, 40 bbls Beef, 1 sack Feathers, 225 bbls Flour; per **Julia Dean**, 300 bbls Flour, 4 coops Chickens, per **Washington**, 17 bbls Flour; per **Princess**, 312 bushels Corn, 22 bbls Flour; per **Tennessee**, 7,300 Staves; per **Jim Crow**, 12 cords Wood. Nathan Rowley, Col.

12-18-1858 **Evansville Journal**

Canal Receipts.

Arrived. Per **G. Morgan**, 1,000 bushels Wheat; per **Imperial**, 163 bbls. Flour, 245 bushels Wheat, 5 bbls Pork, 3 do. Lard; per **Washington**, 6 barrels Lard, : per **Tobacco Plant** 25 cords Wood; per **Fillmore** 6,000 Hoop Poles, 5,000 Staves; per **Princess** 450 bushels Wheat, 150 empty Barrels, 9 bales Hay; per **Fox**, 15 cords Wood.

Cleared—Per **Collier** 2 bbls. Salt; per **Julia Dean** 50 bbls Salt, 2 do. Molasses, 975 in Potters' Ware, 2100 do. Ag. Implements, 1450 do. Iron, 1100 do. Furniture, 837 do. Misc.; per **Tobacco Plant** 35 Pork Barrels, 6 bbls. Salt, 8 bags do.; per **G.Morgan**, 800 lbs. Castings; per **Fillmore** 1 Sage, 10 Pork Barrels, pair Scales, 6 Boxes, 1 box Axes, 1 do. Tea; per **H. G. Travice** 7,300 lbs Mdse.; per **Imperial** 41 Pork Barrels, 900 lbs Sundries. Nathan Rowley, Collector.

12-23-1858 **Evansville Journal**

Canal Receipts.

Arrived.—Per **Red Rose**, 150 cords Wood; per **Collier**, 500 lbs House Goods, 9,000 Staves; per **Fox**, 22,000 lbs Hay, 5 cords Wood; per **Red Rover**, 18 cords Wood; per **Jim Crow**, 5 cords Wood; per **Princess**, 300 bushels Wheat, 100 Flour Barrels, 50 lbs. Flour; per **Black Diamond**, 21,000 Hoop Poles, 4 tierces Lard; per **Washington**, 4 tierces Butter, 7 bbls Lard; per **Imperial**, 75,000 Shingles, 300 kegs Lard, 15 tierces do., 900 bushels Wheat; per **Rosanne**, 50 dressed Hogs; per **Fox**, 15 cords Wood.

Cleared—Per **Princess** 6 bbls. Molasses, 2 do. Vinegar, 2 do. Tar, 15 do. Whisky, 600 lbs Mdse. 4 bushels Lime, 6,225 lbs. Mdse; per **Princess**, 20 bbls, Salt, 1,843 bbls Whiskey, 4 sacks Coffee.

Nathan Rowley, Collector.

9-6-1859 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal.

The canal boats **Morgan** and **Princess** both passed the Summit level on Saturday, and have arrived here with cargoes from **Petersburgh**. The canal is now in good order from here to Toledo. We understand from Mr. Lawrence that he has over 300 tons of freight on the way from the lake. Shippers might now, we think, order their heavy freights by the way of canal without fear of any undue delay. The work is now in better condition that it has ever been. A new era in our canal navigation has, we trust, begun.

11-18-1859 **Evansville Journal**

THE CANAL.—We are informed that the canal is in better repair now than ever before. So thoroughly have all the leaks been stopped, that all the lower levels are supplied from White river without calling on Pigeon creek. The prospects for an enterprising business is now first-rate. The warehouses are crowded with freight and the boats will have all they can possibly transport. The following arrivals are noticed:

The canal boats, **State Bank**, **Helen Mar**, **Bill Cornwell**, **North Star**, arrived here yesterday, loaded with marble from **Toledo** having been out some time on account of the canal not being in repair. They were the first boats to arrive this season from Toledo.

The **G. Morgan**, **Princess**, **Udora** and **Imperial** came in yesterday from **Petersburg** with flour and wheat; they leave this morning for **Petersburg** with fair loads of merchandise.

3-21-1860 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal.—The southern portion of the Canal has been in better order during the latter part of the past winter than we have ever known it before **Three or four boats arrive here (Petersburg) from Evansville and return every week.** When the canal is in good order everything looks cheerful in this place, and out citizens wear a smiling countenance. Should the canal keep in good order this year, there will be a heavy business done on it.—We have ever been a warm friend to this enterprise, and it would be gratifying to us to see it fulfill the noble destiny for which it was built. Should it be maintained in navigable order it will be a great blessing to this county. Were it to go to ruin and decay, what would we do with the large amount of produce raised here every year? To return to the old and uncertain mode of shipping our produce down the river on flatboats, is almost an impossibility. We truly hope the canal may be kept up.—**Petersburg Reporter.**

3-21-1860 **Evansville Journal**

Receipts by Canal.

From **Worthington**—Per **North Star**.—1,200 bushels corn, Brown & Aikman

From **Millersburg** - Per **Washington**—5bbds tobacco, Brown & Aikman; 60 bushels potatoes, J. P. Elliott

From **Petersburg**—Per **Collier**. 1,000 bushels coal, 500 feet lumber

3-22-1860 **Evansville Journal**

From **Worthington** per **Imperial**—8 tons bran,

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Capt. Campbell; 475 bushels corn, 175 bushels wheat, L. R. Mills & Co.; 30 coops chickens, owner on board; 10 bbls eggs, Wm E. French & Co.; 300 bushels potatoes, Geo. Foster & Co.

From **Worthington** per **Live Oak**—14,533 feet lumber, Wetzell & Klintworth.

### 3-24-1860 **Evansville Journal**

Receipts by Canal.

From Millersburg per **Washington**, 30,000 lbs bulk tobacco, Miller & Copeland; 3 bbls tobacco, L. A. Crane & Co., 4 bbls tobacco, Brown & Aikman

From **Newberry** per **Southern Indiana**—870 bushel corn, 300 bushels wheat, 2 bbl eggs, **Capt. Robinson**

From Francisco per **Spartan**—21 casks meal, 22 bbls pork, 4 bbls lard, 49 kegs lard, 1 box hogs heads, 13 bbls eggs, Brown & Aikman; 1 beef cow, 3000 staves, 1000 hoop-poles, owner on board.

### 3-29-1860 **Evansville Journal**

Receipts by Canal.

From **Petersburg**, per **Imperial**, 133 bushels corn, Brown & Aikman, 110 bags wheat, 1 bag feathers, 5 bags apples, 1 bag sage, Geo. Foster & Col, 10 bbls tobacco, Miller & Copeland.

From **Petersburg** per **Imperial**—2 bbls tobacco, Ellis & Howe, 7 bbls. Do. Geo. Foster & Co., 7 bbls tobacco, 100 bbls flour, 46 bags bran, 3 bags apples, 1 bbl. Eggs, Wheeler & Riggs

From **Newberry**, per **Princess**—320 bushels wheat, J. H. Miller & Co., 240 bbls. Flour, 4 bags apples, 1 bbl butter, 3 bbls eggs, 5 bags rags, Brown & Aikman, 40 beef hides, 17 bags beans, Geo Foster & Co.

### 4-8-1860 **Evansville Journal**

Canal Receipts.

From **Terre Haute** per **Empress** 31 tons unwrought marble. M. A. Lawrence; 240 bush. Corn, 100 bbls flour, Brown & Aikman; 40 bbls potatoes, owner on board.

From **Petersburgh**, per **Princess**—74 empty bbls., 4 dry hides, owner on board; 3 bbls. Tobacco, Geo. Foster & Col; 3 do do Miller & Copeland; 1 do do Miller & Howes; 1 do do Brown & Aikman, 2 bbls, eggs, Preston & Bros; 2 do meal, lot household goods, Isaac Street.

Wm D. Downey, Secretary

### 4-21-1860 **Evansville Journal**

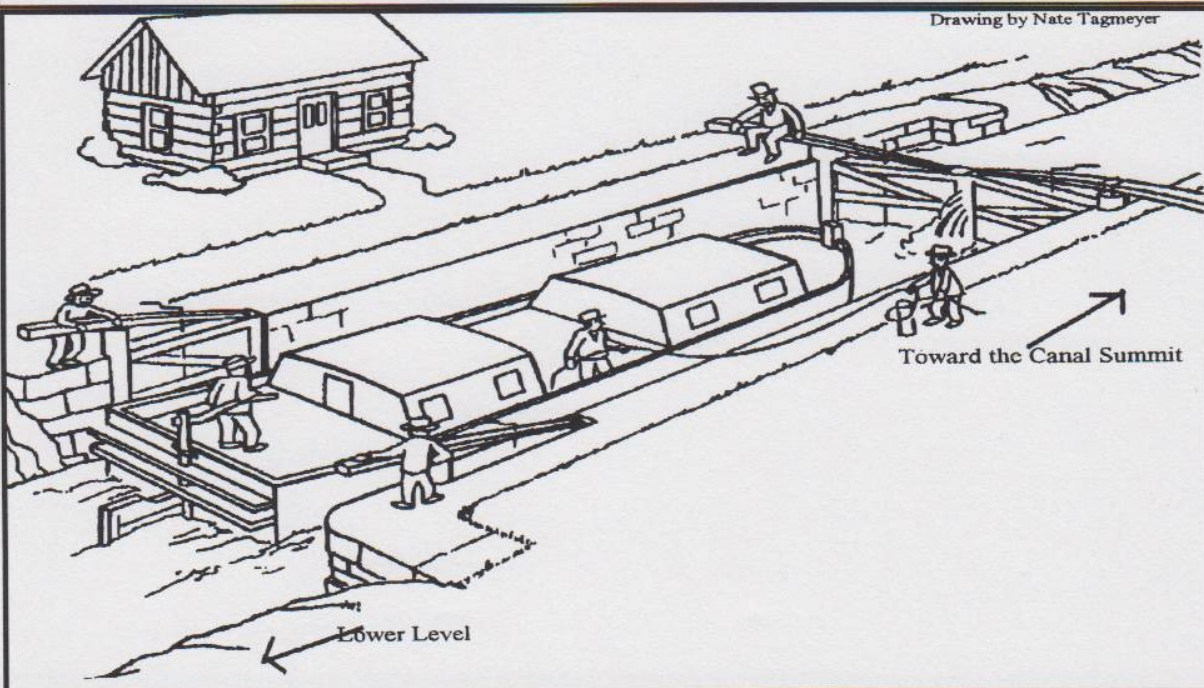
Canal Receipts.

From **Petersburgh** per **Princess**, 8 bbls tobacco, 5 bbls pork, 6 bbls eggs, 3 dozen hides, 34 bags wheat, 3 bags rags. Geo. Foster & Co., 5 bbls tobacco, I.A. Grace & Co.

From **Newberry** per **North Star** – 21 bbls tobacco, 2,000 lbs rags, 1 box eggs, 1 box beeswax, Brown & Aikman; 16 bags dried apples Geo. Foster & Col,

From **Terre Haute** per **Imperial** 32 tons marble unwrought. I. A. Lawrence  
Wm D. Downey, Sec'y

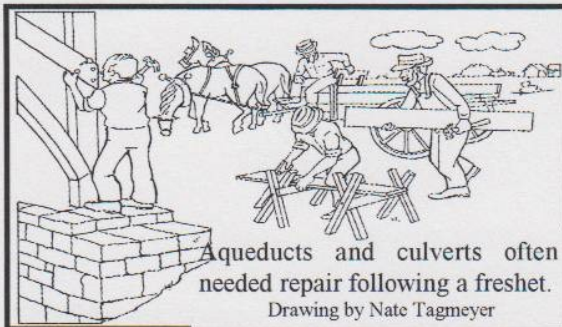
Many of Indiana's locks were built of timber instead of the cut stone shown here. They had huge gates at either end of the chamber. Boats would come into the lock at the lower level and the gates would be closed behind them. The wickets in the upstream gate would be opened to let water from the higher level come into the lock by gravity flow. When the water in the lock was as high as the upper level, the large gates were opened and the boat was pulled out of the lock by the mules. The reverse was done going downstream.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# CANAL BREAKS

The canal broke in Evansville even before its reopening as the Wabash and Erie Canal. Heavy rains usually caused these breaches. This was especially true when the banks were new, not fully settled nor fully soaked. The coarse, loose soils in southern Indiana often required puddling—lining the prism with a clay mixture—to hold water. Sometimes these heavy storms called “freshets” washed out bridges, aqueducts, culverts, etc. which caused greater delays in repairing than mere breaches in the canal banks.



The storms also washed soil into the canal causing shoals that rendered the canal unnavigable. Delays occurred until dredging was done. In places timber had to line certain areas to keep dirt from falling into the canal.

At other times the breaks were caused by such hot and dry weather that the banks cracked open. Burrowing animals were another source of breaches.

No matter what caused the break, those superintendents, engineers or captains in charge of state repair boats usually received the blame for not checking the banks or maintaining them. They would send large forces of men to do the repairs when there was enough money, but the breaks kept the canal from realizing the profits it would have made if open to navigation.

Not only did repairing the breaks take time, there was also the time lost in refilling the canal. If the reservoirs or supplying streams were low this could take a while.

Most boating seasons experienced

breaches which often kept the canal closed to navigation for weeks. However, the boatmen would often navigate to the breach, meet a boat coming from the opposite direction, take their cargo around the breach in wagons, put it on the other boat, and send it on its way to its destination.

The towns below Terre Haute and Evansville, the southern terminus, probably felt the effects of the breaches even more than the towns in the northern portion of the state. They had less means of filling the canal with water once the break was fixed.

Even after the canal was closed to navigation, breaks occurred. They often caused the businesses who rented water for power to shut down until the canal was rewatered.

These natural breaks left canal men, businessmen, etc. upset. But they were not as bad nor made people as mad as did the manmade destruction of the canal banks and reservoirs by those who were opposed to the canal. More can be read about this in the section on reservoirs in this book.

3-11-1852 **Evansville Journal**  
Canal Broke.

Last Saturday morning at a very early hour, the Canal broke at or near that upper town end, and the portion of town below it was completely inundated, the water entering some houses to the depth of a couple feet. There was a very respectable appearing lake visible when day broke, much to the astonishment of those who slept on to their regular hours of rising, and awoke to find themselves surrounded by the flood. The canal had been filled to overflowing by the late rains, and as there was no outlet, it made on it its own banks. Laborers were at work on Saturday repairing the breach.

7-11-1853 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal.

We understand the Canal has broken in two places, just below the Reservoir and at the Summit. The **P. G. O'Riley**, expected down today, is lying at Petersburg in six inches water, and at points the Canal is dry. These breaks may be expected at the first letting in of the water. The earth of the embankments is loose, and becoming thoroughly soaked, the immense weight of water bearing against them, breaks the weak parts. Time is always required to strengthen the work, but we hope ere long, the task will be accomplished. The contractors have large bodies of laborers at hand, and no

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

unreasonable delay occurs in mending the breaks.

### 8-3-1853 **Evansville Journal** Our Canal.

The people of Evansville have been living in "glorious anticipation" for the last dozen years of enjoying a lucrative business connection with the interior of Indiana, through the medium of the Wabash and Erie Canal. The great work was declared completed some two months since, done, did finished. Our citizens were thought tardy in erecting suitable warehouses to accommodate the immense freight that would be poured in upon us, at the opening of the longest Canal in the world, running through the richest country in the Universe.

One slight break after another occurred to prevent the realization of their long deferred hopes, yet the water, the boats and the freight were daily expected to arrive. The superintendents were busily engaged "puddling" the banks, trying hard to overcome obstacles which Nature had thrown in the way, and make the Canal stand where it had stubbornly refused for twelve years past. From the description given of the geological formations of the "bluffs," it would appear that the original location of the Canal was not judiciously made, as it has at all times resisted all efforts to make its banks permanent.

Several breaks occurred on Sunday last, extending along the line for three miles at different points, some of which are of a serious nature, and will take a long time to repair and put in condition for successful navigation. All we have to do in the mean time, is to live on in the same "glorious anticipation" and await the "good time coming."

It is confidently asserted, however, that the breaks can all be repaired in less than a month—but whether the banks will then stand or not, "is not known as far as heard from."

### 5-19-1854 **Evansville Journal**

Great Storm \_ Wabash and Erie Canal Suffering.

The storm on Saturday caused great damage in the Interior of Indiana. The **Indianapolis Sentinel** gives the following account:

The storm which passed over this State on Saturday afternoon and the succeeding night; was one of the most severe that has been known in this vicinity for several years. Its effects have been felt over the whole State, and it has left its marks in streams overflowing, bridges washed away, roads destroyed, houses, trees, fences, and telegraph poles blown down, and cattle injured and killed. We have already received numerous accounts of its ravages in several directions, in the city it blew down a number of trees and threw over one or two unfinished tenements.

From Terre Haute we learn that Sugar Creek aqueduct on the Wabash and Erie Canal was carried away by the flood. There is also a rumor, which is probably founded on fact, that the aqueduct over Raccoon Creek was also washed away on Sunday morning. It this proves true, it is to be feared that navigation on the canal will be interrupted for the whole summer. The damage from the loss of these two works would not be less than \$200,000. The bridge at Terre Haute was, we

understand, in considerable danger on Sunday from the heavy drift laying against the piers and extending across the whole width of the Wabash. The railroad bridge was not endangered, there being a much wider space between the piers, allowing the drift to pass through. On Sunday the river at Terre Haute was rising at the rate of a foot per hour.

We learn further that the Terre Haute railroad has suffered no material damage from the freshet. The track is somewhat washed in many places from the overflowing of culverts, and the bridge at Cloverland was injured by having the foundation washed from beneath one of the abutments. Nothing was injured, however, sufficiently to cause any delay or stoppage on the road.

### 8-18-1854 **Evansville Journal** The Canal.

The Big Creek Aqueduct has again broken, and in an entirely different place from the old break. But Mr. Lawrence, the engineer, has a large force on it, who have been at work some little time, and it is anticipated the aqueduct will be repaired by next Monday. Two heavy breaks have also occurred in the Canal, one at Millersburgh and the other at the "tumble" of the lock above. But heavy forces or men are at work at these, and unless new breaks occur, the Canal will be in good running order again by next Monday. These breaks have been caused by the extreme dry and hot weather causing the banks to crack open.—Mr. Lawrence, the acting engineer at this end of the canal, is active and industrious. We can say from our personal knowledge that he is always on the alert, and looses no energy nor labor to keep the Canal in good order. He intends to have it ready for the use of the Petersburg convention.

### 8-23-1854 **Evansville Journal**

BREAK IN THE CANAL.—The reported break in the canal is no great affair after all, and will not obstruct navigation, except that passengers will have to walk around the Big Creek Aqueduct, a distance of one mile only. There is plenty of water on both sides of the break, and there will not be half an hour's delay on the trip.

The "Tobacco Plant" running out from this city, will connect with the "Coulton" now lying above the break. Other boats will make like connection.

THE CANAL.—The canal was rapidly filling up last evening. One boat load of passengers left for the "mass Meeting" at Petersburg last night. Philip Decker took out a load of his friends who will no doubt have a good time of it. We don't believe he would have any but anti-Nebraska men on board. Is there no native born citizen who feels interest enough in this affair to imitate Mr. Decker's example? Phil. Is a whole-souled patriotic republican, and will be entitled to the banner, as an ardent supporter of the "people's rights."

### 4-18-1855 **Evansville Journal**

The break in the Canal will be repaired in less than three weeks as we are informed by a gentleman who came down on Saturday. The **Journal** put down the time at three months, but as usual the **Journal** was in error.—[**Enquirer**.

The **Journal** has the authority of a letter from a

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

responsible person on the spot, for its assertion. It has also the authority of a prominent engineer that the aqueduct, not "break in the Canal," cannot be repaired in a month. The **Enquirer** will probably find that "as usual" the **Journal** is nearer correct than it. We thought we had effectually cured our neighbor of his disposition to pick out errors in the **Journal**. We shall take him in hands again, if he be not careful.

4-28-1855 **Evansville Journal**

For the **Evansville Journal**.

Mr. A. H. Sanders:-

It appears to me some notion of our citizens here ought to be had in reference to the frequent breaks and interruption to the navigation of the Canal.

We anticipated large benefits resulting to our business from the completion of the canal. Our citizens, with their usual energy and enterprise, prepared themselves for it, by the erection of commodious warehouses, by building and equipping canal boats, and providing increased stocks of merchandise to meet the demand. But instead of it being a benefit it has proved an actual injury not only to Evansville, but to the whole country south of Terre Haute. Had those in charge of the canal not induced a belief that it would be kept in running order, arrangements would have been made here to have put a steamboat in the White river trade, and thereby enable the merchants in the White river Valley to supply themselves (as heretofore) with goods purchased here or forwarded from New Orleans; and the outlay in canal boats and warehouses, would have been saved until wanted to say nothing of the time and labor of those connected with canal boats, "waiting the moving of the waters,"—"until hope deferred has made the heart sick"—until the bare mentioning the canal is the idea of disappointment. I will not controvert the position, that "no power on earth could prevent the breaks." Nor am I disposed to blame, unless blame attaches. But I do think a sufficient force of vigilant watchmen ought to be placed on the whole new line, and, if possible, prevent the breaks; and when they do occur, sufficient means ought to be placed at the disposal of the superintendent to repair the work as speedily as possible; that the Engineer or person in charge should inform the public where the obstruction is located, and the probable time of its repair, so that shipments may not be made without a prospect of reaching the point of destination. The canal, although owned and controlled by a Company, was intended by law to be of public utility, and its management is therefore amenable to public opinion. We have a deep pecuniary interest in the matter.—That interest is suffering loss, and should receive our united attention. I would, therefore, propose the call of a public meeting to take the matter into consideration, and to procure information in regard to the reuse of such unusual interruption. An investigation would be productive of good. It would either remedy the evil, or remove the cause attached to its present management. ONE INTERESTED.

7-25-1856 **Evansville Journal**

CANAL BROKE AGAIN.

—The canal broke again on Tuesday last, four miles above

Petersburg, on Mr. Wright's division. There is a large number of boats on this end of the canal now loaded to go up to Petersburg and the various points on the canal, and they are necessarily brought to a stand still by the neglect and carelessness of those under whose charge the attention of the canal is entrusted, in the vicinity of the breakage. Every thing is conducted promptly and in order on Mr. Fuller's division. Verily, there must be something wrong somewhere. The often breakage of this old ditch renders it a nuisance, and an outrage upon the citizens of this place. We ask how long will they submit to such a state of things? Would it not be better to abate navigation altogether by the canal—fill it up, and sow it in grass?

11-8-1858 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal.

We were in error, as we are informed by Mr. Thomas D. Smith, the Superintendent of the lower division of the canal, in saying the break in the canal, which has suspended navigation, was in his division. It is not in his division. It is in the division above Petersburg, about two miles north of the White river viaduct. A break occurred at the same place four weeks ago, which arrested the passage of boats for two weeks, and it had been repaired scarcely two weeks, when it broke again on Friday last, and another suspension of business for two weeks, in the most important season of navigation, will be suffered before it can be repaired. This alternate breaking and repairing, constitutes the whole history of the canal South of Terra Haute. For all practical purposes of commercial intercourse with the North and East, the Southern terminus of the canal is at Terre Haute, and it will remain there so long as we are without an efficient and energetic Commissioner, who will insist that the Southern section shall be attended to.—Dr. Bartes has done all he could, but it requires a man of vigor and strength to remove a ponderous obstacle.

There is a section of the canal near Hosmer, about half way to Petersburg, where it passes through a deep cut, with a steep bank on one side. Every rain washes the loose earth into the canal, and for the distance of a mile there is not more than 18-20 inches of water, for the greater portion of the year. To get over this shallow place boats are compelled to restrict themselves to half or one-third of a boat, and to charge double or three-fold freight on what they do carry. This condition of affairs has existed for two years, and no one has complained of it but the boatmen. We are informed by those who have had the Superintendence of the canal, and are acquainted with this spot that the whole difficulty could be removed, and protection from future injury could be secured by the expenditure of five thousand dollars. By building a crib of timber three feet high on one side and arrest the falling earth from going into the canal, and removing that which has already washed in, as much water could be had at all times at that point, as in other parts of the canal, and boats be enabled to pass it with full loads, carried at half the freight they now charge. As obvious as the necessity of this work is, no attention has been given to it by the Commissioners, although the increased tolls it would bring to the canal coffers would repay the costs of improvement in six months.

The canal, through it may never fulfill all the

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

brilliant hopes that were originally conceived of it, would, if properly managed, contribute a steady, safe, and a large current of trade to this city. But neglected and mismanaged as it has been, it is a nuisance. As a medium of transportation, it serves but to entrap, disappoint, vex, and entail less upon all who attempt to use it. The public, vexed and disgusted with its wretched management, have ceased to expect any thing from it, or to take any interest in it.—railroad interests are inimical to it, and are waiting to see it silently sink into utter decay and ruin.

Thus, at a period when canals are about to be appreciated,—when the popular enthusiasm in favor of railroads is abating—and when the advantages of water communication for heavy freights are about to be demonstrated by the lessons of a sad experience, we are totally neglecting one of the most magnificent lines of canal in the world, and abandoning it to be ruined by selfish speculation and incompetence. If the people of Southern Indiana wish to preserve the vestiges of this great national work which belongs to their section, they must now move in the matter, and insist upon having a trustee who has industry and force of character to attend to their interests.

Evansville has a deeper stake in it than any other place, and one of her citizens would have stronger inducements than any other, to discharge faithfully the duties of Commissioner. We can think of no one more better fitted by habit, capacity and experience, to restore the canal and make it what it should be, than Willard Carpenter, if he would accept the office. His private affairs are now in the hands of others, and he is comparatively at leisure from an inability to use his own means for his own benefit. He might, under these circumstances be willing to work for the public, for a year or two. Under his management we don't believe that many interruptions to navigation would occur on this end of the route. Without authority we suggest his name as a candidate for Canal Commissioner. A better can't be found in the State.

In justice of Mr. Thomas D. Smith, we should say that no breaks have occurred in this section under his care, between here and Petersburg, that has detained boats more than ten hours at a time, since he took charge of the section in May last. He has established a corps of watchmen along the line at six miles apart, and each one is required to traverse this section morning and evening armed with a pick and shovel, to arrest any break, or repair any slight damage. Under this excellent arrangement breaks are prevented, or stopped before doing much damage. The principal difficulty experienced on the lower division, except the shoal at Hosmer, since Mr. Smith had charge of it, is the want of water, which is kept back on the Second Division, in spite of all remonstrances against its retention. An efficient commissioner will correct this evil.

### 2-18-1860 *Evansville Journal*

Canal Break.—Last Wednesday night a break occurred in the bank of the Canal at Division street, and the water rushed out with much force. It passed through a cooper shop, around the corner of the German Evangelical Church, and into a large hole opposite the culvert. In its course through the cooper establishment,

it made quite a scattering amongst the timber, and filled the large cellar of the concern.

Some citizens went to work and stopped the break, else all that part of town would have been flooded. The break was occasioned by the bank being beaten down by water carts passing over it.

Yesterday the steam fire engine was engaged in pumping the water out of the cellar back into the Canal. As it was pumped out of the cellar it rushed in from the pond which had been formed, and the steamer was obliged to do considerable more work than was calculated on.

### 4-23-1860 *Evansville Journal*

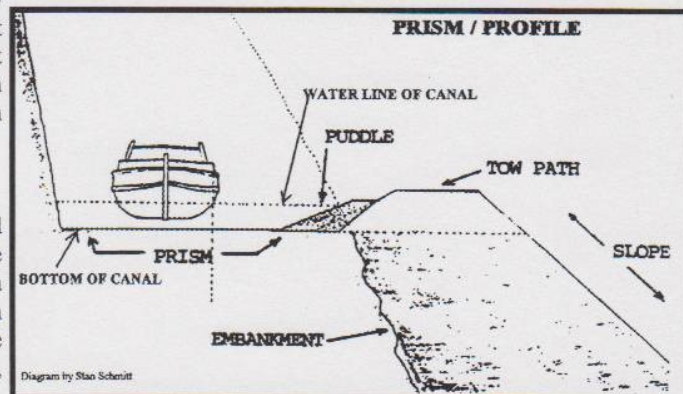
Wabash and Erie Canal.

The break in the Wabash and Erie Canal near Durgy's Run, this side of A. B. Holland and Co.'s distillery, is being repaired with much vigor. A large number of men are engaged upon the work and it is expected that it will be completed by Friday evening or Saturday morning next, at which time the water will be let in. We understand that as soon as this is completed, that the canal being in thorough repair, navigation will open for the season. Everything bids fair for a busy season and we have no doubt but that the canal will receive a large share of patronage. Boats are loading all along the line of the canal, and all persons interested are waiting anxiously for the day when navigation will be thoroughly opened. Steamers are running regularly, from Toledo to the eastern ports on the lake, and shippers will therefore experience no difficulty at Toledo. — *Laf. Journal*.

### 7-26-1866 *Evansville Journal*

WATER.

—A break was occasioned in the canal that prevented the water from reaching the city as early as was anticipated. The break was effected about twelve or fourteen miles from the city. The water was stopped off, in order to make the repair, which will be completed in a few days. We are informed that this was nothing more than was to have been expected, since the canal has so long been idle, but when the water has once passed to the city, no further trouble need be expected. The extreme dry weather this season would naturally give rise to breaks in the bank. The late rains have partially supplied those of our manufacturers with water who receive their supply above the deep basin in Lamasco. It will prove a great blessing as soon as the water reaches the city.





## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# BRIDGES OVER CREEKS & CANAL

### Pigeon Creek at the Mouth: Evansville and its Gateway Spans

by Dr. James L. Cooper  
Emeritus Professor of History  
DePauw University

This report, like most documented stories told about the past, builds on the hard work of predecessors. I am deeply indebted to the research notes of two persons much engaged with the history of Evansville—Joan Marchand and Stan Schmitt—who dug deeply into local records to locate some of the central clues about the bridges built at the mouth of Pigeon Creek. Dennis M. Au, Evansville's Historic Preservation Officer, offered much direction to the community's archival and human resources. Finally, Carol Bartlett of Willard Library, Evansville, provided invaluable assistance to a neophyte working in electronic records and did some grubby newspaper reading when the state library's microfilm copy was on loan in California. The author naturally absolves all others of responsibility for mistakes made and interpretations proffered in the text.

### The City on the Bluffs

Seated atop the bluffs overlooking the majestic Ohio and its swampy flood-plain at a major river bend, a settler at nascent Evansville would not necessarily account Pigeon Creek as an important resource. To flow into the river, Pigeon's waters interrupted the bluff to the west and cut a fairly deep swath to a fall line about a half-mile upstream. The lower creek and its ravine obstructed land travel westward, and the falls prevented the creek's mouth from becoming an entrepot for water-based transport between the river and the hinterland. Fish Lake, just north of what became Ohio Street on the west side of the lower creek, further hampered overland travel. It would take a bridge across the mouth to establish a gateway here—a symbolic one from the perspective of river traffic; a physically functioning one for east-west landed travelers.

### From Itinerant Traders to Settlers

The earliest known French trader in the area, the elusive Pierre Brouillette, didn't treat

Pigeon Creek altogether as an obstacle. He settled at its mouth in a small cabin and trading post from which he exchanged whiskey, guns, and trinkets with nearby Shawnee villagers for a few seasons. But around 1804 Brouillette left the area, and his post at the mouth of the creek disappeared with him.

Only in 1805 did the Indians relinquish their claims to lands north of the Ohio River and the federal government begin to sell lands in the new Indiana territory. In 1806, Enos McAllister built a cabin at the foot of Reitz hill near Pigeon Creek's mouth, but most of the other early migrants from Kentucky headed northward and settled along the creek well above the falls where in time the old State, Princeton or Stringtown Road would cross it. Here James Anthony became the first to put the creek to work powering a gristmill. Later when David Negley took over the mill, "quite a little village sprang up,...a regular Mecca, or rather a Jerusalem of trade and exchange, in flour meal, bran and grain of all kinds, embracing the patronage from a territory of thirty or forty miles around."

In 1811, Hugh McGary, whose family had crossed the Ohio from Kentucky earlier and settled in Princeton, made his way back to the river bluff at the foot of what in time became Evansville's Main Street. That same November the steamboat *New Orleans* first churned the waters of the Ohio and left a symbolically-indelible smoke trail in the sky where Evansville would soon rise and reduce Negley's creek-based Mecca into hinterland for a river city.

### Nellie Sweezer's Ferry

Around 1820, the widow Nellie Sweezer started to operate a ferry across the mouth of Pigeon Creek. This helped to build the nascent city's ties westward towards the river ferry to Henderson, Kentucky, and the road to Mt. Vernon, Indiana. Nellie's ferry became such a landmark that Fish Lake was soon known as Sweezer Pond. Once Evansville developed west of the creek and regional overland transportation grew apace, community interest in bridging the

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

creek below the falls mounted.

### John Lockwood's Bridge

The interest in lower Pigeon Creek bridges both grew and sputtered along for a number of years. Spanning the creek at its mouth proved the most challenging of all. In the end, it required close to a decade of exploratory starts and another decade of construction and additions to success.

### Getting Launched, 1832-1840

In 1832 the Vanderburgh county commissioners appointed Robert Evans to secure state funds for a pair of bridges across Pigeon Creek between the mouth and the falls. If agent Evans turned up the needed funds, he was then authorized to seek proposals for two bridges, one at the mouth and a second around the salt well (near Maryland Street). A little later the board appointed two other men "to receive subscriptions and proposals" for the bridges. In March 1833, the commissioners enlarged their committee to three "to receive plans, proposals, and subscriptions" for a bridge above the salt well. While it asked in September for a bond from James Tutman to build a bridge at the creek's mouth and named two superintendents of construction, the board seems to have started anew a year later by appointing a "commissioner" to contract "with the lowest responsible billed...if the subscription shall amount to a sufficient sum together with the appropriation made by the legislature for the purpose to build said bridge." A map of the areas dated about 1837 shows the ferry still operating and locates the site of a bridge as "proposed."

In late 1838, the county commissioners renewed their efforts, appointing James B. McCall and John B. Stinson to solicit donations for construction of a bridge over Pigeon Creek at its mouth. The next March, the board appointed Amos Clark and Stinson to solicit donations and to superintend the construction there of "a good substantial frame bridge" for which the county would pay half. In May, Stinson was paid for the "first plan of building bridge," and in September he and Clark were allowed \$1,300 towards construction. Matters took an interesting turn in January 1840 when the commissioners voted to

levy tolls for using "the bridge now underway." Donations must not have appeared as adequate to meet the remainder of the estimated cost of the structure that the board and its agents had agreed to build.

Probably public outcry against the toll proposal caused the board to reverse course again in May. The commissioners voted against levying tolls, dismissed all the agents it had previously appointed, and named three men with retail businesses near the creek's mouth "to complete" the bridge construction, "receive former subscriptions and to secure more," and adjust all existing claims. Charles Harrington, John M. Lockwood, and Charles Steward may have been among those who protested the proposed laying on of bridge tolls. Lockwood and steward ran stores, and Harrington kept a hotel in the area. Businessmen and their customers in the neighborhood east of the mouth had long borne the weight of ferry tolls that competitors from other neighborhoods avoided. The retailers around Water Street probably saw little advantage in replacing a toll ferry with a toll bridge in part paid for with tax dollars and from donations to which they would undoubtedly be expected to contribute.

If anticipated tolls couldn't be used to raise capital for the bridge's construction, and if the county's share of the cost remained set at half, then the board's new committee of agents would either have to secure more donations, scale back the bridge, or--as probably happened--do a bit of each. Lockwood later reported that he had to carry the bridge business along, for Harrington and Steward each said "he could not spare the time," to which Steward further added that the county paid hardly enough for one person "for serving" anyway. Harrington and Steward, through, probably had to reach deeper into their pockets and donate more towards construction. Commissioners Stinson and Carpenter also encouraged Lockwood to go ahead and let the necessary building contracts.

### Building the Bridge, 1840-1841

The exact location and the precise nature of the bridge Lockwood could afford to build remains partly enshrouded. Where Water Street, which ran between the river and the top of the

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

bluff, intersected the creek was not an ideal site for bridge construction in the first half of the nineteenth century. If, as suggested in the approximately-1837 map, the bridge were located just north of the ferry run, the lands to the east were low, subject to flooding, and sufficiently at the mercy of river currents that a "projected breakwater" was sketched in on the map. The areas to the east of the creek were described in 1836 as dotted with "ponds, sloughs, gullies, and places for back-water, running nearly from Main Street to the river and Pigeon Creek near its mouth."

Captain William Walker, Lockwood's "old friend" who later died in the Mexican War, and Lewis C. Stinson built the bridge abutments, probably of timber for reasons of economy. Walker and Stinson received about \$1,600 for their work from the commissioners. Charles Jones, in turn, was paid \$368 for the construction of embankments.

William E. Boswell secured the contract for the bridge's superstructure, although the planning and construction seem more like a committee than an individually-directed effort. Boswell was a shadowy figure who came and went through Evansville apparently too quickly to leave much of a record even in the census returns. His name does appear in two issues of the *Evansville Journal* of 1844, however, for a Sheriff's Sale of eight lots he owned in Evansville. Boswell, who was probably hired because he worked cheap, received a lot of direction and help. Samuel C. Bradford, for example, was paid \$18 for "drawing plans for bridge and measuring distance." Lockwood later identified the design as "the Carother's plan." From the beginning, Amos Clark agreed to provide timber for the superstructure, and William A. Sullivan supplied "all necessary irons and iron work."

In any case, Lockwood proclaimed his bridge--seated as it was on timber piles and with its timber trusses uncovered--complete in 1841. The county approved its final payments for the bridge's construction, including seeding the embankment, on 8 September 1841. Presumably traffic now crossed the mouth of Pigeon Creek on a toll-free bridge.

### The Continuing Dilemma: To Repair or to Rebuild Lockwood's Bridge, 1841-1846

Lockwood was proud of his achievement, although he, too, probably understood that the building process was not really complete: He had brought only the first phase of construction to a successful conclusion. One day after approving its last payments on Lockwood's project, the commissioners appointed a new committee to examine the bridge's abutments and to "ascertain what repairs are necessary to make the same permanent," or, as more forthrightly noted in another entry, "to permanently secure the said bridge from falling." The board paid out a couple of hundred dollars for repair work in December 1841.

The commissioners largely ignored the bridge at the mouth for a number of years. They faced the dilemma of repairing the structure that Lockwood built or of improving it. To shore up Lockwood's admittedly stripped-down bridge was to pour modest sums into keeping what was decidedly inadequate; to remodel or to rebuild it would require a major investment.

In June 1844, the board belatedly installed a roof over the trusses to protect them from accelerated decay. Significant deterioration in the bridge's timber foundation finally forced the commissioners to face the structure's overall condition a year later. The board started in March 1845 with Nathan Rowley and Samuel Orr voting to construct stone abutments under the existing bridge and Everton Kennedy dissenting. In June, the commissioners reversed course and unanimously voted to remodel the whole structure. The board rescinded its order for stone abutments and instead offered a \$20 premium for the submission of the best plan of a "double-track" structure. In the meantime, the commissioners contracted with George W. Miller to install two timber bends "to prevent said bridge from falling." The *Record* remains silent on the grand scheme for a double-track structure through the rest of 1845 and much of 1846. In late 1846, the board formally declared the existing bridge unsafe, ordered it closed, and advertised the superstructure for sale. Remodeling the old was now no longer feasible. Replacement seemed to be the only option available, if the creek were to be spanned at its

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mouth.

Nathan Rowley was an important businessman-booster of the lower Pigeon Creek area. He ran a shoe store on Water Street from 1820 to 1828, then engaged in the drug and grocery businesses into 1831 when he built a dry-goods store. He sold the store in 1838 and took a contract for Wabash and Erie canal construction. Next he rented the Indiana Flour Mill which operated profitably until destroyed by fire in 1844. At this point he opened the Salt Well Park with John Gifford which soon became "the leading resort of the public." He also became an active participant and promoter of railroad development. This "enterprising pioneer" died in 1872.

### The Second Bridge at the Mouth

#### Site Preparation and Substructure, 1849-1850

The commissioners moved to replace Lockwood's bridge in 1849. The board asked Esquire Samuel C. Bradford's to design a stone substructure, which they subsequently accepted in a trimmed version. (Bradford, for example, wanted the stone work to rise 50 ft. above low water; the board opted for 42 ft.) Moses Ross subsequently won the contract to construct the masonry which was to float on a two-layer timber foundation of 10-inch thick by 12-inch wide oak, walnut, or cypress timbers. The abutments of "good substantial limestone" blocks, dressed on three faces, were to be 27-foot long and 15-foot deep at the base. In all, the abutments cost the county something over \$3,400. Ross also agreed to put in about 4,000 cu. yds. of earth fill and rip rap behind the new stone abutments. The height of the abutments and the amount of fill and rip rap to be placed behind them confirm that the new bridge would sit well above the flood plain and cross the creek's mouth at the top of the river bluffs."

Ross was contracted to correct a part of the original design for the site which Lockwood had omitted earlier in the name of economy. Erect a breakwater on the east side of the creek where it joined the Ohio in order to turn the river's current away from the creek and thereby contain river scouring of the bridge's abutments. The board expected Ross to provide five

flatboats--one at 100 ft., one at 80 ft., and two at 50 ft.--fill them with stone, and sink each in the designated area of the creek's mouth.

Considering the site preparation and stone work as complete by December 1849, the commissioners prepared to let the bridge superstructure in January, only to find that Ross' limestone walls and earthen embankments had already begun to fail. In April 1850, the board considered "the best way of repairing the damage done to the work at the mouth of Pigeon Creek. They contracted with Philip Hoke "to rebuild an abutment" that had "fallen" and paid Gifford and Smith \$100 "for embankment." The debacle led a group called "Citizens of Vanderburgh County" to question their commissioners' judgment. The citizens asked the board "to suspend operations...until a survey of the site be made by Messrs. Bewly and Woodward, two practical engineers," to see if "it is not best to abandon the work and remove the materials to a point higher up the creek." The commissioners "respectfully declined" the group's request and continued repair work throughout the remainder of 1850.

#### Raising the New Superstructure, 1850

The board had already considered and agreed in 1849 to plans for "a wooden arch and lattice bridge," and they voted in December to proceed with a January letting based on those plans. Even as the newly-constructed substructure was collapsing around them, the board contracted on 7 January with James and Samuel Carothers "on the plan known as Carothers late improved patent bridge" at \$17 per lineal foot of the trussed bridge and at \$8.50 per lineal foot for an "8-ft. projection at each end." The Carothers were to have their trusses in place by 1 August. In early September, Samuel Carothers & Company received \$1,921, "being half the amount due him for building of bridge." The *Evansville Journal* also reported at this time that "the bridge at the mouth of Pigeon Creek is now so nearly completed that it can be crossed conveniently." The editors claimed they would "take occasion to notice it [the bridge] more fully" in a few days, a promise they unfortunately--for out purposed--apparently failed to keep.

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Samuel Carothers et al.

Some male Carothers had a lot to do with a number of the covered timber-truss bridges that crossed Pigeon Creek in Vanderburgh County both before and after the one built at the mouth. James had earlier secured and completed the contract for the structure carrying the Evansville to Princeton state road (1845). Messrs. Carothers and Applegate won the bidding for the Linxwiler's Ferry bridge in 1858. The Carothers era seems to have come to an end in Evansville when Samuel's bid of \$5,100 lost out by a considerable margin to A. B. Lockhart's of \$3,800 to build the Franklin Street Bridge in 1859.

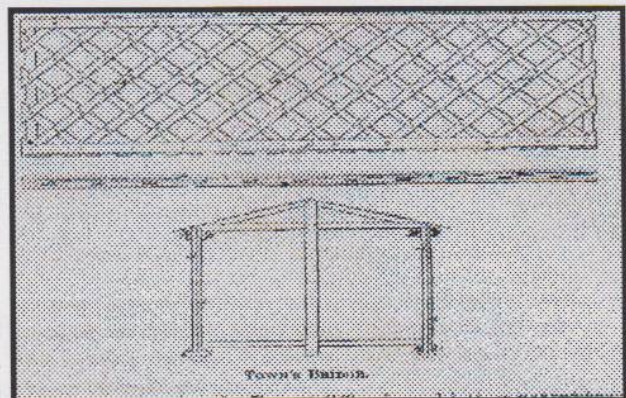
The commissioners provided no identifying information on any of the Carothers in their "Record," nor is there any extant contractual information on which to draw. Not a single James or Samuel Carothers turns up in Vanderburgh County in the census of 1840 or 1850. Indeed, it takes a virtual trip to the main river highway--the Ohio--and then south along Salt Creek to Mt. Washington in Bullitt County, Kentucky--more than one hundred miles east of Evansville--to locate one Samuel Carothers, "Bridge-BUILDER," in the 1850 census. This Samuel hailed from Pennsylvania; his wife of nine years and children were all born in Kentucky. The census records do show a Samuel Carothers of the right age in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, in 1840 who was gone from the county by 1850. Nestled against the State of Ohio line and dissected by the Ohio River, Beaver County offered a good staging area for westward migration. Having moved on the Kentucky, Samuel soon moved up in the Mt. Washington scene from bridge-building to "merchant" by 1860. Ten years later, he was a "distiller." In 1880 he listed himself as a "farmer," probably of the gentler sort since his household now included a farm hand, a domestic, and a servant.

Samuel Carothers apparently used bridge-building as a stepping stone in his westward pursuit of upward mobility. Having migrated into Bullit County around 1840 when he was about 24 years old, Samuel probably came from Pennsylvania with some experience with bridge-building, and one presumes that he must have been involved with bridge construction in

Kentucky as well as in Indiana. But the most obvious secondary bridge books for Pennsylvania and Kentucky shed little more light on this than do the "Commissioners Records: of Vanderburgh County. No context for bridge-building in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, appears in either the county's histories or in the state's covered bridge guides. The guides, moreover, make no mention of Carothers as builders anywhere in the state. The same is true for books about Bullitt County and covered bridges across the rest of Kentucky. Carothers, furthermore, is not mentioned in any of the works or newsletters on Indiana's timber trusses, and Samuel and James are now definitely known to have built bridges in this state.

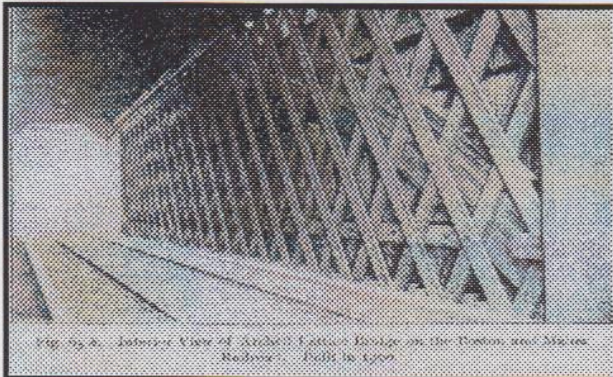
### "Carothers late improved patent bridge"

The commissioners wanted a "double-track," "wooden arch and lattice bridge." An 1850s lithograph of the Evansville area shows that they indeed got a two-track span, but the pictorial representation does not reveal the truss-system under the bridge's cover. Since it is unlikely that a Carothers family member held a bridge patent in his own right, Samuel must have offered a version of some other person's patent, probably one he had seen or possibly even helped to construct earlier in either Pennsylvania or Kentucky. Carothers may have followed one of four patented systems, listed and discussed in order of probably use: (1) modified Town truss; (2) a Steele truss; (3) a Wilton truss; (4) Burr arch truss.

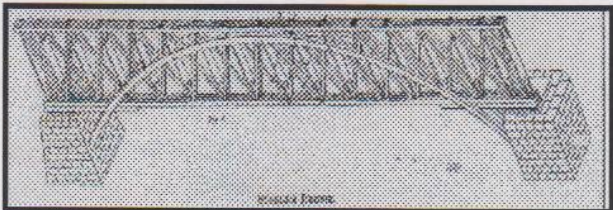


(1) **Arched Town truss:** Ithiel Town designed a wooden lattice truss which he first patented in 1820 and re-patented in 1836 in an improved version. While Town was raised and lived largely

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

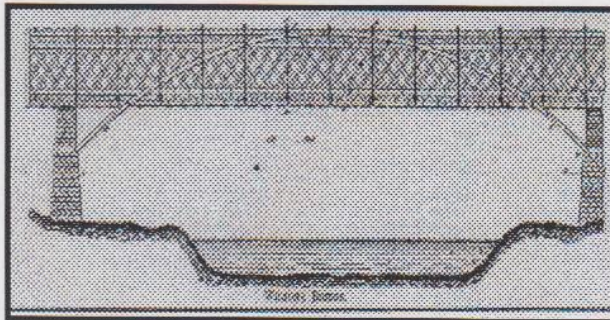


in Connecticut, he traveled the eastern states and designed his first lattice in North Carolina. Simple Town trusses were built in considerable numbers across the northeast and into Pennsylvania and Kentucky. Town's first patent does show a double-barrel structure, and in a few cases arches were added to his trusses to strengthen them. A double-track, arched lattice bridge on the Town system would have directly matched the commissioners' specifications. Neither the 1850s lithograph nor a later one of the bridge show the arches extending below the lower chords to the abutments. The Town's arches, when used, were typically contained between the chords as the Evansville lithographs suggest. This would not be the case with any of the following systems.



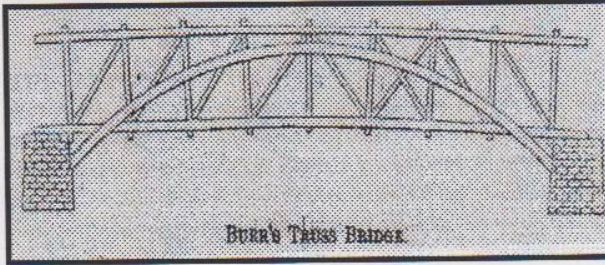
(2) **Steele truss:** In February 1849, J. Dutton Steele of Pennsylvania received a patent for a truss and arch bridge. Steele designed his system with an eye to adjusting the arches and the chords from time to time. He bolted the arches only to the posts, each of which in turn had "four screw rods" and crew-nuts passing through the skewbacks and chords. By turning the nuts, "the posts can be either raised or lowered or the chords drawn together." "in time, should the weight be thrown upon the arches making them bear ultimately an undue portion of the load the camber must be restored and the posts moved up so as to again divide the strain between the arches and trusses." The truss web consisted of X-bracing similar to the Howe system between

the posts. The Steele truss was so new and rare that Carothers, had he known of it, could have referred to it as a "late improved patent." The X-bracing might be loosely described as a form of latticing. And the fact that the commissioners did in 1866 contract to have the bridges over Pigeon Creek, many of which Carothers had built, regularly maintained, including the "drawing and fastening of bolts," adds some circumstantial support for the Steele truss. Neither the Town nor the Burr were typically adjusted in the years following construction, although the Steele could have been.



(3) **Wilton truss:** Henry Wilton, another Pennsylvanian, secured a patent "for a railway truss bridge" in June 1839 which relied on lattice webbing with wrought iron vertical rods, are reinforced with an arch that rested against the abutments below the lower chord. "The bridge is extended in length beyond the abutments for the purpose of producing a county-balancing weight." Here was a long and heavy truss design which used lattice and an arch as the commissioners prescribed. Had Carothers known of this other Pennsylvanian's system, he might have considered modest adjustments made for highway use and double-barreling as late improvements on the patented design. Like the Steele trusses, the iron rods in Wilton's could have been adjusted from time to time. The two relevant Evansville lithographs of the bridge provide some contradictory evidence concerning a match with the Wilson system. On the one hand, they show the superstructure extending over a collection of piers and abutments that might have allowed for some of the cantilevering effect Wilton built into his truss system. On the other, Wilton's arches dropped below the lower chord to reach the abutments, and there is no evidence of such a pattern in the lithographs.

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(4) **Burr arch-truss:** Born and reared in Connecticut, then pursuing major bridge design and building activities from New York into Pennsylvania, Theodore Burr patented in 1806 and re-patented in 1817 an improved version of a multiple kingpost truss with an arch superimposed. Burr's plan was widely built across the east (naturally including Pennsylvania), the border states (including Kentucky), and the Midwest, being the most common form to have survived in Indiana. The Burr arch should have been a commonplace to any timber-truss bridge builder like the Carothers, and double-barrel examples were available at the time to see and to copy. But, since the Burr system was so common, the commissioners and their engineering advisors should have known the difference between kingposts and lattices, and Carothers would have been engaging in what should have been unconvincing hyperbole if he portrayed the Burr arch to his prospective clients as "Carothers late improved patent."

The commissioners entered in the "Record" the state of their account with Samuel Carothers in September 1850. They county owed the builder a total of \$2,842. According to the January agreement, the bridge was to have 8-foot extensions at each end built at \$8.50 per lineal foot or a total of \$136 for 16 feet. This leaves \$3,706 for the trussed part of the structure. Dividing this subtotal by the agreed \$17 per lineal foot leaves a truss length of 218 feet. Adding the trussed length to that of the entrances provides a 234-foot long structure. These lengths must be taken as estimates, since the commissioners' accounting does not reveal whether Carothers was being paid in part for work beyond that initially contracted.

### Illuminating the Gateway

At night the enclosed bridge at the mouth of Pigeon Creek turned into an extraordinarily

long, dark tunnel. When the commissioners voted in 1860 to light the bridge, they both made their tunnel less scary and dangerous and, by singling it out, turned it into a Gateway monument for Evansville, especially to those traveling the Ohio River. In its own words, the board "considers it proper and beneficial to the public that the bridge [at the mouth of Pigeon Creek]...be lighted at night. It is therefore ordered that Henry New be and he is hereby appointed by this board to procure oil and have said bridge lighted every night in the year and to see that the lights are extinguished every morning." Responding to a petition, the commissioners finally extended the lighting of bridges along the lower Pigeon Creek to the Franklin Street structure at the end of 1867. A second petition in the summer of 1868 for lighting these same two bridges suggests that official declarations did not always lead to immediate action.

Carothers' Pigeon Creek bridge "at the mouth" served Evansville well through the 1870s, although it increasingly showed its age in the 1880s. As with its predecessor, the substructure continued to bedevil the county authorities and consequently to tax the superstructure with unanticipated stresses. By the mid-1880s, the eastern stone abutment had "badly cracked and settled." A pier which has washed out was replaced "with a wooden bent." Traffic on the bridge had also grown in number and weight, adding other dimensions to the special structural demands on the timber trusses.

The city of Evansville authorities finally petitioned the county commissioners for a new bridge in 1886. Finding itself enmeshed in a controversy over where to located the new bridge, the board failed to act and the city made some repairs to the bridge "at considerable expense." On inspection in late 1889, however, the city's Committee on Sewers and Bridges found the structure "in a very bad condition. The trusses are badly out of line and out of plumb, the lower chords are in a very bad condition and have been spliced in many places." "In the opinion of your committee the bridge is unsafe for traffic and may at any time give way causing loss of life to persons who may be upon it. We therefore submit a resolution for its condemnation." The Evansville Common Council

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concluded with the proposal to condemn what the city folk were increasingly calling "the Water Street Bridge" and asked the county board to construct a new structure as soon as possible.

### The Water Street Bridge

#### From Timber to Iron Trusses

The 1888 lithograph of Evansville portrays of one theme of coming bridge policy: Of the seven truss bridges over Pigeon Creek, the five highway ones were all timber; the two railroad ones were of iron. There had been important developments around the lower creek mouth since 1850. Factories and mills powered by steam replaced the farm and open lands to the west as well as some of the retail shops to the east. A smoke-belching sawmill on the banks of Sweezer Pond was processing logs corralled in the water of the Pond, the lower creek, and the river bank to the west. The St. Louis and South Eastern Railroad which serviced some of the area's industrial transportation needs had erected an iron-truss bridge just north of the road bridge at the mouth. Having to service heavy cars and fast-moving locomotives with their bridges, railroad engineers led the way by the early 1870s to spans designed almost exclusively in iron, setting the pattern for highway bridge design in the years ahead.

Indeed, the efficacy of timber-truss structures for roadway bridges within and near Evansville had passed by the 1880s. Wooden spans, especially those lighted at night with oil lamps, were at high risk of burning down. This risk had led a divided board of commissioners to take out an insurance policy on one of the Pigeon Creek bridges as early as 1870. The danger of fire came directly home in September 1888 when fire "totally destroyed" the Stephens Bridge over Pigeon Creek.

#### The Example of Stephens Bridge

The commissioners' behavior in the Stephens Bridge case is particularly instructive, since its timber trusses went up in smoke two years after the Evansville Common Council had requested the replacement of the covered bridge at the mouth and a year before the city council finally condemned that structure. Shortly after

the Stephens Bridge burned, the commissioners ordered plans "for a new iron bridge and stone abutments" and then approved a general set of plans the following day. Two weeks later they received proposals from six metal bridge companies based on their own specific plans, specifications, and strain sheet. The metal bridge arena was so new to the commissioners that, after considering the proposals in hand for a week, they voted to send two of their number to visit "various bridge companies for the purpose of entertaining bids." A week later the two designated commissioners were paid for having traveled "to Ohio negotiating for the building of a new bridge." The conclusion of the trip did not lead to the immediate awarding of a contract, however, Conversation continued in Evansville.

The County Surveyor, August Pfafflin, weighed in with an assessment of the companies' proposals and a specific endorsement of a bid of F. J. P. Brackett of Lomas Forge and Bridge Works of Cincinnati. Pfafflin had come down-river from Cincinnati, his birthplace, in 1869 and had worked as a machinist until 1881, after which he served as County Surveyor for a number of years and then sometimes as Evansville City Engineer, too. Pfafflin "became interested in civil engineering at an early age and educated himself for that profession by close attention to business and hard study." How long and how well Pfafflin, the machinist-surveyor from Cincinnati, may have known Brackett, the Queen City metal-fabricator of Lomas Forge and Bridge, remains undetermined. While the surveyor's assessment of the Stephens Bridge proposals was basically accepted, the board nonetheless tweaked Brackett's bid and the surveyor's recommendations on it into what the commissioners regarded as a satisfactory contractual arrangement. Building an iron bridge was still new enough in Vanderburgh County to require a lot of official attention.

#### Starting Down the Circuitous Road from Condemnation to Construction

The Evansville Common Council's formal condemnation of the bridge at the mouth of Pigeon Creek in September 1889 did not spur the county commissioners to emergency action. Not until April 1890 did the board dispatch the County Surveyor "to the mouth of Pigeon Creek"



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to "measure the distance between the old bridge and the railroad bridge that crosses said creek." With this action, it did signal, though, that it had at least resolved the simmering controversy over the new bridge's site and would place the new where the old sat. In May the board visited the bridge site, and in June Surveyor August Pfafflin presented plans for the construction of an iron bridge on stone abutments and wingwalls to be erected about 40 feet below what was now the Louisville and Nashville [L & N] Railroad's bridge near the creek's mouth. Pfafflin required trusses capable of handling moving loads of 2,400 lbs. per lineal foot, beams and joists to carry 100 lbs. per square foot for driveway and 80 lbs. per square foot for sidewalks, all calculated with a safety factor of four. The commissioners quickly approved the plans and ordered a letting advertised for a 200-foot wrought iron superstructure with a 24-foot roadway and two 6-foot sidewalks.

The proposed width of the new superstructure's roadway and its sidewalks reveals a lot about the bridge as a Gateway. At 24 feet, the Water Street Bridge would have a roadway twenty percent wider than the brand new Stephens Bridge and be wide enough, indeed, to accommodate one of today's secondary state highways. It would be able to carry heavy and wide vehicular traffic. More impressive still was the amount of space reserved for pedestrians. With two six-foot sidewalks, the county reserved half as much deck room for walkers as for vehicles, an extraordinary allocation even for the nineteenth century. Quite sensitive to the plight of "foot passengers in that locality" while the new bridge was being built, city Surveyor James D. Saunders, the Evansville mayor, and other city officials met with the L & N superintendent to see if the railroad bridge could not be temporarily fitted out as a "foot bridge," too, in order to "relieve the poor workmen of the West End."

In July the board opened an impressive list of construction proposals; two bids on the substructure; eighteen companies bidding on the superstructure with 43 different proposals. Not surprisingly, the commissioners referred all the proposals to county Surveyor Pfafflin who was instructed to report on the substructure on 21 July and on the superstructure on 6 August.

### The Stone Work

Consideration of the two substructure proposals went ahead in a rather straight-forward manner. The board took up Pfafflin's report on them in July as planned and endorsed his recommendation of John G. Eigenmann and Archibald Hollerbach of Spencer County over Enos Hege of Indianapolis. In large part because Hege had proposed more piling and twice as much masonry as Eigenmann and Hollerbach, Hege's bid was double (\$53,225.09) that of his successful competitor (\$26,795.10). Pfafflin did recommend, and the board concurred, that Eigenmann and Hollerbach needed to widen their foundation plan by a foot. The *Evansville Journal* reporter quipped that "the ideas" of "Enos Hege of Indianapolis...were quite as rich as those generally prevailing in Indianapolis' fertile brains when they go outside of the own bailiwick look[ing] for work."

John G. Eigenmann had been born in Baden-Baden, Germany, in 1837 and immigrated at age twenty to Rockport, Indiana shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War in which he "served with distinction: and rose to the rank of Captain. After the war, Eigenmann began forty years of contracting business first by himself, then with partners like Archibald Hollerbach, and finally as part of the Evansville Contract Company. Eigenmann and Hollerbach paved many of Evansville's streets with brick; "Eichel and Arnold; Eigenmann and Hollerbach Company" built a number of court houses and county jails in southern Indiana and Kentucky; and, as a leading figure in the Evansville Contract Company, Eigenmann became "known on the Ohio River from Pittsburgh to Cairo through his participation in contracts for the building of government locks, dams and dikes."

### The Tangle of Truss Plans and Proposals

Surveyor Pfafflin reported to the commissioners on 7 August that the myriad of superstructure bids ought to be set aside. He concluded that the plans proposed were generally "too light" and often did not assure the required safety factor of four. Of the bids, Pfafflin found only those of the Massillon Bridge and Pittsburgh Bridge companies to be "nearest to the advertisement." Both were "about up to

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the requirements, but are too weak in the floor system." Instead of negotiating with the two companies closest to meeting the county's specifications, the board rejected all of the first set of superstructure bids and then agreed to employ "an engineer of experience in such work;..to pass on the next lot of bids received, all of which will be for one particular style of work." Not surprising given ties to Cincinnati and the Lomas Forge and Bridge Works, the commissioners contracted with F. J. P. Brackett to review incoming plans and strain sheets proposed for the Water Street Bridge.

The board dedicated several meetings in May 1891 to discussing Brackett's new set of plans and specification for the bridge before approving them and setting a letting for 25 June. The schedule apparently left enough time for the board to engage in what appears to have been partisan wrangling over who would be named superintendent of the Water Street Bridge's construction. On 1 and 2 June the board cast 41 ballots before achieving a majority for any nominee. Finally A. A. Swope, a former commissioner from the Republican party, beat out James D. Saunders, Jr., an avid Democrat who served as Evansville's City Engineer, on a 2-1 vote for the \$4-a-day assignment.

The second set of superstructure proposals was simpler (a single bid per firm), the list of bidders shorter (13, one of whom immediately withdrew, rather than 19), and the bids higher (ranging from \$20,900-\$28,498 rather than from \$7,600- \$11,767). It didn't take the board long to reject the whole second set of proposals by a 2-1 vote. Finding the plans under which the second letting was held "as too expensive," the commissioners ordered Brackett to revise them "without cost to the county" and to submit them for review by the same James D. Saunders, Jr., whom they had been unwilling to employ as superintendent of the bridge's construction.

The family was central to design and construction in Evansville and Vanderburgh County for almost a century that Saunders might be considered a regional engineering dynasty. Born in Manchester, England, in 1829, the family patriarch, James D. Saunders Sr., "had the advantages of a liberal mathematical education,

and chose the profession of civil engineering, in which branch he became not only proficient, but so thoroughly skilled that he had few equals and no superior in his line of business." Saunders sailed to New Orleans in 1850, came up-river to New Albany, Indiana, moved to Bloomington, and then to Evansville in 1854 where he was soon elected City Surveyor, a post he held until his death in 1880. "His business in this line [as a civil engineer] has been so intimately associated with the growth and progress of Evansville that every citizen is acquainted with his record, and thoroughly conversant with his professional proficiency." After college, James, Jr., and his brother, Miles B., "followed in their father's footsteps and became civil engineers." A Saunders--one of the two James or Miles--filled the post of city engineer in every Democratic administration from the 1850s into the 1930s and sometimes also served as County Surveyor. James Jr.'s son, W. Mack, was County Surveyor when his father died in 1936.

Brackett brought in and Saunders endorsed a revised set of plans for the Water Street Bridge. The board adopted the revised plans in mid-July 1891, and set a letting date for six weeks later. Thirteen firms made proposals in this third round, including the F. J. P. Brackett Bridge Company of Cincinnati. But at \$14,820.20, the Pittsburgh Bridge Company of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania underbid Brackett by \$3,100 and the others by even more. The commissioners wasted no time in finding "the lowest bid the best" and in contracting with the Pittsburgh firm for a "wrought iron bridge." Pittsburgh fabricated and erected the bridge promptly. The commissioners accepted the superstructure as complete on 15 January 1892, except for the painting, which was duly certified as finished by the end of the month.

### The Gateway's Iron Monument

The Water Street Bridge stands at a gateway to Evansville's inheritance from river trade and industry, a distant reminder of previous exercises of imaginative design and skilled work in timber. Today's iron monument rises on stone pedestals planned by the county's late nineteenth-century surveyors and engineers and built by one of its most successful contractors. The metal trusses speak to the careful design

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

analysis of river city engineers from Evansville and Cincinnati as well as to the skilled craftsmanship or iron workers from Pittsburgh.

Now bypassed by later waves of community development, the old Water Street Bridge's wide decks and sidewalks with carefully-worked iron rails, latticed members, and decorated portals suggest a vibrant past. Large and heavily laden vehicles once crossed its deck while workers hurried between home and factory in the business of sustaining lives and making fortunes. This is now a place to observe the river

which was once Evansville's lifeline, to consider the creek which required some of the most extensive planning, inventive design, and dogged labor to span, and to acknowledge and commemorate yesteryear's industrial achievements, the shoulders upon which the growth of today's city into prominence rests.

*The footnotes accompanying this document were not included in this book due to space constraints.*

### NOTICE TO BRIDGE BUILDERS!

**THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS** of the County of Vanderburgh solicit bids for building a Wooden Bridge over the Canal at the crossing of Ninth Street, near Little's Mill. Plans and Specifications of said work may be examined at the Auditor's Office up to Tuesday, April 16th, next, ensuing. The Commissioners will also, at the same time, if suitable bids are received, let the job of building a Bridge over Big Blue Grass Creek, in Scott Township, on the road leading to Millersburgh. Also, the job of building a Bridge over Saunder's Creek, on the road leading to Mt. Vernon. Persons bidding for the last named jobs will produce to the Board the plans and specifications of the works. The Commissioners will reserve the right to amend the plans submitted, and also the right to reject all bids presented to them if deemed unreasonable. The County Board will hold a special session on the third Tuesday in April next (16th), for the purpose of acting upon said proposed contracts. By order of the Board.

March 26th, 1861. WM. H. WALKER,  
mar27 Swd&w County Auditor.

[Volkswote copy.]

bridges over the canal as long as they met certain specifications. This, along with the growth of Indiana during the canal era, resulted in the building of additional bridges not heretofore contemplated by canal officials.

Much of this local rebuilding resulted from the inability of canal officials to afford the replacement costs of the numerous bridges. In Evansville canal bridge rebuilding came about as the result of an agreement between the Canal Trustees and the city. Under this agreement the city agreed to build and rebuild all future canal bridges in exchange for the Trustees widening the canal to 60 feet throughout the city. As a result, the original single and double track wooden bridges were replaced by a variety of wooden and iron bridges, including pivot, turntable and draw bridges. During this same period, Vanderburgh County assumed the responsibility for replacing the canal bridges outside of the Evansville city limits.

### BUILDING THE NINTH STREET CANAL BRIDGE

By Stan Schmitt

Of all the structures on the Wabash & Erie Canal, the most common were bridges. Upon the completion of the canal in 1853, over 172 bridges were listed in the Chief Engineer's report as crossing the canal. Originally built by the Board of Internal Improvements or Canal Trustees, these bridges were later replaced by local government sources. In fact the legislature allowed individuals to construct their own

On March 13, 1861, Robert Earley, Thomas Garvin and others presented a petition to the Vanderburgh County Commissioners for the "erection of a Bridge over the Canal upon the Road leading from Knight Township into Evansville." The Board decided to put off final determination until the April special session. On April 16th the Board met for the purpose of contracting for the erection of a bridge over the canal near Little's Mill. William H. Oakley was paid \$15 for drawing up plans and specifications for the new bridge and bids were advertised. On the following day, April 17th, the Board met to open bids.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

**Now Here** this Board proceeds to open the bids for building the bridge over the Canal near Littles Mill on the road leading from Knight Township to Evansville and upon an inspection of the said bids find that Clark and Mauk agreed to build said bridge and furnish all the materials to be used in said bridge for the Sum of \$553.

**And that** Mr. Oakley will build the same as aforesaid for 600.

**And that** F. D. Allen will build the same as aforesaid for 675.

**And that** Charles Kinkel will build the same as aforesaid for 700.

**And** the Board after duly Considering Said proposals Awards the building of the bridge over the Canal at 9th Street or upon the road leading from Knight Township to Evansville over the Canal near Littles Mill to Levi S. Clark and Wm. Mauk at the Sum of five hundred and fifty three dollars with the understanding that Said Clark and Mauk will build said bridge according to the plans and specification of said bridge on file in the Auditors Office and furnish all materials and give to this board satisfactory Security for the performance of said Contract.

At the same time the Board ordered "that Mathew W. Foster Esqr be and he is hereby appointed Superintendent, to superintend the building of the bridge across the W & E Canal on 9th Street in Pigeon Township, to be constructed by Levi S Clarke and William Mauk, and that he is authorized to take from the Auditors Office the plan and specifications of said bridge, and after the entire work is done, to return the plan and specifications the same to said Auditors Office with his Report of superintending thereto."

To provide the necessary security for their canal bridge work the following contract was drawn up between Clark & Mauk and the Vanderburgh County Commissioners. Along with this was provided a Bill of Timber and Iron with Specifications for the bridge.

**Now Here** comes Levi S. Clarke, William Mauk and C. Hedderich and produced to this Board their Agreement with the same for building of a bridge across the Canal on 9th Street, which agreement is in the words and figures as follows to wit:

This Agreement is made this 18th day of April AD under the name of Clarke & Mauk partners first part, and the Board of Commissioners of the County of Vanderburgh of the second part,

**Witnesseth:**

**First:** The said parties of the first part are to build a bridge across the Wabash & Erie Canal at the point where 9th Street of the City of Evansville would cross the same if extended, according to the plan and specifications on file in the Office of the Auditor of said County, which plan and specifications have been approved by the Board.-

**Second:** Said parties of the first part are to furnish at their own expense all the material of any description whatsoever required and necessary for the construction of said bridge and to complete the same by the first day of July 1861, and deliver the same to the said party of the second part free and discharged from any lien or encumbrances for labor or materials used in the construction of said Bridge or anything appertaining thereto on and before said first day of July 1861.-

**Third:** It is understood and agreed between the parties hereto that the said party of the second part may appoint a superintendent, who shall, as the work progresses, inspect the materials used and work done, and the said superintendent shall have the power to report to the said party of the second part to any failure in any respect of the parties of the first part to comply with the plans and specifications aforesaid, and the party of the second part may in their discretion when convinced of the truth of said report take the job out of the hands of the parties of the first part and have it completed according to the terms of this contract Keeping an account of the expenditures and charging the same to the account of said parties of the first part. -

**Fourth:** Should any alterations be made from the specifications by the said party of the second part, which may in the opinion of said superintendent by advisable during the progress of the work, they shall not invalidate this contract, And should said alterations be more expensive the excess over the contract will be estimated and paid to the said parties of the first part.-

**Fifth:** The said party of the second part agree to pay the said parties of the first part for the said bridge, the gross sum of five hundred and fifty three Dollars in Orders drawn by the Auditor of said County upon the Treasurer thereof

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

commonly called "County Orders" which shall be taken at their face as follows: seventy five per cent shall be paid upon each one hundred dollars or upwards in Value of labor and materials as the work progresses upon the estimate of the said superintendent, the remaining twenty five per cent shall be paid upon the completion and delivery of said bridge, according to the specifications stipulations of this contract. In testimony whereof the said parties of the first part and Levi S. Clarke and William Mauk, and C. Hedderich their sureties have herewith set their hands, and the said Board of Commissioners have caused these articles to be subscribed by

William Pruitt, President of said Board and has also caused the corporate Seal of said Board of Commissioners of the County of Vanderburgh to be herewith affixed this eighteenth day of April A. D. 1861.

Levi S. Clarke  
William Mauk  
C. Hedderich  
Wm. Pruitt

And the Board after duly examination of the foregoing Agreement of Levi S. Clarke & William Mauk and C. Hedderich, and being satisfied with their Security, accept this Contract and approve the same.

### Bill of Timber and Iron with Specifications for bridge over Canal on 9th Street.

#### Railing

poplar 4 Plank 1 in thick by 6 " wide 47 ft. long  
16 Posts 4 x 4 - 4 ft. 8" long

Posts are notched on Floor Beams 2 in deep and 6 " long and butted to Beam with ½ in Bolt. The Floor plank are cut around them butting close. (see Plan) The Plank or Rails are notched 1" deep on posts & spiked as per plan.

#### Floor

wh1 Oak 9 cross Ties 3" x 6" x 15 ft. long  
1500 feet Ties 2" thick x 15 ft. long  
20 Planks or Floor Beams 2 x 12 x 25 ft. long  
7 Planks or Floor Beams 2 x 12 x 18 ft. long

4 cross Ties 2 Each ends of Bridge (one above and one below) and 3 cross Ties on top of beams 3 x 6" one notched 1" to fit on Beams, and at 2 Ties 3" & 6" at End of large Braces the Beams are notched for the Ties to fit in (1" deep). The 1500 feet of Plank are spiked (5 in spike) onto top of Beams (see plan). Beams are jointed & doubled on middle & bolted with ½ in Bolts— being 2 x 12" to out of trestle & 2 x 6 at End.

#### Trestle

poplar 6 Braces 4" x 6" 9 ft. long  
8 jns 2 x 4 7 ½ ft. long  
6 sills 8 x 8 15 ft. long  
3 sills 8 x 8 16 ft. long  
9 posts 8 x 8 3 ½ ft. long.

post The 6 braces fit on upon End on pier Beam & up between Floor Beams toing on sill & on lower end sills on ½ notched on each other then projecting 6" in length of Bridge. Middle ones are dove tail joint. Posts are notched 1 in. at top and Bottom being 2 in. thick 6" wide & small braces two against posts, (4 in. deep)

#### For Iron Track

4 Timbers 4" x 8" x 8 feet long cut to circle of 14 feet & framed underneath to Trestle as in plan

#### Pier

4 pieces 3 x 8" 7 feet long — 4 pieces 3 x 8" 5 ft. long (for wheels)  
24 pieces 3 x 8 " 2 feet long (24 pieces 12 x 12 15 ft. long Hwn 3 sides)  
Pieces for wheels are bolted to pier with the ½ in Bolt at each end and boxing for wheels are notched in and bolted with ½ in Bolt at each end to this 3 x 8 pieces wheel running

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

between them as in plan. The 12 x 12 pieces are ½ notches on each other and wooden pinned at corners by 2 in Pier, the joints of those running through centre are dove tailed on out side timbers or pieces.

### North Abutment

Oak  
 9 pieces 12 x 12 x 17 ft. long 3 sides Hewn  
 2 pieces 12 x 12 x 17 ft. long 4 sides Hewn  
 20 pieces 12 x 12 x 15 ft. long 3 sides Hewn

20 pieces Round x 8 ft. long  
 100 ft. 2 in. Plank at End

### South Abutment

Oak  
 4 pieces 12 x 12 17 ft. long Hwn 3 sides  
 2 pieces 12 x 12 17 ft. long Hwn 4 sides  
 10 pieces 12 x 12 10 ft. long Hwn 3 sides  
 10 pieces Found 8 ft. long  
 Timbers are ½ notches & pinned with 2" pins at corners and Round pieces are ½ notched with dove tail joints & run out into the bank at least Eight feet.  
 Bill Timber neat length

### Bill of Iron

1 pivot 4" diameter steel hardened  
 2 Boxes for pivot 2 x 2 ft. (see plan)  
 16 wheels 1 foot diameter 1½ in face 3" Hub 1½ shaft 1 foot long wheel cast  
 Iron 1 shaft wrought iron  
 32 Boxes for wheels 2 in. wide & drill for ½" Bolt  
 64 Bolts ½ in diameter 10" long 1¼ hd. & nut  
 32 Bolts ½" diameter 22 in. long 1¼ hd. & nut  
 2 Bolts 1" diameter 15 ft. 3" long 2 in hd. & nut  
 4 Bolts ¾" diameter 23" long 1½" hd. & nut  
 12 Bolts ½ diameter 14" long 1½" hd. & nut  
 24 Bolts ½" diameter 12" long 1¼" hd. & nut  
 16 Bolts ½" diameter 10" long 1¼" hd. & nut  
 66 Bolts ½" diameter 8" long 1¼" hd. & nut  
 40 Bolts ½" diameter 6" long 1¼" hd. & nut  
 12 straps 1" thick 3 in. wide 6" long cast o wrought and drilled for ¾ Bolts  
 Washers for all Bolts  
 43 ½ ft. Iron 3/8 thick by 4" wide & but to 14 ft. curve  
 32 ft. Iron 3/8 thick by 4" wide & but to 24 ft. 5" curve  
 1 King spike 5" long for floor  
 Bill Iron Gross length  
 Bill Iron Gross length

Pivot Boxes are bolted above and below with ¾ Bolts to Each Box, wheels are made stationary as per plan & specifications and turn Iron way 3/8" x 4" made fast as follows: at Ends it is the (3/8 x 4 Iron track) is spiked underneath. the timbers to the lower beams across the End and at centre it is spiked underneath the trestle to the beams and timbers framed between the beams, the Ends of timbers jointing on the beams and are so made that curves correspond to curves above described. The timbers of this bridge as per this Bill and specification shall be of best quality of white or brown Oak and poplar. The work shall be well done joints well fitted bolts and all put in as to plan & specifications in a workmanlike manner. -

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

Irons shall be best wrought Iron for bolts & shafts - pivot shall be steel hardened wrought Iron turned - Boxing good cast Iron. Bridge shall be turned by means of a wooden lever fastened into side of floor beam (bolted on) with a walk for man to pass on while in the act of turning.

As you can guess from the specifications the new 9th Street bridge was a pivot bridge. This type of bridge became popular during the later stages of the canal era because it eliminated the need for elevated bridges to allow canal boat clearance. When a boat reached the bridge the entire span pivoted to a position parallel to the canal, allowing the boat to pass. The construction of the 9th Street bridge by Vanderburgh County is rather surprising considering the canal's decline by 1861, the existence of bridges at 8th and 10th Streets and the fact that Evansville was on the west side of the canal. The 9th Street bridge was finally taken down in June 1868 and was replaced by an earthen causeway crossing the canal until it was entirely filled in 1870.

The story of the 9th Street canal bridge is just one of many during Indiana's canal era. Nothing of significance or historic importance occurred there. Yet as canawlers there is much to learn here.

First, the story shows us one of the untapped sources of information on Indiana's

canals. Much of the information comes from Record Book J of the Vanderburgh County Commissioner's records. These records are available in the Auditor's Office of every Indiana County. That means that there is more information out there on the canals. At the present time I have still been unable to determine if the bridge mentioned in records still exists. It not, hopefully somewhere else in the state one exists. In this case the detailed specifications still tell us a lot about canal bridge construction. More amazing is the simplicity of the entire project. Within a month of the original request the project was approved. Two days later bids were taken and a contract awarded. Three months later a completed bridge was in operation. You have to wonder how long the process would have taken given our present rules and regulations.

Council Proceedings June 8, 1868  
Blemker asked that Ninth Street canal bridge be removed and the canal filled with a dirt crossing with a box sewer beneath it. It was ordered to be done.

### NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ABOUT CANAL BRIDGES

When the first eighteen miles of the Central Canal was built in Warrick and Vanderburgh counties, it was crossed by plank bridges. These bridges in Evansville from Walnut to Sycamore Streets were built high enough for the canal boats to pass beneath them. Pedestrians crossing the bridges were protected from falling into the canal by wooden rails.

When the canal was continued as the Wabash & Erie, it was widened to 60 feet necessitating longer bridges. This is when the city accepted responsibility for the maintenance of the bridges. The original estimates were for shorter bridges which were less expensive to build. From time to time the question seemed to arise as to who was to maintain the bridges. Another major question arose as to who was responsible for any accidents that took place on

or about the bridges.

The canal hindered fire wagons from reaching fires quickly because they had to cross at the bridges. Once the canal was only used as a hydraulic canal, box culverts were built to pass the water beneath some of the streets. Eventually the canal through the city was filled in and canal bridges were no longer an issue.

6-12-1851 6-9 W **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal.

We learn that the Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal, at their late session, directed the opening of the Canal sixty feet wide at the water line from the terminus on Pigeon Creek, through the whole length of Lamasco, and directed the building of bridges across the Canal on every street in that city. We presume the same enlargement will be made through Evansville so soon as the right of way can be obtained. The enlargement will be absolutely necessary as

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

soon as the Canal is completed. The immense trade that will center here from the valleys of the Wabash and White rivers, will induce a wide outlet at the termination of the Canal. We are informed that the width of the Ohio Canal, at Cincinnati, is only fifty-four feet—making ours six feet wider.

### 5-13-1852 **Evansville Journal**

Widening the Canal.

The Canal Engineers have been for several days engaged in measuring the Canal, for within nearly a mile of its Pigeon Creek terminus, preparatory to widening it uniformly sixty feet that distance. At the last meeting held in this city, the Canal Trustees agreed to thus widen the Canal at this point, in view of the great commercial advantage of Evansville, which seemed to require such an accommodation. A Few evenings since, the City Council of Lamasco agreed to build four large, double track bridges, with foot-paths six feet wide, over the Canal, and within the bounds of Lamasco corporation. An immense amount of earth will be taken from the Canal in course of widening it. Lamasco is entitled to this, and it is deemed sufficient to fill up the streets and lots of the town. Her property holders and authorities seem to be energetic in everything tending to improve and beautify their place. The contracts for widening the Canal, will be let out in a few days.

### 6-22-1859 **Evansville Journal**

J. D. Sauders City Engineer, presented plans for the construction of a bridge over the Canal at the crossing of Division street.

On motion of Councilman Redmond the plans of the Engineer were accepted, and he was directed to prepare specifications for the same. Also that the city advertise for proposals for the construction of said bridge till the 9th day of July next, when the contract shall be let unless hereafter deferred.

On motion of Councilman Redmond, the embankment on the east side of the Canal at the crossing of Division street was directed to be used in filling up Division street, near Sixth street, to the proper grade.

### 3-30-1860 **Evansville Journal**

Lower Division of the W. & E. Canal.

Mr. M. A. Lawrence returned, Thursday evening, from a trip on the Canal, and has been making estimates, in company with our efficient Canal Superintendent, as to the cost of repairs on the wood structures necessary to keep the Canal navigable the coming season. He finds that the heaviest outlay will be on the White River Aqueduct, which needs prompt attention. It will cost about \$1,500 to render it safe for some years. The locks will require but a small expense to render them passable for the next twelve months.

The banks are in a safer and more reliable condition than they ever have been, the weak places having been raised and widened during the past summer and fall.

The expense of this important work has been cut down lower than was ever anticipated. It is to be hoped that all who have not paid up their assessments will do so without delay, as every dollar will be needed to pay off past outlays

and complete the repairs necessary to keep water in the Canal.

Mr. Lawrence desires us to say that it is impossible for those having charge of the Canal, under the present arrangement, to keep up the bridges along the line. Every cent of money subscribed, and all the revenue, is required to keep the Canal in proper order. If the bridges are supposed to become dangerous to travelers, and any one gets hurt, there is at present no person or corporation responsible for damages. So it will be better for the people interested along the line to keep the bridges in repair. Some towns have already done this, and all would do well to make up their minds to do the same, if they expect the canal to be kept in navigable order.

### 5-12-1860 **Evansville Journal**

Wabash and Erie Canal.

We publish this morning a card from the managers of the southern division of the Wabash and Erie Canal. The importance of the subject presented in the card will challenge the careful attention of every one interested in the preservation of that thoroughfare. While it is no doubt true that the Trustees of the canal under its former management were responsible for the preservation of the bridges at the crossing of State and county roads that existed at the time of the formation of the canal; as the case now stands, the people should not attempt to hold the new board of managers equally responsible, even if they could legally do so. The reasons why they should not are clearly and concisely set forth in the card of the managers.

The General Superintendent of the upper division has issued a circular in which he takes the same position assured by the manager of the lower division, and demonstrates the utter inconsistency of the different boards to keep the canal in boating order and also the bridges in repair.

As Mr. Edgerton very correctly remarks, a local interest can, with but very little individual outlay, remedy the one evil by the repair of an old or the erection of a new structure; but the various local interests could not, if disposed, combine in time for success in maintaining the navigation of the entire canal.

If a perusal of the receipts and expenditures of the lower division, it will be seen that the most rigid economy is absolutely necessary to keep the canal in repair. Already the great bulk of the voluntary contributions have been absorbed. It not, when the managers have but just succeeded in putting the Canal in good order, they should be compelled to expect the earnings which are beginning to accumulate in the repair of bridges, it is evident they will be compelled to abandon the enterprise altogether, and the people on the canal, for want of a little public spirit and enterprise, will have the mortification of knowing they have deprived themselves of its great benefit.

But we do not believe those interested in the canal will pursue so suicidal a course. We feel confident they will encourage the managers by telling them "all we ask at your hands is that you will preserve the canal in good boating order, as for the bridges, we will look after them."

Perhaps the proper routes to be pursued would be for the county commissioners of the various counties through which the canal runs, to assume the care of the bridges and keep them in order. The tax that would have to be levied for



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

this purpose would be so slight as to be scarcely perceptible, while a load of responsibility would be lifted from the shoulders of the managers who are already sufficiently bothered.

6-15-1863 **Evansville Journal**

City Improvements.

Our city fathers seem to have struck on a new idea as regards city improvements, and persons making improvements would do well to note the fact.

The alleys, instead of streets, are fast being paved all through the city. The streets must be intended for grain fields, as Third street, from Walnut to Cherry, has been manured for three or four weeks since, which will be spread in the fall preparatory to plowing.

Persons building, would therefore do well to front their stores or dwellings on the alleys instead of the streets, as the former will certainly be the only one passable next winter. It is true that alleys can only be used single file, or goose fashion, but persons noticing the new bouldered crossings on Main street will at once observe that "single file" is the order of the day—they being very narrow and high, afford a better chance to break vehicles and persons necks on a sleety day, than for two to pass each other.

Why is it that we must forever suffer that tad pole pond, that "infernal ditch?" If a poor man has a lot on which the water stands a week, it is declared a nuisance, and he must fill it up, as is right. But the canal, as it has been for many

years, is a greater nuisance than all others in the city together, and why must we suffer it with impunity? If a canal company cannot be made to keep it in order within the city limits, let the city do it as its own expense, or buy it from the elbow to the creek, and then fill it up. The latter would be cheaper than the bridges.

At present there is but little protection against fire to persons living across the canal as there are but few bridges, if any, over which it is safe to take the steam fire engine.

TAX PAYER.

3-16-1864 **Evansville Journal**

MAIN STREET BRIDGE.

THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF Evansville will review sealed proposals for removing Main Street Bridge, and filling in an earth-way at said total of the width of 76 feet, the same to be brought to the proper grade. A box trunk four by four feet in dimensions to be constructed under said earth-way of good sound two inch Oak plank, well strengthened. The timbers and irons of the bridge to be carefully taken down and removed to a place to be provided by the City, not more than three squares from said bridge. Proposals to be submitted on or before Friday March 18, next.

A. PFAFOLIN,

Clerk.

Clerk's Office,

March 11, 1864.

## CHOLERA ALONG CANAL LINE

The following articles tell of Cholera on the southern division of the Central/Wabash and Erie Canal. Although Vanderburgh county had some cholera, it was not as prevalent as along the canal line that was being constructed to connect the sections of existing canals. It definitely slowed down the progress of completing the canal and caused Evansville businessmen, who were promised it would really benefit the town, to have doubts.

Cholera was probably worse along the line due to the unsanitary conditions in which the workers lived and the wet swampy area around Petersburg in which they were working. Since they lived in close proximity with one another, the disease spread quickly.

7-18-1850 **Evansville Journal**

CHOLERA AT PETERSBURGH.

We extract the following paragraph from the **Princeton Clarion** of the 13th, relative to the Cholera at Petersburg. It is a note from the P. M. of that place to the P. M. of Princeton. It contains almost the same news we



published a few days back:

PETERSBURGH, July 10, 1850.

The cholera is raging to some extent on the canal. There were two deaths in town last night and one case now not expected to live. Most persons have the premonitory symptoms. "To-day there are not six families left in town; it is nearly vacated. In town, and on the Canal, the daily average number of deaths is about five. The contractor started for Daviess county at 5 o'clock on Friday last with 14 hands and before day one half of them were dead.

W. S. Scott, P.M.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

7-18-1850

Wabash Canal.

We have taken some pains to ascertain the progress now being made in the construction of the Evansville division of the Wabash & Erie Canal. We had the pleasure about the first of June, of announcing that an important division of forty-two miles, between Terre Haute and Point Commerce, had been completed and the water let into it. We have now a continuous canal—the whole line in fine navigable order—from Toledo to Point Commerce, Indiana, a distance of three hundred and fifty-two miles. Point Commerce is one hundred and ten miles from Evansville on the Ohio river, the southern terminus of the Wabash and Erie Canal—the longest Canal in the United States. The southern division from Point Commerce to Evansville, a distance of one hundred and ten miles—is in rapid process of construction.

A division of 17 miles extending to Newbury will be opened by 1st November next.

Another division of 23½ miles extending to Maysville on the road leading from Louisville to Vincennes will be opened by the fall of 1850.

While the Canal was owned by the State of Indiana, 19 miles of it next to Evansville was finished. Some three or four years since we traveled on the towpath some distance and recollect that it then appeared in a good state or repair. The portion unfinished (though a considerable work has been expended upon it) lies between that division and Maysville. We learn from the Chief Engineer, Jesse L. Williams, Esq., now having charge of the work—finished as well as unfinished portions of the Canal—that he intends to pass loaded boats thro' the whole line from Toledo to Evansville, within two years from this date.—[Toledo Repub.

The last Canal contract was to have been let in June, and we suppose was put out according to notice, and will be speedily finished. In less than two years we may confidently anticipate the arrival at Evansville of laden Canal boats from Toledo. The work is progressing rapidly, except at Newbury where the laborers have been driven from their work by the cholera. The above contract gives some idea of importance of this work as a public improvement, and its especial importance as an auxiliary to the business and growth of Evansville. Connecting us with the Lakes at the North, and connecting the Lakes with the Ohio river and then with the South at this point, we will receive the benefit of a trade and

travel unequalled by any other single line in the West, whether Railroad or Canal. The indirect effect of this Canal will be to push on other public improvements in this State and Kentucky to connect with it; and we shall eventually, through the Wabash and Erie Canal, be made the great center of a trade extending by various ramifications from the South.

6-26-1851

CHOLERA ON THE CANAL.

Mr. Samuel Forrer has just returned from a trip up the line of the Canal, and says that but few cases of Cholera had occurred among the workmen—not so many as might have been expected considering the exposure to which they are subjected, and the careless habits of many of their number. Two laborers died at Petersburg Bluffs several weeks ago.—On section 50 of the new let work, some four miles above Cox's Mills, where too many hands had probably been crowded together, there were lately two deaths by Cholera.—The laborers on the line are healthy, and there is no prospect of the work being interrupted by sickness.

9-18-51 W

CHOLERA

Considerable alarm has existed at Princeton at intervals on account of a few sudden deaths by Cholera. We are glad to hear there have been no new cases for a few days past, and the alarm is calming down. The health on the line of the Canal above Princeton is said to be very good, and we believe laborers are at work on every section, although they do not number so many in the aggregate as they did before the late alarm. Such are the particulars as told to us.

6-30-1852 **Evansville Journal**

Cholera on the Canal.

We learn from several sources that the Cholera still prevails at several points along the Canal, among the laborers. Mr. Reagin disbanded his laborers at sections 20 and 21 last week. A number of his men died with the Cholera. We understand that persons could not be procured to bury the bodies, and that a house was burnt containing bodies, thus to destroy them. At Summit Hill there have been some deaths, among Mr. Walters' men. Mr Reagin, whom we noticed as having the Cholera, was better yesterday, but his little boy was down with it at Princeton.

## DOCKS

12-7-1852 **Evansville Journal**

(For the

Mr. Editor – Many of the citizens of Lamasco and Evansville own lots fronting on the canal, which they expect to occupy with warehouses, in which to store freight received from, and to be shipped on, the canal.—For convenience in the use of such buildings, especially in receiving and discharging wheat, oats, corn and other grain in bulk, it is important to have the second story of the building project some fifteen feet beyond the lower story with a basin so constructed as to permit

a canal boat to lie snugly up to the end of the lower story. By this means the boat is brought under shelter and goods and produce can be received and discharged at all times in every kind of weather, without being injured or disfigured by water or mud.—By this means also, the elevators used for lifting grain, can be let down from the second story into the bins in the boat, and the grain lifted into the second story without loss or damage and with but little cost. To effect this arrangement properly, docking must be put in; that is, a perpendicular wall of timber, commencing a little below the bottom of the canal,

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

and extending up to the top of the water. This wall may be made of oak timber, hewed on two sides and one edge.—It will serve as the foundation of the front wall of the lower story of the warehouse, and always submerged, will last as long as any superstructure placed on it.

In order to work at it conveniently and make it firm and secure, the docking should be put in before the water is let into the canal. Before the water is let in, the docking can be put in at a cost exceeding but little the cost of the timber, and the earth can be excavated and removed from the basin at from 8 to 12 cents per cubic yard. After the water is let in the cost will be much greater, and the docking cannot be made so firm and secure. Those who intend to contract docks at all, had

better do it now. Twenty years hence that portion of the timber under water will be as sound as when it was put in.

Those suggestions are offered by one who has no direct interest in the subject, and are intended to direct the attention of persons concerned to what is supposed to be their true interest. Before another season favorable for such work shall arrive, it is confidently anticipated that canal boats will be regularly plying between the southern extremity of the canal at Evansville on the Ohio river and its northern extremity at Lake Erie.

Let all be prepared for the event and provided with the necessary facilities to transact the vastly increased amount of business to be done in our already busy city.

## LABORERS

11-20-51 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal -- Laborers, &c.

We are gratified to understand from different sources, one of the principal contractors among others, that the work on the unfinished portion of the Wabash and Erie Canal is progressing steadily and swiftly. An immense number of laborers are employed, who are doing good work from the fact that their health is excellent, and they have the incentive of high wages. We understand the health along the line of the work is very good, there being little or no complaint among the laborers, who are cheerful and robust.—This is no doubt partly attributable to the general health of the country itself, but much of it is also owing to the excellent victuals with which the laborers are provided.—A gentleman who has been up the line, informs us that he never saw better boarding for laborers on any line of Canal or Railroad in the country, or things conducted in better order, cleanliness, &c. There are regular boarding houses at certain points on the Canal, which are under charge of experienced persons. Provisions and Game are abundant so that the laborers literally live on the fat

of the land. They are at this time receiving very high wages, promptly paid every week so that the laborers on this great work are to be envied. As laborers, owing the immensity of the work, are always in demand up the canal, we shall hereafter recommend young men looking for situation to take a shovel and pickax, and go to work on the Canal, where they can get first rate wages, excellent living, and enjoy far better health than at the shop board or behind the counter.

We commenced with the intention of giving some facts connected with the progress of the work of excavation itself, but will allude to them at another time. The principal contractors, however, are sparing no energy nor industry to carry through the work by the terms of their contract. They will accomplish the stupendous enterprise without doubt, if no untoward event occurs for which the calculations of men can make no preparation for prevention. The sub-contractors, are almost without exception, the right kind of men, and are doing their share toward pushing forward the work. Everything looks bright and prosperous.

## LETTINGS - BIDS/PROPOSALS

6-15-1847 **Evansville Journal**  
CANAL LETTINGS. NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.

In pursuance of an order of the Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal, the undersigned will receive sealed proposals, on the fifth day of August next, at the office of the Board at Terre Haute, or the construction of forty two sections of said canal, situated between Coal Creek in Parke County and Terre Haute. The work to be let, embraces two large aqueducts over Raccoon and Coal creeks, and three similar ones over Otter, Mill and Spring creeks; also one dam across Coal Creek, and three Locks, together with the usual variety of earth work. Payments will be made in par funds.

The line will be ready for inspection by the twenty-fifth inst, and the plans, specifications and terms of contract, may be seen for three days previous to the day of letting, at the office of the Resident Engineer at Terre Haute, by whom, all

necessary information will there and in the meantime be given. THOS. H. BLACK, N. B. PALMER.  
Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal.  
Terre Haute, June 15th 1847 jy6 tf

4-29-1848 **Evansville Journal**  
WABASH AND ERIE CANAL INDIANA.  
Canal Lettings.

The undersigned will receive sealed proposals at Terre Haute, Indiana, on the 24th day of May next, for the construction of Forty Miles of the Wabash and Erie Canal, extending from Terre Haute to Point Commerce, on the West Fork of White River, The line will be divided into sections, about a half a mile in length, and will embrace the variety of work usually presented on a similar division of Canal amongst which one reservoir, a number of lift-locks, culverts , &c.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

together with the rebuilding of a portion of Eel river dam and the guard-lock connected therewith.

Payments will be made as the work advances in part funds.

The line to be let, will be ready for inspection by the 15th of May, and by the 20th of that month, the plans, specification, estimates and quantities, &c., will be exhibited at the Engineer's office in Terre Haute.

Dated, Terre Haute, 17th March, 1848.

CHARLES BUTLER, THO. H. BLACK, AUSTIN M. PUETT.  
Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal ap6-6w

### 9-13-1848 **Evansville Journal**

Canal Letting.

#### NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.

The undersigned Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal, hereby give notice that they will receive sealed proposals at Point Commerce in Greene County, Indiana on the 15th day of November next, for the construction of 17 miles of said Canal, extending along the valley of the west fork of White River from Point Commerce to the village of Newberry in said County. On this division, there are to be constructed 6 Lift-Locks, one Guard-Lock, a Dam across White River, 12 feet in height and over 400 feet in length; together with the usual variety of work belonging to a Canal. The line will be divided into sections averaging about half a mile in length.

At the same time and place, proposals will be received for the performance of a part of the Rock Excavation at the Patoka Summit, in Pike county.—This section will embrace near 20,000 cubic yards of solid rock, varying in depth from 4 to 15 feet, together with a portion of earth excavation.

The work to be done will be ready for inspection for two weeks previous to the day of letting, during which time all necessary information will be given by the Resident Engineer.

Payments will be made as the work progresses in part funds.

CHARLES BUTLER, A. M. PUETT, THOS. H. BLAKE,  
Trustees &c.

Office of the Board of Trustees,

Terre Haute, Ind., Sep. 7, 1848. sep 13-td

### 11-4-1849 **Evansville Journal**

#### LETTING OF CONTRACTS

On the Wabash & Erie CANAL. The undersigned, Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal, will receive sealed proposals at Petersburg, Pike county Indiana, on the 11th day of November next, for the construction of about 15 ½ miles of said Canal, extending from Maysville to Petersburg. This division embraces a large proportion of the heaviest earth work on the canal, and is worthy the attention of contractors accustomed to heavy work. The line will be divided into sections suited to the shape and character of the ground, averaging near a half mile in length.

The superstructure of the Aqueduct over East Fork of White River will also be let. It is about 400 feet in length, consisting for four spans of near 100 feet, sustained by timber arches and truss-work, and enclosed from the weather.

The work will be ready for inspection for one week

previous to the letting, and all necessary information will be given by the resident Engineer. Bidders not known either to the Trustees, or to the Engineers, will be expected to enclose with their proposals, satisfactory testimonials as to character and qualifications.

CHARLES BUTLER, A. M. PUETT, THOS. H. BLAKE

Trustees of the Wabash & Erie Canal.

Terre-Haute, Ind., Sept 19th, 1849 —sept 28.

### 11-19—1849 and 11-22-1849 **Evansville Journal** Canal Lettings.

The following is the list of bidders to whom contracts were awarded on the 14th inst., on the Wabash and Erie Canal. We are indebted to the politeness of Mr. Foster for the list:

Section No.	
161.	H. & I. Horneling.
162.	Michael Byrnes & Co.
163.	Allen & McGillicurdy.
164.	Cochran & Hebb.
165.	Patrick Farrell.
166.	Harris & Harlow.
167.	Harrington & Ingersoll,
168.	John Coffee & Co.
169.	Galligan & O'Mally.
170.	Charles Moore.
171.	P. P. & O'Riley & Co.
172.	Wm Maloney.
173.	J. & J. Vest & Co.
174.	Groverman & Bourne.
175.	J. & J. Vest & Col.
176.	James Kinney & Co.
177.	Baird & Miller.
178.	James Kinney.
179.	E. M. & J. M. Patterson
180.	James Kinney & Co.
182.	John Tarvin & Co.
183.	Gallagher & Walters.
184.	George Bourne.
185.	do.
185½.	Wm. Griffin & Co.
186.	do.
187.	Patrick Sweeney.
188.	Gallagher & Walters.
189.	A. & E. R. Knight.
190.	John Coffee & Co.
191.	do.
192.	Logan, McBay & Caso.
193.	H. & J. Herneling.
194.	W. Maloney.
195.	Mulholland & Cassidy.
196.	Harrington & Stalcup.

White River Aqueduct Superstructure.—T. A. Madison.

### 5-18. 1850 **Evansville Journal**

Mistake Corrected.

To our remarks yesterday on the subject of the Canal, we perceive by a further examination of the Report of the Board of Trustees made to the Legislature at its last

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

epidemic referred to. This is a great point gained, for time, in this case, in money with interest compounded.

We learn that the contract provides, as follows:

1. The entire line is taken at the Engineer's estimates, with five per cent added to meet contingencies;
2. The work is to be constructed in the most durable and substantial manner, under the immediate supervision of the Engineers employed by the Trustees;
3. The whole line is to be completed by the 1st of November, 1852; and
4. The twenty miles next to Evansville is to be let on the first of October next, and completed, without any delay.

a. These are all the material points of the contract, with reference to the mode of construction and time of completion. It would be impracticable, we think, to complete the work as soon under any other system, or by any other mode of proceeding.

i. The Trustees make payment to Messrs. Forrer & Hosmer stated periods, looking to the certainty of the means then at their disposal and by anticipating the ample resources of the Trust Funds. The contractors will use cash means alone, and payments to laborers will be made as heretofore, at sixty day periods. This will be a valuable feature growing out of the arrangement, and ensures to the workmen all the facilities enjoyed heretofore in the construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

### 10-30-1850 **Evansville Journal** NOTICE TO CANAL CONTRACTORS. WABASH & ERIE CANAL, INDIANA.

SEALED Proposals will be received at Princeton, Ind., until the 20th day of October next for the construction of thirty-five miles of the above named Canal. The work consists of sixty sections, embracing much variety of excavation, including considerable rock, a number of deep cuts and heavy embankments, one aqueduct, eight locks, and many culverts. All the mechanical structure to be timber, and will afford much work for carpenters.

There will be no stone masonry of any description. Of the excavation and embankment there is much more heavy work than is common on an equal length of line. Bidders from Ohio will find it most convenient to reach this work by way of the Ohio river and Evansville as the south end of the work is only 18 miles north of Evansville—From the middle and north part of Indiana, it will be most convenient to reach the north end of the work at Petersburg, in Pike county. Bidders who are not known to the undersigned will be expected to furnish

proper testimonials of character.

Payments in money will be made at periods of about sixty days.

Plans and specification of the work will be exhibited at Princeton, by the Engineer in charge, 10 days before the letting. The line will be in readiness for inspection by the first of October. For further information, persons wishing to examine the work can address W. J. Ball, Res't. Engineer, Terre Haute.

SAML. FORRER, SOLOMON STURGESS, S. R. HOSMER.  
Sept 18-tl

### 10-31-1850 **Princeton Clarion** Canal Lettings.

Our town has been quite lively with strangers—competitors for contracts on the Wabash and Erie Canal, at the Lettings during the past week, of all the unlet portions of said Canal.

Below will be found the number of the section with the name of the successful bidder, as awarded on the 23d, by Messrs. Forrer, Sturgess & Hosmer:

197, 11, 36 and Reservoir, Steward & Rockafellow.

198, John Mehan.

199 1, Robert Garrett.

200, 15, Hefferman & Mehan.

201, James Ferriter

202, Kinney & Steward.

2, 7, Jacob Haug.

3, 37, 44 Sharon & Meldrum.

4, James Garrett.

5, Adam Fritz.

6, 8, 20, David L. Bell & Co.

9, 10, John Tarvin.

12, 17, 34, Crimmins, Clune & Co.

13, Kinney & Manning.

14, 16, Eber Jones.

18, 19, Thomas Potter.

21, 22, M. C. Regan.

23, Griffin & Swaggart.

35, Clark & Stewart.

26, McGuire & Farrell.

27, 50, Samuel Parker.

28, 29, Kinney & Murray.

30, Aydelett & Parker.

31, 32, Stewart & Walters.

33, 34, 35, Edward Jordan.

38, Edward Barrett.

39, Faulkner & Syers.

40, Thos. Harris & Co.

41, Jas. Adams & Co.

42, Ralph Wilson.

43, Thos. Kinney.

45, Carty & Pandrigan.

46, Patrick Sweeney.

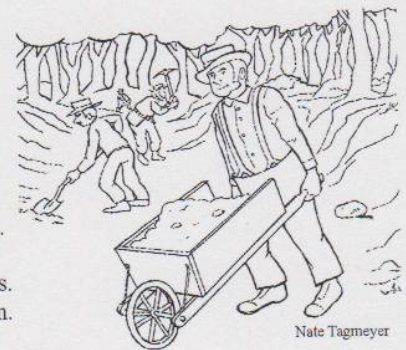
47, 48, 49, E. M. & J. M. Patterson.

51, George Hartley.

52, John McCracken.

53, Hiram Green.

54, David W. Beeson. [Princeton Clarion.



Nate Tagmeyer

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

10-1-1852 **Evansville Journal**  
NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.

Proposals will be received, by mail, at Princeton until the 5th of October, to widen the Canal in Evansville between Main street and the first Elbow, Eastward. The earth taken out is all to be placed in the canal banks, and bridge embankments on this division.—Also until the 13th of October for widening that part of the canal West of Main street. This division contains nearly 18,000 cubic yards of excavation, about 10.0 ft. of which will be required in the ridge and canal banks.—The remainder will be placed in the streets at such points as shall be named by the city authorities.

The bids will be for excavation only, the price to cover the cost of placing the earth wherever it may be ordered by the Engineers.

The first division must be finished in 30 days after the work it let. The other division in three months.

**Times and Volksbote** copy office. Oct 1  
SAM'L FORRER

2-25-53 **Evansville Journal**  
PROPOSALS

By order of the Common Council of the City of Evansville made Feb. 22d, 1853, Proposals will be received until Saturday, the 5th day of March next for docking the canal on Fourth street, between Vine and Division streets and covering said Fourth street with plank; the whole of said work, including Frame, Plank, and Earth work, to be completely finished by the first day of July next according to plans and specifications to be made by the City Engineer and seen at the office of the city Clerk on and after the first day of March next.

JOHN J. CHANDLER, City Clerk  
Fe25to3mh [Volksbote copy]

## MUD SLIDES

10-21-1856 **Evansville Journal**  
The W. & E. Canal.

We are grateful to find that, though late, yet the trustees of the Canal have at last thought fit to turn their attention to that portion of it known to boatmen as the Pigeon Summit.

At this point the canal is cut through a ridge of hills and the nature of the soil is such that every rain washes down the earth in great quantities into it, which consequently always has several inches less water in it at that point than there is above and below it.

The chief engineer, Mr. Ball, has instructed Capt. Fuller to put on a sufficient force to clean out the canal at the summit, and to secure the banks as far as possible from washing.

Capt. Fuller drew off the water on Sunday, the 19th, and is now at work with his crews and boats. It is to be regretted that he did not receive instructions to attend to the summit earlier in the season, while the canal has been almost useless for want of water, as now, at this advanced period, we may expect rains at any time, which will interfere with the completion of the work, or else delay navigation to a very late period of the season; so that, in fact, this end of the canal will have been of little benefit for nine months of the year. No wonder the bond holders complain that the revenues of the canal are not enough to pay the current expenses of the work, and interest on the bonds.

10-29-1856 **Evansville Journal**  
THE W. & E. CANAL.

We hear that Capt. Fuller, has about 150 men at work at the Pigeon Summit, which is being cleaned out and deepened as fast as the bottom of the canal dries so that the mud can be removed. The sides of the canal are to be planked for some distance up, so that the dirt will not wash down the banks, and we have every hope that this place will not in future, be such an impediment to navigation as it has been up to the present time.

It is to be regretted that the Trustees did not give earlier instruction to Capt. Fuller, to proceed with these repairs so as to insure their being thoroughly completed before the streams which supply the canal should have risen sufficiently to enable navigation to be resumed. We understand, however, the Capt. Fuller will continue working at them until the rain should fall in sufficient quantities as to cause him to suspend operations.

12-18-1856 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal.

In Ohio complaints have been made respecting the condition of the Miami Canal for some weeks past, causing vexations and unnecessary delay to boats some of which were detained two months on the way between Toledo and Cincinnati. In that State this condition of affairs is deemed worthy the attention of the Legislature, and a committee has been appointed to enquire into these obstructions and adopt measures to prevent a recurrence of them.

We hope this good example will be followed by our Legislators and that some means will be devised so as to ensure good navigation at this end of the canal and that this public work may in future be of some utility to the citizens of Southern Indiana.

There is at least a fair prospect of our having some benefit from the canal. The repairs at Pigeon Summit, under the superintendence of Capt. Fuller, though not as complete as could be desired, (it being considered to the interest of all parties to suspend the operations for the present, since there is now plenty of water in the feeders,) are such as to allay all fears of that point being the dread of every boatman, and we hope to see in a few days, business as brisk at the canal wharves as it is at present at the river.

12-15-1858 **Evansville Journal**  
A Card.

Mr. Editor.—Sir: The **Journal** of Friday contains an article headed "The Canal Again;" "there is an error that should be

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

corrected, as great injustice is done to the Trustees. No such order as the one mentioned has been received by me, nor have I made any such reports as those alluded to. I think it my duty to correct such misstatements as are made in connection with my name. Further than this, I do not wish to have anything to do with the controversy. Yours, &c. Thos. D. Smyth.

The Trustees did not order, as stated, the tools provided by Mr. Smyth for clearing out the Pigeon Summit, to be sold, because they were provided at Mr. Smyth's own cost, and were his own individual property, and not subject to their orders. But the Trustees have provided no means, nor given their permission to use them.

For the last six months Mr. Smyth has found employment for two repair boats on his division and has, by his energy and attention, prevented any interruption from any accident on his line to navigation for a single day. The improvement he has effected on his division shows what might

be done on other portions by energy and attention. Though Mr. Smyth has not been ordered by the Trustees to sell his own tools, he has been directed to lay up one of his repair boats and reduce his force of laborers, while the Trustees are still in consultation whether he shall be permitted to dig out the shallows on Pigeon Summit. These shallows have only from 15 to 20 inches of water on them, and reduce every boat passing them to one half a load. By cleaning out the dirt that has washed in for a distance of a mile, boats could pass this place with as much draft of water as in other portions.—The improvement could be made this winter, and at an inconsiderable expense, for a sum, we are told, which the increased tolls next summer would more than repay. But it is likely that Mr. Smyth and his tools will be permitted to remain idle during the winter, and the washings of the rains during the wet season will reduce the water to six inches, and the summer will find this part of the canal virtually closed.

## NAVIGATION

4-12-1856 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal.

The Canal is now in a fair stage and open from Terre Haute down to this city. We can congratulate the Canal Trustees and Superintendents for the precautions that have been taken to prevent accidents and breaks from occurring, and the promptness with which they have been repaired when they did occur. There are six or eight inches more water in the canal than ever previously at this season. The thanks of the community are due to Capt. Albert Smith of the canal boat G. Morgan for the prompt and efficient manner in which he with the assistance of his crew stopped a break which promised to be a serious one. The accident alluded to occurred about three miles above Francisco, and when discovered by Capt. Smith, he immediately stopped his boat and turned out with all his hands and prevented further damage. We anticipate a large business on the Canal this year.

8-19-1856 **Evansville Journal**

The water in the canal in the upper level is gradually deepening and we noticed the arrival on Saturday and Sunday of some boats from above. We are told by Esquire Rowley that Mr. Dowling reports there is plenty of water above the dam in White river to feed the canal, but owing to the obstruction occasioned by the grass and weeds that have grown up in it the flow is very slow and that in the course of a day or two he expects there will be an ample quantity of water for navigation.

When once more in an efficient state we hope that Mr. Wright will spare at least sufficient time to see that the banks are not continually breaking, or else resign his post in favor of some one who can devote more attention to the matter. No one can doubt Mr. Wright's efficiency if he would attend to their canal in the way the public have a right to expect.

8-21-1856 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal.

We had a call yesterday from Chief Engineer, Ball, of the Wabash and Erie Canal, and are glad to learn that there is a prospect of continued navigation during the fall. Mr. Wright, who has been Superintendent of the Petersburg division so long—the division that has been always broken—has resigned, and Capt. Kib Osborne, of Worthington, has been appointed to fill his place. From assurance given by those who know Mr. Osborne, we are led to believe that he will keep that division of the canal in good boating order; he has been for some years superintendent of the division next above the one he now takes charge of, and has made for himself an excellent reputation for industry and judgment. We really hope that the expectations of this friends may be fully realized

2-30-1857 **Evansville Journal**  
Canal Trustees Report.

We have received a copy of this report from Indianapolis and must say it is drawn up with great care. The tables certainly show a considerable falling off in the receipts we compared with those of two years back, but we do not agree with the opinions expressed by the Chief and Resident Engineers, in their separate reports that this falling off is owing, in the main, to the great amount of trade diverted to different channels by the establishment of railroads. No doubt to a certain extent this has been the case but not to the extent that these gentlemen would appear to consider and would endeavor to induce the reader to believe—Mr. Williams, Chief Engineer says in his report at page 14:

Though the cutting of the Clay county reservoir in May, 1855, not since filled, and the frequent breaks in the new and hazardous embankments on White river during previous seasons, there has not yet been a full year of uninterrupted navigation. These difficulties are now, we trust, removed, and a good navigation for next year is expected. But with a direct railroad, as there is of light grades, between Terre Haute and Evansville 40 miles shorter, but little more than way business

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

session, we were in error in making the statement that the portion of the Canal yet to be put under contract, was that between Maysville and Pigeon Dam. Pigeon Dam, it will be recollected, is the point of termination of the Canal already made from this place. The portion yet to be put under contract, is not that from Maysville to Pigeon Dam, but from a point fifteen miles this side. Last November a reach of fifteen miles this side of Maysville was let. The remainder contemplated to be let in June, which finishes all the lettings, is a distance to Maysville fifty miles. So it will be seen, as we stated yesterday, that there are only thirty-five miles of this splendid Canal not under contract and worked, and nearly completed. The error was in stating it to be from Maysville to Pigeon Dam.

When we consider that this Canal is the longest in the United States—that it connects the Lakes with the Ohio river at a point where the navigation is scarcely obstructed at any time—that the rich agricultural and mineral products of Western Kentucky, Tennessee, and a portion of Missouri and the South Western States, will through this channel seek the New York market, and receive in return the products and merchandize of the East—and that Evansville will be the great mart of this mighty commerce—can we doubt her destiny? We cannot believe we are presumptuous in saying, she must be as large as any city on the Ohio river.

5-23-1850 **Evansville Journal**  
Wabash and Erie Canal.

Yesterday we saw letters from Mr. Chas. Butler, President of the Board of Trustees at New York, a Board, which will be in June, and the work would be immediately commenced and industriously prosecuted to its completion. The Canal is now in operation to Point Commerce, while contracts are now in existence and the work progressing to complete the improvement to Maysville. From Evansville, the Canal has been dug twenty-one miles. From this point to Maysville is about thirty-five miles, thus leaving that distance to be put under contract at the next sitting of the Board.

It affords us much satisfaction to announce this state of affairs. Thus is evidence offered in the statement that the Board of Trustees are acting vigorously to complete this important work, which is bound to advance the prosperity of our city more than any single enterprise that has been originated, or that may be started a half century to come. And, it exhibits, that the great Wabash and Erie Canal, about four hundred and fifty miles in length, running through a rich agricultural country, and connecting us with the Lakes, is almost finished. The remaining unfinished portion will soon be under contract, and speedily completed. Mr. Butler spoke in the highest terms of Mr. Dowling in his letter, and expressed full confidence that his appointment as Trustee would be beneficial to the interests of the Canal. Mr. Dowling signified his intention of visiting Evansville so soon as his health would permit to forward the Canal enterprise. Thus everything appears going on well. We look forward to the completion of this important improvement with that gladness we shall always regard the progress of work tending greatly to the advancement of this city. The Wabash and Erie Canal will be of boundless benefit to Evansville,—The Michigan Canal

almost built up New York, and we see no reason why, judging from the past influence of canals, this work will not (be) united to our Railroad and the public spirit of our citizens build up Evansville.—Without entering into details, it is sufficient to say that this canal connects us with the Wabash river and the Lakes. It opens a new and navigable river to Evansville, running not only to important points, but through a country, whose agricultural resources, immense, rich and valuable, will through this channel be poured into our lap. We do not date the greatness of Evansville from the time when a mere village, she commenced rising through numberless improvements, to a city—but from that day when the first boat arrives here on this canal. That will be an era in the history of Evansville, to which when years have rolled by, we may proudly look back as the beginning of our greatness.

9-26-1850 **Evansville Journal**  
Wabash and Erie Canal.

We learn from good authority, that a contract for all the unlet portion of the Canal has been entered into with Messrs. Forrer & Hosmer, by the Trustees, and that active operations will be shortly commenced on the line South of Petersburg.

It is understood that this contract embraces All the unlet sections of the Canal, and that now every foot of the work is under contract along the entire line. This intelligence, we feel assured will be gratifying to the people South of White river, and gives in earnest that the long looked for period is near at hand, when the water of the Lake will mingle with the "Father of Waters."

This contract, as we learn, covers a large expenditure of money, and may be put down in round numbers at \$530,000. Thid Mr. Thos Dowling, the lately appointed Trustee, residing at Terre Haute, to a gentleman in this city, which contained some items of interest relative to the Wabash and Erie Canal. It was stated in these letters that the plan for completing the unfinished portions of this canal would be determined upon at the next meeting of the sum, it is gratifying to know, will be readily commanded by the contractors, who are gentlemen of ample means and of undoubted credit and responsibility. The expenditure of so much money, in our immediate vicinity, is of itself, a matter of great importance, but its influence will be much enhanced when it is remembered that it is auxiliary to the completion of a work in which the State itself and the Southern portion of it particularly, feels so deep an interest. On every account this movement of the Trustees cannot fail to have a great and favorable influence on the progress of South Western Indiana.

Though the prospective means of the Trust are ample, it cannot be disguised that a failure to realize them, promptly, would delay the work unfavorable, and that the time necessarily lost by the floods of 1848 and 1849, and the calamitous visitation of cholera along the line in 1850, would warrant the Trustees in looking to the extension of time provided in the Legislative enactment. By the late arrangements, this will be obviated, and the work will be completed within a year of the earliest time fixed upon by the act providing for the Funded Debt of the State leaving out of view entirely the eighteen months lost by the casualties and



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

can be expected on the canal.

And Mr. Ball, Resident Engineer at page 25 says:

In these anticipations we have already been much disappointed, and an impartial survey of the whole ground must lead to the conclusion that improvements now being constructed must still further divert business from the canal. It is only necessary for me to refer to the fact, that through a district of county affording a limited business for one great line of transportation, there has been in operation, for two years past, a railroad forty miles shorter than the canal between Terre Haute and Evansville, and that a second railroad is being constructed from Evansville northward, in the immediate vicinity of the canal, fifty miles of which are expected to be completed within a year from this time. In addition to this the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, extending from St. Louis to Cincinnati, crosses the canal in the county of Daviess, and will doubtless take from us a large share of the trade of that county.

With these facts before us, and in view of the known results of railroad competition to the canal, the conviction is irresistible, that with the best navigation practicable on a canal adapted to boats of not over sixty tons burden, the competition of the railroads now in operation, and in process of construction above referred to, must greatly diminish the revenues of the canal.

It would seem, therefore, to be, in these gentlemen's opinion that this falling off in the business on this end of the canal is simply owing to the fact that the railroads traversing the county through which the canal passes, carry freight quicker to its destination than it can be reached by the canal. We differ entirely in opinion with them. Some freight would undoubtedly go by railroad, but the uncertainty of the stability of the canal is the chief cause of the unwillingness of shippers to employ it as a means of transport.—Notwithstanding Mr. Williams' opinion, we have good reason to believe that the heavy and bulky articles of commerce, grain, flour, pork, &c. would be shipped on the canal in preference to the railroad.

During last year we believe that not a single boat passed through between Terre Haute and Evansville without detention or delay, and now, although, the canal is pronounced in good order, and navigable between those points no one will venture to ship on it; there is no confidence even in a boat's being able to make the trip to Petersburg and back. Many of our friends in this city and in other places have lost heavily by investing in canal boats, warehouses and in other ways, looking forward to doing a paying business and would have done so had the canal been sustained.

The fact is and there is no concealing it, an undue preference has been always shown on the part of the management to the upper portion of the canal.

Though we have always been answered, when speaking of the numerous breaks and impediments to navigation at our end, that the other end was more solid the banks less liable to break, &c. yet we learn from the report before us, that over seventy thousand dollars were laid out last year, for repairs on the Canal from the State line to Clinton, and under thirty seven thousand from Clinton to Evansville. The amount paid out on contract, on the certificate of the Chief Engineer, on the former division, being nearly \$20,000 and on the latter under \$3,000; and yet it is acknowledged that this

last division needs it the worst.

Notwithstanding the very short period during which the canal was in operation, last year, the tolls and water rents received at the collector's office at Worthington, Petersburg and Evansville, were two thirds of what they were in 1855, viz: \$8,794/94 against \$5,435.65. On looking over the tables we find an evidence of the preference shown to the upper division of the canal. The distance from Clinton to the State line is 203 miles, and five superintendents are employed, with a salary of \$5035.93 being an average of 40 miles and \$1067 each; while on the lower division the distance is 176 miles, on which there are four superintendents, employed at \$3186.17 being an average of 44 miles and \$756 each.

Could the canal be relied upon, there is no doubt but that the amount of its business would be increased tenfold. We know one instance that occurred two years ago, of a merchant of Lafayette, having consigned a heavy lot of groceries from the South, to a commission house here, part of which were shipped on the canal, and at the end of two months had not reached their destination; the remainder were then directed to be reshipped to New Albany and thence forwarded to their destination. Does Mr. Ball consider that a preference was given to the railroad in such a case? Last year, also, several hundred tons of marble and other freight were delayed at Terre Haute, in expectation of the canal to Evansville being repaired, and were, at a heavy expense, re-forwarded by railroad. In fact, the want of confidence in the canal is such, that railroads, wagons and every species of conveyance are preferred to it.

3-12-1857 **Evansville Journal**

"The canal continues in good boating order."

The above paragraph has appeared in our paper about once a week for the last six weeks or so, and we are pleased to be able to continue it. The canal is in excellent order and confidence in its stability is being restored among our citizens. Only let the officers continue to do their duty in the way they are now doing and let the Trustees appropriate a little more money for repairs, boats, &c. on the lower division and we shall hear no more complaints upon the part of the citizens or hints thrown out by some of the bondholders of desiring to give up the work to the State. It will amply repay the stockholders if well attended to and we have every hope that henceforth it will be a benefit to all parties.

9-2-1857 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal.

We feel highly gratified at the good prospect for steady navigation upon the canal this fall. This end of the canal has been so wholly neglected for two or three years that boatmen and forwarding men had lost nearly all hope of ever being able to do a remunerative business upon it. But now, since the appointment of Dr. Barton, of Daviess, a Trustee of the State, confidence seems to be restored, and our canal men are fixed to do a business this fall the same as though the canal were a permanent institution. The Doctor has taken hold of the work with a determination that it shall be kept in order, and from our knowledge of his go-ahead disposition, we know that it will be done. He certainly will deserve the thanks of the

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

people of Southern Indiana, particularly of Evansville, for what he has already accomplished.

We spent a few days last week, in the counties of Martin and Dubois, in company with the Doctor, looking after the timber pirates who are cutting off the finest timber to be found on the canal lands, and rafting it out of White river. The Doctor has taken into his possession a vast amount of saw logs, and has been paid for some---some he has notes for and some he has brought suit for. By his energy in ferreting out these pirates he will save the timber from destruction and prevent this system of stealing in future. He has put an effectual stop to the piracy for the present. He is the first Trustee of the canal who ever paid the slightest attention to these lands.

11-13-1857 **Evansville Journal**  
Dr. G. G. Barton.

The gentleman, the indefatigable Trustee of the Wabash and Erie canal, was in our city yesterday, brought here by the late heavy rains. Fearing that damage would ensue to the canal from the freshet, he came here to look at the lower level and to render any assistance that might be necessary for the speedy repair of any breaks that might occur. Several breaks had occurred, but Capt. Jesse Fuller, had a sufficient force at work to have all repaired at once, so that no detention could occur to boats on the line.

We only mention this circumstance to contrast the present condition of affairs upon the canal with the condition a year ago. Before the election of Dr. Barton to the Trusteeship, a night as a Trustee on this end of the canal would have cured the worst case of chronic sore eyes, and the consequence was that this end of the canal was always out of order, while now, under his administration he is all along the line and it is always in good condition. The people of this end of the State are greatly indebted to the Doctor for his energy and determination in keeping their end of the canal in good boating order.

4-24-1858 **Evansville Journal**  
[For the **Journal**.  
The Canal.

Mr. Editors:--Again we begin to hear complaints, and justly too, about the condition of the W. & E. Canal. It is now in such a bad state that navigation will be stopped for, perhaps a month or longer, and from appearance, that portion from Hosmer o Evansville, a portion much unused, will be left to take care of itself. There are, as I learn, two small breaks in this lower district which might be repaired in five or six days, and the boats might continue to do considerable business between the two places. It was not expected that a heavy break above Petersburg would in any way interfere with the division and cut off the trade with Millersburg, Port, Gibson, Francisco, Dongola, Crowe and Hosmer. Besides the citizens of Petersburg would gladly receive their goods at Hosmer, and have them hauled by wagon, which would be the cheapest way they can get them. It appears to me that there is something wrong about such management. I understand that Mr. Fuller, by the urgent solicitation of many citizens, has taken it upon himself to repair the two lower breaks. When that is done, would it not be to the advantage of the Trustees

and others concerned, to see that the canal is kept open to Hosmer? If they will not there are persons enough along the line that will do the work without charge, if permitted to act. A gentleman who had 800 cords of wood to come down the canal, yesterday volunteered the services of three hands free, for the purpose of keeping up the lower level. Others will do as much. The want of water is no excuse, for they have an abundance in all the feeders, as we are informed. Yours, &c.

4-23-1860 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal Is In Good Order.

The Southern Division of the Wabash and Erie Canal, from Newberry to this city, a distance of ninety-five miles, is now in excellent navigable order, and boats are running regularly, without interruption.—There is a good stage of water, and the banks are in good condition.

Mr. M. A. Lawrence, President, of the Board of Managers, goes up to Washington today, where he expects to meet Mr. Jesse L. Williams, the Chief Engineer, for the purpose of devising some plan for strengthening the aqueduct across White river, so it will be secure from accident in future. It is the design of the gentlemen now managing the Canal to keep it in thorough repair, so that shippers may rely on getting freights through with promptness and certainty;

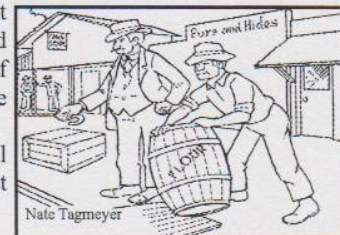
The Board of Managers and Mr. Thomas Smith (Superintendent) deserve great praise for bringing the Canal to its present state of efficiency. They have labored under many difficulties, but have the gratification of seeing the work they manage a self-supporting institution. Unless the Canal meets with some unlooked-for accident, the Managers have good reason to believe that it will pay its own way until the heavy wooden structures have to be replaced with new ones.

It is hoped that the people along the line will consider the Canal a great public thoroughfare, and keep the bridges in repair, as the Board cannot, with their limited means, repair these structures as they become unsafe and rebuild them when they decay. It is better for the people along the line to keep up the bridges than to have a dry ditch passing through their counties. If the Managers keep up the bridges they cannot keep up the Canal. If the people will keep up their bridges, the Canal can in all probability be furnished as it is now --a reliable channel of commerce.

4-26-1860 **Evansville Journal**

The W & E CANAL --Mr. M. A. Lawrence has just returned from Washington, up the Canal, where he has been conferring with Mr. Williams, engineer of the Canal, in regard to repairing the Aqueduct across White River.—Plans for the work have been agreed on, and the water will be drawn off on the 15th of May (proximo), for the purpose of making such repairs. The work will require about twenty-five days, and the Board of Managers think it right to give boatmen and shippers ample notice of the drawing off of the water.

Navigation will be resumed at the earliest day possible.



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# NUISANCE - FILL IT UP

12-15-1860 **Evansville Journal**  
Our Canal.

It must be evident to every one that our Canal MUST AT AN EARLY DAY BE ABANDONED. This is inevitable.

By a series of breaks at Prairie Creek in Daviess county, the Manager of the Canal have abandoned all hope of repairing it so as to convey water from White River to Port Gibson. Considerably the only supply which can be relied upon is Pigeon Reservoir. This under the most favorable circumstances cannot supply the Canal more than eight months a year. The other four months it will be what it has been—an offensive and worthless ditch.

Can the Canal be repaired? I answer no, because the money cannot be obtained to do it. The Managers have already expended all the means within their control and cannot reasonably hope to obtain more. Few people will subscribe again, and for the next year or two large expenditures will be required, even to get a limited supply from Pigeon Reservoir. From what source can the money be obtained to meet this requirement?

Must we not then contemplate the early abandonment of the Canal? The answer to the inquiry has an important bearing upon the manufacturing interests of the city, because every flouring mill, planing mill—in fact almost every steam engine within the city receives its water from the Canal. Even the fire department is largely dependent on this source for its supply.

Must we suffer our manufactories to stop for four months in a year? How can this be avoided?

It is worse than useless to expend any more money upon the Canal. So long as it remains not filled up. Every summer it will not only be worthless for all practical purposes, but, also, a fertile source of disease.—This is a fact painfully well known to those who live near it.

Should not this important subject engage the early attention of our City Fathers? C.

12-19-1860 **Evansville Journal**

The present and future condition of the southern end of the Canal is a subject of great interest to our citizens.

Without assuming the position to which "C" arrived in his communication of Saturday, let us briefly consider the influence this Canal exercises upon the value of property and the health of citizens near it.

Its length from Wabash street to the elbow and from that to Pigeon Creek is near a mile. This distance divided into lots of twenty-four feet each makes about four hundred and fifty. The last duplicate shows that these lots are valued at something like two dollars a foot less than lots one square from the Canal. Hence the conclusion is reasonable that it depreciates the value of lots fronting upon it about two dollars per front foot, or fifty dollars a lot. Multiply four hundred and fifty, the number of lots on the Canal by fifty, their depreciated value, and the product, or loss to the lot owners, is \$22,500.

It would be a very low estimate to fix the depreciated value of property, more ready situated at \$22,500 more. Add these amounts together and the total depreciation of property would be \$45,000. Is not this a low estimate?

There are now, from twelve to fifteen bridges across the Canal. Several of these are worthless. The average duration of canal bridges does not appear to be more than five years. Hence we may estimate, if the Canal is to be kept up, that an average of three bridges a year for the next five years must be made. The cost of these may be estimated at \$800 each, or \$2,400 a year for bridges for the next five years. Think of it, taxpayers. Within the next five years you will be required to pay something like \$12,800 for canal bridges if you desire to keep that worthless ditch properly bridged.

The condition the Canal has been in during the summer months for the last several years, and the condition it is likely to be in on the \_\_\_ season for years to come, if efforts be made to keep it up, renders a consideration of its influence upon the health of citizens near it an important question. All medical authorities and common experience teach that stagnant water, is a prolific source of disease, during the summer months. As the water diminishes, the effluvial or poisonous gases increase in abundance so that by the time the Canal is nearly dry they become so poisonous that a few hours exposure will, frequently, \_\_\_\_\_. For the last several years the canal water has attained this condition in August and September. The consequence has been, citizens living near it have been much more affected by disease than those living more remote.

I presume the number of citizens living sufficiently near the canal to be influenced by low water when it attains a noxious state may be reasonably estimated at five hundred. Suppose the increased ratio of sickness is equal to five persons daily (one man and four women and children), for the months of July, August and September. Let us place a cash estimate on this affliction. The women and children are self-sustaining but their sickness involved cash, on the \_\_\_ the way of physicians' bills and other extras of one dollar per day each. This \_\_\_ an aggregate of \$400.

The men lose their time which is worth a dollar, and incur a dollar of expenses.—This would make the \_\_\_ aggregate of \$200?. In consequence of the \_\_\_ influence of the Canal, therefore citizens \_\_\_\_\_ it, additionally incur an expense, or loss of time, physicians' bills and other extras, of \$400. If a cash value could be put upon the afflictions of our fellow-beings this appears low.

6-25-1863 **Evansville Journal**  
THE BIG GOOSE-POND.

Much has been said in favor of the "big goose pond." Many, no doubt, have suggested its sanitary and commercial qualities have been over estimated. — In fact, it is difficult for men who walk by night to arrive at any other conclusion. Following the old fogy notions of books and \_\_\_,

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the people suppose that like causes may produce a like effect. When they see rivers of stagnant water exposed to the sun of summer, and haul boats of green scum rise to the surface, interspersed with dead fish and other petrevent (sic) matter, they infer that it may produce disease, and endanger the health and life of the citizens. We frankly admit the justness of the conclusions, if the pond was composed of common stagnant water only that but such is not the case. Everybody knows that.

“Variety if the spice of life” and beyond all doubt the big pond contains a variety.  
(unable to read microfiche)

### 7-16-1864 **Evansville Journal**

#### LET IT BE FILLED UP.

—There is no question but that the filthy canal, which permeates our city, is the cause of nearly two-thirds of the sickness with which our people are afflicted, and its filling up is looked on, by most of our citizens, as a question of not only duty but of humanity.

Now while causeways are being built over the canal, in different places, would be a good time to go on and fill up the whole concern, from the elbow to the basin or to Pigeon creek.

The citizens should meet in council and consider this matter, as the lives of their friends are at stake. Let some influential men get up a call for a meeting on Tuesday night and let the matter be talked over.

### 7-19-1864 **Evansville Journal**

#### Shall the Nuisance be Abated—Public Meeting.

In view of the facts set forth by a large number of the physicians of this city which will be found elsewhere, we are requested to call a public meeting of the citizens at the COURT HOUSE At 8 O’CLOCK ON TOMORROW (WEDNESDAY) EVENING, to take into consideration some plan for filling up the canal. Every man in the city is interested in this matter. The lives of our families and our own lives are at stake. Let the meeting be a large one, and let all come prepared to act. [Times and Union please copy.]

### 7-20-1864 **Evansville Journal**

RALLY TO-NIGHT--The importance of the meeting to be held at the Court House to-night to consider the canal question cannot be magnified.

It is a subject in which all are deeply interested, and thought there may be a few who have property on the canal from which they draw water, and who may have some doubts about the matter, yet we take it that one man will place a question of this kind between himself and his health, and ever the lives of his wife and children. There is no question but that the canal has been a fruitful source of death, and that its longer maintenance in its present condition should be a monstrous crime.

We hope the Court House will be crowded tonight, and that all will come, with one mind—that the nuisance shall be abated—and ready to consult —lely (sic) with a view to the best and most usable plan for its abatement.

This is a question of universal interest, and all

should take part.

### 7-21-1864 **Evansville Journal**

CANAL MEETING.—A large number of people met at the Court House last night to consider the question of filling up the canal.

Joseph P. Elliott was called to the chair and Wm. E. French was appointed Secretary of the meeting.

Mayor Baker stated the object of the meeting, and made a very sensible speech on the subject. He believed the canal to be a nuisance, a fruitful source of sickness and death. He thought when he first saw the canal that it should not have been located in the city.

There was, he said, conflicting interests, the desire to promote the health of the city and the supply of water to the manufacturing community. The proper remedy was to construct Water Works. This could be profitably done, and then all the water should be shut out of the canal. He thought the health of the city paramount to every other consideration.

Mr. W. E. French spoke earnestly and pointedly in favor of abating the nuisance. It was no good reason because manufacturers might be inconvenienced by the filling up of the canal that the lives of our citizens should be jeopardized by its maintenance.

Dr. Thompson spoke to the same effect. The canal was scattering disease and death throughout the city.

Mr. Roelker thought that if the 2,200 men interested in manufactures, were deprived of their means of carrying on the business, the city would be worth but little.

Mr. J. U. Magee thought if the citizens are killed off by the malaria on the canal, the manufactures would be of but little use. But he thought a supply of water might be maintained and the nuisance, at the same time, abated.

Mr. J. C. Smith, endorsed the plan of a sewer being laid in the bed of the canal, and filling it up gradually.

Mr. Tom Smith, agent for the canal, was willing to give up the canal.

J. F. Glover was in favor of a move for the construction of Water-Works. Manufacturers must be supplied with water but he thought that could be done, and the health of the city improved, by inserting a wooden sewer.

Mr. Glover moved that Wm. E. French, Henry Roelker, Levi Iglehart, Valentine Wetzel and Wm. Hunnel be appointed a committee to petition the City Council to construct such a sewer.

Mr. Roelker in the course of a few remarks said that he was willing to fill up an entire square if they would keep up a supply of water.

Mayer Baker though the city should bear a large part of the expense, but he thought the manufacturers should bear a fair proportion of the expense.

A great deal of talking was done, and a great variety of opinion was given. After a long time the question was put with the amendment, that the committee wait upon the manufacturers to see what they will contribute, and was carried; whereupon, the meeting adjourned until called again by the committee.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# PIGEON CREEK RESERVOIR

Although Pigeon Creek Reservoir is located in Gibson county, Indiana, and we will not visit it since our tour is in Warrick and Vanderburgh counties, it was of prime importance to the Wabash & Erie Canal's constant operation in the counties we are covering. It was not constructed at the time the original canal was dug as a part of the Central Canal. It was added when the Wabash & Erie Canal joined this portion of completed Central Canal. At the time of its construction local newspapers reported the debates and injunctions regarding its effect on the health of persons living in its vicinity. Many were opposed to it, but it was greatly needed to supply extra water once the canal was fully operational from Toledo to Evansville.

### Indiana's Canal Reservoirs By Stan Schmitt

The most essential element for the operation of a canal is an abundant water supply. In most cases this is accomplished by diverting water from a dammed river into the canal. If this proved insufficient, it was then necessary to construct reservoirs to store adequate supplies. On the Wabash & Erie Canal in Indiana these reservoirs were restricted to the southern half of the state.

With the exception of the Wabash & Erie Canal reservoir at Antwerp, Ohio, the sole reservoir in northern Indiana was the Northport reservoir at Rome City. This body of water, now known as Sylvan Lake, is the only major remains of the ill-fated Erie & Michigan Canal and surprisingly the only survivor of Indiana's four canal reservoirs. In southern Indiana three reservoirs were constructed between Terre Haute and Evansville. Splunge Creek reservoir was the most important of the three, since it supplied the entire water supply for the 34 mile section at the Eel River summit. At this part of the canal it was necessary to lock up 79.2 feet south of Terre Haute, before locking down 163.5 feet to the Ohio River. The only possible way to supply the necessary water for lockage on both sides of the summit was to construct a reservoir

on top. The resulting reservoir covered an area of 3,873 acres with up to 7 feet of water. After people in the area expressed some health concerns, the chief engineer and Dr. Ezra Reed examined the site and recommended only that timber on the margins be removed. After a drought in 1851 it was decided that this reservoir might be insufficient and a second site was chosen at Birch Creek. This second site covered 1,000 acres and was a source of local concern even before its completion. This was borne out by the locals cutting the reservoir in June 1854, May 1855, June 1855, and March 1860.

The final reservoir constructed was located on Pigeon Creek. This 1,500 acre site was designed to supplement White river dam which fed the lower 93 miles of the canal. Upon completion of the canal in 1853, a medical commission was appointed to examine all three of the reservoirs as to their possible effect on the health of the region.

To His Excellency, JOSEPH A. WRIGHT.

The Committee appointed by your Excellency, under an act of the Legislature of the 4th of March, 1853, to examine the Reservoirs of Clay and Gibson counties in the State of Indiana, having had the subject under consideration during the months of June and July, beg leave to submit the following as the result of their investigations:

(Splunge Creek and Birch Creek reservoirs included in this document have been omitted here.)

PIGEON CREEK RESERVOIR, GIBSON COUNTY.

This Reservoir covers an area of about fifteen hundred acres, partially filled with water, which presents a dark and filthy appearance not different however, from the water in the creek itself beyond the influence of the Reservoir.

The soil is thin, argillaceous, and covered with a layer of decaying vegetable matter, subject to inundation, both from heavy rains and rises in the

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

creek. On the west, extending north, is a very marshy, wet swamp, from two to six rods wide, and about three-fourths of a mile in length. The partial filling of this Reservoir will be a disadvantage during the coming autumn, but when once filled will add greatly to the improvement of the hygiene of the country. The timber is heavy, and comprises the major variety of the forest trees of this latitude, interspersed with under growth and grass. During the destruction of the foliage and grass, soon after submerging these grounds, there will be a new source of miasma, ceasing, however, almost entirely when that crop is decayed. Not a great amount of poisonous influence would result from this than from the clearing away of the timber; and to take the Reservoir in its present condition and drain it, which would have to be done before the timber could be removed, fourfold greater damage would result to the surrounding country than from the complete inundation of the whole territory at the worst season of the year. When the great Reservoir of Mercer county, Ohio, was first constructed and partially filled, the people fearing the consequences, met and opened the bank. The result was, that never in the history of the county did disease become so common and fatal.

The fringes of this Reservoir are also being cleared of timber, so that the rise and fall of six feet will not expose any grounds having on them standing timber. As the subject of standing timber has often been referred to, we deem a further notice of it unnecessary.

The Committee, after having finished their investigation of the Reservoirs of Clay and Gibson counties, had the privilege of inspecting some of the artificial lakes of Ohio. These Reservoirs have been constructed from twelve to fifteen years, where time sufficient has elapsed to see the practical effects of such collections of water. The great Reservoir of Mercer county, being the largest artificial lake in the world, covers about seventeen thousand acres of land, nine thousand of which was dense forest when submerged.

Although great fears were entertained as to its effect upon the health of the country at the time,

yet all now freely acknowledge that it has been a decided advantage in point of health.

Dr. Stevens, who has practised medicine for eighteen years in the vicinity of this body of water, says the health has gradually improved since the filling of the Reservoir. Mr. Sawyer, ex-member of Congress, and the citizens living near, all say, without a dissenting voice, that the hygiene of the country has been greatly improved by the construction of the Reservoir.

The topography of this region is not essentially different from that of Splunge Creek, in Indiana, being wet and swampy, previous to being submerged. Much of the timber is yet standing, although the Reservoir has been filled thirteen years. After falling it soon disappears, and not appreciable influence is in the least traceable to it. All our investigations in Ohio only go to confirm our previous opinions as to what will be the practical effects of these collections of water in the counties of Clay and Gibson, Indiana.

All of which is respectfully submitted.  
Joseph C. Cook, Chairman., A. D. Gall, Secretary.,  
John L. Ford., Samuel Grimes., Matthew Smith.

### Newspaper Articles About The Reservoir

Vandalism of reservoirs and canal banks led to angry citizens who condemned the Governor for not acting to prevent it. Even though the Clay County Birch Creek Reservoir was more often the target, Evansville was concerned that the canal would never be finished. The issue was debated in long meetings which led to resolutions of what they would and would not allow and the creation of laws. Rewards were offered for the capture of the vandals.

10-9-51 **Evansville Journal**  
Canal Reservoir

The Vanderburgh Circuit Court has just closed a two week's session during which an unusual amount of business has been dispatched.

The most prominent case which came up, on account of the interest involved, was the application of sundry citizens of Gibson county, for an injunction to stay the construction of a reservoir which will submerge about eighteen hundred acres

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

of land in that county, and upon which the practical utility of forty miles of the southern portion of the great Wabash and Erie Canal, almost entirely depends. The application was supported by Messrs. Jones, Blythe and Palmer, and opposed on behalf of the Canal Trustees, by Judge Law and Sam'l Junah, Esq. We had the pleasure of listening to the argument of one of the council, Judge Law, and it seems to us that his position, fortified so strongly by law and facts, cannot be shaken.

Instead of such a reservoir being a place where noxious vapors and deadly exhalations are generated, it was conclusively shown by the affidavits of gentlemen occupying distinguished position in scientific research, as well as of those of great practical experience, that it improved the health of the surrounding country— instead of being a nuisance, these reservoirs wherever they have existed are regarded by those living in their neighborhood, as beneficent improvements.

Judge Hovey is to give his decision this week. The people look for it with interest, because upon it will depend the practical utility, as we have said, of the portion of the Canal, forty miles from this place.

11-11-51 **Evansville Journal**  
Judge Hovey's Decision.

We publish in to-day's paper to the exclusion of less important matters, the decision of Judge Hovey in the case of Joshua W. Davis, Geo. W. Depriest, Elisha Embree and others vs The Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal. This was an application of injunction to restrain the defendants from constructing a reservoir for the Wabash and Erie Canal in Gibson county, or, if permitted to be constructed that the defendants be enjoined from finishing the same, until all the trees, shrubs, vegetable matter &c. and the surface of the earth to a reasonable depth shall have been removed from the bed of the reservoir. By Judge Hovey's decision, the injunction is refused. There has been much interest felt in the case, as upon the decision rested, the speedy or probably long delayed completion of the Wabash and Erie Canal. It was not only a matter of interest to us at Evansville, but to the whole country traversed by this great work. We hope the people of Gibson county will not realize any of those evils anticipated by the building of this reservoir. The document allowed to will be read with much interest, and be found in every respect worthy of its author.

11-27-51 **Evansville Journal**  
Still Another Injunction.

We learn from the **Washington** (Daviess county) **Journal** that an injunction has been granted against the further prosecution of the work on the aqueduct designed to lead the Wabash and Erie Canal over the east branch of White River, on the ground that the work will be an impediment to navigation.

{**New Albany Ledger.**

This injunction will not retard the great work, and the enemies of this enterprise, many of whom are enemies only through jealousy of Evansville. The East Branch of White River, where the Canal crosses it, can scarcely be

considered navigable, and it can only be made so at heavy cost. One very small steamer has passed up within a year. That a great public work of such State and National interest as the Wabash and Erie Canal should be stopped to accommodate a "navigation" which does not really exist to the benefit of any person, is a species of injunction which will not be permitted, by the voice of public will or decision of higher courts, to stand. The work will go on, in spite of those conflicting interests and petty local jealousies, which would seek to retard if not entirely stop the enterprise.

6-8-1854 **Evansville Journal**  
More Destruction!

The miserable wretches who here already occasioned so much trouble in Clay county, by their destruction of canal works, are still engaged in destroying, it appears. We make the following extracts from Terre Haute papers of the 5th:

RESERVOIR.—On Saturday night, between 11 and 12 o'clock, the Reservoir regulators visited the scene of their former villainy once more, and ordering a Mr. Mason and wife out of doors from a shanty which they occupied, set it on fire with eleven other similar buildings, the property of James Beard and Adolphus Erisman, and burned the whole village of workmen's shanties to the ground, with tools, barrows, &c., which they contained; the whole loss being about \$600.

**Terre Haute Examiner**

RESERVOIR DEPREDATIONS AGAIN.  
— We learn this morning that a band of the Reservoir Regulators burned all the buildings that the workmen occupied, together with their tools, wheelbarrows, etc. on Saturday night last. Eleven other buildings besides those occupied by the workmen, were burned to the ground. James Beard and Adolphus Erisman are losers to some extent. This destroys, we believe, all the principal places of abode for the laborers on the Reservoir, and renders every effort to repair the canal, dangerous and almost impossible, unless a military guard is stationed there.

What is to be done to check these depredations? Can't Joseph tell the people what to do? Workmen cannot be hired now, at any price, to remain on the Reservoir. These outrages are becoming more alarming, and the desperadoes more daring. Can we stand and look upon these acts with indifference—acts that disgrace the county, and will also be a reproach upon our State, if they are permitted to triumph over justice. [**Terre Haute, Amer.**

7-7-1854 **Evansville Journal**  
Birch Creek Reservoir.

The **Terre Haute Journal** contains an article on the recent lawless cutting away of the Birch Creek Reservoir on the W. & E. Canal, by which a thousand acres of water, ten feet deep, were lost or spread over the neighboring country. The importance of the Reservoir to the Canal, in view of the dry season, cannot be appreciated. It is to be hoped the villains who committed the deed, may be arrested. The **Journal** says:

All businessmen who recollect the want of water last summer and fell on the Eel River summit level will

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

appreciate this calamity. A full supply has been stored up in the Reservoir for the approaching dry season, but by one act of midnight villainy, it is all gone. The breach will no doubt be immediately repaired, but at this late period there is little prospect of rains to fill the Reservoir for use this season.

It is supposed that a number of lawless men must have joined together in perpetrating this outrage. The shortest night of the year, (22nd June,) does not afford sufficient hours of darkness for the performance of so much hard labor by one or two men. A few months before the same bank was cut, but was discovered before a breach was made.

The Trustees have built this Reservoir at a cost of \$30,000 to supply the want of water South, of this place, and to give, to the citizens and business men certain navigation to Evansville. They have paid damages to the owners of the lands taken for the purpose, and settled every claim but one, and that one by no means pressing. Every thing that was reasonable has been done to satisfy those who live near the Reservoir, and it is difficult to conceive what could prompt this act of wanton destruction of a great and valuable public work. The Reservoir is absolutely necessary to the very existence of the Canal South to Evansville, and the Trustees have no choice but to maintain and keep it up.

7-12-1854 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal.

We learn that the Canal is now in good navigable order to Terre Haute, there being plenty of water the whole distance. The packet **Pennsylvania** arrived here Monday morning, under command of **Capt. Sharra**, and left that evening for Terre Haute. The **P. G. O'Riley** will leave this evening at 7 o'clock for the same place. Her accommodations will be found, excellent, and **Capt. W. H. Robinson** a most accommodating gentleman.

The cutting away of the Birch Creek Reservoir has had no effect on the navigation of the Canal, as we had been led to understand it would. The Reservoir has never been used to feed the canal, but has been kept as a reserved pond of water, to be used in case of Croy's Creek, which feeds the canal just below Terre Haute, going dry. Happily that creek has afforded and now affords a sufficient supply of water for the canal. We understand a large force of men were at once put at work to repair the break in the Reservoir, and it is now completed.

The report which has been in circulation, that the present line of packets was to be discontinued, is entirely untrue. A new towpath agent has been employed. All the receipts of these packets will be placed in his hands to purchase stock, keep the packets in repair, &c., &c. Mr. Pendleton P. Price, the resident agent in this city, has his office now at Geo. Foster & Co.'s large warehouse, where he will attend to the receipt and shipment of packages of freight, selling tickets, and attending to the business of the line generally.

6-4-1855 **Evansville Journal**  
CITY OF EVANSVILLE  
MONDAY MORNING---JUNE 4.

More outrages on the Canal—Canal Bank cut away

and Aqueduct Burned by a Mob—Reward for Governor's Head Lynching and threats of Lynching, &c &c.

A short time since we published the fact that a large body of ruffians of Clay and Vigo counties had cut away the bank of the Birch Creek Reservoir, and that they threatened dire vengeance on those who should attempt to repair the breach. The Governor issued a proclamation, which we published, offering rewards for the perpetrators of the outrage. The scoundrels sent a formal notice to the resident Trustee at Terre Haute, that if an attempt were made to repair the Canal, it would be at the risk of the lives of the men sent, and that the canal would be cut away for a long distance in the neighborhood of the Reservoir. Notwithstanding these threats a state boat was sent to the Reservoir last Tuesday, with twenty armed laborers under charge of Mr. Higgens.

They worked all Tuesday without interruption. (We may here say we learned these particulars from **Capt. Grant** of the **Archer** who informed himself fully and carefully as possible of the facts.) On Tuesday night the boat was surrounded by men with blackened faces, who during the night kept up a continual firing of guns about the boat. These ruffians held a meeting about a mile from the boat during Tuesday night, and drew up a statement of their complaints and resolutions of a threatening nature. In the morning a copy of these was found stuck up on the boat, with a warning that the laborers would be allowed seven hours to take away the earth they had replaced in the Reservoir bank, and one hour after that to leave, and that the canal would be cut away and the Birch Creek Aqueduct burned the following night. The laborers, who had been during the whole night expecting an attack, took the seven hours for at once making tracks from the neighborhood instead of undoing their work of the day previous.

Wednesday night the canal bank was cut away on Summit Level, eighteen miles below Terre Haute, and boats on the level coming down, at once made their way back to Terre Haute with much difficulty. The Aqueduct over Birch Creek, near the Reservoir as was that part of the canal cut away, was burned down the same night a guard of the poor deluded scoundrels standing by to prevent interruption during the fire. It was also understood they intended to cut away the old Reservoir, on the opposite side of the canal to the other, and perform other acts of villainy. As an exhibition of their contempt for the Governor and his Proclamation, they stuck up a notice offering a high reward for the Governor's head. It was reported at Terre Haute Friday morning that this mob had destroyed the two locks at the Junction. They left written notice at the doors of persons in their neighborhood who regarded their acts with disapproval, that if they gave any information as to the perpetrators of these cowardly acts, or had anything to say on the subject, they would be at once taken on and lynched. It was reported at Terre Haute, that the owner of a mill in this neighborhood had for some of his language of disapproval, been severely lynched by scourging, and was told that if he interfered any further his mill and house would be burned to the ground.

We understand Gov. Wright was at Terre Haute last week, but returned to Indianapolis without visiting the reservoir neighborhood, being probably afraid to trust himself



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

there. His action now is looked for with a great deal of interest. He has a duty to perform from which there must be no shrinking. Not only must this gang of lawless scoundrels be punished, but the repairs of reservoir, canal &c. must but once be made, and the improvements protected from further injury. He can get thousands of volunteers if necessary, Evansville alone, we have no doubt, would turn out enough men to render the Governor secure of his head in visiting the scene of these outrages.

Nothing but the lowest ignorance and depravity can account for the action of the mob. The Reservoir was in no manner the cause of sickness. It was filled with clear water, and was no more injurious than a natural lake. The Canal is of course a great benefit to that benighted region of country. We trust the ringleaders will be brought to punishment, and that right speedily. Even if the damages to reservoir and canal be promptly repaired, we doubt whether canal navigation at and below Summit Level can be worth much this summer.

The following boats were compelled to return to Terre Haute. (see section on boats)

### 6-4-1855 Evansville Journal

#### A Public Calamity.

But few citizens are prepared to appreciate the great misfortune at the present time upon certain business interests of this city, of the recent outrages upon the works of the Wabash & Erie canal, by a lawless mob of beings. We had but just begun to learn and value the importance of this canal. Indeed, until very lately it has been almost valueless to us as a community. But the last two or three months, a steady stream of produce has been pouring into Evansville through this channel of trade, with a return tide of groceries and other articles required to supply the country from Evansville to Lafayette.—Warehouses and new firms have been started here to accommodate this business, and the Canal had certainly got to be looked upon as a new river of trade and commerce, and at last reliable. Our collector's books exhibit that last month the tolls collected here amounted to \$1069. This month would have witnessed a very heavy increase. There is a large amount of produce now up the Canal awaiting shipment, and quantities of groceries, etc., here to go up.—But everything has been brought to a standstill—the produce cannot be taken to market—country merchants cannot get their stocks—contracts are broken—many boats are laid up and men thrown out of business—great interests affecting seriously whole communities are sacrificed—and all because a few poor depraved and malicious ruffians imagine that a reservoir of pure water in a certain place does not conduce to the health of their neighborhood. And in their malice they have taken the very best plan to make that of real injury to the health of the country, which before was only suspected of being so.

But we have not the space nor patience to speak further on this subject. We agree with our correspondent, that a meeting should be held on the subject of these outrages, and to give the influence of this community toward assisting the Governor, physically if necessary, in any prompt and effectual action he may take in the premises.

6-8-1855 Evansville Journal

CITY OF EVANSVILLE.

FRIDAY MORNING---JUNE 8

The Canal Meeting.

Last Wednesday evening a very large meeting of the citizens of Evansville was held at Apollo Hall, to take into consideration the recent outrages of the mob in Clay county, in breaking the reservoir and canal, burning the aqueduct, &c. Apollo Hall was crowded, and but one feeling seemed to pervade the mass, that of strong indignation against the course of those men, who taking the law into their own hands, and to remedy mere imaginary evils, have for a time by their lawless acts rendered almost useless that portion of the Wabash and Erie Canal below Terre Haute, and thus struck a heavy blow at the best interests of this and other communities, and thrown out of employment a large, body of worthy men. What wonder that we particularly feel indignant, when a body of not two hundred men, thus sacrifice thousands of dollars of business, and at a very important time of trade and commerce too, throw hundreds of better men than themselves out of employment, and destroy the usefulness of a great public work, the full benefits of which we were but just beginning to realize! Still less grows the wonder when it is recollected how long and grievous a delay we experienced in getting this canal into practical operation. But warmly as every man at the meeting seemed to feel, the whole proceedings were marked with dignity, but with a firm determination to see the law prevail, and the outrageous proceedings of the Clay county mob stopped at any sacrifice, and the criminals brought to punishment. Messrs. Rowley, (Canal Collector) Ingle and Carpenter, made strong speeches, the latter gentlemen dwelling particularly upon the effect abroad of the honor and credit of the State, if these riotous proceedings were not at once and promptly quelled. We should much have liked to give an abstract of these proceedings, but our space is limited. It is enough to say, that they made those present feel this is not merely a subject in which this community, and communities along the Canal have a warm interest, but the whole State is directly implicated so far as the preservation of its honor and credit is concerned.

We regret with others, the course of Mr. Coffin, of Parke county. He made a speech against the resolutions offered, and from the very apparent motive alone, of injuring the Trustees of the Canal in public opinion here. This community has already spoken its free and candid opinions on those in authority, so far as this canal is concerned, when our people felt aggrieved by their dilatory action in former times. But our citizens have no disposition now to listen to the repetition of either individual or general grievances, so far as the trustees are concerned. There was no such allusion made in the resolution either to the bondholders or trustees, in laudation of them; as to justify Mr. Coffin's exceedingly coarse charge of falsehood on the part of a certain statement of the resolutions. And at all events, the consideration of their action, good or bad, had nothing to do with the object of the meeting. We desire to treat a stranger with courtesy, especially a gentleman who has done good and laborious service in our State Legislature, yet we beg leave to say, that his remarks at this meeting, though well spoken, had much better have been omitted, both for the credit of the speakers, and the harmony

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of feeling which pervaded the meeting. They were out of place, ill-timed, and the suggestions of motives and prejudices with which the meeting had nothing to do. No better evidence of this need be given, than the fact that the resolutions were passed without a single dissenting vote.

Our community how impatiently await the action of Gov. Wright. We are pledged to lend him any aid he may demand, to carry out strong and prompt action on his part as the executive officer of the State, in this affair. He has but got to make his desires known. We trust there will be no delay on his part. We assure him there will be none on the part of our citizens when the proper time comes.

### 6-8-1855 Evansville Journal Canal Meeting

At a called meeting of the citizens of Evansville, held at Apollo Hall Wednesday evening, June 6th, Mayor John S. Hopkins was called to the Chair, and A. H. Sanders and Rob't Robertson appointed Secretaries.

Mayor Hopkins, on taking the chair, briefly stated the object of the meeting was to take late consideration the recent outrages of a band of lawless men of Clay county, in cutting away the Birch Creek Reservoir and Canal adjoining, burning an aqueduct, &c. to the great injury of the business of the Canal and the interests of different communities, more especially perhaps of this. There were others present being posted than himself in the details of these outrages upon law and order.

We deem it not improper, however, on the occasion to refer to a few. First, we notice its effect upon the prosperity of our city. Evansville has done much to procure the construction of this canal. She was not sparing of labor nor money in order to obtain a donation of land by Congress, by which the canal between this and Terre Haute was in part constructed; she was first to propose the meeting at Terre Haute between the citizens more directly interested and the agent of the Bondholders of Indiana, at which the basis of the arrangement was made, and which was finally carried out by our Legislature, by which the Bondholders undertook its construction.

We need say nothing of the injury, which Evansville would sustain if the Canal is destroyed. The warehouses built with reference to it, would be useless, lots purchased on account of it, slak (sic) to nominal value—this commerce and trade which she already began largely to enjoy by means of it, will cease and be diverted to other channels.—But the consequences to the honor and prosperity of the State are what most palefully impress us. It is known that the bondholders of Indiana, by contract with her, agreed to complete that part of the Canal, which at the time of the contract was unfinished, and then to take it in payment of one half of her debt. They have complied with their agreement—they have completed the Canal—they have released to the State one-half of their debt; but if the authorities of Indiana will not protect them in the enjoyment of it, they will have a valid claim upon her for the amount which they have paid for it, which, probably at this time, reaches seven millions of dollars, and thus a heavy debt is at once created, which our citizens will be compelled to pay by means of taxation. But this is not all the evil we

shall sustain by our violation of State faith; no one will trust us hereafter, who will loan to citizens of our State, on State, county, city or railroad bonds, after it is known that our government dare not enforce its own laws, and that here mobs rule when they please!

It is melancholy to think, that this great work, the "Wabash and Erie Canal," of which we are so justly proud—it being greater in extent than any Internal Improvement of the kind in United States, perhaps in the world; a work that has already greatly increased our property and added to our wealth, and thereby lessening the burden of our taxes—may be rendered comparatively useless. Uniting as it does the Northern Lakes with the waters of the Mississippi, it will create an internal commerce which will not be equaled by any in this continent. It will ever be a powerful means to develop the resources of Indiana. Looking at the future, we scarcely can calculate the golden showers it will scatter in our midst. We trust then it will never be said of this magnificent work, it was destroyed by a few irresponsible desperadoes, which the Government of Indiana dared not, or was unable to put down.

Therefore resolved, That His Excellency, Gov. Jos. A. Wright, be requested immediately to take measures to put down this mob—using every means that may be expedient, force if necessary; and we hereby pledge ourselves, if need be, with "our lives and fortunes."

Resolved, That the citizens of Indiana, especially those on the line of the Canal, be requested to hold meetings and express their opinion upon this subject.

Resolved, That a Delegation of—citizens be appointed to wait upon His Excellency, Gov. Wright, and present him a copy of these proceedings, and request him to carry out our wishes as expressed in our resolutions, and further to confer with him on the subject as their wisdom may suggest.

Resolved, That a copy of these proceedings be published in each of the newspapers of this city.

Nathan Rowley, Esq., being called upon, stated he had visited Terre Haute for the purpose of ascertaining the extent of injuries committed by the mob & C. He had been assured by Mr. Dowling, Trustee, that all the repairs might be made in two weeks if the laborers could be protected. He spoke of the immense importance this canal was just getting to be to Evansville, and gave a tabular statement of the amount of freight received and shipped by canal during the month of May. The imports were over \$30,000 in value and the exports over \$100,000. The tolls collected at Evansville for the month amounted to \$1069. He approved of the resolution and thought instant action should be taken by the Governor in view of the course of these rioters. Only 180 men had thus stopped the business of the whole canal, and greatly to the injury of this community. We could not and would not attend it as a community.

John Engle, Esq., responded to a call in a very able speech, in which he reviewed the actions of the Clay county mob, the plat history of Indiana as a law-abiding community, and the effects of this mob spirit if allowed to proceed unchecked, and especially of its effects upon the honor and standing of this State abroad. He urged the necessity of strong

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action upon the part of the Governor, and declared the willingness of the community to supply any deficiency of nerve on his part, and volunteer money and men if necessary.

Dr. Hatchett moved that this meeting resolve itself into a company, and report itself to the Governor as ready and willing to defend the Canal against all such outrageous proceedings as those of which we are now complaining.

Mr. Sanders offered as a substitute the following resolution, if accepted, to be placed among the regular resolutions, as offered by Judge Battell:

Resolved. That this meeting pledge the Governor, on behalf of the city of Evansville, a volunteer force of armed men, as many as may be desired by him, to assist his Excellency in restoring order in Clay county—for arresting and bringing to punishment these offenders against the laws of the State, against all order, and against the interests of various classes and communities, and the honor of Indiana—and for protecting any laborers who may be sent to repair the damages inflicted upon the works of the Canal, by a lawless mob or men.

This resolution was accepted by Dr. H. and by the meeting.

Mr. Coffin, of Parke county, opposed that part of the resolutions, which said the bond holders had complied with their part of the contract, and the trustees had done their duty. It was false, and he could prove it. He bitterly complained of the trustees. He thought that a committee had better be appointed to visit the Reservoir, and inquire into the real complaints of the people there, than to send to the Governor—that the bond holders and trustees were at the foundation of all the trouble.

Mr. J. S. Gavitt replied to one portion of Mr. C.'s remarks which was answered in turn by Mr. C.

Mr. Willard Carpenter addressed the meeting, and made a forcible speech in review of the building of the canal, showing donation of land, &c., &c., and warmly recommended immediate action to stop the riotous proceedings on the part of certain citizens of Clay county.

Question being called upon the resolutions, they were put to vote and unanimously adopted.

Mr. J. W. Hughes moved that a committee of two be appointed in compliance with the resolution appointing delegates to visit the Governor, which motion was carried.

The Chairman appointed Hon. C. I. Battell and Hon. John Law said committee.

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

JOHN S. HOPKINS, Chairman.

A. H. SANDERS, ROB'T ROBERTSON, Secretaries.

### 9-24-1857 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal Cut at the Reservoir.

From Mr. Igleheart, who returned from Worthington yesterday, we learn that the canal at Eel river has again been cut by a crowd of Clay county rascals, and the canal is entirely dry above Newberry. Mr. Igleheart states that the water has rushed out a deep gully ten or fifteen feet below the bottom of the canal and that it will take at least two weeks to repair it. It is supposed that the same parties who were guilty of the outrages at the reservoir in 1855, have made the present break.

The news created considerable excitement upon the streets yesterday. Those who remember the repeated outrages of this character, committed by the "Clay County Boys" in the summer of '55, know the indignation they excited. The canal will be repaired as soon as possible, but its safety cannot be insured for a day while the perpetrators of these high handed outrages are still at large.

### 11-14-1859 **Evansville Journal**

The Canal Managers have issued handbills offering \$100 reward for the detection of any one in cutting the banks of the canal. Several instances have come under their observation, in which the water has been let out of the canal, and they think the perpetrators of these outrages are not fully aware of the penalty that attaches to the commission of this crime. We publish below the statute on this point:

SEC. 74. Every person who shall willfully and maliciously injure or destroy any lock, culvert, or embankment of said canal, or shall willfully or maliciously make any aperture or breach in any embankment of said canal, with intent to injure or destroy the same, shall, on conviction, be punished by imprisonment in the State prison, at hard labor, not more than five years, or by fine not exceeding five hundred dollars, and imprisonment in the county jail not more than two years; and shall be moreover liable to said Trustees for the damages occasioned thereby, which damages, when recovered, shall be considered as a part of the revenues of said canal, and applied accordingly. And the Trustees for the time being may prosecute and sue accordingly, and no plea or other technical objection, in her abatement, shall be taken or judiciously allowed, so as to defeat such prosecution or action, or other proceeding, on the ground of any misnomer, mis-description of the premises or parties, or want of interest in the prosecutor or plaintiff, as the case may be.

### 2-17-1869 **Evansville Journal**

A STRIKE FOR BETTER HEALTH—CUTTING THE RESERVOIR—THE RESULT.

For several years past there has been much sickness in the vicinity of the canal reservoir, near Fort (sic) Gibson, which has been very generally attributed to the existence of that large body of water, covering hundreds of acres, including much timbered land, and being in some places fully fifteen feet deep. The conviction became so strong that one night last week, the people of that whole vicinity congregated to abate the nuisance. They came armed with picks, mattocks, and shovels, and to work they went with a will. They dug a sluice in the bank fifty feet wide, not for a moment apprehending any danger. The country around is lower than the banks of the reservoir, and when they cut through the bank the vast field of water began to rush out.

The stream was small and harmless at first, but as the opening widened, an angry flood began to pour through like a mighty crevasse, and fences and bridges, and stock were carried away before the wild rush of waters. One bridge, 144 feet long, was swept away, besides other smaller ones. Hundreds of rails were borne down upon the resistless current; and one German lost fifty head of sheep. The people were filled with consternation, and would gladly have closed the

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breach, for though many damned the wild, rushing waters, all the force they could muster could not, for a moment, check its impetuosity. The damage is almost incalculable, and farms that were once fertile and prolific, are now a swamp, and the

miasma arising from the ground so long submerged is likely to produce tenfold more sickness than the reservoir ever did. Men should never act rashly or unadvisedly.

## SOUTHERN INDIANA CANAL CO.

4-13-1859 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal Project.

We are persuaded, from what we have learned since our article of yesterday, that the apparent failure of the subscription for the canal below Main street was caused by some misapprehension of the motives and feelings of the merchants in that section of the city, and a little impatient zeal on the part of those who had the matter in charge. There will be, inevitably, differences of opinion in regard to the relative direct benefits which different parties—with equal stakes in the city—will derive from contributions made to preserve the canal; all will not be benefited equally in proportion to the property held and the amount of business done. If it were so, it would be easy to make the assessment. It is a matter in which each one must be allowed to be his own judge, to a great extent, and his decision, if he be a tolerable fair and liberal man, ought to be accepted as about right. At any rate, no one should quarrel with a contributor for his decision in a matter where he had undisputed right to exercise his own discretion unquestioned.

Property, as well as persons, owes duties to the community whose members have a right to demand a fulfillment of its obligations; but the public are often unreasonable in its expectations from rich men, and forget that from the inevitable effects of getting wealth is to create an increasing love for its increased stores, that it is harder to give ten dollars when a man has half a million than it was for him to yield it when he had but \$10,000. In a public contribution, therefore, we must not expect men to give in proportion to their wealth. Let every man measure his own ability and judge of the profits of the investment to himself; when he is by right the sole judge no one ought to be allowed to grumble at his decisions.

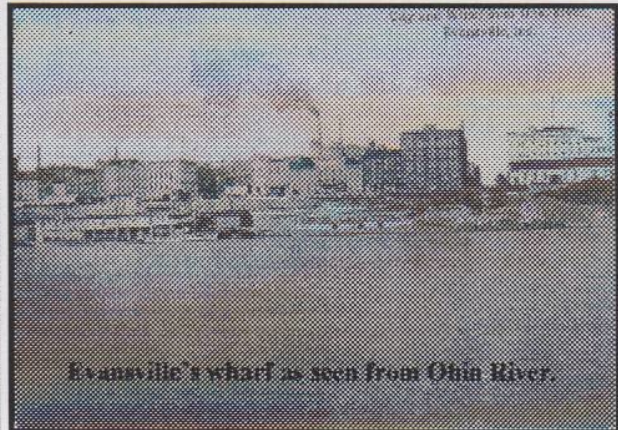
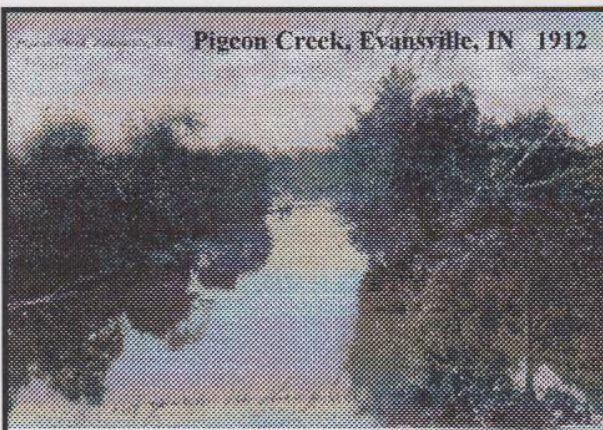
We are assured that the merchants and citizens below Main street are ready to do their part, and if the proper

spirit be maintained that ought to actuate citizens engaged in an enterprise for the lasting good of the whole city, we have no doubt the full amount, and more than is needed, can be raised. There is not a businessman in the city who would not feel it to be a subject of personal mortifications—a matter for which he would blush—if the canal project were to fail.

The subscription will be resumed, we hope, in a spirit that will bring all parties into a generous and cordial support of the enterprise. We wish the merchants and citizens below Main street would select their own canvasser and start the subscription in their own way, and show the uptown gentleman they are not behind them in public spirit and enterprise. No personal or local feeling should be allowed to intrude itself into the matter. Where the character and interest of the city are so deeply concerned, there should be perfect harmony and unison of feeling and purpose. Don't levy any assessments, but take every man's free will offering as the measure of his ability and the correct estimate of his obligations to the public.

4-14-1859 **Evansville Journal**  
[Communicated. The Canal.

Mr. Carlile: From the articles in your paper relating to the canal, persons at a distance might be led to believe there was a disposition on the part of a large portion of our citizens to let the canal "slide."—This, I can assure you, is not the case, and with the exception of a few—very few—wealthy citizens, here shows a fair, if not a liberal, spirit both above and below Main street. There has never been any disposition below Main street not to contribute fairly, but there has been a general inclination to point to certain "wealthy citizens" to take the lead in the subscription, and perhaps, in some degree to graduate contributions by that of more wealthy neighbors, yet even this has by no means been universal, although some have made conditional subscriptions to be reduced by the maximum



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of individuals named. On the whole the subscription below Main street is a fair one, and in many cases very liberal, as the list, when published, will show.

In reference to the insinuation in your paper, yesterday, regarding the canvassers, it is proper to say that they received their appointment from the Managers, and have been guided by their instructions. The first canvassers appointed below Main street found it inconvenient to attend to the duty, and the canvass has been made by those who were instituted for them; and the subscriptions obtained are, in a great measure, satisfactory.

Our word in regard to the right and duty of rich men to contribute whatever they please, or, as you express it, "No one should quarrel with a contributor for his decision in a matter when he has undisputed right to exercise his own discretion unquestioned."—This is true, but, at the same time, if his subscription was so disproportioned that, in the judgment of a discrete canvasser, it would injure the subscription list ten times the amount subscribed, he would be acting judiciously, as a canvasser, to decline the subscription altogether. This course would certainly be a wise one, and would not interfere with the vested rights of any citizens.

In regard to myself, I have no disposition to "quarrel" with any one and have the kindest feelings towards those that do not subscribe, as well as to those who subscribe liberally.  
ONE THAT CANVASSED.

### 4-20-1859 **Evansville Journal**

**CANAL MATTER**—The condition of the canal at this time is a subject that we feel cannot be too frequently and earnestly urged upon the attention of the citizens of Evansville. The object we have to view in presenting the facts of its condition and importuning their considerations, is the accomplishment of the means whereby the present managers of the work may be enabled to put it in needful repair and preserve it in navigable condition, without which it is worse than needless to the county. We have been informed by one of the Board of Managers that during the past few days the members of the Board have traversed the entire length of the Southern division, and spent nearly a week in examining its condition and ordering repairs. Although several breaks occurred last week so as to greatly impair and partially suspend navigation, yet they find the condition of the canal much better than the anticipated, and with the proper exertion and aid of those interested in keeping up the work, this object can be speedily and effectively accomplished. About forty men have been put to work upon the breaks, and the repairing has progressed as rapidly that the water is beginning to come in today. The aqueduct at White river, and the culverts, bridges, &c. along the line are in good condition and there is no serious impediment to putting and keeping the canal in good order, provided the managers are backed by the necessary aid of subscribers. The managers, in proof of their zeal to the discharge of their duties, have pledged themselves to pay the workmen already employed out of their own pockets, rather than have the enterprise fail or be further damaged by neglecting to repair the breaks at this juncture. About \$5,000 more is required to be subscribed by the citizens of Evansville to make up the amount allotted as their portion. The Managers

found the people along the upper line of the canal enthusiastic in the cause and they pledge themselves to raise fifteen thousand dollars on subscription, provided the citizens of Evansville show their enterprise and sincerity by raising an equal amount. Several meetings were held in the little towns along the canal which the managers visited, and liberal sums were subscribed at once.

The cut through Pigeon Summit requires to be docked, a work which managers have resolved to do, and will be ready to commence operations early in May. They, however, wish to get out the timbers for the docking and have them boated on the spot before that time, and they wish to have the amount yet lacking on subscription by the citizens of Evansville, made up before they commence getting out the timber for this work, so as to know whether they can go on with it or not, and the case as it now stands is just this; if the requisite amount is made up here by the first of May, at farthest, they will proceed with the work, if not, the Managers will resign and leave it to somebody else, to try if they can get along with less means. Will the people come up liberally and back the managers they have chosen to superintend the canal, or let the work relapse, and fall by sheer neglect, and indecision after the undertaking is so fairly begun and with such prospects to success? We shall see.

### 4-20-1859 **Evansville Journal**

The Condition of the Canal.

Mr. Editor: We are informed that many of our citizens are delaying to subscribe to the Canal fund, or are placing their names to sums far less than their own interest demands, or their ability to contribute makes it their duty to give. These delinquencies have been encouraged—we are inclined to think—by a belief that the Managers having assumed the task of putting the Canal in order, will not allow the work to fail, but will push it through, by some means, without the aid of those who are disposed to shrink from a just share in the cost of an important public work. It is true the Managers have assumed, for the present, the charge of the Canal, and have gone to work upon means provided by themselves, to make such repairs as are most imperatively demanded to preserve the work from further serious injury or total destruction.

They have set an efficient force to work on the breaks, and some of the worst leaks which threaten to become dangerous breaks; and they will continue their charge till the first of May, and then, if there be as much as \$30,000 subscribed, they will go on; and from personal examination of the line just made, they feel warranted in giving a pledge to their fellow-citizens, that they will place the canal in a far better condition than it ever has been. But if there should not be an amount equal to about \$30,000 secured to the fund, it is their determination to resign their trust, and let those who have subscribed have an opportunity to select other men to fill their places, and see if they can sustain the work with a less amount of funds.

The present Board of Managers think it their duty to be explicit and frank, in a matter so deeply affecting the interests of the whole city. They are unwilling to incur the responsibilities, the labor, care and expenses of attempting to

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

repair the work without a guarantee of sufficient means to make the work complete and secure its success. The Managers have already had their private notes discounted at the bank, to raise the means to pay the work they have already employed in the repairs of the present breaches.

The managers have just returned from an inspection of the line between here and Newberry, and they are pleased to report that the main work on the line is in better condition than they expected to find it. The work exhibits evidence of neglect and mismanagement; the repairs made upon it have been very partial and shabby, as if they were designed only to keep up navigation temporarily. They find the banks perforated by hundreds of muskrat and crawfish holes, that have become dangerous and injurious leaks, which a very little care and a very slight expense, in due season, would have prevented or remedied. They are persuaded that the repair and maintenance of the canal will come within the estimates that have been submitted to the public.

In their recent visit along the line, they have found everywhere a deep interest felt in the preservation of the work, and a liberal disposition to contribute the means to sustain it. The Managers are confident that if the city of Evansville will make up her subscription to \$15,000, the citizens upon the canal will make a subscription equal to it. The success of their endeavors to serve a public work, important above all other to the prosperity of the city, depends upon the liberality and public spirit of her active business men—the Managers have too much confidence in that reliance to believe it will fail them till the subscription books shall demonstrate the fact.

Five thousand dollars more than has yet been subscribed is required from the city.—This small sum ought and can be raised in a day by a proper effort on the part of the active business men.

### THE BOARD OF CANAL MANAGERS.

We learn that Mr. Brett, of Washington in consequence of a suit pending between him and the Trustees of the bondholders, declined to act as a Manager, though he is taking an active and zealous interest in the present project for preserving the Canal.—The Board have associated with them in his place Mr. Daniel A. Bynam, of Newberry, a gentleman well qualified by his business experience for the duties, and his location on the line near one of the main feeders, and where the connection is to be made with the company controlling the other portion of the Canal, made is peculiarly desirable to enlist his services.

The Managers have taken hold of the work with spirit and in the right way, with a determination to carry it through, if sustained by their fellow citizens. They have secured plans and estimates for all the important repairs, including a plan for docking the Pigeon Summit level, which will effectually secure it from future washings; and they assure us that they can put the canal in better order than it has ever been, in four weeks after they are satisfied that the means will be secured to them.

### 5-17-1859 **Evansville Journal**

#### The Canal Appropriation.

By reference to the minutes of the council meeting held last night, which will be seen in our column today it will

be seen that the appropriation of a thousand dollars to the Southern Canal Company was not agreed to. This refusal on the part of the Council arose from no hostility to the canal. There was not a member of the board present last night who is not a devoted friend of this important work, nor do we think any of the absentees are hostile to it. But there was a settled conviction on the minds of the Councilmen that the obligations required to be met by the city during the current year are about as great as the condition of the city treasury could stand. It is undeniable that at the close of the year there will be outstanding and unpaid several thousand dollars in city orders which there will be no funds to redeem. This does not speak well for the future credit of this city especially if debts are permitted to accumulate which might be avoided. We think the Council has wisely determined to cut off every unnecessary source of expense, and it will, even with the exercise of the most rigid economy, be quite an accomplishment if the present Council can give way to their successors leaving the city in no worse condition financially, than they found it.

We understand the Canal Company now proposes to raise the money asked of the city by an advancement of a tax for water rent. We think this method preferable to a direct appropriation, as whatever is paid will be for a specific object and becomes a necessary expense of the city.

### 8-1-1859 **Evansville Journal**

#### THE CANAL.

The estimates for the work done on the Canal for the past sixty days will be prepared this week. No effort has been spared to make the collections along the line of the canal and in most instances the managers have been successful. Messrs. Cook and Lawrence have been untiring in their efforts for the success of the canal and great credit is due them, but there are only two or three days left to make up the amount necessary to liquidate the indebtedness already incurred and to pay off the workmen on the canal. The men expect their money at the time it has been promised them, and we are assured that the managers say they must be paid to secure their services in completing the work.

Over a hundred men have been employed on the canal during the past two weeks between this city and Newberry, and the present work about thirty more hands will be added to the number. Every refusal or neglect on the part of the subscribers to pay their assessment is equivalent to saying that this great work, which is of vital interest to our city, shall not progress any further. It will have to be stopped unless the abstracts and estimates are paid without any delay. We hope the subscribers will remember their duty, and remembering perform it.

### 12-9-1859 **Evansville Journal**

The Board of Managers of the Southern Canal Co., held a meeting at their office yesterday, to consult about their management during the winter. An order was passed to draw the water from the Canal between Port Gibson and Newbury, from the 1st of January, if the navigation should then be obstructed by ice, and remain off until the first of March next, as it was feared that the weight of ice that would accumulate on the aqueducts across White river and Patoka, would

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

endanger them, and that the banks would be better preserved by draining the water off the canal.

The working force will be immediately reduced to two repair boats, and when the water is drawn from the canal the entire force will be discharged, except a few watchmen, so that the expenses will be reduced to a mere nominal sum.

The financial condition of the company is not very good, but the revenues of the last 30 days has much more than paid the expenses, and things are looking brighter.

Papers along the canal will please give notice.—**Enquirer** of Wednesday.

9-8-1860 **Evansville Journal**

Canal Meeting.

Evansville, Sept 5th 1860.

Pursuant to a notice, a meeting of the stockholders of the Southern Canal Company, was held at the Court House, as above when on motion of M. W. Foster, Esq., Mr. R Baldwin of Francisco was called to the Chair and W. M. Atkinson chosen Secretary.

George Foster, Esq. having been appointed by the Managers to make an examination of the Canal, made the following report.

To the Stockholders of the Southern Canal Company.

At a meeting of the Board of managers held at the Canal office in this city, Aug. 15th, 1860, it was ordered that a meeting of the Stockholders of the Southern Canal Company be called for Sept. 5th inst., for the purpose of obtaining an expression of their wishes regarding the future management of the Canal, and to enable them to form a better opinion of the condition of the work, the undersigned was appointed to make a personal examination of the Canal from Evansville to Newberry, in company with the Superintendent, Mr. T. D. Smith, and report at that meeting an estimate of the cost of the work necessary to put the canal in navigable order.

Having performed that service I would respectfully beg leave to submit the following:

That on the 23d of August we commenced an examination. We found a full supply of water from Evansville to Port Gibson, a distance of 31 miles, at which place the Canal is supplied with water by the Pigeon Reservoir. To this point we found the banks generally good and comparatively free from breaks. The locks and the aqueduct on Big Creek will need repairing. A waste weir in needs fixing on the second level below the feeder, and some work must be done at the Reservoir. The Bridges are generally in good order from present uses except the two nearest the city. Beyond Port Gibson to Maysville there is no water.

The Canal was greatly damaged by the storm in June, in the neighborhood of Francisco, and here we find frequent breaches from the ditches about the summit, and much earth washed in. The Patoka aqueduct is very dangerous. It may be repaired to stand sometime at the estimates we make, but we regard it as uncertain, and about the worst place on the line. We would not recommend such expenditure here as it cannot be done to our advantage, the entire structure will have to be rebuilt shortly. We had some banks at Hosmer to be repaired, and the Patoka summit will need some clearing. The bluffs above Petersburg have slid

into the canal in some places, and have reduced the size so much that a sufficiency of water will not pass to supply the Canal below. These places will have to be removed. The aqueduct at White river will need some repairs, and when completed will be comparatively secure. The superintendent has expended on this structure, during early summer, about \$1,500, which had done it much good. A break occurred at the culvert above Maysville, which will have to be repaired. Beyond this place the Canal is in comparatively good order, with the exception of a few bars, which can be removed at a small expense. We had the dam at Newberry looking well, the abutments but little worse than for sometime past. The bridges from Port Gibson to Hosmer are in passable order, but beyond, with one or two exceptions, they are dangerous in making estimates for necessary work we do include bridges; as long as they stand they must do. It will be entirely beyond the means of the company to rebuild them The locks are in bad order, but we think—as our estimate—they will last a year or so longer. The estimate, for the work necessary to put the Canal to navigable order include, only those most pressing. Other work is needed, which can be done by the boat force, at a small expense, after navigation is resumed, and which we estimate can be more than paid for from tolls and other resources of the Canal.

Respectfully, Geo. Foster.

Estimate of cost of work required to put the Canal in navigable order from Evansville to Newberry, a distance of 95 miles.

9-15-1860 **Evansville Journal**

WORKING ON THE CANAL.

—It is with pleasure that we announce that the Board of Managers of the Southern portion of the Canal commenced repairing it between here and Evansville last Monday. The Canal being unnavigable for the past few weeks has set the people to thinking, and we think, has convinced everybody that it is impossible to get along without it. We know of one farmer who paid 25 cents a bushel for having wheat hauled to market, all because the Canal was not navigable. Now, it is very evident that no farmer can afford to pay such prices to get their wheat into market.

The citizens along the line of the Canal cannot do without it, if it be possible to keep it up. It is a matter of vital importance to the citizens in every county along the Canal, and we now hope such arrangements may be made as will keep it in good order from this time on. We publish in another column of this morning's paper, the proceeding of the Board of Managers at Evansville on the 5th inst.—**Peters. Rep.**

9-26-1860 **Evansville Journal**

GOOD CANAL NEWS.

—We are informed by the President of the Board of Canal Managers that the Canal from Port Gibson to Newbury is now filling with water. The aqueducts across White River and Patoka Creek have been repaired, and water was let in last Saturday. Much work still remains to be done in raising and widening the banks that were damaged by the heavy rains that fell last May and June. But the last of this week boats can pass from this place to Newbury and Worthington.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

On the first of next month the Superintendent will render his abstract for work done the sixty days previously, and the Managers are looking to the subscribers and others interested to furnish the case to pay off with.

Mr. Merrill, the Collector, will this week call once more upon those who have not paid up the assessments, and all who wish to save cost will not put him off with excuses or promises, and thus annoy and embarrass the Managers, who are spending their time gratuitously for the benefit of us all.

6-19-1861 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal.

To satisfy the anxious and refute the many false impressions entertained by stockholders and others as to the management and disposal of the work and revenue, we propose to make a full and reliable statement of the management of the funds, the intentions of the managers, and the final disposal of the Canal. It is supposed, or at least hinted at by many, that the President of the Board Of Management received a large salary for the laborious duties he has heretofore performed, and is even now "growing fat" on the life-blood of this nearly defunct institution. But we can positively assert that not one dime has ever been paid the present incumbent for services rendered. On the contrary, he has donated cash freely and liberally, besides employing much of his time, and submitting to many losses for the purpose of advancing the interests of the Canal, without ever asking or expecting any compensation.

In October last, the indebtedness of the company was over two thousand dollars, which was created by an act of the stockholders; but by close management, tolls, water-rents, and stocks have been collected, sufficient to reduce the indebtedness to about three hundred dollars, beside paying current expenses and keeping the canal in repair.

Some are disposed to consider it unjust to collect water rent and the last installment. How is this? It cannot be that stockholders desire to repudiate their just debts. The Board of Managers acted in the capacity of agents, simply executing the plans of the stockholders.

As to the other members of the board, they have all served gratuitously. But because certain individuals did not spend their whole time and sink their private fortunes in endeavoring to sustain this work, there are those who paid the least, but the most directly interested, that have ever been, and yet are, foremost to cry "wolf." But let us look at the facts.

The breakage occurred just as the canal was in a navigable condition, thereby greatly reducing the revenue from tolls, and compelling the managers to hold the stockholders responsible for the full amount of their subscription. Thus all available funds are employed to liquidate the old debt, so that when the canal was cut and the revenue diminished to a mere trifle, and, it not being in their power to involve the stockholders above the amount of stock due, the Board knew but one alternative, viz; The abandonment of the work. The work has been abandoned, and the members of the Board will offer their resignations as soon as the balance of the indebtedness can be discharged. A responsible party is now negotiating for that portion of the canal between Evansville and Port Gibson. The party proposed to render the canal navigable and, aided by the revenue, keep it in repair. Those using water from the canal, irrespective of person or arrangements with the present Board, will be required to pay their rent promptly, so that the canal can be continually supplied with water.

We doubt not all those interested, and knowing their wants, will at once come forward to aid and assist in supplying them.



*River Front, Evansville, Ind.*

OHIO RIVER AT EVANSVILLE

Post Card Dated 1908

From the post card collection of Carolyn Schmidt



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

# WABASH & ERIE SUITS

5-5-1877 **Evansville Journal**

THE WABASH AND ERIE CANAL.

Col. R. N. Hudson, of Terre Haute, a very prominent journalist and politician is in the city at the residence of his brother-in-law, M. Henning, Esq. Col. Hudson has purchased the bed of the old Wabash and Erie Canal lying within the corporation limits of Evansville, and is here for the purpose of instituting legal proceedings to recover certain streets, lots, etc., held by other parties, and of which he claims to have become the rightful owner by reason of his purchase of the canal bed.

5-5-1877 **Evansville Journal**

A RAGING CANAL MUDDLE! \$300,000 OF EVANSVILLE PROPERTY CONCERNED IN COL. R. N. HUDSON'S WABASH AND ERIE CANAL CLAIM'

History of the Muddle as Far as Possible.

The proceedings which Col. R. N. Hudson of Terre Haute, is about the institute to recover the old bed of the Wabash and Erie Canal in the corporate limits of this city, if not stopped by a compromise, promise to entail considerable and vexatious litigation upon the present holders of the property in question, many of whom obtained it by purchase and through various other means which will render the settling of the muddle a tortuous and tedious occupation. The County of Vanderburgh is concerned in the matter to the extent of the Court House block on the corner of Fifth and Vine Streets, which will be greatly mutilated if Col. Hudson should recover his claim.

The property claimed by Col. Hudson was sold under a decree of the United States Circuit Court for the district of Indiana, at Indianapolis, some two or three months ago. The property was advertised and there were competitive bids although the sale attracted no attention. The bed in Evansville was purchased by D. W. Minshall (Marshall?) of Terre Haute, and was afterwards conveyed by him to Col. Hudson in the course of trade and exchange for certain other portions of canal line, which were owned by Col. Hudson. In the matter of these proceedings the purchaser's title appears to be founded upon security, but the question of the title of the property and its abandonment will probably end in the establishment of a very important and troublesome suit—one as important and extensive to Evansville as Mrs. Gaines' suits are to New Orleans. No proceedings have yet been entered, but Col Hudson has retained Messrs. Buchanan, Gooding & Buchanan, of this city, as his attorneys, and unless a compromise is effected they will doubtless move upon the opposition with all the panoply of legal warfare.

The canal bed in the city begins at Garvin and Canal Street, where it enters the corporation line; and runs thence down Canal or Boulevard Street to Fifth; thence down Fifth to the corner of Sycamore; thence diagonally across two blocks occupied by Barenfanger & Lennert's manufactory and Caden's stone yard, and the Court House site to Fourth Street;

down Fourth Street to Indiana Street, and thence down Indiana Street to the old basin at the intersection of Indiana Street and Seventh Avenue. This is a distance of a little more than two miles. The bed averages fifty feet in width, though in some places it is 150 feet wide. That portion from Garvin Street to Sycamore, is in the street, while from Sycamore Street to Seventh Avenue much of the bed is infringed upon by blocks. Where the line crosses the block occupied by Caden and others the width of the bed is 150 feet, which cuts the block diagonally across. It will take off the entire southerly third of the Court House block, and thence for nine blocks below the squares infringe some forty-five feet upon the bed as claimed by Col. Hudson.

The value of the property is enormous, and a rough estimate of the value of the blocks through which the bed runs was made yesterday at between \$300,000 and \$400,000. This is not all claimed, however, and the maximum value of Col. Hudson's claim is from \$75,000 to \$100,000. This is not a great estimate, since the value of the two blocks which are most heavily damaged by claim is \$50,000 each.

The facts in the canal case are, or should be, familiar to our readers. It has been often discussed, and pretty thoroughly once, in the case of Garvin vs. the City, when the complications were taken into court, and passed upon by Judge Parrett. But a brief statement will suffice: that when the Wabash & Erie Canal Company suspended its operations the canal became a nuisance, and was so declared by order of Council, which directed that the bed be filled up. The adjoining property holders filled up and gobbled the property according to the statutes, provided in case of the abandonment of the bed by the Trustees of the canal. The question now arises, did the Trustees abandon the bed, and whether the title of the property has been acquired by the property owners by reason of the assumption or whether it remains vested in the State.

When the County of Vanderburgh purchased the site for the Court House, Judge Asa Iglehart and the late Major Blythe Hynes were employed to examine the title of the property as conveyed by the then owners. A short time before that a test case had been carried before the Supreme Court of the State from a northern county, where a man owning property on both sides of the canal claimed the right to take it from the water by reason of its abandonment by the Trustees. The Supreme Court sustained the claimant and decided against the Canal. Upon this decision the examiners pronounced the title to the County to be good and safe. But in order to make assurance double sure the County required a warranty deed, and it thus protected in the outcome. After this another and more important case was carried to the Supreme Court and argued perhaps more thoroughly than any other suit pending in that Court. In that decision the first ruling was modified and changed, and it is claimed was really reversed. There were several important points, however, which were not ruled upon except indirectly.

This leaves the matter in a most complicated

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

situation, and opinion is widely at variance as to the right of Col. Hudson's claim. That gentleman states that Vanderburgh is the only county which has resisted his claim. It will not prejudice the case to say that he will not have a walk over here, but will probably repeat Mrs. Gaines' experience on a smaller but equally vexatious scale.

### 5-11-1877 **Evansville Journal**

#### THE CANAL QUESTION. A SUPREME COURT DECISION IN THE PREMISES.

The complications likely to ensue upon the claim of Col. R. N. Hudson for the Wabash and Erie Canal bed, are in one particular dissipated by the following decision in the Supreme Court, reported in the **Indianapolis Journal** of yesterday morning:

#### DEDICATION OF STREETS.

John Shanklin vs. City of Evansville, Vanderburgh, C.C. Affirmed.

Perkins, J.—This was an action by the appellant to quiet title to certain real estate in the city of Evansville. The court below found specially, that prior to October 16, 1837, appellant was the owner in fee of the land claimed. That on that day appellant, with others, laid off the Eastern Enlargement of the city of Evansville, which included the tract of land claimed; that since the recording of the plat of said enlargement appellant had sold to other one-half of the lots adjoining the land claimed; that the land in controversy, designated on the plat as "Canal Street," was afterwards, with the consent of appellee, used by the Wabash and Erie Canal, as the southern terminus of said canal in the City of Evansville; that the canal was abandoned, and that appellee afterwards filled it up; that a number of purchasers of lots on said Canal Street have erected buildings, including a valuable public school house, front on said Canal Street, and that said Canal Street has, since filled up by appellee, been kept upon and improved by appellee as a public street, and so used and treated by the public. The court below found as a conclusion of law that there was a dedication by the plaintiff to the public of the real estate mentioned as a public street, and that the defendant is entitled to the possession of the same to be kept open and maintained as a public street.

We think the conclusion of law upon the facts is correct. Judgment affirmed.

The decision appears to quiet the title of the city to all the streets infringing upon the canal bed, but the private property will still remain in litigation and that is of great value.

### 6-14-1877 **Evansville Journal**

#### W. & E. CANAL PROPERTY.

Col. R. N. Hudson, of Terre Haute, arrived in the city yesterday. He visits the city at this time for the purpose of taking definite action in relation to the recovery of the possession of the bed of the canal, he having purchased the same under a decree of the United States District Court. It might be well for the city authorities and others holding possession of this property, to examine their titles.

### 9-28-1878 **Evansville Journal**

#### The Wabash Canal Suits.

#### A Decision of Great Importance to Evansville Interests,

A telegram was received from Indianapolis yesterday announcing an important decision in the United States Court respecting the title and interests in the old Wabash and Erie Canal lands. The decision is very important to many property holders in Evansville, whose title to lots reclaimed from the old canal bed is under question. When the canal abandoned the bed in Evansville, and indeed all through the State, it was "squatted" upon by adjoining owners, and in Evansville the canal lots have been exceedingly valuable, residences having been erected upon them and the wilderness made to bloom as a garden. The State, however, several years ago, appointed Trustees who sold the canal bed at public auction. That portion lying in the corporate limits of Evansville was sold to Colonel R. N. Hudson of Terre Haute, for that portion from the city limits to the upper line of Warrick County to Aaron N. Dukes, of Peru. Both instituted suit to recover from the holders who had reclaimed the land. Buchanan, Gooding & Buchanan, representing Mr. Dukes, brought suit against the Lake Erie, Evansville and Southwestern Railroad Company to recover the value of nine miles of the bed which had been used by the by the railroad for its track. Several months were consumed in taking evidence and appraising the land before Commissioner Wartman in this city and then the matter was sent to Judge Gresham, who referred it to Col. Fishback, Clerk of the Court. He took it under advisement several months ago and yesterday rendered a decision awarding a judgment to Mr. Dukes for \$15,000 from the railroad company. The title goes with the judgment and is, therefore, a decision adverse to the interests of all the landholders in the city limits. This was a test case. The decision is yet to be affirmed by Judge Gresham, but that is a matter of course. The result is a great triumph for Messrs. Buchanan, Gooding & Buchanan, who fought an adverse decision of the Supreme Court on the same point.

### 5-14-1879 **Evansville Journal**

#### The Canal Cases,

The case of Aaron V. Dukes, purchaser of the canal bed, against John A. Mann, one of the holders of the old canal property, was called in the Superior Court yesterday. The parties are represented by able counsel, Messrs. Denby and Gilchrist for the defense and Buchanan, Gooding & Buchanan for the plaintiff. The case is one of four brought by Mr. Dukes as test cases in this county. The questions are well understood generally. There are a hundred property holders greatly interested here and large numbers all over the State.

### 5-15-1879 **Evansville Journal**

The canal case. Reminiscences in court of the operation.

This case is developing into large proportions. The first witness on the stand yesterday was John A. Reitz. He testified that the canal was constructed through Stockwell's Enlargement, in 1838; that it ran along in the rear of the lots as afterwards laid out and platted. That boats passed over the canal to the basin near Pigeon Creek; that most of the time boats could not pass for want of water supply; that there was nothing to prevent the passing o' boats at all times except scarcity of water; that after the canal was constructed over the

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

ground in suit in 1838 to 1866 no one took possession of it; that afterwards it was filled up and enclosed; it was first known as the Central Canal; afterwards the Wabash and Erie Canal.

Other witnesses testified to much the same effect, that boats ran down to Pigeon Creek except when there was scarcity of water, which was frequent, and that there was nothing to prevent navigation this side of Lamasco except scarcity of water. Some also testified that the canal was in use between Evansville and Terre Haute from 1853 to 1859, except about half the time when the water from the reservoirs was not sufficient; Boats passed from Evansville to Toledo, O.

Jesse Fuller, of Boonville, testified that he was the Superintendent from 1853 to 1858; that he had in charge the canal through Lamasco to Pigeon Creek; that he was under the Trustee of the Wabash and Erie Canal, and had charge of the canal in Lamasco for them. The plat of Stockwell's Enlargement was introduced upon which the canal was marked by water lines. Also agreements between Stockwell, Carpenter and Ingle with the Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal, in which Stockwell, Carpenter and Ingle agree to keep up the bridges over the street if the Trustees would build them. It is claimed by the plaintiffs' attorneys that the fee-simple title to the ground passed to the State both by the plat and by the construction of the canal, while the attorneys for the defendant claim that only an easement passed, and that when the canal ceased to be used, and was filled up the land passed to the lot owner next to it.

There are some other cases pending, but it is strongly intimated that this is the only one that will be tried in this county. The outlook is favorable for long and expensive litigation.

5-17-1879 **Evansville Journal**

THE CANAL CASE.

This case was brought to an unexpected close yesterday morning. The trial had been in progress for two days before a jury, and it was only discovered yesterday that one of the jurymen while acting as County Commissioner of this county had formed and expressed an opinion in relation to the plaintiff's title, which rendered him incompetent to set as a juror in the case, and the Court most properly discharged the entire panel. Col Hudson then, through his attorney, proposed to continue the case before the Judge, but this the defendant's counsel refused to do. The case was therefore, continued, and will now, we understand, be removed to another county on change of venue, as will all the rest of the Wabash & Erie Canal cases.

It will be remembered that the **Journal** strongly opposed the purchase of the square for a Court House, urging as one of the reasons, that the title to the property was involved in doubt. It may be that our fears will never be realized, but it is now quite apparent that the county will be put to a great deal of expense in litigation, and may ultimately have to advance a large sum of money in order to save that already expended.

5-17-1879 **Evansville Journal**

THE CANAL TITLE. SUDDEN ENDING OF THE CASE IN THE SUPERIOR COURT.

The case of Aaron S. Dukes vs. John A. Mann, in which the title of the canal bed in the city was being investigated in the Superior Court, came to a sudden end yesterday morning, which was the fourth day of the trial. The circumstances of the conclusion were peculiar, inasmuch as it was the first time in courts here that a jury was ever discharged after the case was begun.

The plaintiff filed an affidavit that one of the jurors, Clark Cody, had formed and expressed an opinion on the merits of the case; that in 1873, when the County Commissioners were about to purchase Union Square for a Court House site, the title to about one-third of it was discussed in the city papers, and the County Commissioners were personally warned, and by publication in the city papers, cautioned in regard to the title of the Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal; that Clark Cody, as one of said Commissioners, took the opinion of attorneys on the subject of the canal title, and acting in his official capacity formed his opinion, and on the strength of that opinion purchased the square and paid \$50,000 for it. Upon this affidavit and the affidavit of H. E. Read, that he had about that time through the city papers and personally warned the County Commissioners on the question of the title, the court discharged the jury, stating that the mind of the jurors should be like white paper, ready to be impressed by the law and evidence without bias. The plaintiff's counsel then turning to the defendant's counsel proposed to go on with the trial by the Judge. The defendant declined to go on with the trial before the Judge, and the case passed over to the next term.

It is estimated that the costs already amount to more than the value of the piece of ground immediately in the suit. It is thought that the cases will be transferred to another county for trial, as was done in the north part of the State It is not difficult for a disinterested observer to understand why the facts can not be submitted to the court and the law decided without so much costs and controversy.

6-15-1879 **Evansville Journal**

THE CANAL CASE.

THE JURY DECIDE AGAINST THE PROPERTY HOLDERS.

The case of Colonel Hudson vs. John Mann, was decided by the jury in favor of Colonel Hudson. This case has occupied the better part of two weeks, and has been ably handled on both sides. Under the new law the jury was sent home while the law of the case was argued. Three days were consumed in discussion before the Judge on the law, Captain Gooding spoke one entire day for the plaintiff and two other days were taken up by Colonel Buchanan, Colonel Denby and Major Gilchrist.

There were more than fifty written instructions given by the court to the jury, and more than forty interrogatories propounded. The court, among other things instructed the jury that the State took the fee simple title to the land that is appropriated for the Wabash and Erie Canal, and that if the owner failed to apply for his damages within two years it was too late to apply thereafter, and the State took the same title as if the damaged had been paid. The point most strongly insisted on by the defense was that the officers of the State had

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

no authority to go beyond Evansville, and that Lamasco was then beyond Evansville.

The jury answered all the interrogatories very favorably to Col. Hudson, as well as giving the verdict in his favor.

The verdict is conclusive, and the Supreme Court can only reverse the case by declaring that the legal basis of the case is not good. The jury have decided the facts unalterably.

1-29-1880 **Evansville Journal**  
The Canal Decision.

The \_\_\_\_\_ of yesterday editorially says; Referring to

the late decision of Judge Drummond affecting the title of the bed of the Wabash and Erie canal, lately published in this paper, the additional fact appears that the Supreme Court of this State, in the case of Nelson vs. Fleming, decided some months ago, held that the State, under the acts locating the canal and by previous decisions of that court, took the title to the ground over which the canal passed in fee simple. It was contended, therefore, by the parties purchasing under the decree of the United States Circuit Court, that there could be no reversion and divesting of the title by non-user or abandonment.

### CONTRACTS ON THE SOUTHERN DIVISION OF THE CENTRAL CANAL

#### Section # & Contractor

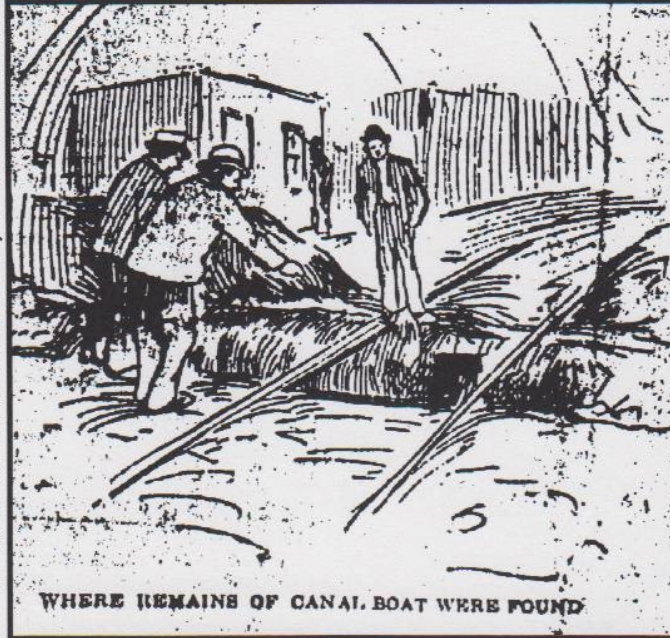
1. John G. Freeman	12. William Walker	29. "
2. "	13. "	30. "
3. "	14. Henry Ryne	31. "
4. Jas. Price	15. "	32. "
5. "	16. Rowley & Sherwood	33. "
6. Murphy & Allen	17. "	34. "
7. Rowley & Sherwood	18. Osborn & Castle	35. "
8. "	19. "	36. David A Beeson
9. "	20. Wines & Osborn	37. "
10. "	21. Barcus & Mudge	38. "
11. Perkins & Allen	22. "	Pigeon Creek Dam Barcus & Mudge
	23. "	Lamasco Branch or Mill Race
	24. Wines & Osborn	1. Rowley & Gifford
	25. David A Beeson	2. "
	25. Barcus & Mudge	3. James B McCall
	26. "	
	27. "	
	28. "	



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

### EXCAVATORS BRING TO LIGHT A RELIC OF THE OLD CANAL DAYS Gunwales of Freight Boat Found in Fifth Street Where It Was Sunk When Present Thoroughfare Was Bed of the Erie Canal

Excavations for a water main at Fifth and Walnut streets Friday revisited a relic of the days when Fifth street was a part of the Erie Canal. Two feet below the surface of the street workmen struck the gunwales of an old freight boat. The heavy oak timbers were well preserved and almost as hard as rock.



WHERE REMAINS OF CANAL BOAT WERE FOUND

Evansville Courier 3-28-1903

The first obstruction was encountered on the side nearest Sixth street. The timbers were in such close proximity to a cross pipe that it was found necessary to saw them out on each side of the ditch in order to allow the workmen room in which to lay the pipes.

The other gunwale of the boat was struck on the opposite side of the street exactly parallel to the first one. A portion of the floor of the boat was also cut away by the workmen. The timbers are all of oak and are just as good today as they were many years ago, when they were hewed for the boat.

The Erie canal was in operation in the fifties. It extended from Indianapolis to Cleveland, Ohio. (This statement is completely false.) The course of it in Evansville was down Canal street to Fifth and down Fifth to the heart of the city. Where the court house now stands was a basin.

The venture did not prove a paying one and along in 1857 it was abandoned. Debris gradually accumulated in the waterway that once teemed with freight and passenger boats. Boats were allowed to stand and go to rack and ruin just where the mules had been unhitched from them. The canal became a dumping ground for trash and refuse, and the

boats, neglected and uncared for, soon sank to the bottom. Not even an attempt was made to preserve the valuable lumber in them, for in those days lumber was one of the cheapest and one of the most abundant articles to be gotten.

During the years of '63, '64, and '65 the canal was gradually filled up by the dumping of loose dirt and refuse into it. Later the bed was filled in with dirt and rock and Canal and Fifth streets took the place of the waterway. Boats, bridges and everything else was dumped into the ditch.

Many of the old residents of the city visited the scene of the find yesterday. Some thought the timbers were the remains of an old bridge, but the majority were of the opinion that they had at one time formed the gunwales of a freight boat.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Millersburg to Evansville

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**The Evansville Daily Journal** (1840's +)

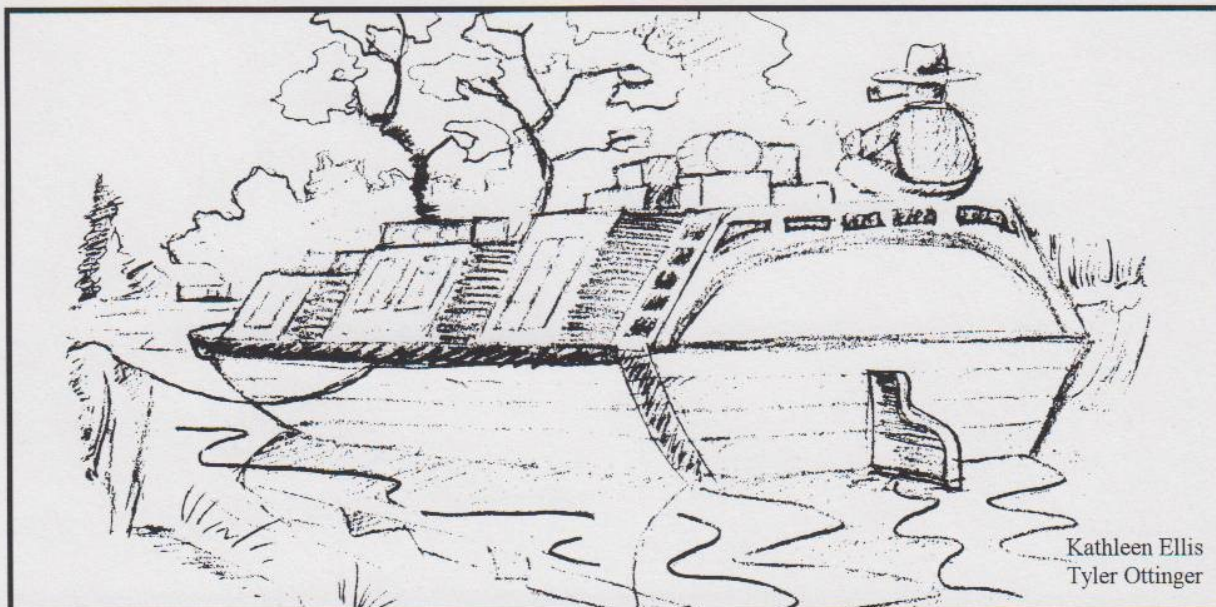
**The Evansville Enquirer** (1850's +)

**The Evansville Weekly Journal** (1840's +)

Dates when articles were published have been included within the text and are not repeated here.

### SOME DIAGRAMS, MAPS & PHOTOS BY CANAL SOCIETY OF INDIANA MEMBERS

Bob Schmidt  
Carolyn Schmidt  
Stan Schmitt  
Nate Tagmeyer  
Wendell Woods



**WABASH & ERIE CANAL 1832-1874**

Distances between locations with towns in bold that collected tolls.

	<u>Miles</u>		
Manhattan to Toledo	4		
Toledo to Swan Creek Side-cut	1		
Swan Creek Side-cut to Port Miami	7		
Port Miami to Maumee Side-cut	2		
Maumee Side-cut to Providence Dam	16		
Providence Dam to Texas	4		
Texas to Florida	18		
Florida to Defiance	9		
Defiance to Junction	<u>9</u>		
<b>W&amp;E/Miami &amp; Erie Canal</b>	<b>70</b>	Manhattan to Junction	70
Junction to Six Mile Reservoir	11		
Six Mile Reservoir to Antwerp	3		
Antwerp to Ohio/Indiana State Line	<u>4</u>		
<b>Total Miles in Ohio</b>	<b>88</b>	Junction to St. Line	18
Ohio/Indiana State Line to New Haven	14		
New Haven to <b>Ft. Wayne</b>	6	St. Line to Ft. Wayne	20
Fort Wayne to Aboite	11		
Aboite to Forks of the Wabash	16		
Forks of the Wabash to <b>Lagro</b>	11		
Lagro to Wabash	6		
Wabash to Peru	15		
Peru to <b>Logansport</b>	18		
Logansport to Delphi	23		
Delphi to Americus	8		
Americus to <b>Lafayette</b>	<u>10</u>	Ft. Wayne to Lafayette	118
<b>Total to Lafayette</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>Toledo - Lafayette</b>	
<b>56 hours @ 4 MPH</b>			
Lafayette to Attica	23	Lafayette to Terre Haute	89
Attica to <b>Covington</b>	20		
Covington to Montezuma	21		
Montezuma to <b>Terre Haute</b>	<u>25</u>		
<b>Total to Terre Haute</b>	<b>315</b>		
<b>Cross-Cut Terre Haute to Worthington</b>	<b>42</b>	Terre Haute to Worthington	42
Worthington to Newberry	17		
Newberry to Maysville	23		
Maysville to Petersburg	17		
Petersburg to Pigeon Reservoir	23		
Pigeon Reservoir to Pigeon Dam	13		
Pigeon Dam to <b>Evansville</b>	<u>18</u>	Worthington - Evansville	<u>111</u>
<b>Total to Evansville</b>	<b>468</b>		<b>468</b>
<hr/>			
<b>Wabash &amp; Erie from Junction, OH to Evansville, IN</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>Longest in U. S.</b>	
<b>Wabash/Miami and Erie</b>	<b>W&amp;E 70 + M&amp;E 179 = 249</b>	<b>5th Longest in U.S.</b>	
<b>Erie Canal, NY</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>2nd Longest in U.S.</b>	
<b>Ohio &amp; Erie (Eastern Ohio)</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>3rd Longest in U.S.</b>	



## Great Expectations!

"....this canal connects us with the Wabash river and the Lakes. It opens a new and navigable river to Evansville, running not only to important points, but through a country, whose agricultural resources, immense, rich and valuable, will through this channel be poured into our lap. We do not date the greatness of Evansville from the time when a mere village, she commenced rising through numberless improvements, to a city—but from that day when the first boat arrives here on this canal. That will be an era in the history of Evansville, to which when years have rolled by, we may proudly look back as the beginning of our greatness."

9-26-1850 Evansville Journal

"Uniting as it does the Northern Lakes with the waters of the Mississippi, it will create an internal commerce which will not be equaled by any in this continent. It will ever be a powerful means to develop the resources of Indiana. Looking at the future, we scarcely can calculate the golden showers it will scatter in our midst."

6-8-1855 Evansville Journal