

**Tour along the Ohio River and
The Wabash & Erie Canal
In Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky**

October 22-24,
2010



**Canal Society of Indiana
Fall Tour**

"Rappites, Riverboats, Pirates"

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



My sincere thanks to the following canawlers for their contributions of diagrams, drawings, maps, pictures, poems, research and tour route, which made this "Rappites, Riverboats, Pirates" tour possible.

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Nate Taymeyer

Wendell Woods (deceased)

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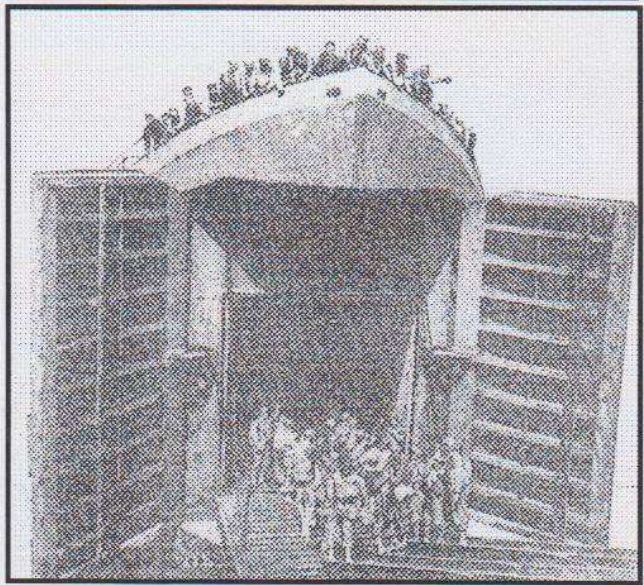
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LST 325 MEMORIAL

USS LST 325, docked in Evansville, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. LST stands for Landing Ship Tank. These huge 330-foot-long ships with flat bottomed hulls were designed to carry 19 Sherman tanks with their crews and hundreds of soldiers as well as 4 smaller LCVPS (landing craft) and cargo during World War II. The LST could actually be beached by the crew through the use of winches and anchors. Its bow had hinges at its sides that allowed it to be opened and a ramp lowered that tanks could roll directly into combat from the ship. After it was unloaded it could pull back into deeper waters often carrying wounded soldiers or prisoners of war. It earned the nickname of "Workhorse of the Navy."



Tanks and troops could be loaded/unloaded directly onto the land from the bow of an LST.

Courtesy Evansville Museum & Historical Society

Before the use of LSTs troops had to secure and prepare a port before they could unload their heavy equipment. During World War II the Allies had no secure ports from which to launch their attacks and recapture territory after France had fallen and the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. Plus the Nazi's had invaded the Soviet Union and were knocking the Soviets out of the war. The British Admiralty requested in November 1941 that LSTs be built and built quickly by U. S. Naval Shipyards. The first LST was completed in June 1942 and sent into action to play a major role in our national defense.

LSTs were such slow moving vessels and had very little fire power by which to protect themselves so their crews suggested that LST stood for Large Slow Target. They were usually escorted to where they were going to protect them and their crew.

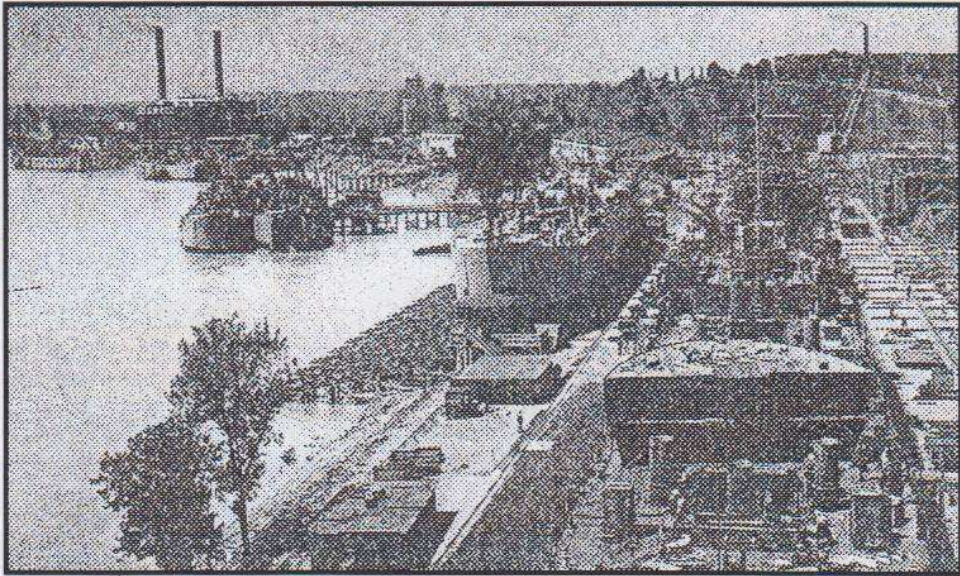
Although LST 325 was built in the Naval Shipyards in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, she is identical to those that were built in Evansville, Indiana. Evansville was chosen as a shipyard due to its strategic location on the Ohio River. The Gulf of Mexico could be reached via the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers from Evansville. It also had the access to railroads and highways that were needed to bring in the steel and lumber* used in heavy industry. Being inland it was safe from foreign sabotage or U-boat attack. Plus Evansville had built boats before and had the facilities to quickly get started building and assembling them.

*Your editor's father worked at an Evansville lumber company buying much of the lumber used in the LSTs. His job was considered so important to the LST project that it kept him from having to go to war.

At its peak of production, the Evansville Shipyard, which covered 45-acres, completed 2 LSTs per week and employed a workforce of over 19,000. According to its original contract it was to produce 24 ships, 167 LSTs and 35 other vessels. On December 12, 1945 the last LST was launched down the Ohio River.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

Very few LSTs are left in the world. LST 325, owned by LST 325 Memorial, Inc. was located in New Orleans before they decided to move her to Evansville. Once she arrived here, the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology offered and then assisted its board in preparing an application for listing on the National Register.



LSTs being built along the Ohio River in the Evansville shipyard in May 1943.
Courtesy Evansville Museum & Historical Society

LST 325 has a distinguished history. She carried the elements of the U.S. 1st Armored Division for the invasion of Sicily on July 11, 1943; the 40th British Royal Tank Regiment for the invasion of Salerno, Italy on September 13, 1943; and was part of the backup force for Omaha Beach landing 59 vehicles, 31 officers and 408 enlisted men on her first trip on D-Day, June 6, 1944. During the following months she made 44 round trips between England and Normandy for the liberation of France. She ran supply trips between England and France afterwards. She returned to the United States in March 1945 and was decommissioned on July 2, 1946 at Green Cove Springs, Florida. Two battle stars were earned by her crew during World War II.

Following the war the U. S. government donated the ship and others like her to the Greek Navy, which used her for decades. After they retired her, the USS LST Ship Memorial, Inc. sought the best preserved LST in Greek hands. Through international approval and hours of repair by a volunteer crew of 30 working in 100°F temperatures at times, she was made sea worthy and sailed back to the U.S. arriving on January 10, 2001 in Mobile, Alabama. Her captain on this voyage was Robert Jornlin from Earlville, Illinois. There volunteers continued restoring her features. Today volunteers maintain the ship in Evansville for tours and cruise to other ports for tours in August and September.

LST CHARACTERISTICS

Armament:

2 twin 40 mm gun mounts
4 single 40 mm gun mounts
12 single 20 mm gun mounts

Beam:

50 ft

Boats/ landing craft carried:

2 LCVPs

Complement:

7 officers, 104 enlisted

Displacement:

1,625 long tons — light
4,080 long tons — full

Draft:

Light: 2 ft 4 in forward
7 ft. 6 in aft
Sea-going: 8 ft 3 in forward
14 ft 1 in aft
Landing: (with 500 ton load)
3 ft 11 in forward
9 ft 10 in aft

Length:

327 ft 9 in

Propulsion:

2 General Motors 12-567
900 hp diesel engines
2 shafts, twin rudders

Range:

24,000 nmi at 9kn (10 mph)

Speed:

12 knots (14 mph)

**HARMONIE TO "NEW" HARMONY
ATTEMPTED COMMUNAL SOCIETIES**

Along the Wabash River in southern Indiana lies a town of some 1,000 people that developed from socialistic experiments of the 19th Century. Here at New Harmony are remains of the buildings of these two social attempts. The first of these groups was lead by George Rapp born in 1757 in Wurttemberg, Germany. He and his followers felt that their interpretation of religion was less restrictive than the Lutheran church and they wanted to be separate. Due to continual harassment by the government and the Lutheran Church in Germany, Rapp left for America in the summer of 1803.

On February 15, 1805 about 400 followers of Rapp, who had come to America in 1803/4, created the Harmony Society. They initially acquired 3000 acres of land in Butler County, Pennsylvania, and called it Harmonie. Property was held in common and they agreed to submit leadership to George Rapp. A celibate lifestyle was advocated since they believed the second coming of Christ was not far off and they wanted to be "pure." Initially the experiment was successful and the society grew as others joined the "Rappites" Dealing with troublesome neighbors, rising land prices and difficulty in raising grapes, they decided to move west seeking more fertile land. This initial site in Pennsylvania was then sold to a group of Mennonites who farmed the land until about 1904. It is located just east of Beaver Falls and is still called Harmony.

In 1814, after exploring the Indiana Territory, the Rappites moved from Pennsylvania to a "new" Harmony buying 3,500 acres and building a communal society in the Indiana wilderness. Over the next 10 years they acquired about 20,000 acres, an area equal to 5 x 6 square miles. The town began to grow as the forest was cleared for fields and bricks were fired to construct permanent buildings. They built a fine brick church, a tavern, mills and community houses for single men and women. A community house was constructed using heavy timber framing with mud-plastered, straw-wrapped boards used between floors.



GEORGE RAPP 1757-1847

Daily life with the Rappites, also known as the Harmonists, began between 5-6 a.m. in a log cabin (later two story brick homes) occupied by 4-6 people, who, even if they were married, were supposed to live a celibate life. They got dressed in plain clothing that varied in color but were of the same designs as their German roots. The women wore ankle length dresses. The men wore pants with vests or coats and a hat. They did have finer garments for Sunday and special occasions. After breakfast they did their chores before doing their work at a certain craft or trade. Men's work was usually some sort of manual labor. Women worked at either textiles or agriculture. After the evening meal they met for meetings. Curfew was 9 p.m. On Sunday they had church services and singing groups but did no work.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

Through his work at "new" Harmony George Rapp became well known and was important to the development of Indiana. He was a delegate to the Indiana Constitutional Convention in 1816. He was also on the committee to select the state capitol at Indianapolis.

Indiana proved to be too distant from Eastern markets for the Rappites. They also lost 120 members from malaria, which was always a problem in the bottom lands along the Wabash. They decided to return to Pennsylvania. An advertisement was placed in the country's leading newspapers saying they would sell their machinery in place and 20,000 acres of land for a total of \$150,000 to be paid over a period of years with two different methods of payment. The following advertisement appeared in the *Philadelphia National Gazette and Literary Register* in 1824.

VALUABLE PROPERTY FOR SALE

The entire and very valuable Property hereinafter described, belonging to the Harmonie Society, is now offered by them for sale, and is well worthy the attention of capitalists, or of persons composing or inclined to constitute a company or association, either for pecuniary or social purposes.

1. The *town* of Harmonie, with 20,000 acres first rate *land*, adjoining thereto, situated on the east bank of the Big Wabash, seventy miles by water and but 15 miles by land, from the Ohio, in Posey Country, State of Indiana. The Wabash is navigable for many miles above Harmonie, at all seasons for boats of 20 tons burden and during a great part of the year for steam boats of the middle class. Amongst the many improvements of this property may be enumerated the following:

2. There are about 200 acres of *land* in a high state of cultivation, 15 acres thereof are in vine-yard, and 35 acres are devoted to an apple orchard containing about 15000 bearing apple and pear trees all of choice fruit; there are also several peach orchards and pleasure gardens.

3. A large three-story *merchant mill*, with three pair of stones, one of them of French burrs: this mill is propelled by a bayou of the Wabash, called the Big-Cut-Off. Two *saw-mills* and one oil and *hemp-mill*.

4. An extensive *factory*, for the manufacture of cotton and woolen goods, with all the necessary buildings for dyeing and dressing broadcloth, flannels, etc.

5. A large brick *church* 125 by 130 feet, and a frame church 55 by 80 feet, both having steeples.

6. A two-story brick *store* and stone *ware-house* and two large *granaries*, one of which is of stone.

7. A large *tavern-house*, with convenient kitchen and stalling for the same.

8. Six large *frame buildings*, used as mechanics' shops.

9. A *tan yard* of fifty vats, with bark house, carriers' shop, and other necessary buildings attached thereto.

10. Three frame *barns*, of 50 by 100 feet each, with a large and complete threshing machine.

11. Three large *sheep-stables*.

12. Two large *distilleries*, and one *brewery*, with malt-kiln, etc.

13. Six two-story *brick dwelling houses*, about 60 feet square each. Forty convenient two-story brick and frame *dwelling houses* of various sizes; and 86 log dwellings. All these dwelling houses have kitchens, stabling and gardens, and in the gardens are a variety of choice fruit trees.

The whole of the property herein described, is supplied with never failing wells and springs of very good water, and there are also a number of running streams. The surrounding country is thickly settled, and has heretofore been in a great measure dependant upon the labor of the mechanics, etc., of Harmonie; so that, upon the sale of the property, mechanics and others will be much wanted, as there is a great demand for the works of mechanics and manufacturers generally.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

All the produce of the country can be sent at any time by water to New Orleans.

Should any capitalist or company desire to continue the cotton and woolen manufactories, now in successful operation at Harmonie, the proprietors are willing to sell them the entire machinery, steam engine, etc., belonging to those establishments. They will also sell, if desired, a variety of valuable farming utensils, as well as stocks of cattle, of various kinds, so that the establishment may be continued upon the scale now adhered to by the Harmonists.

For terms, which will be liberal, apply to J. SOLMS, Merchant, Philadelphia, or to A. WAY & Co. Merchants, Pittsburgh; or to the Subscriber, at Harmonie.

FREDERICK RAPP

Agent for George Rapp and Society

In 1824 they packed their belongings, moved to Pennsylvania, and established their third community, Economy. Father Rapp predicted a return of Christ on September 15, 1829. When this did not occur dissension occurred among the younger members of the society who were not in agreement with the celibate lifestyle. In 1832 about one-third of the younger men and women broke away..

The remaining group continued to be an economic success. The Harmonists were not only known for their piety, but also for their production of wool, cotton, and silk. As a pioneer in the American silk industry, Economy became the American silk center in the 1830s-40s.

Although George Rapp died in August 1847, the group continued. But by 1890 it had dwindled significantly and final dissolution came in 1906.

In 1916 the state of Pennsylvania acquired the Rappite's buildings and their lands were bought by the American Bridge company to expand its town. This is now part of the town of "Ambridge," which is on the Ohio River just north of Pittsburgh in Beaver County. In summary, the Harmonists, along with the Zoarites in Ohio and the Shakers elsewhere, were some of the most successful of the communal societies.

The next chapter in "new" Harmony's history began in 1825, when George Rapp sold all of his society's property for \$150,000 to Robert Owen, a Welch born industrialist and social reformer. Owen had married Caroline Dale of Glasgow, Scotland, whose father owned a cotton mill at New Lanark. He used his family's fortune to purchase into the mill. Then he developed improvements to raise the well being of the workers. He was a believer in educating young workers and established one of the first childcare programs for workers' families.

Owen had an idea on how to deal with the poor. He wanted to establish communities of about 1200 persons settling on 1000-1500 acres. The people would live in large buildings and share common facilities such as kitchen



ROBERT OWEN 1771-1858

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

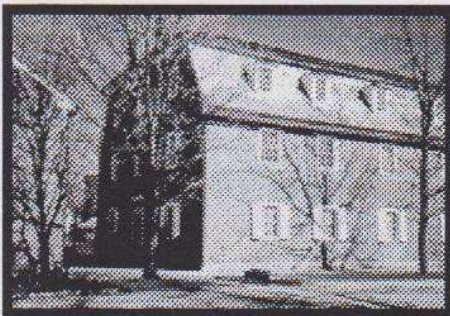
and dining areas. There would be an emphasis on education and social equality. Owen felt that "new" Harmony, Indiana, was ideal for this experiment since the fields and buildings had been already laid out by the Harmonists. The cost to setup here was much less than other sites he had considered. Owen called this location New Harmony.

In January 1826 some of Owen's friends, who were scientists and educators, arrived on "The Philanthropist," often referred to as "the Boatload of Knowledge." Geologist, William Maclure, who came with Owen, also brought naturalists, Thomas Say and Charles Leseuer. The town for a time became the center of educational and scientific significance. However, after constant quarreling, the social experiment failed in 1829 due to lack of private ownership and discipline.

Say died in New Harmony in 1834 and Leseuer returned to France in 1837. In 1838, William Maclure established The Working Men's Institute and its library is the oldest continuously operating library in Indiana.

Sons of Robert Owen remained in New Harmony. David Dale Owen, perhaps influenced by Maclure, conducted the first official geological survey of the state of Indiana in 1837-39. Richard Owen became the second state geologist and first President of Purdue University. Robert Dale Owen, the eldest son, served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1843-47 and introduced the bill creating the Smithsonian Institute. Although New Harmony failed as a social experiment it certainly left a permanent mark on the Hoosier landscape.

Today, New Harmony's past is honored and preserved by Historic New Harmony, which is a unified program between the University of Southern Indiana and the Indiana State Museum. The Atheneum, which serves as the visitor center, was designed by Richard Meier and dedicated in 1979. Other sites are the Roofless Church in Paul Tillich Park, the Cathedral Labyrinth, Thrall's Opera House, and other buildings that tell the story of the early development of this quaint village.



Old and New Buildings for Visitors to Explore

Community House #2

Thrall's Opera House, built in 1824 as Community House #4

The Atheneum, which houses New Harmony's Visitor Center was opened on August 10, 1979.

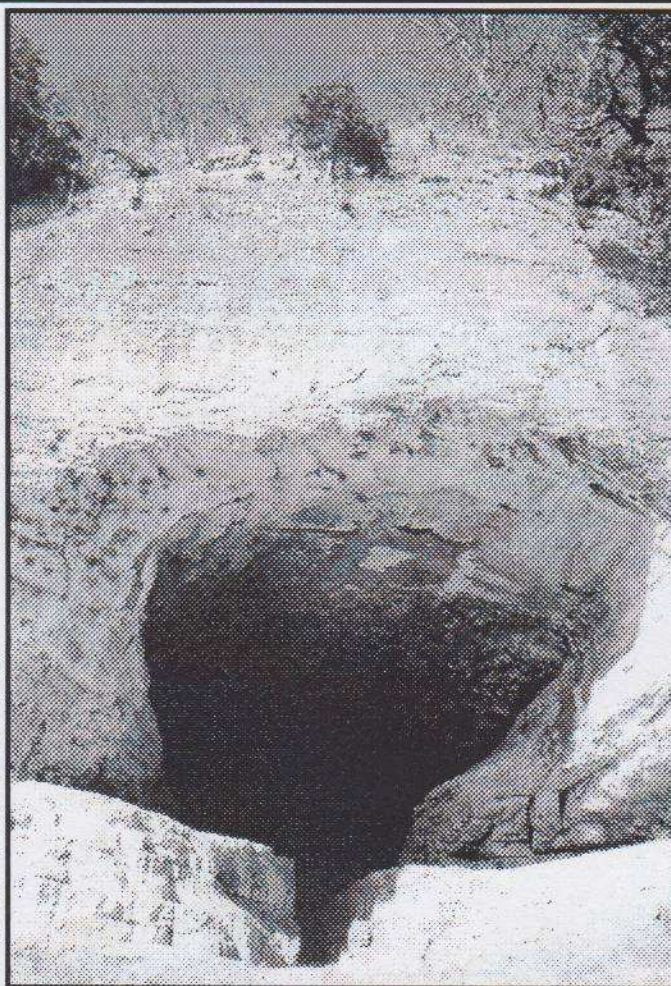
Photos courtesy Historic New Harmony



CAVE-IN-ROCK

On the banks of the Ohio River about 85 miles down river from Evansville, Indiana, is a natural limestone carve-out along the cliff overlooking the river. The opening is 55 foot wide, 75 foot high and extends 160 feet into the bank. It has a level floor. In the rear of the cavern is a sinkhole from the bluff's surface that acts like a chimney and is about wide enough for a person to slip through. During the 18th century the opening of this natural feature was covered with vines and hidden somewhat by trees and overgrowth.

Cave-In-Rock was first recorded by French explorers in 1729. M. de Lery called it *caverne dans Le Roc*. It has no normal cave like features such as stalactites but rather the opening appears to have been formed from erosion of water from the sinkhole and the Ohio River. At times of floods river water does enter the cavern.



CAVE-IN-ROCK Photo by Bob Schmidt

Today Cave-In-Rock is easily visible from the river. In days gone by it was an outstanding feature mentioned by many river travelers.

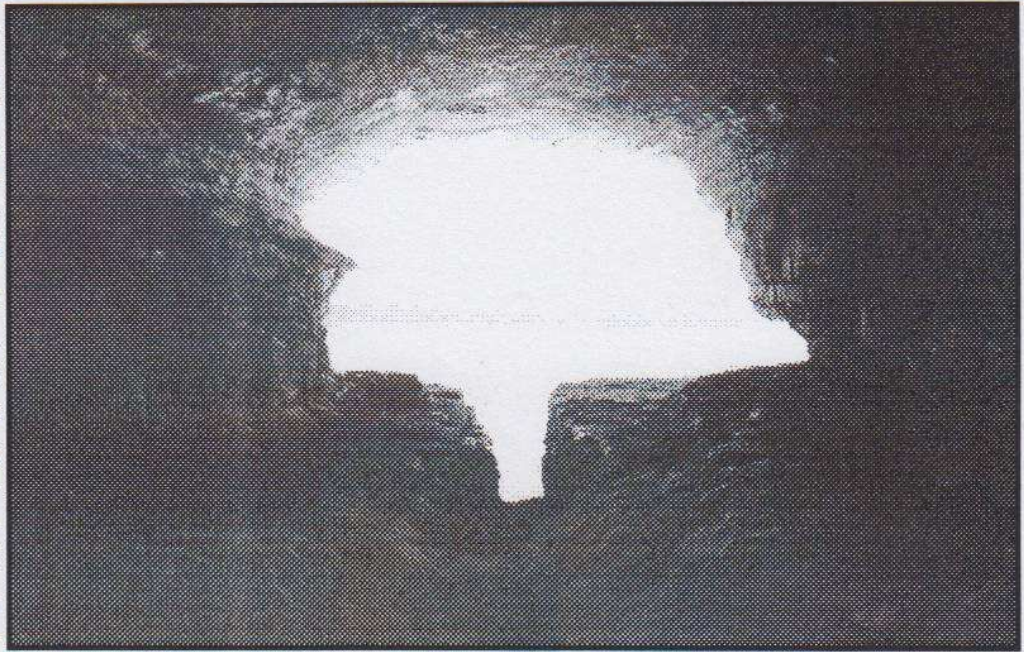
This surely was the hiding place for wild animals in prehistoric times. There is some evidence, due to the number of Indian mounds above the cave, that it might have been used for some ceremonial purposes. For this use we can only speculate since little hard archeological evidence remains. Following the Revolutionary War, as settlers began moving into the lower Ohio Valley, this cave or cavern came to serve as an ideal lair for outlaws and river pirates, who preyed on travelers. They robbed and often murdered them. They also plundered passing flatboats.

River pirates were an early danger on the Ohio River and some of its tributaries. They were found in the area from Henderson, Kentucky to as far down as Cave-In-Rock, Illinois. Meanwhile outlaws threatened settlers on land along the Green River and as far east as Mercer County, Kentucky. In Starling's *History of Henderson County, Kentucky* this group of pirates and thieves is described as follows:

"a clan organized to glut a savage vengeance unknown to the most heartless red man. The life they led, was one of hire and salary, not revenge — it was the counting of money against human life. It was not only the counting of so many pieces of silver,

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

against so many ounces of blood, but it was a life of inhuman nature, enveloped in depravity, intensified in all of its paroxysms of crime. Murder, coupled with robbery, or murder alone seemed to have been the actuating impulse of this Godless clan. The innocent, the weak and harmless, the silvery locks of decrepit old age, the golden tresses of sweet infancy and



View looking out of Cave-In-Rock to the Ohio River.
Photo by Bob Schmidt

purity of charming maidenhood, served as no palliating medium, but these met the same fate as did hardy manhood. All, all, who fell in the way of these highwaymen were sacrificed to satisfy their thirst for blood and died examples of the barbarity of incontinent brutes and fiends."

As early as 1790 Philip Alston and John Duff (McElduff) used the cave as a rendezvous for their counterfeiting. Bandit Logan Belt, and the Sturdivant Gang, who were counterfeiters, also used it in the early 1800s.

One of the caves' most notorious desperados was Samuel Mason, an officer from the Continental Army. In about 1797 he had established a tavern and gambling parlor in the cave that could be described as Cave-Inn-Rock. From this location he had a view up and down river long before a boatman saw the opening. Boatman coming down river often even steered near the shore to get a better look at the cliff's beauty instead of looking at the flat lands across river. There they fell prey to the pirates.

How did the pirates operate? One tactic was similar to those used by the Indians. They would have a man or woman on shore call out to the passing flatboat, saying that they are stranded, needed food, or assistance to travel to the next town. How many boatmen could pass by a desperate cry for help from a stranger? Once their vessel reached shore, they could be overcome by others waiting in the trees. Also a crude sign was posted above the cave reading "Liquor Vault and House of Entertainment." Once on shore and perhaps intoxicated the boatmen became easy prey for the pirates. In the movie "How The West Was Won" one of the sequences was filmed with Cave-In-Rock as the backdrop for the river pirates.

Another ploy was to offer "pilot" steerage around the shoals about 2 miles below Cave-In-Rock. The advantage of this method allowed the "pilot" the opportunity to view

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

the cargo and see if it was worth plundering. He could either steer the boat ashore where his fellow pirates awaited or actually steer the boat through if the cargo was not valuable enough or the crew looked threatening. "The Navigator," a river travel guide published in 1801, warned of shoal locations so boatman would naturally be looking for help. This guide was very advantageous to the pirates.

Mason operated a few years at the cave but soon headed for the Natchez Trace, where the targets were much easier to catch as boatman traveled back with their gold from the trip to New Orleans. Governor Claiborne of the Mississippi Territory offered a large reward for Mason dead or alive. Greed got to Mason's men and one of them drove a tomahawk into his skull. His head was severed from his body and taken to the territory capital in Washington, Mississippi. His head was placed on a stake for exhibit. Two bandits turned in the head of Mason, unfortunately for them they were recognized, captured and hung.

Back at Cave-In-Rock, new pirates followed Mason's lead. James Wilson installed a sign over the cave's entrance proclaiming it "Wilson's Liquor Vault and the House of Entertainment." He may just have been the front-man for the operation.

Around 1799 the infamous Harpe brothers, Big Harpe & Little Harpe, occupied the cave area. They are accused of pushing victims off the top of the cliff and murdering others. The problem with most of these stories about pirates is that some is truth, some is legend and some tales are mixed between desperados. Nevertheless, there were river pirates along the Ohio River and they used Cave-In-Rock as a base camp.

No effort had been made to stop these pirates, counterfeiters, etc. until 1799. Captain Young, a dashing commander in the Louisville, Kentucky area, with a number of equally brave men calling themselves "The Exterminators," armed themselves, met the ne'er-do-wells in battle and came out victorious. They killed many of the band but some escaped and were dispersed. "Organized attacks on flatboats and other river craft never became popular afterward..." according to Dunbar's *A History of*



From the cliff above Cave-In-Rock steps lead down to the cave.
Photos by Bob Schmidt

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Travel in America. He goes on to say, "But the conflict that brought safety to river voyagers proved a curse to some of those emigrants who had occasion to journey overland through the South. The survivors of the pirate band, after their defeat, united under the leadership of three famous bandits, named Mason, Corkendale, and Harpe, and for several years infested the region of southern Tennessee and northern Mississippi."

Other counterfeiters, murders, etc. who were associated with places nearby the cave were James Ford and his Ford's Ferry Gang; Isaiah L. Potts, who operated Potts Inn north of the cave and whose travelers often checked in but never out; and Eason Bigsby (Bixby) another counterfeiter.

Cave-In-Rock has had several names over the years. Besides *caverne dans Le Roc*, others have been Rocking Cave, Rock-and-Cave and House of Nature.

In 1929, the State of Illinois acquired the area, which today encompasses 204 acres of cliffs and trails. Beautiful hills overlook the Ohio River where you can see tow barges going up and down river. In the words of Illinois historian, John W. Allen, "Today only the natural beauty of the historic spot remains, clothed in mystery. In the hollow silence of the cave that echoes the peaceful cooing of doves, a visitor can let a vivid imagination run riot. But he can dream little that will be beyond what actually happened."

A good view of traffic on the Ohio River is provided from the picnic area on the cliff above the cave. Nearby the only ferry operating on the Ohio River still carries vehicles across the river to Kentucky.

A ferry still carries vehicles across the Ohio River from Illinois to Kentucky at Cave-In-Rock.
Photo by Bob Schmidt



ILLINOIS IRON FURNACE HISTORIC SITE

The Illinois Iron Furnace is the only remaining iron furnace structure in the state of Illinois. Iron was manufactured at the Illinois Furnace by the charcoal blast method. The furnace was built on a dry laid limestone foundation. The exterior of the furnace was manufactured of large limestone blocks quarried near the town of Cave-In-Rock. The interior wall, or lining, was constructed of firebrick from Pennsylvania. The space between the interior and exterior walls was filled with sandstone. Wrought iron binders were placed through the stonework and tightened to secure the walls. All of the stonework was dry laid.

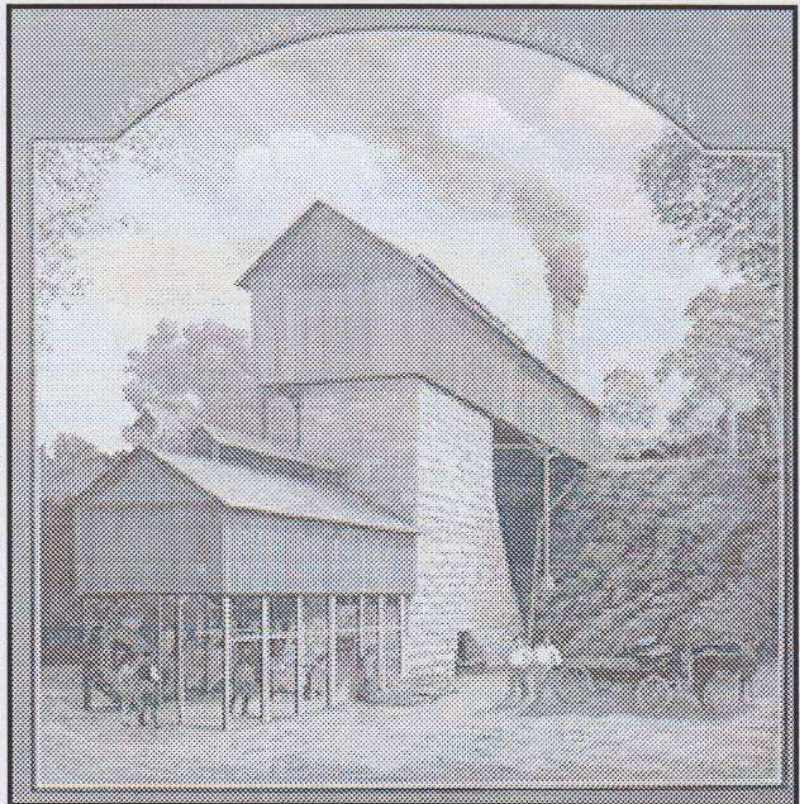


Illinois Iron Furnace has been reconstructed as a memorial.
Photo by Bob Schmidt

Built in 1837, the furnace was the main economic support of over 100 families. Some of the pig iron smelted there was used at the Mounds Naval Shipyards to clad the gunboats they built. The furnace fell into disuse in 1861. It worked sporadically throughout the 1870-80s. Then in the 1930s, members of the Civilian Conservation Corps dismantled most of the furnace. The stones were needed to build the embankments of the Hog Creek Thief Bridge.

The iron furnace that stands today in a small park with a visitors pavilion was rebuilt in 1967 as a monument to this past industry and is located four miles north of Rosiclair, Illinois where Illinois' first iron furnace was located. Signs warn visitors not to climb on the stones. There a half mile trail leads from the back of the picnic area through bottomland habitat and tree species. It winds along Big Creek and is used by fishermen to reach 2 or 3 deep old-fashioned fishing holes.

When in operation the iron furnace would have appeared much like this Portsmouth, Ohio Flood Wall mural painted by Robert Dafford.



CANALIZING THE OHIO RIVER

Locks near
Paducah, Kentucky:
New Smithfield Locks/Dam
Old Locks/Dam 52
New Olmstead Locks/Dam

The Ohio (Algonquin for beautiful river) had its start with the glacial melt of about 10,000 years ago. It begins in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at the junction of the Monogahela and Allegheny rivers then flows 981 miles to the Mississippi. It forms the lower borders of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

The Ohio River basin covers 204,000 square miles east of the Mississippi and contains nearly 25 million people. It extends northeast into New York, west to Illinois and then south draining through the Tennessee River in Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. The Ohio River carries the largest volume of water of any of the Mississippi River tributaries.

The importance of the Ohio River was recognized by those who first explored the area and claimed possession. It was used by earlier settlers who followed one of the two overland roads until they came to the Allegheny Mountains. They then built boats or rafts that were poled by hand to carry their belongings as they continued their journey west. When they arrived at their destination they broke up the boats for the lumber.

The arrival of the steamboat in 1811 on the western rivers changed forever river travel. Before it had been basically downstream. Steam boats were faster and could also travel upstream. By 1835 over 650 steamboats had been built in the west.

Although steamboats were ideal in a river free of snags, sandbars, rocks, and rapids, such idyllic condition did not exist. River pilots had to memorize the river foot by foot to avoid these hazards. They even measured the depth as they went along calling out foot by foot and sometimes inch by inch. Even so boats were wrecked.

Congress finally listened to boatmen and in 1824 authorized the removal of the sandbars and snags from the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. The Army Corps of Engineers was put in charge of the work. They constructed wing dams to concentrate flow into



Lock and Dam 52, completed in 1928, is located at Ohio River Mile 938.9. This site, and Lock and Dam 53, are the only remaining moveable wicket dams on the Ohio. Both will be removed when the Olmsted Locks and Dam become operational. When the navigation system was completed in 1929, there were 51 similar projects. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' maneuver boat raises and lowers the wooden wickets, determined by river conditions. The M/V RAY A. ECK-STEIN is shown locking down-bound. The vessel, owned and operated by Marquette Transportation Co., Inc. is headquartered in Paducah and named for the company's founder.

One of Paducah's flood wall murals depicts Lock and Dam 52 and the brass plaque describes how it operates until being replaced by Olmsted Locks and Dam.

Photo by Bob Schmidt

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

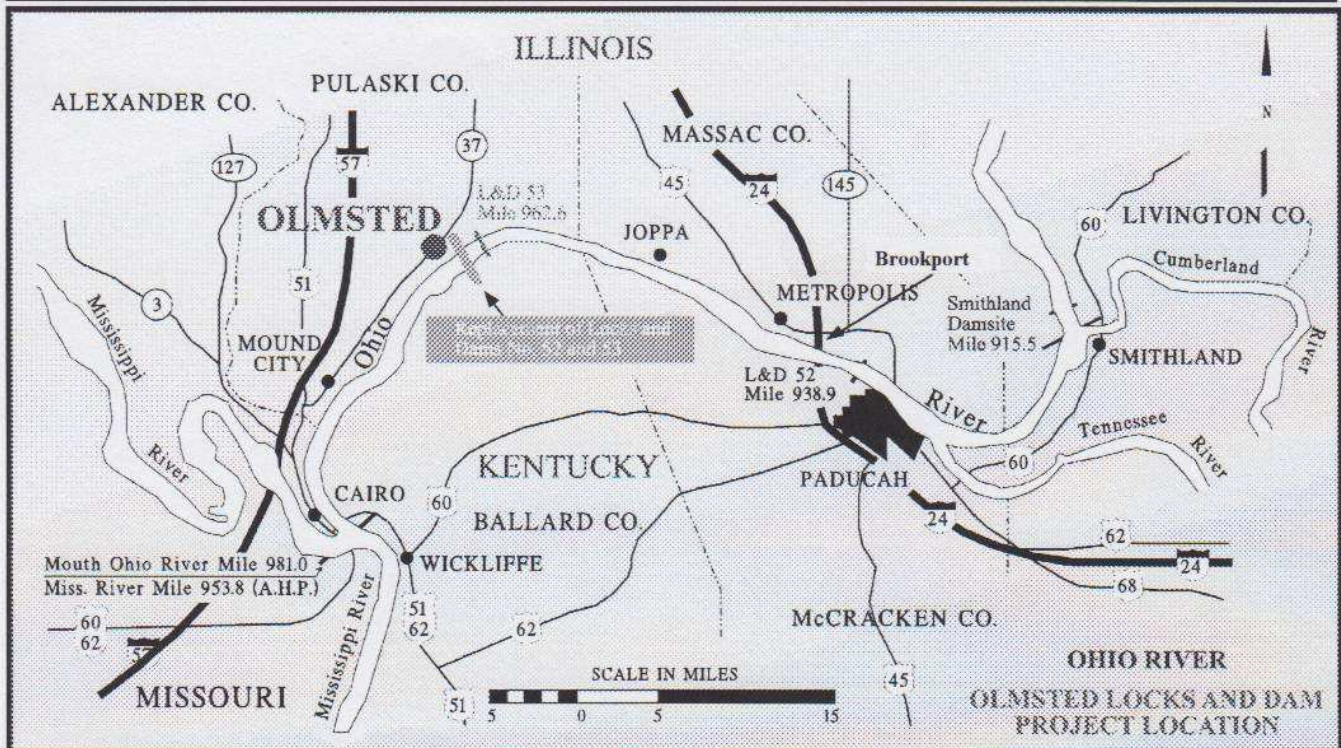
the main channel. Much of the danger was removed, but the depth problem during summer months was not solved. The water was so shallow at places that it could be forded. Rivermen had to wait for the water to rise in October-November and February-April to ship their goods.

After the Civil War the coal tows out of Pittsburgh grew in length and were pushed by powerful steam towboats. The Corps concluded that the Ohio River could be improved by building a series of locks and dams to create slackwater pools.

Congress once again took note and the Corps began building the first federal lock and dam on the Ohio in 1878. It was located five miles below the Point in Pittsburgh. It was 110 feet wide, 600 feet long, and the world's largest lock when completed in 1885. Wooden bulkheads were hinged on the river bottom. By lowering them when the river was high, boats could pass over them without using the lock. When the water level began to fall they could raise the wooden wickets, create a slackwater pool behind the dam and control the level of the water in the river so that it was deep enough to float boats.

Having seen the success of this type of lock and dam, Congress passed the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 3, 1909, authorizing construction of a series of locks and dams all along the river to create a nine-foot navigational depth. This "canalization" project called for 51 movable dams with wooden wickets and a lock chamber 600 feet by 110 feet. The last lock and dam of this project, Dam 53, was completed at Cairo, Illinois, in 1929.

Notice location of the Smithland Damsite, Lock and Dams 52 or 53 that will be replaced by the Olmstead Locks and Dam
Courtesy US Army Corps of Engineers' Olmstead Brochure 2006



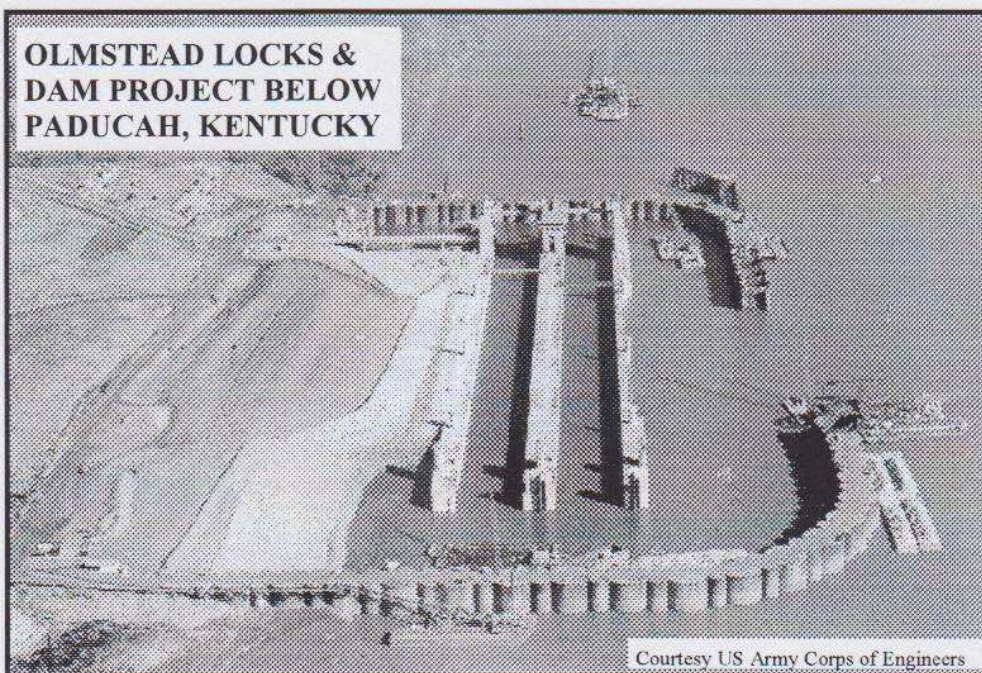
RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

With commercial traffic continuing to increase on the Ohio River from 5 million tons in 1917 to about 150 million tons today, the old wicket dams with their small lock chambers became obsolete and could not accommodate the large tows. The tows had to be broken and required double locking. This was time consuming, hazardous, caused traffic delays and increased towing costs.

Even before the entire system was completed in 1929, the first lock and dam was replaced on Davis Island in 1922. The Ohio River Navigation Modernization Program was undertaken by the Corps in the 1950s to replace the obsolete wicket dam system. The new dams consisted of two locks, one 600 feet by 110 feet and one 1200 feet by 110 feet. They were built of concrete and steel and with the new higher lift replaced at least two of the older structures. The larger lock chamber has room for up to fifteen barges and the towboat to pass through the lock at one time making travel down the Ohio much faster.

In 1980 the Smithland Locks/Dam above Paducah, Kentucky, was completed with two 1200-foot chambers. It is located on the Ohio River at 918.5 River Miles below Point Bridge, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and 62.5 miles upstream of the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Construction started on this project's locks in 1971 and the two 110 feet wide and 1200 feet long locks were in operation in 1979. The overall length of the river lock wall, including the guard walls, is approximately three-quarters of a mile. Each miter gate door weighs 250 tons. The gates and the valve machinery are hydraulically operated. Each lock chamber requires eight minutes for filling and nine minutes for emptying. Construction started on the concrete fixed weir with Tainter gates dam in 1974. It is 2,952 feet long, has an upper pool of 324 feet and a lower pool of 302 feet, has 11 Tainter gates, and was completed in November 1980. The locks are on the Illinois side of the river accessible via the New Liberty Road reached from either Golconda or Brookport, Illinois. When planning this tour your authors went to the site and used the telephone provided to call inside. We were told no one was allowed onto the property without a pass. Since the events of 9-11, security is very high at these twin locks.

In the year 1990 improvements were authorized to be made at the McAlpine Locks and Dam near Louisville, Kentucky. In 1992 the Gallipolis Locks were completed and construction began on the Olmstead Locks/Dam south of Paducah. In 2000 the extension of the J. T. Myers Lock



**OLMSTEAD LOCKS &
DAM PROJECT BELOW
PADUCAH, KENTUCKY**

Courtesy US Army Corps of Engineers

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

was authorized and the second 1200 foot lock was begun at Louisville for the McAlpine Lock and Dam. The last locks to be replaced are Lock 52 located on the Ohio River about 1.5 miles downstream of Brookport, Illinois, 939 miles below Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Lock and Dam 53 located on the Ohio River approximately 11 miles upstream of Mound City, Illinois, 962 miles below Pittsburgh.

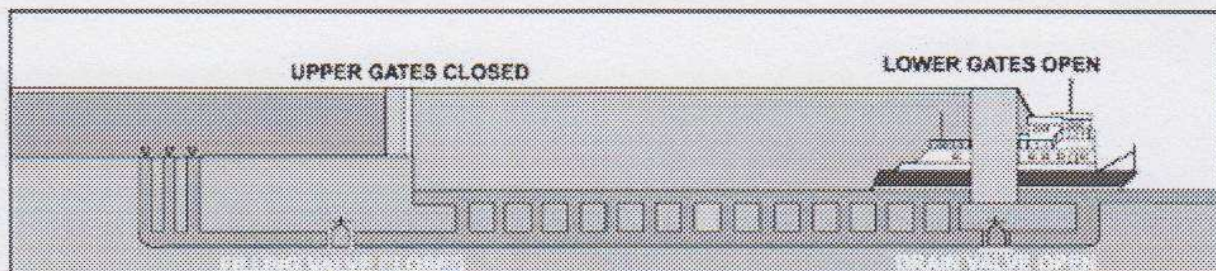
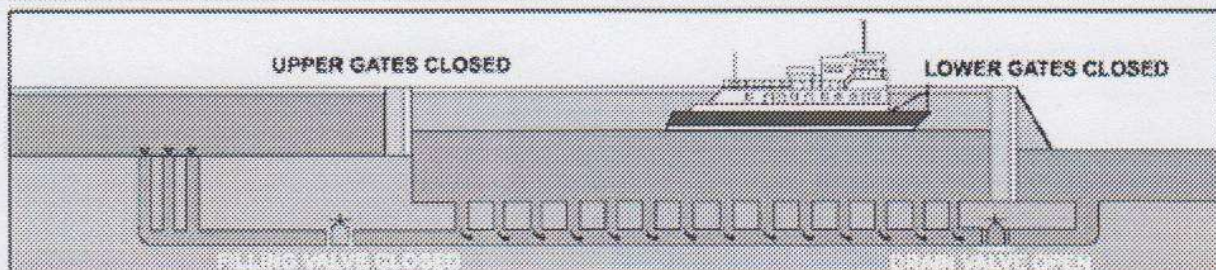
Old Locks and Dam 52 below Paducah was completed in 1928 on the wicket plan being 2,998 feet long, with an upper pool of 302 feet and a lower pool of 290 feet. It has a navigable pass of 1,248 feet, 540 feet of chanoine weir, 160 feet of bebout weir, three 91 foot beartraps with piers, and 725 feet of fixed weir. The main lock is 110 feet by 1200 feet and the auxiliary lock is 110 feet by 600 feet.

A temporary 1200 foot lock was built at both 52 and 53 dam sites in less than a year to keep traffic moving along the lower portion of the river. Once the Olmsted Locks and Dam project is completed, it will make them obsolete and should be sufficient to meet tow traffic demands until 2025.

The Ohio River Lock and Dam system operates twenty-four hours a day for 365 days of the year. It serves both the towing industry and recreational boaters.

Picture, diagram and information courtesy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

How Locks Operate



PADUCAH "WALL TO WALL" FLOODWALL MURALS

Robert Dafford, who resides in Lafayette, Louisiana, has been painting murals, signs and fine art paintings for 35 years. During the past fifteen years he has concentrated on floodwall murals along the Ohio River to boost downtown development in small communities along the river. Of the 300 murals he has painted across the United States, two hundred of these large historical images can be found on the flood walls at Paducah and Covington, Kentucky, and Portsmouth, Ohio. He uses realist technique, trompe l'oeil and advanced perspective. Over 60 murals that were seen on an earlier CSI tour stretch across 2,000 feet and cover 44,000 square feet in Portsmouth.

Begun in 1996 Paducah now has 54 murals on the city side of the floodwall that bring its history to life. Twenty panels between Broadway and Jefferson Street depict many historic events in chronological order from the early 1880s to the 1940s. They were completed in 2001.

Another section across from the River Heritage Museum from Broadway south to Kentucky Avenue depicts the city's colorful river history. At the corner of Kentucky Avenue and Water Street south to Washington Street are three panels about the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plants and the growth of the city during the 1950s. Old steam locomotive 2613 is exhibited at this location. Further to the south panels depict popular events, and notable buildings and businesses in Paducah. They are in front of the Four River Center for the Performing Arts.

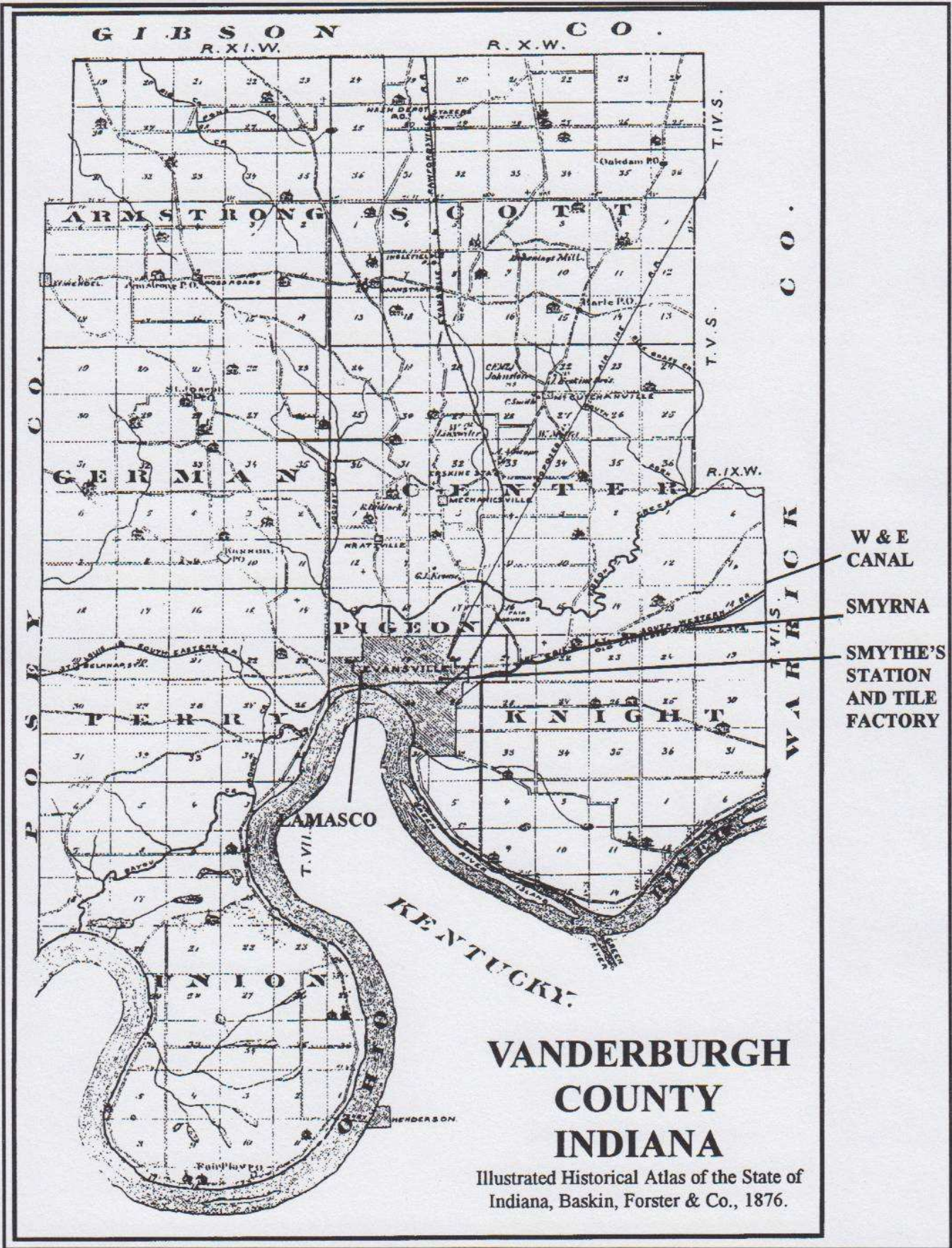
Most of the murals have a brass plaque attached to a stone along the sidewalk that describes the mural. Individual spot lights highlight the murals after sundown.

A book entitled "Paducah Wall To Wall" gives the history of the murals and pictures them in full color. The books are available in shops around town or from the internet. If you just want to see pictures of all of Paducah's murals and the wording on the brass plaques go to: http://www.galenfrysinger.com/paducah_murals.htm

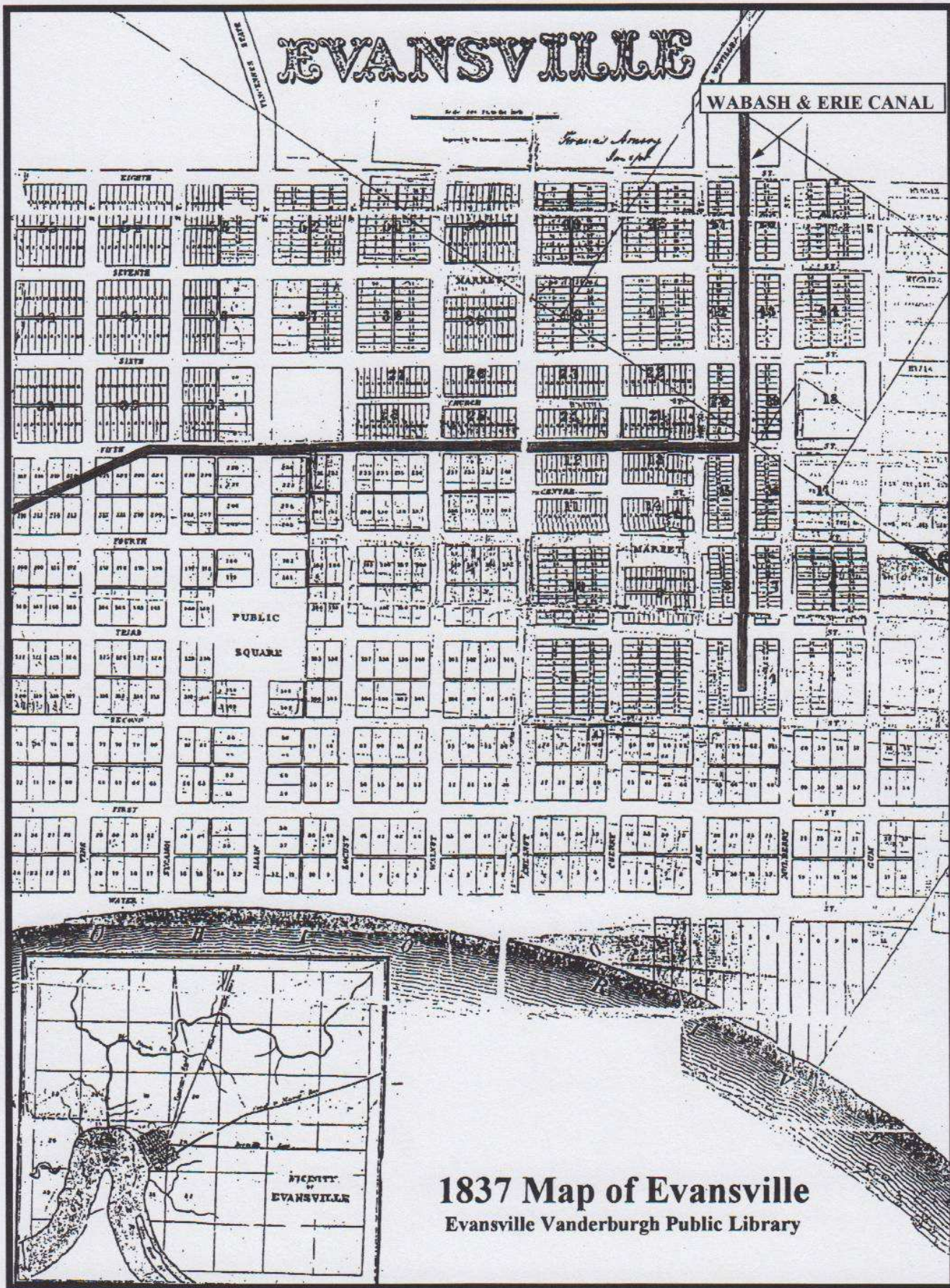


Bronze plaques mark some of the murals like the one above which reads: "Visitors coming to Paducah by boat in the early part of the twentieth century would have been greeted by the hustle and bustle of a riverfront lined with hotels, warehouses, packet boat offices, lumber yards, supply houses, iron foundries, maritime industries and small businesses, all connected to the river. One of the busiest places at the riverfront was the Paducah Wharf boat, which was permanently moored at the foot of Broadway to allow the loading and unloading of cargo and passengers. Large barrels of dark-fired tobacco, known as hogsheads, lined the riverfront waiting to be shipped to ports in Central and South American, Europe and Africa."

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES



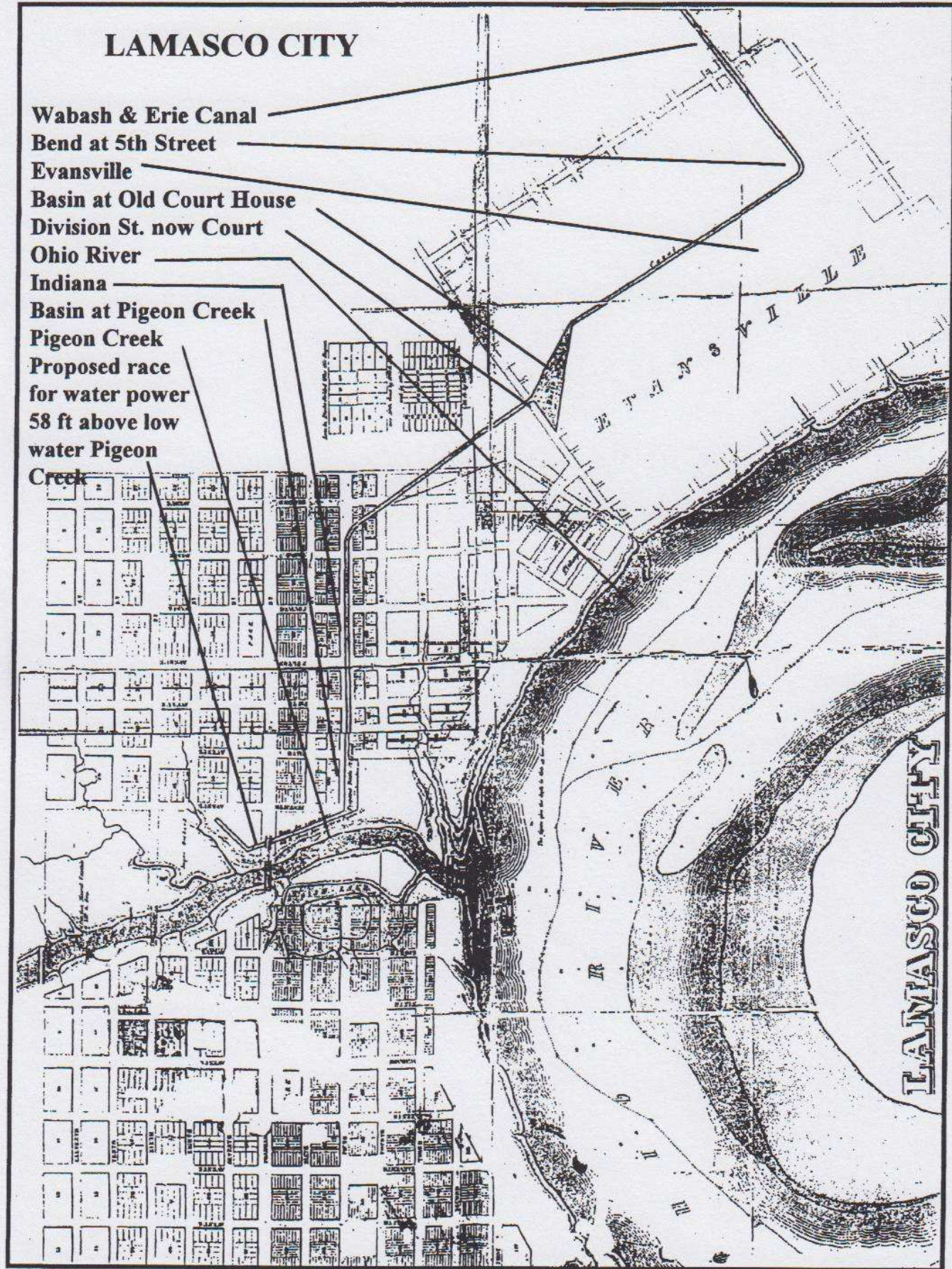
RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

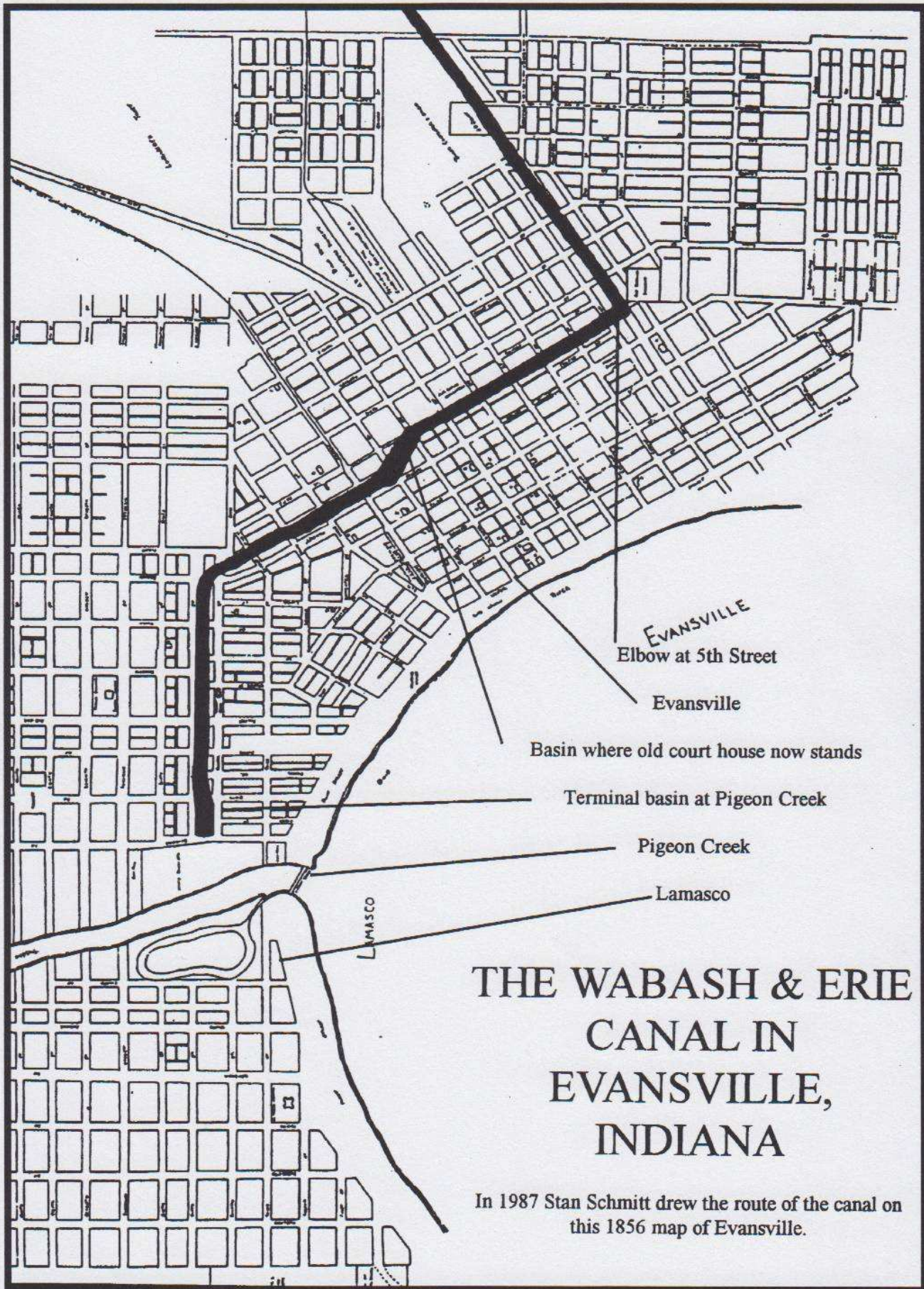


1837 Map of Evansville
Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library

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





W&E IN VANDERBURGH COUNTY

Hugh McGary, a man of foresight, 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. He named it Evansville. It is the most southerly located city of the North being south of both St. Louis, Missouri and Louisville, Kentucky. In 1818 Vanderburgh County was carved out of Warrick County.

By 1819 one hundred people lived in Evansville, which extended from Sycamore to Walnut and from Water to Third streets by 1820. By 1830 flat boats loaded with produce came down the Wabash and White rivers to converge at the Ohio river near Evansville, which soon was known as the "Landing for the Wabash" because of the heavy river traffic. In 1832, just when the town was getting a good start with settlers of German descent purchasing land, cholera struck and caused the death of 11 percent of its population and a decline in property values below those of 1819.

Hope arrived in 1836 via the stage coach, which carried a letter announcing the plan for a Central Canal terminus to be located in Evansville. This created so much excitement that a big public dinner was planned and the following invitation sent:

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 the 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 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.

A large crowd gathered at the courthouse on May 4 and at 11 a.m. a pennant forty feet long with "Internal Improvements" on it was raised amid loud shorts and cannon fire. Then a procession moved to the grounds where Edward Hopkins had prepared an elegant dinner. The drinks served were so strong that nearly every man in town was reeling or staggering from the spirits. Major Clark, president of the meeting, made an opening speech followed by a series of grandiose toasts and the reading of letters. A grand ball, which lasted through the night, finished off the event. According to a county history, "The event exceeded any demonstration of popular joy that up to that time had been witnessed in the town."

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't Eng.

EVANSVILLE JOURNAL, PRINTER.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

Posters were tacked up over town seeking workers to build the canal. Work was begun almost immediately on the 18 miles from the canal terminus northward.

By 1837 land speculation was rampant. Canal boat building, cabinet making, and 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 Central Canal that was completed remained in service. The panic halted business growth and 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 who were connected with the canal:

Charles Voorhees — canal engineer, who laid out the Central Canal portion that was completed in 1837 between Evansville and the Pigeon Dam. This portion would eventually be included in the Wabash & Erie Canal.

Captain P. G. O'Riley — owner of a wharf-boat business with a floating dock and warehouse, was one of the first canal promoters.

Marcus Sherwood — flat-boat hand who accumulated enough money to purchase his own flat-boat, was an advocate and contractor on the Central/Wabash & Erie Canal as well as the Evansville levee, participated in building the insane asylum, helped start a bank, and built the Sherwood House hotel.

Christian Kratz — owner and clearer of land in German township, who began work on the Wabash & Erie Canal in 1838 and eventually owned a foundry and machine works.

John August Reitz — owner of a sawmill at the mouth of Pigeon Creek that was destroyed by fire, built a second mill and later razed it to build a third more improved sawmill. Between 1883-1893 the latter manufactured more hard wood lumber than any other sawmill in the United States. He wanted the canal maintained so badly that he had articles of association drawn up for the Evansville Canal Company in 1866. He was an organizer, officer or stockholder at various times in the Crescent City bank, the Straight-Line Railroad, Crescent Foundry, Evansville, Carmi & Paducah Railroad Co., and the German National Bank.

Nathan Rowley — owner of a shoe/boot shop, then a drug/grocery business, then a store-house, and then a dry goods store. In 1828 he took a contract on the Central Canal that stipulated that he had to dig seven half-mile sections, and finish the part which ran through Fifth street to Division by 1839. He faithfully completed this contract. He was canal toll collector for several years. He is remembered for his effort to relieve the State of Indiana from the "odium of repudiation in connection with its debts." He was a Probate Judge. He operated the Indiana Four Mill and made Crescent City Spring a

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

leading resort. He promoted the Evansville & Crawfordsville Railroad and contributed to the Straight Line Railroad. He was a justice of the peace.

Thomas Smythe — a canal boat captain on the Wabash & Erie Canal after the southern portion of the Central Canal had been joined to it, and served as superintendent for district number nine on the canal. He and his son Henry started the Thomas Smythe Tile Factory in 1871 along the banks of the canal, which was no longer in use. Tracks for the Louisville, Evansville & St. Louis railroad were built atop the old towpath and the railroad transported his tile from Smythe's Station to Kentucky and Tennessee.

Willard Carpenter — sold notions on his way from New York to Ohio where he learned the tanner and shoemaker's trade, returned to New York to help build the Erie Canal. His wages were so poor he became a school teacher, then he moved to Troy, N.Y. and engaged in merchandising. He moved to Evansville to work in wholesale dry goods and notions. After returning from Detroit on business, he found Evansville 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, he circulated the petition through five different legislatures and in seventeen different states personally paying for the expenses he incurred. Later he was involved in the Evansville & Terre Haute railroad and the "Straight Line" between Evansville and Indianapolis, founded the Christian home for homeless girls, established a poor house system, was elected a member of Indiana's legislature and gave Evansville the Willard Library.

In 1837 Indiana's Board of Internal Improvements was reduced to three members. Then 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 Wabash and Erie 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 grant was made of one-half of all unsold lands in the Vincennes district to be sold and to guarantee the completion of the Wabash & Erie 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. (Thus the Central Canal already built from Pigeon Dam to Evansville would become the lower part of the Wabash and Erie Canal.) 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. He fought to present his bill to the state legislature. Finally his proposals were incorporated in a bill intro-



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. SCANTLEN, 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

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duced 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 by income from the Wabash & 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."

On January 29, 1847 the Indiana legislature granted the citizens of Evansville a city charter and with the assurance that the canal would be completed, its citizens had high expectations that their city, which covered an area of about 280 acres and had a population of about 4,000, would attract new businesses, speculators, and men of all classes thus increasing property values. A levee for flood protection and a 2,000-foot-long river wharf were constructed in 1848. The latter accommodated the long lines of wagons from as far inward as Vincennes, Lafayette, and Terre Haute that came to exchange their produce for tea, coffee, sugar, spices and manufactured goods with the magnificent steamers arriving daily on the river.

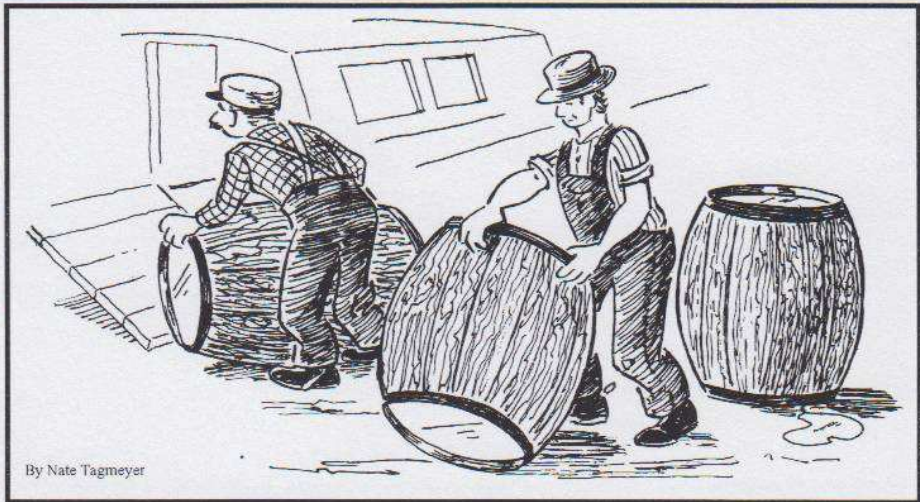
The *Evansville Journal* of September 26, 1850 proclaimed "...this canal connects us with the Wabash river and the Lakes. It opens a new and navigable river to Evansville, running not only to important points, but through a country, whose agricultural resources, immense, rich and valuable, will through 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."

By 1850, Evansville sported 10 grist and saw mills, 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. Perhaps it was because of 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 and Crawfordsville Railroad.

On June 15, 1853 a notice was carried in the *Evansville Journal* about a canal wharf: "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

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

the Eastern Enlargement of said City" 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 Dam.



When the original 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 erected at the Welborn site 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." CSI is fairly certain that the 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. Also at one time the Canal Street School stood on what is now a parking lot for the Welborn Campus.

When canal construction resumed graves were removed from a graveyard where the old courthouse now stands and a large canal basin excavated. Today a marker located on a corner of the grounds 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."

This 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 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."

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. The *Evansville Journal* on June 11, 1853 stated: "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 known in a loud manner, that the magnificent enterprise is

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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."

Begun in Fort Wayne in 1832, the Wabash and Erie Canal was completed to Lafayette in 1841, to Coal Creek in 1847, to Terre Haute in 1849, to Point Commerce in 1851, and to Evansville in 1853, over 21 years after it was commenced. It was 468 miles long from Toledo, Ohio to Evansville, Indiana, with 88 miles in Ohio and 380 miles in Indiana .

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 or well wishers. The first boat left Evansville and went as far as the White River.

The early boats were pulled by mules. Mace Newman, a man who always wanted to be in the limelight, 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, and shot deer, turkey and other game.

The first boat to reach Evansville from Lake Erie arrived on September 22, 1853. It was the "Pennsylvania." The *Evansville Enquirer* reported, "We had the pleasure this morning on 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 met 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 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,

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

however, been all this time on the one trip — having been engaged in the packet trade above Terre Haute.

“She was received 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.”

The “Pennsylvania” was dragged from Fifth Street to the terminus by oxen because the water level was so low. Although some history books report only two boats every made the entire Toledo to Evansville trip, there were more; but the canal was mainly used between towns or from western towns along its route either to Lake Erie or to Evansville.

Businesses grew up along the canal such as the Union Brewery located at Sycamore Street, A. & L. Uhl Pottery located just below the level of the canal, August Elles’ Canal Mill at Eight and Canal streets, and the Igleheart brother’s Southern Mills located on the canal. The latter became the first to use the purifier on winter wheat. It was famous for Swans Down Cake Flour and became a subsidiary of General Foods, Inc..

High quality coal was mined beneath Evansville and within a 30 mile radius of the town during the 1850s. The canal was actually dug through coal deposits along its route near Petersburg. The coal was profitable if shipped by canal boat to Evansville.

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

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. Also that year construction began on Canal Street School. It was erected at Third and Cherry streets.

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.

The canal had its problems. The following newspaper article from the *Evansville Daily Enquirer* of March 21, 1854 probably best relates them:

“‘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

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

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 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 do their duty and see that the locks are kept shut!' You are not perhaps aware that we do not keep lock tenders on 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 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..."

Although the canal was a major source of water power during the 1850s turning the millers' grind stones and the factories' machines and providing a stable income through its water rents as long as it was kept watered, various accidents took place along the its banks. There were drownings of those inebriated or in otherwise sickly conditions, horses plunging into it and spilling the occupants from carriages or wagons, people falling off the bridges, etc.. Though not really the cause of these accidents, they, along with the breaks in its banks, mud slides, vandalism, water shortages, lack of profit, sickness such as cholera along the line, and the railroads, contributed to the local citizens desire to have it filled.

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 and 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 earning 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.

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.

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 River in fishermen's boats, hide them in cellars and move them by night in a wagonload of hay. They may have followed the canal towpath northward.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

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, Illinois and maintained river packets on the Wabash River and to Bowling Green, Kentucky on the Green River. It also shipped on the Evansville and Crawfordsville Railroad and on the Wabash and Erie Canal. It served as a shipping hub for a radius of about 75 miles. However, after the war relations with the south dried up and both the railroad and canal became less important. Gloom prevailed over Evansville.

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 the canal 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. Most considered it a "Nuisance."

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 & Erie Canal from Evansville to the north for a period of five years. It 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.

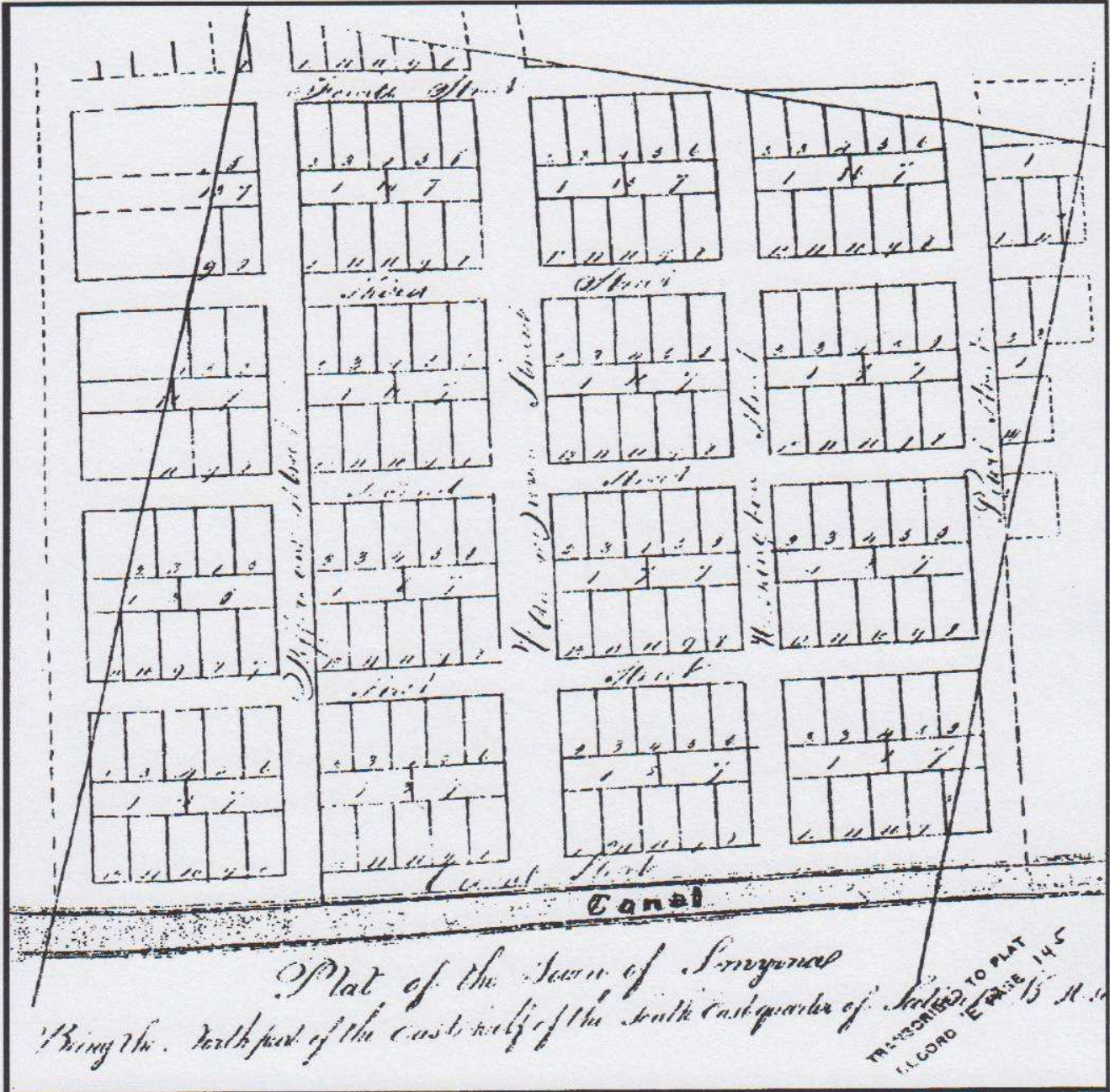
Many freed blacks moved into Vanderburgh county after the Civil War finding work as farm hands. They lived around Liberty Baptist Church, founded in 1865, along the canal bed. Following the surge in black population, a wave of German immigrants arrived. By 1870 Evansville had grown to be the second largest city in Indiana.

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.

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.

After leaving Evansville the canal followed the route of today's State Road 62 past Smythe's Station and Smyrna before entering Warrick County west of Chandler.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES



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

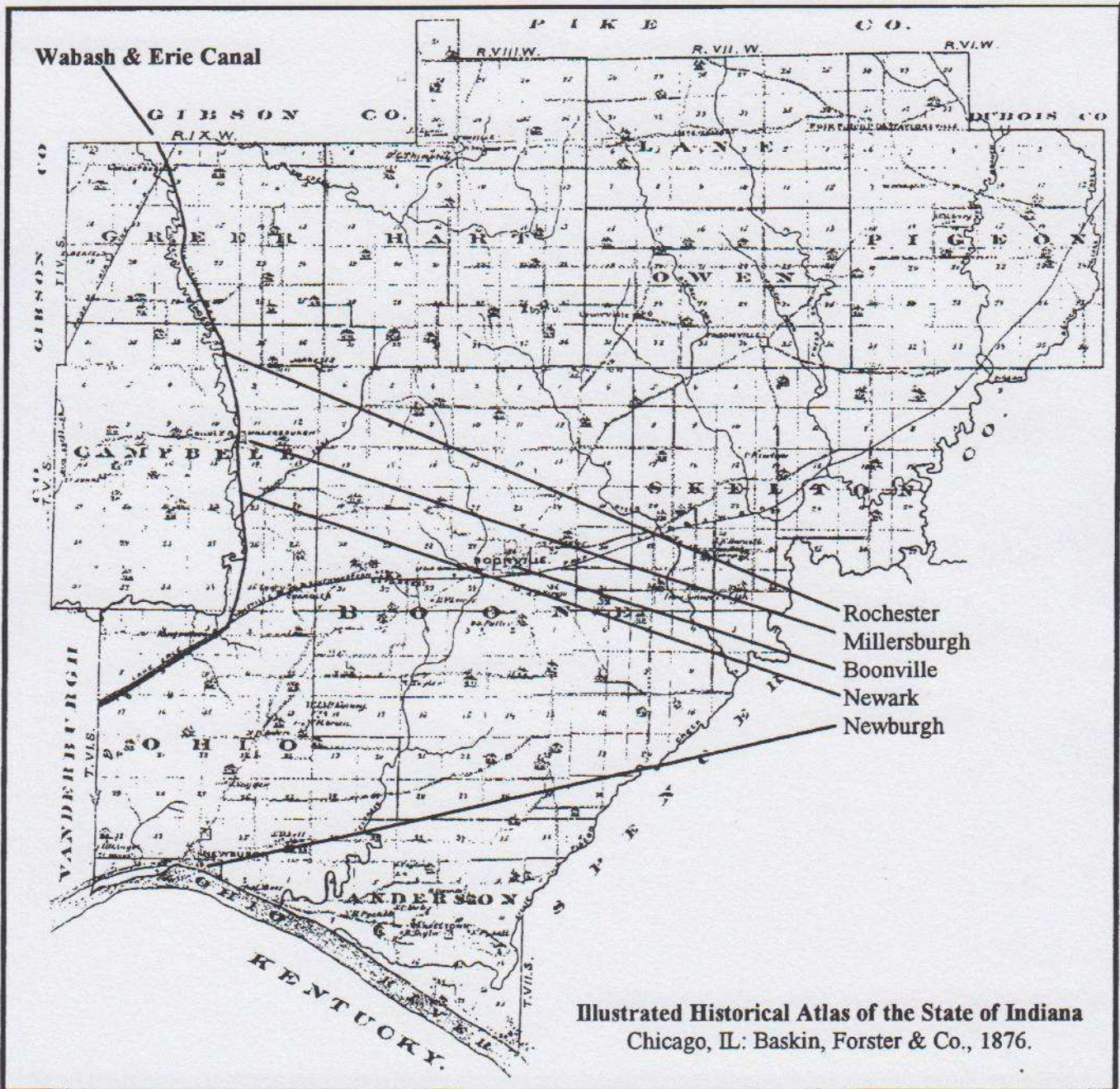
On April 1, 1837, William Walker laid out the town of Smyrna in the southeast quarter of section 13, township 6 south, range 100 west. It was surveyed by Vanderburgh County Deputy Surveyor William Whittlesey and recorded by Charles A. Bowne.

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.

W&E IN WARRICK COUNTY

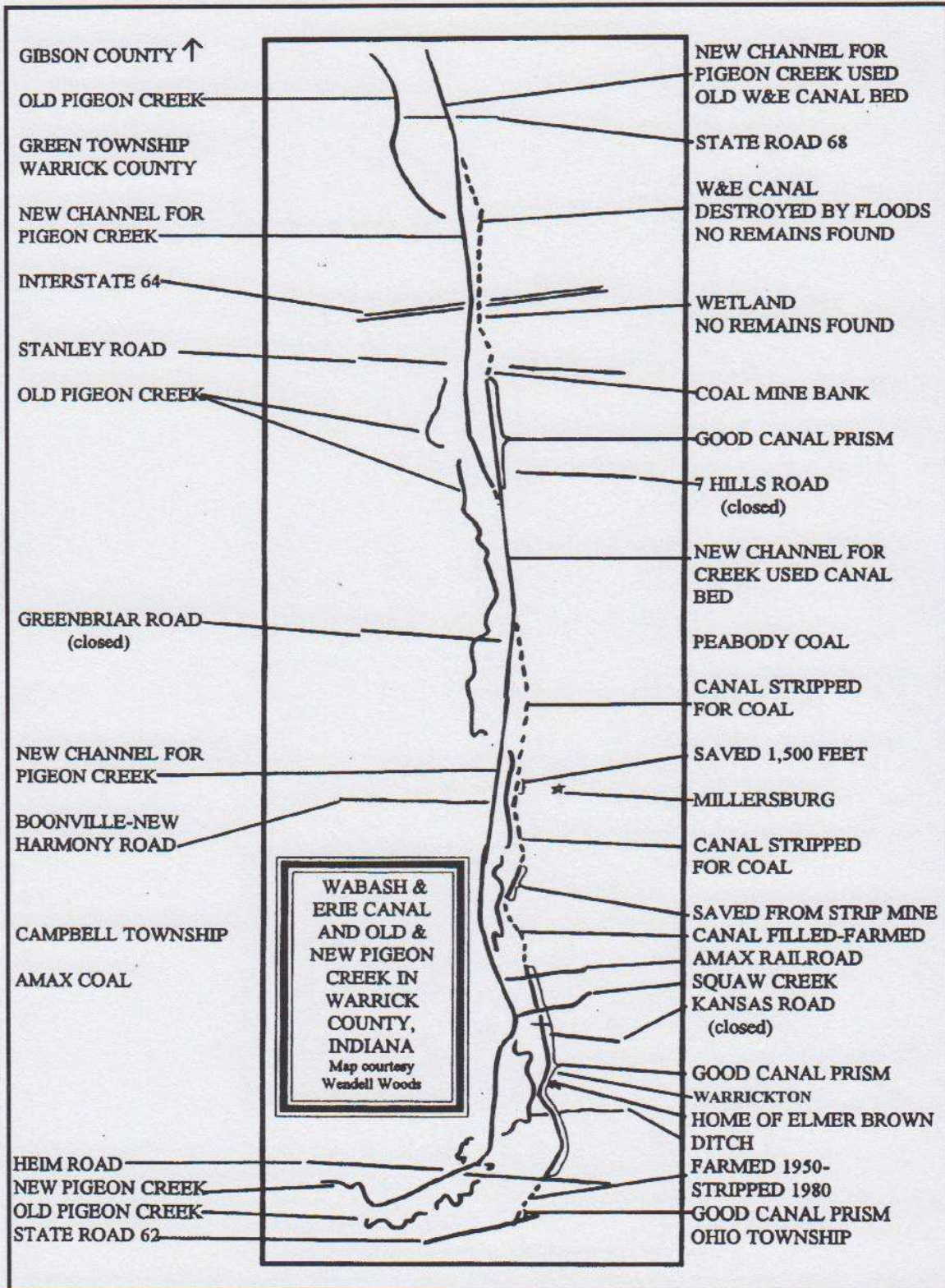
The route of the Wabash & Erie Canal through Greer, Campbell and Ohio townships of Warrick County is marked with a dark line through the left side of this 1876 map. Originally dug as part of the Central Canal (1836-39) work halted when Indiana had financial difficulties. It was never joined to the Central Canal that dug at Indianapolis. A dam was built across Big Pigeon Creek at Rochester to feed this level. In 1853 this portion was connected to the W & E Canal via the Cross-Cut Canal from Terre Haute, IN. to Point Commerce (Worthington), and from Point Commerce to the dam at Rochester. A large reservoir was constructed at Port Gibson in Gibson County to supplement the canal.

Note: 1) Newburgh, which, in its day, was a bigger river port than Evansville; 2) Boonville, which became the county seat; Millersburgh (Canal Post Office). 4) Rochester, which was the location of the Pigeon Creek Reservoir and feeder canal.



RAPPIES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

The Central (Wabash & Erie) Canal entered Warrick County along State Road 62 and turned sharply northward along Towpath Road on the west side of Chandler, Indiana. Over a mile of excellent watered canal prism can still be seen north of Heim Road along Towpath Road on the way to Warrickton and some of it up as far as Squaw Creek. It followed Pigeon Creek northward through what became a major coal strip mining area. The coal companies removed much of the canal prism and culverts.

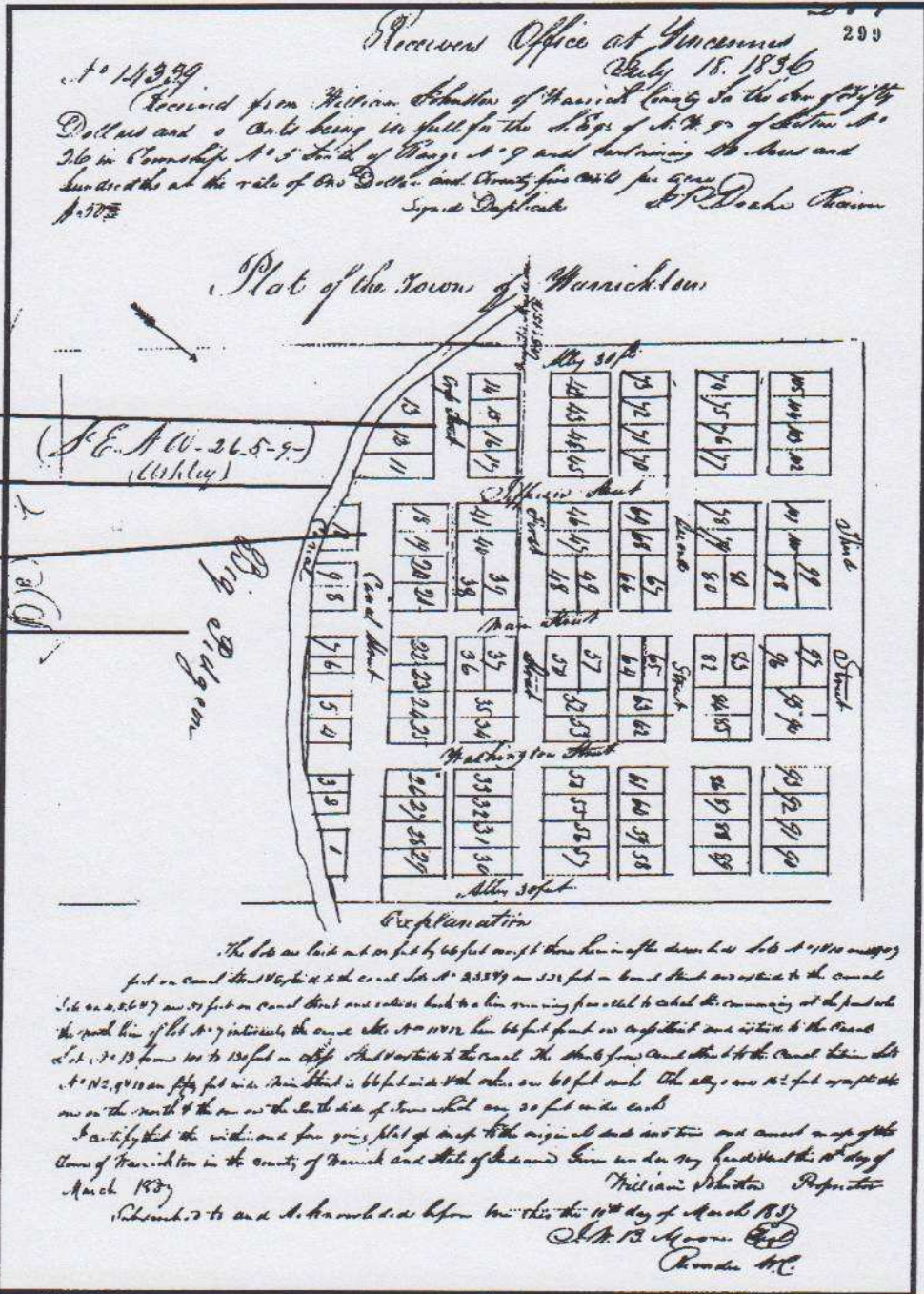


RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

A Plat of the Town of
Warrickton
Warrick County,
Indiana

1836

Crop Street
Central Canal later
W & E Canal
Canal Street
Pigeon Creek



Received Office at Vincennes July 18, 1836 No.14339 Received from William Johnston of Warrick County Ia the sum of Fifty Dollars and 0 cents being in full for the S.E.gr of N.W gr of Section No. 26 in Township No 5 South of Range No 9 west containing 40 Acres and hundredths at the rate of One Dollar and Twenty-five cents per acre \$50. Signed Duplicate J. P. Drake Receiver Plat of the Town of Warrickton Explanation The lots are laid out 132 feet by 66 feet except those here in after described lots No 1 & 10 are _____ feet on Canal Street & extend to the canal, lots No. 2,3,8,& 9 on 53 1/2 feet on Canal Street and extends to the canal, Lots no. 4,5,6 & 7 are 51 feet on Canal Street and extends back to a line running parallel to Canal Street commencing at the point where the north line of lot No 7 intersects the canal, Lots 11 & 12 have 66 feet front on Crop Street and extend to the canal, Lot No 13 from 100 to 130 feet on Crop Street & extends to the canal. The streets from Canal Street to the Canal between Lots No 1 & 2, 9 & 10 are fifty feet wide, Main Street is 66 feet wide & the others are 60 feet each. The alleys are 16 1/2 feet except the one on the North & the one on the South Side of Town which are 30 feet wide each. I certify that the within and fore going plat of map to be the original and _____ and con _____ map of the Town of Warrickton in the county of Warrick and State of Indiana Given under my hand & seal this 10th day of March 1837. William Johnston Proprietor Subscribed to and Acknowledged before me this the 10th day of March 1837. J. W. B. Moore Recorder W. C.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

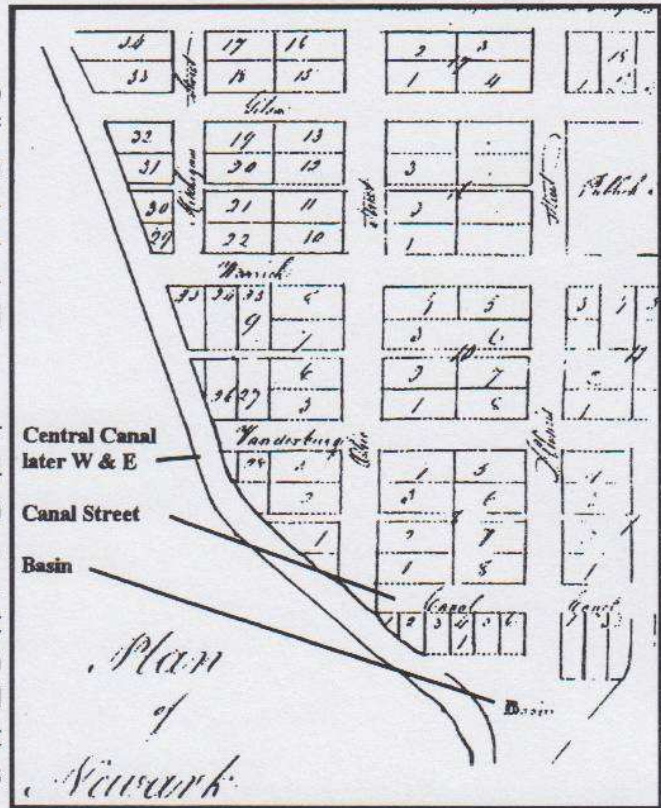
Perry county on the east taken from its area. Now the county seat was located in the far west corner so it was decided in October 1814 to centralize its location to the mouth of Little Pigeon creek (Darlington) about four miles above Newburgh. Although a county jail was built in 1814 and a county court house in 1815, its boundaries were again changed in 1816. It extended farther north with the creation of Pike county out of Gibson, Knox and Perry counties.

Warrickton was platted in Ohio Township on July 18, 1836. The town of Newark to its north was platted on March 16, 1838. These towns as well as Millersburgh and Rochester, both located in Campbell Township, were the result of the announcement that the Central Canal would follow along Pigeon Creek.

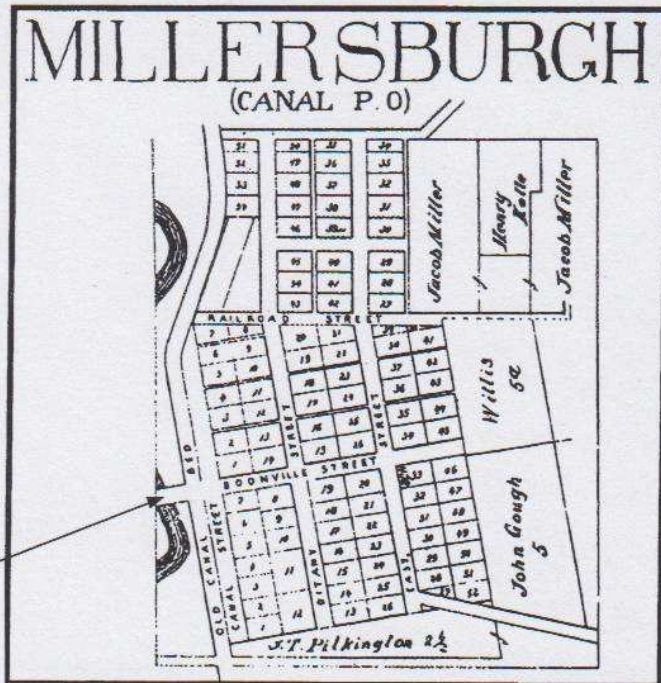
Some sources say that Philip Miller laid out the town of Millersburgh in 1824 for his heirs while others claim that Ann Cox, executrix of the estate of John Cox, laid it out on the 1st day of October 1850. Millersburgh was also known as Canal Post Office and was the largest town through which the Central (Wabash & Erie) Canal passed in Warrick County. The town's most prosperous years were when the canal was in operation. The canal provided it and others along its route with a principal means of travel and freight transportation. Although the creek made this a good agricultural area with well watered and drained arable land, the abandonment of the canal and the remote location of the village from commercial outlets impeded its growth.

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.

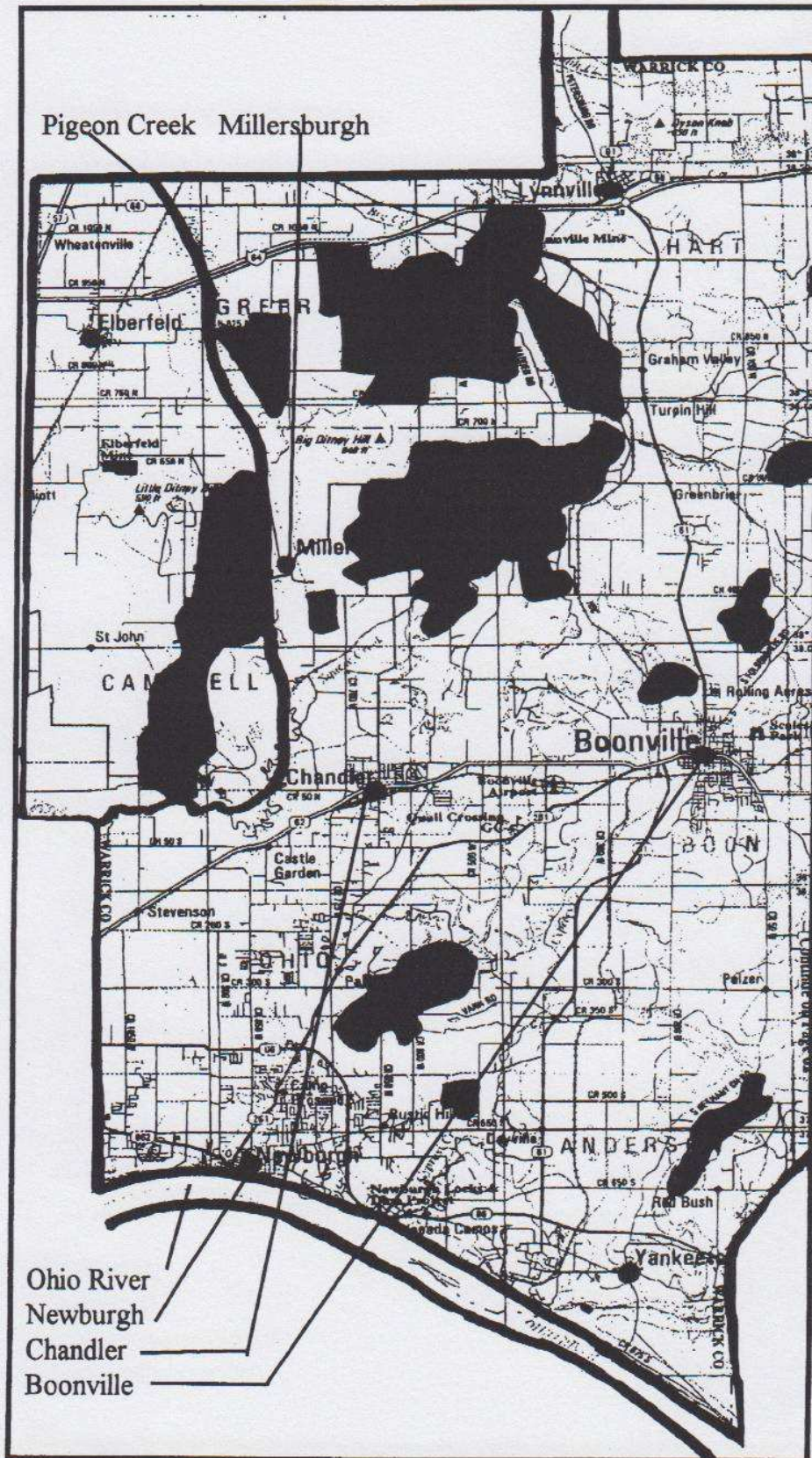
This 1889 map shows how Millersburgh was situated on the Central (Wabash & Erie) Canal. An old bridge still exists that crosses Pigeon Creek on Boonville Street so you can still reach the cemetery on the hill. From: *An Illustrated Standard Atlas of Warrick Co., IN.* Evansville, IN: Tillman & Fuller Publ Co.



Plat of Newark, Warrick County, Indiana
Recorded March 16, 1838
J.W.B. Moore R. W.C.



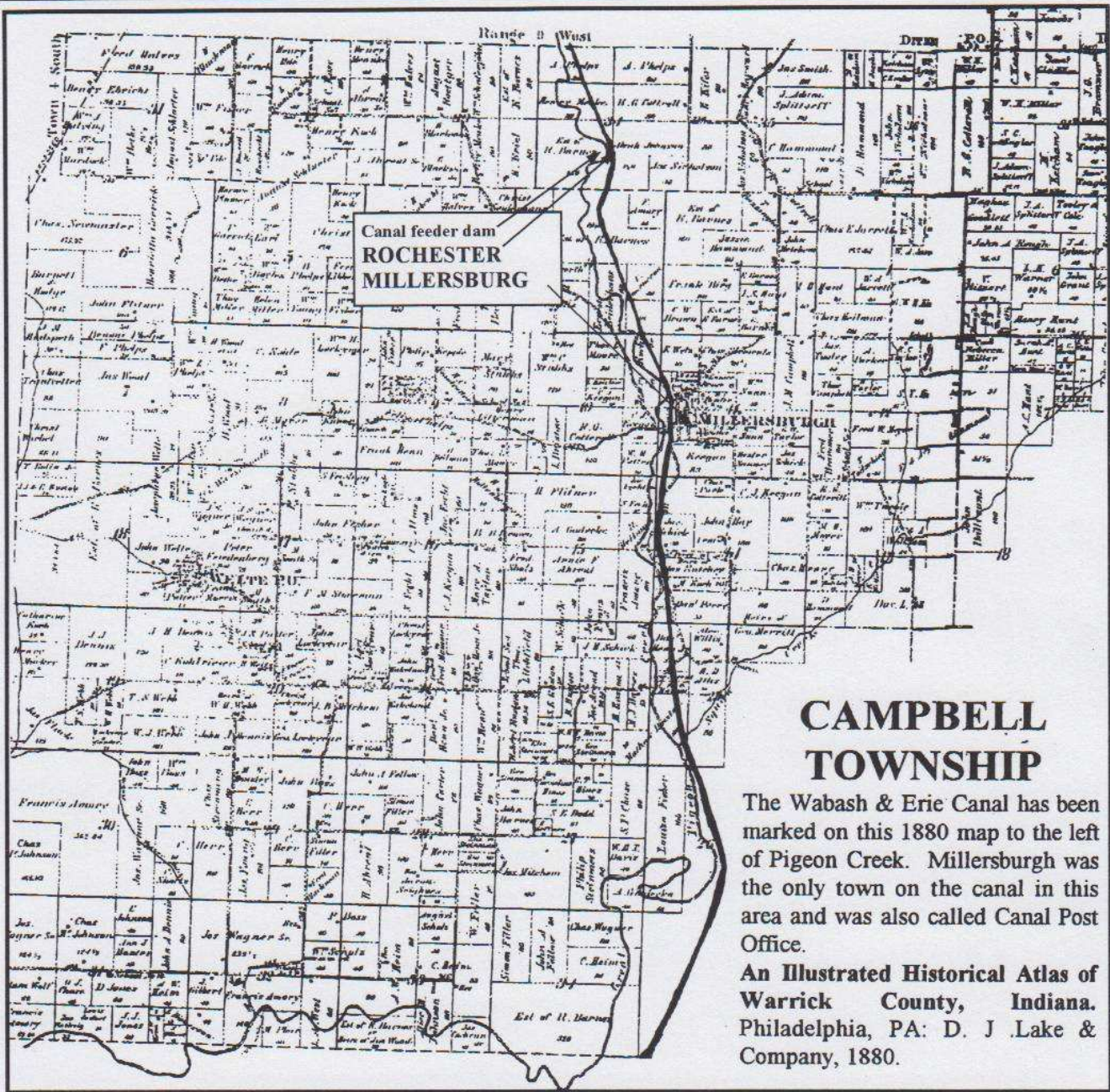
COAL IN WARRICK COUNTY



The coal industry is of great importance to Warrick County. A report as early as 1868 found in the **History of Warrick Co.** by Edwin Adams says, "Mr. Isaac Miller, near Millersburgh, formerly worked a vein from which he could annually produce 100,000 bushels. So abundant is the commodity that at these mines in the interior the owners and operators of them haul it several miles to market, in wagons, and sell it for ten cents per bushel, making a reasonable profit on it. It requires no prophetic eye to discern that in a few years a great portion of country along the river bank will be completely undermined, and while there are only hundreds of men now working in these subterranean passages there will be thousands, and while only thousands of dollars are now yielded, hundreds of thousands will be forthcoming to reward the owners and operators of these enterprises."

Mr. Miller's prediction came true. A great portion of western Warrick county has been shaft mined and strip mined as seen in this partial map of the county. Coal fields are solid black.

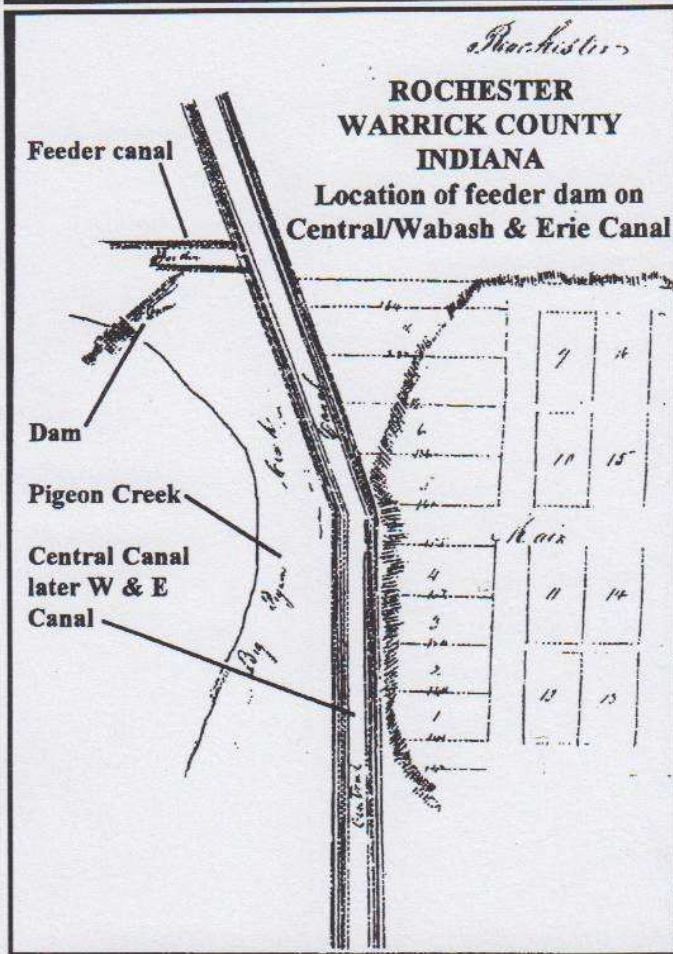
RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES



In 1951 the town was razed by Peabody Coal. CSI member Elmer Brown's family were the last to live there moving in 1983 to land south along the canal. Only its little cemetery remains.

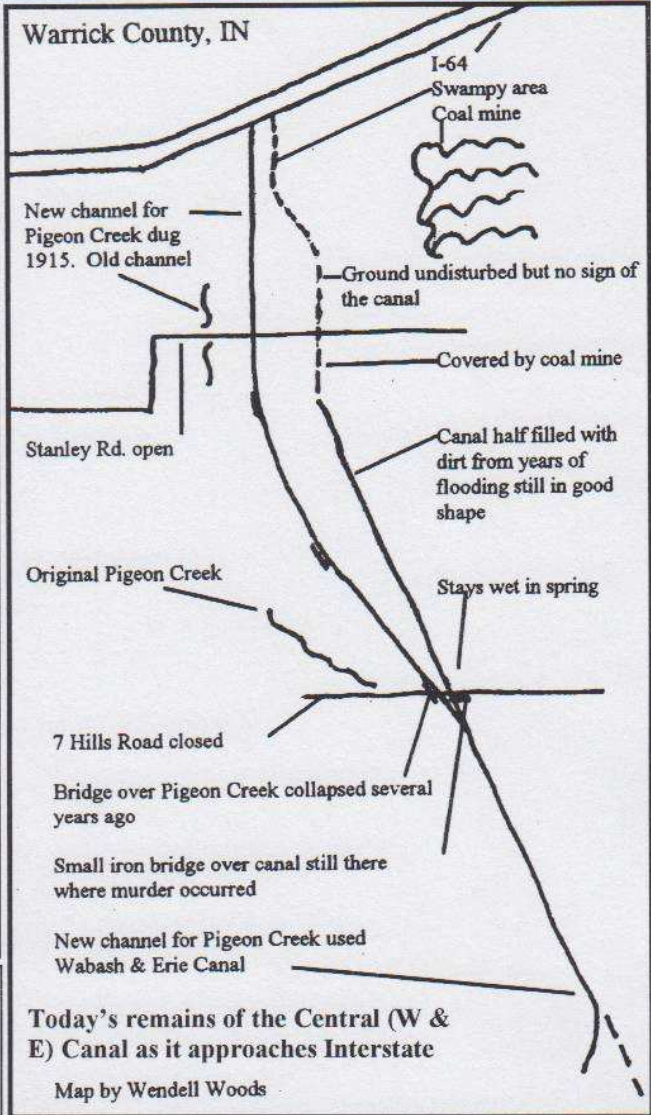
The Central (Wabash & Erie) Canal followed the east bank of Pigeon Creek northward in Campbell Township passing through Millersburgh and Rochester. The 18 miles originally built as the Central Canal from Evansville ended where there was a dam built across Pigeon Creek to feed the canal south and westward. The town of Rochester was platted at this point. Even after construction of the Central Canal ceased in 1839, boat traffic plied the Central Canal between Evansville and Rochester providing a means for farmers to get their crops to market. These 18 miles were connected to the Wabash and Erie Canal in the 1850s and took the name Wabash & Erie Canal.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES



A Plat of Rochester, Warrick County, Indiana

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 (Wabash & Erie) Canal.



Today's remains of the Central (W & E) Canal as it approaches Interstate

Map by Wendell Woods

Along the Wabash and Erie route north of Rochester and just before reaching today's Interstate 64 a murder occurred after the canal era. Nora Kifer was last seen at the bridge over the canal. A book was published about the Keith Murder Trial. It said Nora Kifer was not refined or cultured in city ways but, in the area in which she lived, she was known as "pretty Nora Kifer" and was the "queen of all maids." At the end of an April day she was dressed in a new spring outfit and knew she was attractive to men.

She told her mother that she was going to a spelling bee at the district school, and walked slowly across the meadow and down to the canal towpath. She was happy and her face glowed because she was going to meet her lover.

Along the way Nora met several tired men walking home from work for their suppers. She stopped at a neighbor's home to chat for awhile and then proceeded on. She passed several of her admirers but didn't spend time talking to them. Finally she reach the long narrow road and stopped to view the gorgeous clouds and sunset before walking rapidly to the old canal bridge. Once there she thought of the note she had received from a married man a few hours prior. It said "Meet me at the bridge at dusk, Joe."

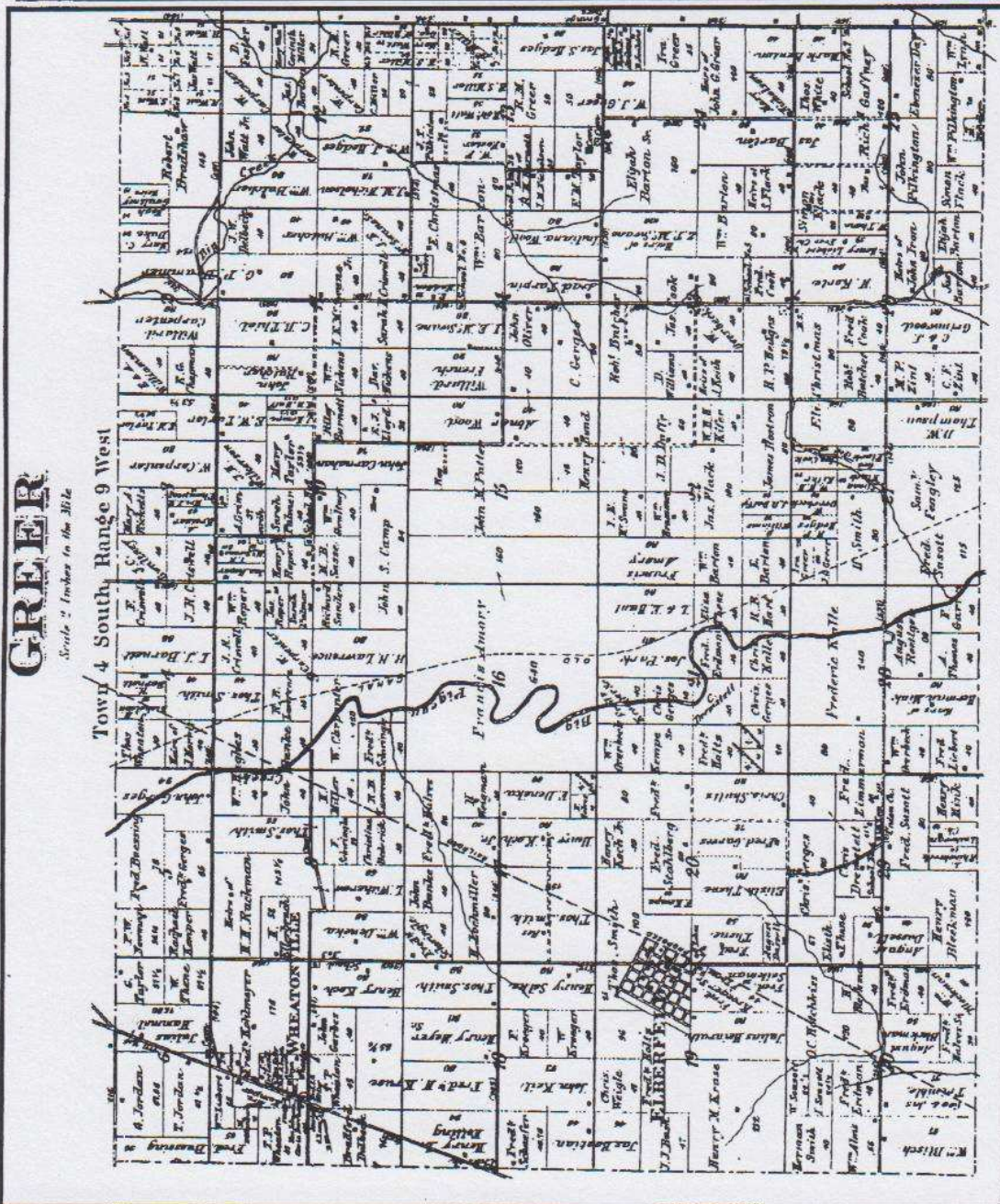
RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

Nora had met Joe at the bridge at dusk many times. They would kiss and tell each other how much they loved each other. He told her he wanted to escape his marriage vows. She understood his moods.

On the evening of April 3, 1900 she walked back and forth on the bridge impatiently waiting for him and, after glancing down the long brown road, crossed the tow-path and was no longer seen. This was to be her last walk. She disappeared among the bushes next to the canal bridge. Her body was later found in Vanderburgh County. Joseph D. Keith was found guilty of murdering her.

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*.

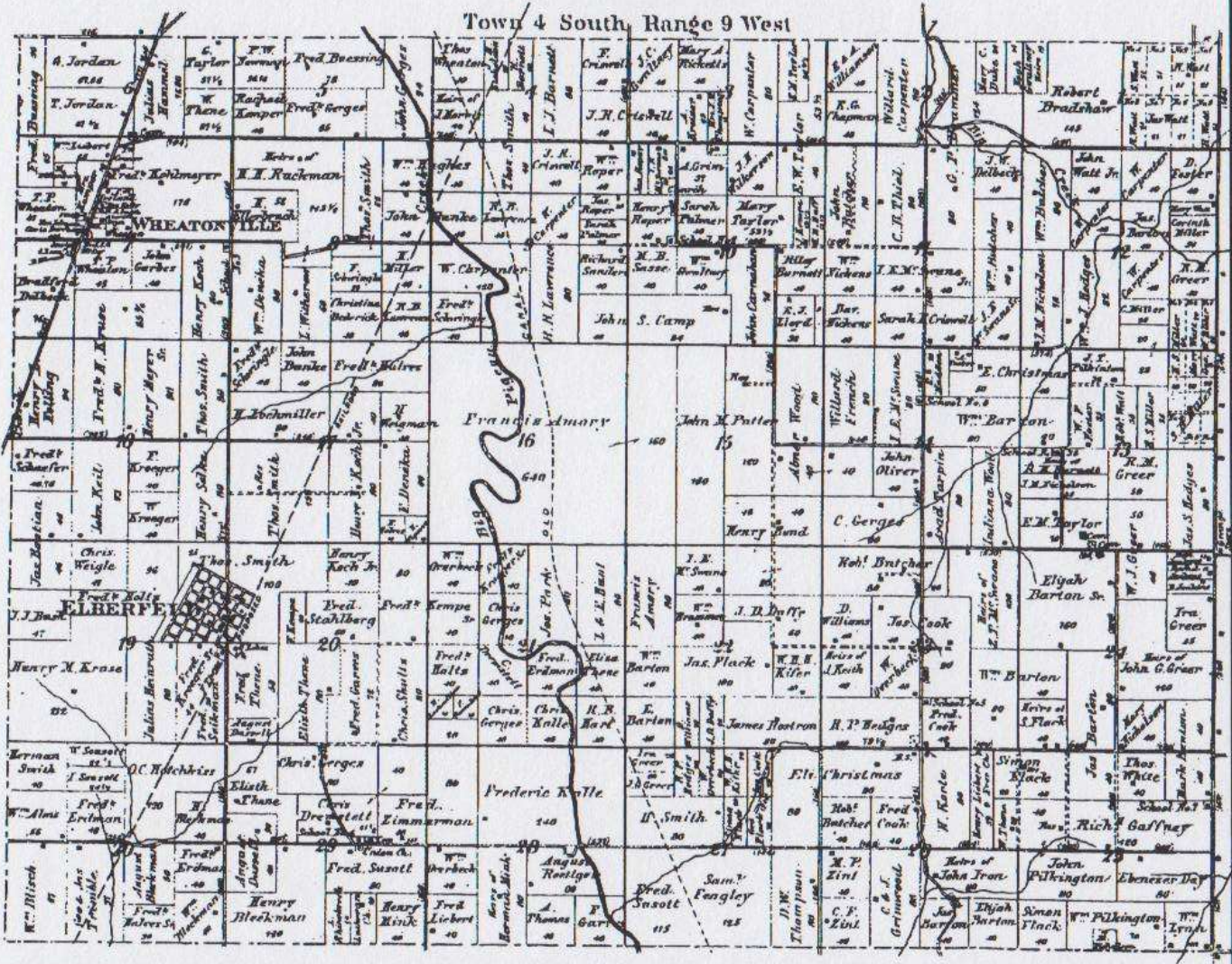
The route of the W&E canal continued through Grier Township in Warrick County and into Gibson County where a huge reservoir was built when the Wabash & Erie Canal was connected to the lower 18 miles of the Central Canal. The reservoir was called Pigeon Creek Reservoir since it was fed by the creek.



GREER

Scale 2 Inches to the Mile

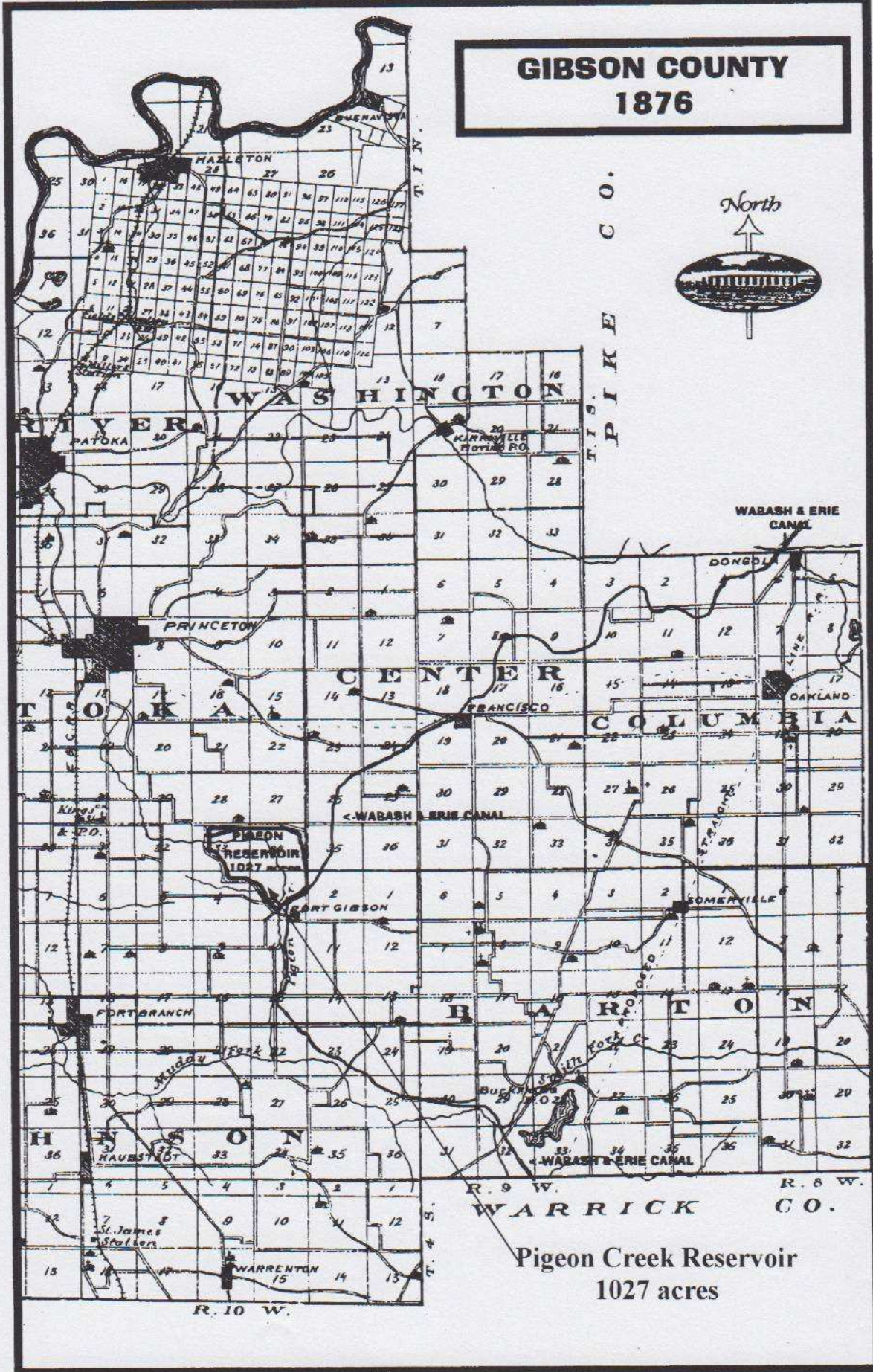
Town 4 South Range 9 West



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.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

GIBSON COUNTY
1876



Pigeon Creek Reservoir
1027 acres

W&E IN GIBSON COUNTY

Gibson County was one of the earliest counties settled in Indiana because the emigrants followed the Native Americans' Red Banks Trail from Kentucky that came up through what would later become Vanderburgh County. The county was organized in 1813 before Indiana became a state and encompassed most of Dubois and Pike counties. It was later reduced to 498 square miles.

Its earliest settlers were John Severns, Gervas Hazelton, Daniel Hazelton, David Robb, John Johnson, William Hargrove, Joseph Milburn, James McClure and their families. About 1810 these settlers were fearful that the Native Americans would raid their settlements since Tecumseh was stirring up the Native Americans in northern Indiana. They built three forts in Patoka township where present day Princeton is located. These were Fort Branch, Fort Hopkins, and the stockade at William Harrington's. The county was organized in Harrington's home in 1813. On March 28, 1814 Princeton was founded by Robert M. Evans and named for William Prince, a local attorney and legislator. It became the county seat.

Robert Evans, as was earlier noted, was instrumental in getting the Indiana legislature to carve out portions of Warrick and Posey counties to form Vanderburgh County. He was also the Representative who introduced the Internal Improvements Bill in January 1836. He had many connections with the canal.

Between 1849 to 1853 the final section of the canal was completed linking the lower 18 miles of the Central Canal to the Cross-Cut Canal at Worthington with the entire length then becoming the Wabash & Erie Canal. When this occurred the canal engineers knew that more water was required than the feeder dam and short feeder canal at Rochester could provide (915 cubic feet of water per minute for eight months of the year). Especially during the dry months more water was needed. They built Pigeon Creek Reservoir about 13 miles north of the feeder dam that supplied 955 cubic feet of water per minute. William J. Ball in his *Resident Engineer's Report* of November 25, 1850 to Chief Engineer Jesse Lynch Williams reports:

"Finding the Flat Creek Reservoir so unfavorable, an examination was made for an eligible site on the head waters of Pigeon Creek which resulted successfully. A suitable place was found for making a bank across the valley where its width is only 36 chains and the top water line of the Reservoir surveyed, including an area of 14,867 acres. Ordinates were also run, by which the content of the Reservoir, when full, is ascertained with reliable accuracy, to be 387,814,680 cubic feet. Its maximum height will be 7 feet A, and the greatest available depth at the bulk head, 10 feet. For a considerable portion of the distance around, the banks are abrupt; another portion has a more gentle inclination; and a part of the border is very flat. A depression of 2 feet will expose 200 acres of land; a depression of 4 feet will expose 460 acres; and a depression of 6 feet, 680 acres. But around the flat portion of its border there are no settlements, and probably never will be. A very small portion of the entire area is arable land.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

"The area of country inclining towards, and the drainage of which would be caught by the Pigeon Creek Reservoir, was ascertained by survey to be 14,876 acres, exclusive of the area of the Reservoir. The basis forming the Pigeon Creek Reservoir is remarkably well adapted to the retention of water, being a tight impervious clay soil; and the surrounding country is general high and rolling, in portions broken, having also a clay soil is well calculated to drain off into the Reservoir, a large proportion of the rain that falls upon it.

"In my calculations of the probable available quantity of water to be laid up in the Pigeon Creek Reservoir, I have assumed an annual fall of rain and snow melted of 35 vertical inches, and that two-fifths of this, or 14 vertical inches, would flow into the Reservoir. This quantity would amount to 755,998,320 cubic feet. I have supposed an allowance of 4 feet vertical over a mean surface of the Reservoir (1,027 acres) would be an ample allowance for loss by evaporation and leakage, considering the peculiar tenacity of the solid. This would amount to 178,944,480 cubic feet, and being deducted from the drainage above, would leave a net supply of 557,053,840 cubic feet; which would afford 1,097 cubic feet per minute for 12 months. It is intended to raised the Reservoir bank 5 feet above top water line. It will be 10 feet wide on top, with slopes of 1 3/4 to 1 and in its centre there will be a tight wall of 2 inch oak plank, extending about 2 feet below the natural surface, and 2 feet above the top water line of the Reservoir.

"There is on the east side of the Reservoir a high point of land composed of hard clay, underlaid with soft sand stone rock, at a suitable level for the foundations of the Reservoir Culverts, rendering the location particularly eligible. From the culverts, a short and cheap feeder will lead the water into the Canal just below the Lock.

"At the North end of Pigeon Summit deep cut, a Lock will be put in having a lift varying from 1 to 3 feet; the latter being its lift when the Reservoir is filled to top water line; and through the Reservoir, the embankments are raised to an extra height of 3 feet to keep them at all times above water. The water will be admitted into the Canal from the Reservoir by suitable waste weirs, and at the north end of Pigeon Summit, a large waste weir will be provided to discharge any extraordinary floods that may occur, and the excessive drainage of certain years. It is intended to put in 4 gates 2 feet square for drawing the water from the Reservoir to fill the Canal, and these together with the waste weirs at the North end of the Reservoir, will be amply sufficient to discharge unusual floods, and prevent the water rising higher than is intended. But the Reservoir bank is raised 5 feet extra height, and would safely bear a rise of 2 feet, which would hold half the largest monthly drainage that has occurred during the last 15 years. But it is not probable the Reservoir bank will ever be exposed to this extra pressure, and I do not think the extreme oscillations in the surface of the water, from the lowest stage in the fall, to the highest, probably in July, need exceed six feet. It is intended to clear 250 acres of the border of the Pigeon Creek Reservoir, which, will be alternately covered with water, and then exposed to the sun, and prevent any just cause of complaint, that the health of the country has been impaired by flooding the land.

"It will be seen that the distance from Newbury (New berry) Dam to the South end of Pigeon Reservoir, is 64 miles and 6 chains, and the estimated supply of water required 4,338 cubic feet per minute. From the Pigeon Reservoir to Pigeon Creek Feeder

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

gether the little settlement became an important station, in fact, the principal canal point in Gibson county."

The canal continued northeast through the highlands of Pigeon summit that divides the watershed between Pigeon Creek and the Patoka river. The first settlers in the area near Francisco were William and Catherine Hensley Reavis who came in 1817. Other settlers drifted slowly in until the canal spurred John Perkins to plat the town of Francisco in January 6, 1851 on the east side of the canal in Center Township. He built several business buildings, two flouring mills, and a sawmill. He was also a merchant and a dealer in real estate.

In November of 1857 a tornado set down near the head of the old reservoir, proceeded northeast through heavily timbered land, and hit the town of Francisco. Several buildings were wrecked, some people were seriously injured, but no one was killed.

By 1858 Francisco boasted three large pork-packing houses and warehouses, three large grain warehouses, several general stores and a few smaller business. It was incorporated as a town in 1907.

From Francisco the canal followed the lowlands of the Patoka River to Dongola, which was platted on March 10, 1851 by William Carpenter and Isaac Steele. There the canal crossed the river on an open trunk aqueduct. William H. Stewart and Agesilaus Rockefeller were the contractors on this section of the canal at Dongola and the building of the aqueduct. They, as was the case of most canal contractors, were honorable men who had many men engaged to work on their section. Shortly after beginning their section Bev. Willis, a rather wild fellow, built a shanty boat (10 ft. x 15 ft.) on the Patoka River. It became a den of drunkards. Contractor Stewart found his best men beginning to neglect their work and gave Willis one week to take away his boat and whiskey. Willis obeyed, sold his whiskey to another "doggerly man," tore up his boat and moved to California.

Then Spradley came to Dongola to build a whiskey shanty. There were no laws against this at the time. Anyone who built a log shanty and purchased a barrel of whiskey at twenty-five cents a gallon could own his own "doggerly." Many of these drinking dens arose along the canal route. Spradley brought two barrels of whiskey from Warrick county and set up his doggerly. He boasted that the canallers would have to get busy to get rid of him. Stewart and several of his bosses armed with picks broke open the barrels and dumped the whiskey onto the ground. This ended the selling of liquor in Dongola.

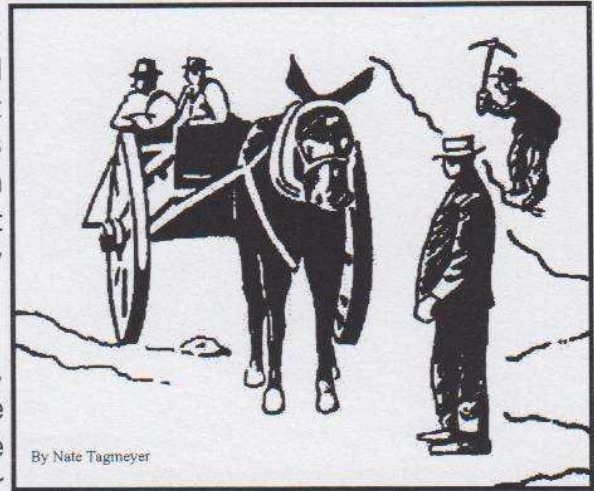
Most of the sections of the canal were a mile long. However, if a section had lots of heavy work, it would be shorter so that the sections could each be



RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

completed about the same time. The canal tow-path and berm were built of dirt that was hauled in one-horse drawn carts. When the haul was not over two hundred yards, the usual procedure was to have four carts and four shovel men. When the procedure was done correctly, as a full cart left to be deposited on the bank another empty cart arrived to be filled with dirt.

Over each forty men and carts was a boss. Most of the shovelers were Irishmen, who were known for their drinking and fighting. Most of the lumber men who cut timbers for the culverts or bridges were Americans. At times the workers were given a half gill of whiskey each day. However, this custom from the east was looked down upon in Indiana and was soon outlawed.



By Nate Tagmeyer

One of the heaviest work sections on the canal was over Keg Creek and its bottoms. Its contractor was Ragon. The fill across these bottom lands was one hundred feet wide and somewhere between fifteen to eighteen feet to the canal's bottom. Along the sides of this fill was built the berm bank (10 feet wide) and towpath. These were six feet higher than the canal bottom. It took a great number of men, many carts and many teams of mules or oxen to complete. These teams often consisted of as many as eight yoke of oxen to pull one huge plow. It took a total of nearly three years to complete the work at Keg Creek. The contractor for the heavy works across Hurricane Creek was Patrick Manning.

In 1852 the cholera epidemic reached Gibson County. It hit the Wabash and Erie Canal construction camp located about seven miles southeast of Princeton where between two and three hundred Irish immigrant workmen lived. Sanitation among canal workers and their shanties was terrible. Most of the men lived like animals. This left them open to disease. In less than three weeks eighty people had died.

Most people fled following this first outbreak. Bodies of the dead remained where they had died for days because it was next to impossible to find men to bury them. Some Irish, who had stricken family members, remained behind and agreed to bury the dead. Long trenches near the canal reservoir were dug to receive the bodies. A few bodies were taken to Vincennes to be buried on consecrated ground. In most cases those who helped also lost their lives.

Once the canal was completed, shippers had the lowest rates that had ever been seen in Gibson County. One of the old record books, kept by James and Col. W.M. Cocrum for their pork packing and tobacco business in Dongola, showed that they shipped from Dongola to Evansville "tierces of lard, two hundred and fifty pounds, for ten cents each, barrels of pork for eight and a third cents each, and hogsheds of tobacco, sixteen to eighteen hundred pounds, for fifty cents each.

The Wabash and Erie Canal left Gibson County and proceeded into Pike County.

RAPPITES, RIVERBOATS, PIRATES

JESSE L. WILLIAMS 1853 STRUCTURE REPORT

To clarify the report and make it easier to find each structure, headings and additional current information have been added in bold type before each of his descriptions

GIBSON COUNTY

Aqueduct No. 17 (Patoka River):

South 1/2 of aqueduct in Gibson County. See above description.

Guard Gates at Patoka Aqueduct:

Former site of Dongola

On each side of the Patoka there is a guard gate, the gates of the upper one facing up stream, and those of the lower facing down stream. They are to be used in case of accident at the aqueduct, to shut the water off both ways. Slide gates are provided in the side of the aqueduct trunk to let off the water.

Road Bridge No. 149:

Road bridge No. 149, at Dongola. The tow-path changes here, the bridge being provided with additional track.

Culvert No. 198:

Culvert No. 198. One space 4 by 1 1/2 feet clear. Length 127 feet. Top of culvert 11 1/2 feet B.

Culvert No. 199:

Culvert No. 199. One space 9 by 1 1/2 feet clear. Length 142 feet. Top of culvert 15 3/4 feet B.

Culvert No. 200 (Hurricane Creek):

Embankment visible

Culvert No. 200. Hurricane creek. Two spaces 8 by 2 1/2 feet clear. Length 169 feet. Top of culvert 23 1/2 feet B.

Culvert No. 201:

Culvert No. 201. Small.

Culvert No. 202:

Culvert No. 202. One space 9 by 2 feet clear. Length 131 feet. Top of culvert 12 1/2 feet B.

GPS - N 38D 21.774M W 87D 22.756M

Culvert No. 203 (Buck Creek):

Culvert under road

Culvert No. 203. Buck creek. Two spaces 8 by 3 feet. Length 153 feet. Top of culvert 19 B.

Road Bridge No. 150:

Road bridge No. 150. Dongola and Princeton road.

Culvert No. 204 (Keg's Creek):

Keg creek, large embankment

Culvert No. 204. Key's creek. Four spaces 8 by 4 feet clear. Length 160 feet. Top of culvert 21 feet B. Side timbers secured by bolting post to them on the outside.

Road Bridge No. 151:

Road bridge No. 151. Princeton road.

Culvert No. 205:

Culvert No. 205. Small.

Culvert No. 206 (Lost Creek east fork):

Culvert No. 206. East fork of Lost creek. Two spaces 8 by 3 1/2 feet. Length 124 feet. Top of culvert 10 1/2 feet B.

Culvert No. 207:

Culvert No. 207. One space 6 by 1 1/2 feet clear. Length 103 feet. Top of culvert 4 1/2 feet B.

Road Bridge No. 152:

Road bridge No. 152. Francisco to Princeton.

Pigeon Deep Cut visible and watered

Waste Weir:

Waste weir with two large gates, supported by iron bars, working from a center, at upper side of foundation, raised by chains and rollers. This structure is built of timber and plank upon the plan described next before Lock No. 61.

Tumble:

Tumble in berm bank to let in branch. Culvert at this point impracticable.

Road Bridge No. 153:

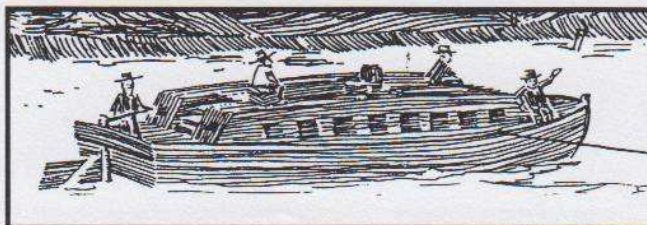
Road bridge NO. 153. Boonville and Princeton.

Waste Weir:

Waste weir in berm side to pass water to and from the Pigeon Creek Reservoir.

Culvert No. 208 (Scaffold Lick):

Culvert No. 208. Scaffold Lick. Timber arch of 16 feet chord. Ring 16 inches deep. Top of culvert 2 feet B. Length of culvert 96 feet from face to face. Crown of arch planked. As the water in the reservoir rises above the bottom of the Canal on both sides of this culvert, it was necessary to secure it from rising by iron bands. They pass through a stick of timber under the foundation, and are strongly keyed together. The bars are 2 by 1/2 inch, made in pieces from 4 to 6 feet long.



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Road Bridge No. 154.

Road bridge No. 154. Port Gibson, at lower end of the Pigeon Creek Reservoir.

GPS - N 38D 16.612M W 87D 30.552M

Pigeon Creek Reservoir Culvert:

Pigeon Creek Reservoir culvert, to admit water into the Canal from the reservoir, is built of timber upon the plan of the culvert for the Splunge Creek reservoir. There are four sliding gates for the passage of water. The foundation is rock, but not being very hard, timber was put in upon it on the ordinary plan, and the whole planked on below the breast wall.

Waste Weir & Road Bridge:

Waste weir at the west end of reservoir bank. This structure consists of timber abutments 66 feet apart, in the form of L's, with breast wall 3 feet high, and longitudinal foundation timbers 2 feet apart, filled in between and covered over with stone. On the breast wall there are posts against which the plank rest, raising to top water line of the reservoir, and upon which there is a wide cap, on which a man may walk, to remove the plank when a large discharge is required. From the waste weir there is a ditch to convey the water gently down to the level of the creek bottom. Across the Canal there is a road bridge about 30 feet long.

Lock No. 67 (Port Gibson Lock) & Towpath Bridge:

Site visible, some timbers visible, now a pig lot. Embankment of Pigeon Reservoir visible.

Lock No. 67, at Port Gibson. Lift 7 feet, but the walls are raised 15 feet high, to guard against overflow, in case the reservoir should break into the Canal. The gates are raised to correspond with the walls. The lock is built of timber on the crib plan. Tow path bridge over the mouth of feeder from the reservoir.

Lock No. 68:

Lock No. 68. Near Port Gibson. Lift 7 feet, built of timber on the crib plan.

Culvert No. 209:

Culvert No. 209. One space 9 by 2 feet clear. Length of culvert 103 feet. Top of culvert 4 1/2 feet B. Covering and part of sides planked.

Lock No. 69:

Lock No. 69. Lift 8 1/2 feet, built of timber on the crib plan.

Culvert No. 210:

Culvert No. 210. One space 9 by 2 feet clear. Top of culvert 2 feet B. Length of culvert 94 feet. Covering and part of sides planked.

Culvert No. 211 (Snake Run):

Culvert No. 211. Snake run. Timber arch of 16 feet chord. Ring 16 inches deep. Top of arch 2 feet B. Length of culvert from face to face, 86 feet. Crown of arch planked.

Road Bridge No. 155:

Road bridge No. 155. Warrington road.

Lock No. 70:

Lock No. 70, of 6.8 feet lift. Built of timber on the crib plan.

Culvert No. 212:

Culvert No. 212. One space 10 by 2 1/2 feet clear. Length of culvert 103 feet. Top of culvert 2 1/2 feet B. Covering and part of sides planked.

Culvert No. 213:

Culvert No. 213. One space 9 by 2 feet clear. Length of culvert 99 feet. Top of culvert 2 1/2 feet B. Covering and part of sides planked.

Culvert No. 214 (Smith's Fork):

Culvert No. 214. Smith's Fork. Timber arch of 28 feet chord. Ring 21 inches deep. Length of culvert from face to face 86 feet. Top of arch 1 1/2 feet B. Crown or arch planked.

Lock No. 71 (Smiths Fork Lock):

Lock No. 71, of 6 feet lift. Built of timber on the crib plan.

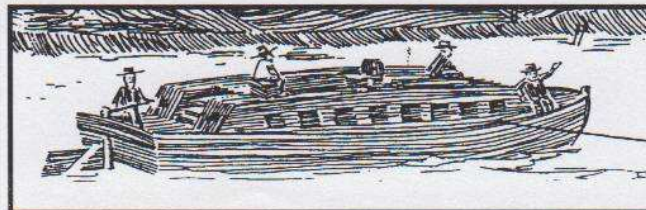
Road Bridge No. 156: (SR57)

Road bridge No. 156. Petersburg and Evansville Road.

WARRICK COUNTY

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.



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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 2 1/2 feet B.

Culvert No. 216:

Culvert No. 216; two spaces 10 by 2 feet clear. Length of culvert 96 feet; top of culvert 2 1/2 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. 217. Timber, rectangular, submerged.

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 Millersburg.

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 in Wesselman Park.

Culvert No. 228:

Culvert No. 228. Rectangular, timber submerged.

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.

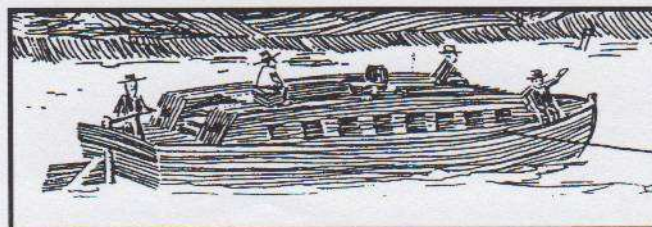
Culvert No. 233:

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 2 1/2 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



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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.

TOUR NOTES

