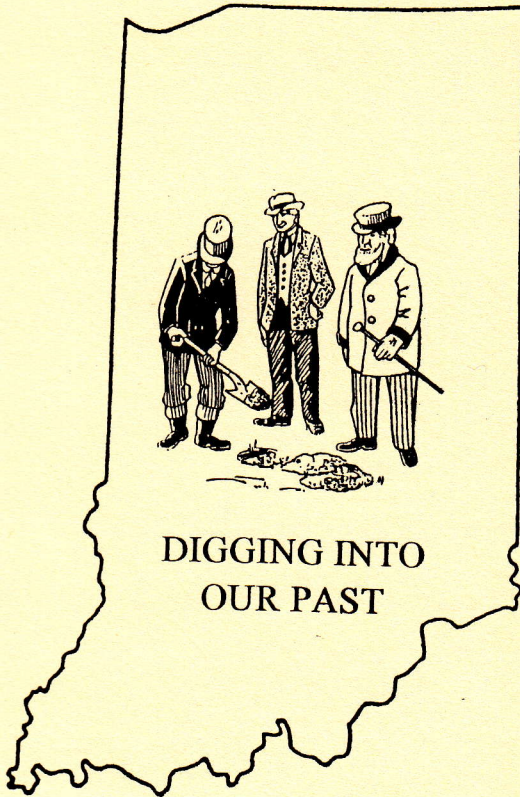


INDIANA CANALS



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INDIANA CANALS

The Journal of the Canal Society of Indiana

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THE RILEY LOCK

by Stan Schmitt

At one time or another, almost anyone interested in Indiana canals has made the walk into the woods to view the remains of the stone lock near Riley. Few people however, realize that they are looking at the sole surviving lock from the Cross Cut Canal.*

Earlier this year, I was doing some research on the canal south of Terre Haute to determine the location of Locks 43 and 44. Planned highway construction along the route of the canal was likely to have an impact on any remains. Later in the summer Tammy Ayer of the Terre Haute Tribune Star asked for some additional information relating to the canal. During the conversation she asked if I had any information on **Robert Logan**.

If you have looked through the 1853 List of Mechanical Structures for the Wabash & Erie Canal, the description of Lock 47 states:

“this is the best lock in the state of

Indiana, it was built by Robert Logan,
of Pike county.”

Despite the proximity of Pike County to Evansville, I had never looked into who Robert Logan was. A little research showed that the builder of the Riley lock was a man of some importance.



Riley Lock was visited by CSI on its tour of the Terre Haute area on April 11, 1994. One wall was removed shortly after the canal era.

Robert Logan was born in Scotland in 1808. As a boy he learned the stone trade as a bound boy in the marble quarries. By 1830, he had immigrated to the Highbanks area of Pike County, overlooking the White River. During the ensuing years he was responsible for some of the stone work in the area,

but made his name and fortune in meat packing, flat boating produce to New Orleans and operating a general store. He was also elected to the Indiana General Assembly in 1843, 1845 and 1869. In 1846, Logan Township was named after him. Robert Logan died in 1872 and was buried under a tomb stone of Scottish marble in Logan cemetery. The quarry which supplied stone for the White River aqueduct was located very near to Logan's home. Whether he had any part in its construction is still to be determined.

Convinced that I had found Robert Logan the lock builder, I went back to the May 24, 1848, contract summary for some additional information. There I found that Alpheus McMaster was listed as contractor for the canal section containing the Riley lock. My attention was then drawn to the fact that the contract called only for the installation of lock gates. This pointed toward an earlier construction date for the construction of this lock and the other stone lock (#46) in the area. A search of engineer reports for the Cross Cut Canal supplied the answers.

*By 1839
the Indiana
internal
improvement
program was
in trouble.*

The 1836 route survey for the Cross Cut Canal called for the construction of seven stone locks between Terre Haute and the summit. In 1837 contracts for two locks were let and "some progress made in quarrying and cutting stone for these locks, although no masonry has yet been laid. The stones are of a

durable quality and will form substantial masonry, though the cost of quarrying and dressing will be great.”

A copy of the contract for lock number 3, at Riley, was found in the Indiana State Archives. This contract was concluded on May 3, 1837, with Robert Logan and Isaac Barnett agreeing to finish construction by November 1, 1838. The report of 1838 stated that locks were being built of cut stone “very substantial and perfect locks, though costly.”



Riley Lock was visited by the Vigo County Historical Society on its canal tour in October of 1999. The lock has changed little, but a nearby stream threatens to undercut the remains.

By 1839 the Indiana internal improvement program was in trouble. Only the heaviest jobs on the Cross Cut Canal were still progressing, and the decision was made that other locks on the line would be constructed of timber, if needed. When work on the Cross Cut Canal was abandoned in 1840, two completed locks of stone were left on the line. Upon the extension of the Wabash & Erie Canal, these locks became locks numbered 46 and 47.

Today, Lock 47 at Riley is still one of the best remnants of the canal era. Part of the east wall was dismantled some time in the early 20th century. Its stones are probably now part of the flood control structure at the base of the former Splunge Creek reservoir. The stones of Lock 46 were taken away for use as bridge abutments over Honey Creek and probably no longer exist. Plans are now in the works to preserve the Riley lock in some kind of park setting. This also includes the possible reconstruction of its missing wall. Hopefully, this will come about in the near future before the stream running down the former canal bed undermines the lock's southern foundation.

Lock 47 is more than just a surviving canal lock. It is the sole survivor of the Cross Cut Canal and therefore deserving of special attention.

* Description of Cross Cut Canal vs Wabash & Erie and why it was lock #3 and also #47.

For further information about the current Riley lock study see the Canal Society of Indiana Newsletter Vol. 13 No. 12, December 1999.

Stan Schmitt is an independent title searcher/abstractor who does property searches for three Indianapolis title companies in Vanderburgh county. He used to do work in 14 other counties which gave him an opportunity to look at canal items and sites in SW Indiana.

Stan first became interested in canals 20 years ago while doing genealogical research. He found that part of this family farm came from the Trustees of the Wabash & Erie Canal, but the farm was in Spencer county nowhere near the canal. It was on land set aside to help fund the canal. Fortunately he was at Indiana University where he soon found engineer's, trustees', and board internal improvement reports. As a result of some trips looking for canal remains using the 1847 and 1853 structure lists, he met the Meeks, who were founders of CSI, and subsequently joined the society.

Stan's research continues. He plans to write a book sometime in the future. He has had a title and an outline for over ten years but continues to find new information. At the present time he is on the history committee of the Pigeon Greenway Passage and supplies canal information to the Evansville Preservation Office and other organizations. He just finished research for the sesquicentennial at his church and continues to do research in a number of other areas of local and state history. Stan is a past member of the CSI Board of Directors, CSI Co-Editor of Indiana Canals, and serves on the CSI Advisory Council.

Stan sent a copy of the contract for building the Riley Lock he obtained from the Indiana State Archives. Because it is too

small to be readable when reduced to fit a 8.5 x 11 inch page, the contract has been typed from the original. Some of the specifications have been printed in other issues of Indiana Canals, but this contract gives the specifics for this lock and have been underlined. Underlining with nothing above it represents places in the contract that were left blank.

Contract

2



for

Building the Riley Lock

THIS AGREEMENT, made and concluded this 3 third day of May in the year 1837 between Robert Logan & Dave Barnett of the Sta te of Indiana party of the first part, and the BOARD OF INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATE OF INDIANA, by Thomas H. Blake acting Commissioner, for and on behalf of said state, of the second part, WITNESSETH; That the said party of the first part contracts and agrees to construct, in a good, substantial, and workmanlike manner, all the part of the line of the _____ of the Cross Cut Canal which is included in section No. Twenty Two (22) reference being herein had to the

location and map of said line made by Wm. Jas. Ball Engineer, agreeable to the following plan, that is to say: First, in all places where the natural surface of the earth is above the bottom of the Canal and where the line requires excavation, all trees, saplings, bushes, stumps, and roots, shall be grubbed and dug up at least sixty _____ feet wide; that is _____ on the towing-path side of the centre, and _____ wide on the opposite side of the centre of the Canal, and together with all logs, brush and wood of every description shall be removed at least twenty feet beyond the outward line of said grubbing on each side, and on the space of twenty feet on each side of the said grubbing, all the trees, saplings, bushes and stumps shall be cut down close to the ground, so that no part of any of them shall be left more than one foot in height above the natural surface of the earth, and shall also, together with all logs, brush, and wood of every kind, be removed entirely from said space. And the trees, saplings, and bushes shall also be cut down fifteen feet wide on each side of said space so to be cleared, and also all trees which in falling will be liable to break or injure the banks of the Canal, and where the situation of the line may require, the grubbing, low chopping, and clearing shall be extended in breadth, so far that no uncleared land may be occupied by the embankment or excavation. And no part of the trees, saplings, brush, stumps, wood, or rubbish of any kind, shall be felled, laid, or deposited on either of the sections adjoining this contract. Second, the Canal and banks shall be so constructed and formed, by excavation or embankment, as either or both may be necessary, in order to bring the same to the proper level, as designated by the Engineers or either of them in the employment of said Commissioners: so that the water may in all places, be at least forty feet wide in the Canal at the surface, twenty-six feet wide

at the bottom, and four feet deep: Each of the banks shall be at least two feet perpendicular measurement, above the top water line, and such a slope shall be preserved on the inner side of the banks, both above and below the top water line; that every foot perpendicular rise in said banks shall give a horizontal base of one foot nine inches: The towing-path shall be at least ten feet wide at its surface, and shall be raised to such height above the top water line as may be designated by the Engineer; and wherever a difference in the elevation of the towing-path shall occur, the ascent or descent shall be such as may be directed by the Engineer: The towing path shall be smooth and even, shall be composed of the best materials which the adjoining excavation will furnish, and shall be so contracted that the side next the Canal will be six inches higher than the opposite side, at the surface, with an uniform and regular, so that the water may run off from said path: In all cases where the materials excavated shall raise a spoil bank on either side of the Canal, above the exterior surface of the Canal banks, it shall be placed so far from the edge of the Canal as to give room for a ditch to be made eight feet wide in the bottom, and two feet deep, between said spoil bank and the towing-path, or bank opposite, as the case may be; and sluices or passages for the water shall either be left or cut through said spoil banks as often as the Engineer having charge of the work may direct, so that the water may drain off freely from the banks in an opposite direction from the Canal: The bank opposite the towing-path shall in no place be less than six feet wide at the surface, and shall be smooth and even, and shall be four inches lower at the back than on the face of the bank; and neither of the banks shall have a slope of lesser base in proportion to its height on the outer than on the inner side, except when there is a redundance

of stuff increasing the width of the bank beyond the requisition aforesaid: All loose and porous materials, and those which are perishable or permeable to water shall occupy the outer extremities of the banks, and for a distance of at least ten feet, measured outwardly from the extremity of the top water line on each side the bank shall be composed both above and below the top water line, of the most pure, solid, compact, and water-tight earth which the adjoining excavation can supply; and no vegetable mould, muck, leaves, roots, grass, weeds, herbage, logs, sticks, brush, or any other substance of a porous or perishable nature, shall be left, laid, or in any way admitted into the said space of ten feet last described, and no wood or any description shall be admitted into any part of the banks. Third, in all cases of embankment, and where the bottom line of the canal is as much as two feet above the surface of the earth, all the trees, bushes, saplings, and stumps, on the space occupied by the canal and its banks, shall be cut close to the ground, and together with all logs, brush, and wood of every description, shall be removed from a space of at least forty-five feet wide on each side of the centre of the canal, and from a strip fifteen feet wide under each bank, to be so situated that the outer side of said strip shall be perpendicularly under the outer extremity of the banks, all the trees, bushes, stumps, and roots shall be thoroughly grubbed, and together with all the logs, brush, roots, grass, herbage, vegetable and porous earth, shall be removed entirely without said bank, so that the banks may unite securely with the solid earth. And in all cases where the natural surface of the earth is below the surface of the water in the canal, a much or puddle ditch shall be dug under the centre of each bank, of the depth and width which may be directed, in order to guard effectually against leakage.

And the said party of the first part further covenants and agrees to build, found, and erect, in a good substantial and workmanlike manner, Lock No. Three (3) conformably to the plan and specification for the same, exhibited at the time of receiving proposals for constructing the work included in this contract.

And the said party of the first part, further covenants and agrees to erect and build, in a good, substantial, and workmanlike manner, all and any such aqueducts, culvert or culverts, bridges, or other mechanical structures, in such place or places, on said section No. Twenty Two (22) and of such materials, form dimensions, and plan, as the acting Commissioner, the principal Engineer, or any other Engineer in the employ of the acting Commissioner, may direct.

And it is mutually agreed, that all the works on said section, or appertaining thereto, shall, during their progress, at all times be subject to the examination and careful inspection of the acting Commissioner or any Engineer, or Agent of the Board, employed for that purpose. And the party of the first part shall conform to such rules as to the manner of doing any and of all the various kinds of work necessary for the construction of a canal on said section, works or devices connected therewith, as may, from time to time, be given or prescribed by the acting Commissioner, or any Engineer having charge of that part of the line; and the said party of the first part further agrees, at all times, to conform to any alteration, or deviation from the present Canal line, or level, and to any alteration in the plan, form, or manner of constructing the Canal, or any of the works or devices connected therewith or appertaining thereto, which may be prescribed or directed by the

Commissioner any Engineer having charge of the work. And it is further agreed that the work specified in this contract, or contemplated thereby, shall be fully completed, by the party of the first part, by the first day of November 1838

And to prevent all disputes and misunderstandings between the parties, it is mutually agreed that Wm. Jas. Ball or some other competent Engineer to be selected by said Board or the acting Commissioners on this part of the line, shall be the inspector of said works, and shall decide whether they have been performed agreeably to the requisitions of this agreement and the instructions given as aforesaid by the Commissioner or Engineer. And it is further agree, that if, in the opinion of said inspector, the party of the first part shall refuse or neglect to prosecute the work specified in this agreement in such a manner as to give reasonable assurance of its full completion by the time herein specified therefor, or shall neglect or refuse to conform to such rules and instructions as may be given in relation to the manner of doing the work, or to such alterations in the line, level or plan of constructing the Canal, as may be made agreeably to the stipulations of this agreement, or shall perform, or suffer to be performed, any part of the work in an unfaithful or unworkmanlike manner, the said inspector shall in either case have power to determine that this contract is abandoned and forfeited by the party of the first part, and such a determination shall absolve the second party from every obligation imposed on them by this agreement; And the said Commissioner may immediately thereafter proceed to dispose of the said section in the same manner as if this contract never existed. And it is further agreed, that whenever this contract, in the opinion of the inspector aforesaid, shall have been completely performed, in every respect, by said party of the first part, (provided the same

shall be done by the time specified,) the said inspector shall certify the same in writing under his hand, together with his estimate of the amount of the various kinds of work herein specified, which shall have been done under this contract, which estimate shall be final between the parties; and thereupon the said party of the second part hereby covenants and agrees to pay, within ten days after notice of said certificates and estimates, to the said party of the first part, the sum which, according to this contract, shall be due, agreeably to said estimates of the Engineer, at the following rates or prices, to wit:

For the grubbing and clearing, per chain of four poles in length Twenty Dollars (\$20.)

cents: For earth

excavation, estimating all earth necessarily excavated between and under the banks, including loose pieces of rock or stones of less than one fourth of a cubic foot, (which are to be estimated as earth excavation) per cubic yard Sixteen (\$0.16) cents: For excavation of loose or detached pieces of rock or stones, (those only to be estimated under this item which are over one fourth or a cubic foot each,) per cubic yard _____ cents: For excavation of all solid rock which may occur in this contract, per cubic yard _____ cents: For each cubic yard of full embankment necessarily made, (to be measured in the bank,) Eighteen (\$0.18) cents: For Each cubic yard of single embankment, (to be measured in the bank,) Eighteen (\$0.18)

“For each cubic yard of full embankment necessarily made . . . \$0.18 . . .”

cents: Provided, That when any embankment is or can be formed, in whole or in part, from the earth necessarily excavated in the construction of the adjoining parts of the Canal, nothing shall be allowed for such embankment, or such part thereof as is or can be so formed, unless the earth to form the same shall be necessarily removed over one hundred feet measuring in the direction of the centre line: For excavation of lock pit, per cubic yard Twenty five (25) cents: For excavation of aqueduct or culvert pit, per cubic yard _____ cents: For puddling around lock, aqueduct, or culvert, per cubic yard Thirty seven (\$0.37) cents: For gravel in lock cribs, or in aqueduct or dam abutments, per cubic yard _____ cents: For embankment around lock, per cubic yard Twenty five (\$0.25) cents: For square timber in a lock cribs, per cubic foot _____ cents: For square timber in aqueduct or culvert, per cubic foot _____ cents: For timber in foundation of lock, per cubic foot Twelve (\$0.12) cents: For timber in foundation of aqueduct or culvert, per cubic foot _____ cents: For round ties in abutments and lock cribs, per foot run _____ cents: For pavement of stone about lock, aqueduct, or culvert, per cubic yard _____ cents: For protection of loose stone on Canal banks, per cubic yard Six Dollars (\$6.00) cents: For the bridge, framed, raised and floored _____ dollars: For lock gates and miter sills, complete, with all necessary fixtures Eight hundred (\$800) dollars: For masonry in cut stone lock, per cubic yard Eleven Dollars (\$11.00) cents: For dry masonry in lock walls, per cubic yard _____ cents: For masonry in culverts, or dam abutments per cubic yard _____ cents: For timber in aqueduct trunks, per cubic foot _____ cents: For upright and cap timbers or combined or dry wall lock per cubic foot _____ cents: For three inch plank in lock foundation, per square foot Seven

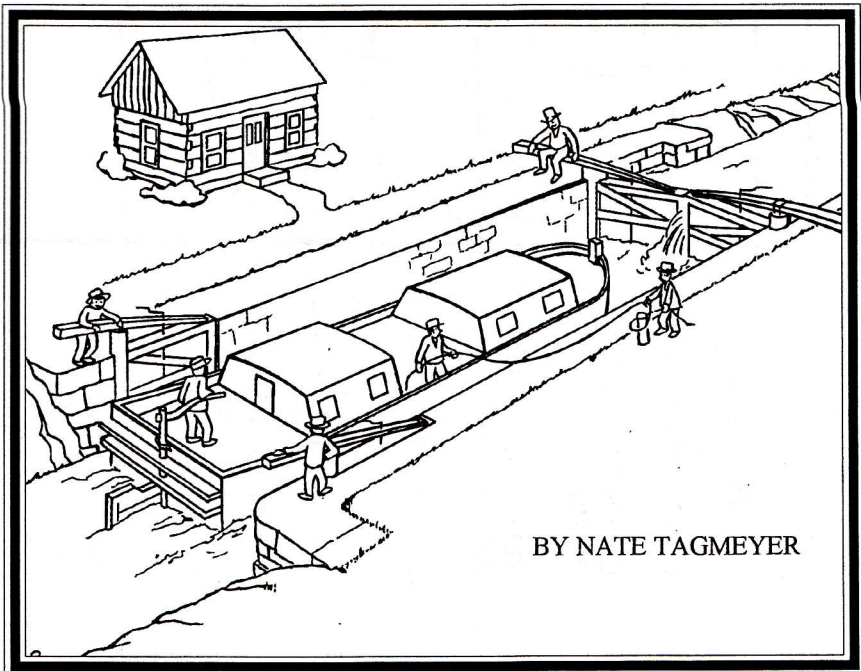
(\$0.07) cents: For two inch oak plank in lock foundations, or in aqueduct trunks, per square foot Five (\$0.05) cents: For two inch oak plank used in facing lock walls, per square foot _____ cents: For one inch boards used in facing lock walls, per square foot _____ cents: For iron used in lock facing, or in aqueduct trunks or dams, including spikes, per lb. Twenty five (\$0.25) cents: For bridge embankment, per cubic yard _____ cents.

And whenever the grubbing, clearing, or excavation of any of the different kinds herein specified, embankment, or any other work to be done under this contract, shall be increased or diminished by conforming to any alteration of the line, level, or plan of the work now made, agreeably to the direction of the acting Commissioner, or any Engineer having charge of the work, as herein before agreed, the quantity or amount of such increase or diminution of any or all the kinds of work herein specified, shall be estimated by said inspector agreeable to the foregoing rules, and the sum to be paid to the contractor shall be increased or diminished accordingly, agreeably to the rates and prices herein before specified.

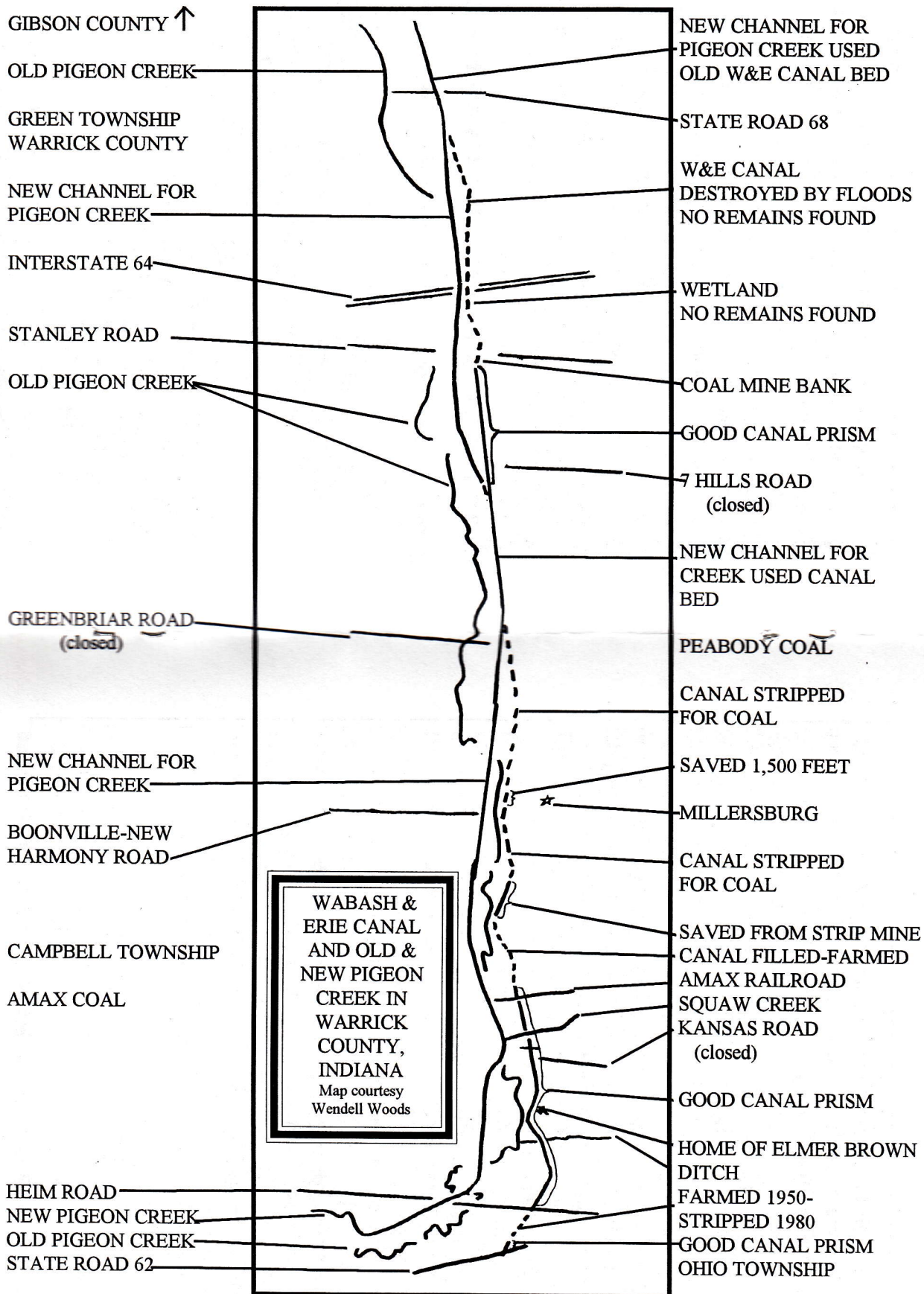
It is further expressly agreed, that the party of the first part shall not sub-contract any portion of the work without the consent of the acting Commissioner, but shall constantly superintend in person the work herein specified, and all parts thereof (except so far as sickness or other unavoidable accident may prevent,) and a failure to comply with this requisition shall be considered and adjudged a forfeiture and abandonment of this contract on the part of the said party.

It is further mutually agreed, that, at any time when in the opinion of the inspector aforesaid, the party of the first part

shall neglect or refuse to prosecute the work specified in this agreement, or any part thereof, so as to give a satisfactory assurance that it will be completed by the time stipulated herein, that the acting Commissioner shall be authorized to appoint agent to superintend said work, or such part thereof as he may deem proper. The agent so appointed shall be authorized to employ hands and to purchase the necessary materials for carrying on and completing all or any part of the work to be performed under this agreement; and his receipt for money paid him by the Commissioner shall be a good and sufficient voucher against the part of the first part, and all money so paid to the agent shall be charged to, and on a final settlement of the accounts, deducted from the sum which under this agreement may be payable to the party of the first part.



BY NATE TAGMEYER



And it is further agreed by the contracting parties, that during the progress of the construction of the work herein contemplated, estimates shall be made by the Engineer having charge of the work as often as the acting Commissioner may deem necessary for the successful prosecution of the work: and the Engineer shall give his certificate of the quantity or amount of labor which the party of the first part shall have performed necessarily under the stipulations and conditions of this agreement; and the party of the second party hereby agrees to pay, within ten days after notice of the estimate and certificate of the Engineer, shall have been made, to the party of the first part, one half of the amount, or sum, which, according to this contract, shall at the time be due, according to the estimates of the Engineer, for the labor which shall have been performed.

It is also further agreed and understood by and between the parties hereunto, that the party of the first part is held liable for the payment of the wages of all laborers who may be employed on the jobs herein contracted, or on any works connected therewith, whether they be employed by the party of the first part, or by any sub-contractor or agent under the said party, and when, in the opinion of the acting Commissioner, it may be necessary to secure the laborers employed as aforesaid, their wages, and he may think justice require it, he is hereby authorized to pay to the said laborers the amount of their claims, and their receipts for the payment so made shall be good against the party of the first part.

It is further understood, that all the stone quarried in excavating the Canal, shall belong to the state of Indiana, unless used in constructing some of the works herein contemplated.

It is further understood and expected that the party of the first part will use all reasonable exertions to discourage and prevent the use of spiritous liquor by the laborers engaged on this contract.

And it is further agreed, that the work embraced in this contract shall be commenced on or before the 10th day of May next 1837.

Grubbing & Clearing new creek channel per chain \$10.00)
Excavation of creek channel per cub. yd. @ \$0.16 cents IN
TESTIMONY WHEREOF, we, the parties in this agreement, hereunto set our hands and seals, the day and year first above written

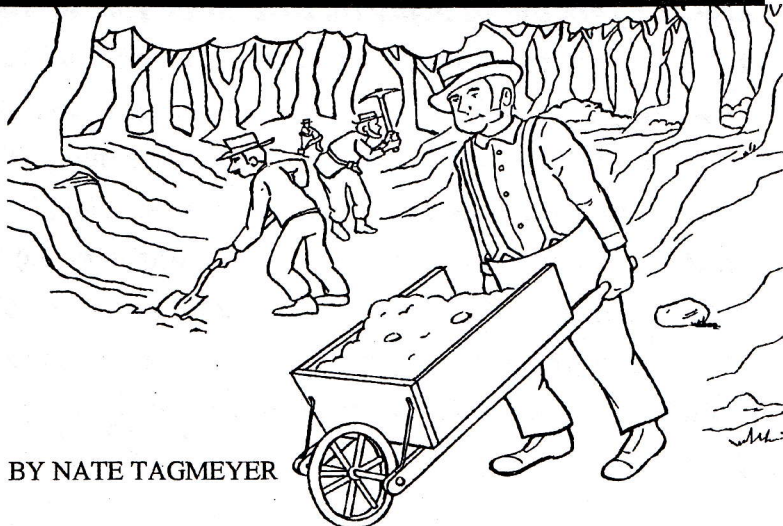
(SIGNED TRIPLICATES)

Robert Logan [SEAL]

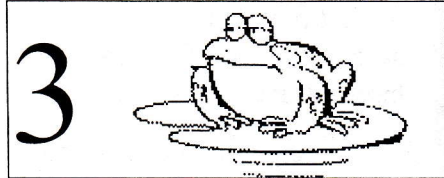
Dave Barnett [SEAL]

[SEAL]

Thos. H. Blake [SEAL]



BY NATE TAGMEYER



STRIPPING IN WARRICK COUNTY

The stripping, or surface mining, of coal in Warrick county, IN is gradually stripping away the remaining portion of the Wabash and Erie Canal which was originally built as a part of the Central Canal. It has caused the town of Millersburg (Canal) to become a ghost town as a result of stripping away its citizens by forcing them to move as the town was purchased by the coal company for future mining. An article entitled "Millersburg: Waterways and Canals Were Important For Town to Flourish During the 1800s" that appeared in The Warrick County Press on Thursday, September 24, 1981 was sent to CSJ Headquarters which gives an accurate picture of what occurred. It is quoted in its entirety as follows:

"MILLERSBURG - The muddy waters of Pigeon Creek meander lazily through the northwest portion of Warrick County, carrying on the task of draining the surrounding woodland and farming area.

"The creek's value as a waterway today fails to carry the significance it once held for Millersburg during the 1800s. It was in 1817 that James Anthony proposed that the stream could be used to power a grist mill by constructing a dam at the site of what would one day become Millersburg.

"It isn't known if Anthony proceeded with his plan, but by 1824 there were two mills in the community -- one owned by Philip Miller and known as Cox's Mill and another owned and operated by Luke Grant.

"James Rasure opened the first general store in the little settlement and

by 1837 the increase in horse-drawn vehicles traveling on Boonville-New Harmony Road resulted in construction of a covered bridge spanning Pigeon Creek at the west edge of town. The bridge remained a landmark until 1951 when it was razed.

"Work on the Wabash and Erie Canal, which ran parallel to the creek brought new settlers to the area and before its completion in 1856 the plat for the growing community named Millersburg had been laid out. However the post office had been assigned the name of Canal and the town was rarely called Millersburg until well past the turn of the century.

"Miss Olga Schwengel, 77, of Elberfeld, recalled that the late Charles Butcher of Warrick County was a descendant of one of the Irish immigrants who came to the area to build the canal.

“The workmen boarded with nearby families and usually moved on to the next construction site,’ she recalled. ‘But some, like Butcher, bought property and stayed.’

“Henry Ebrecht, Miss Schwengel’s great-grandfather, arrived here from Germany in 1847 and worked as a maintenance man on the canal for 75 cents a day.

“Miss Schwengel remembered how the old towpath of the canal that went through her father’s farm made a good road in the early years of the 20th century. ‘We used it to get to the Elberfeld-Stanley Road with our horse and buggy,’ she said. “Then in about 1915, Pigeon Creek was dredged to improve the drainage and it ruined the old towpath.’

“The canal -- which connected Toledo on Lake Erie with Evansville - was begun in 1832 in northern Indiana. By the time the entire operation was completed,

stretching 452 miles (Ed. note: 380 in Indiana plus 88 in Ohio = 468) up and down the state, central portions of the canal were beginning to fall into disuse.

“Posters were circulated throughout the eastern and southern parts of the country in 1837 to acquire the needed labor to complete the canal in Southern Indiana. The posters advertised that workers would be paid \$20 a month with fare and lodging included. The announcement also told of government land available for purchase at \$1.25 per acre for those who desired to establish permanent residence.

“Finally in 1853, the entire canal was completed and on Sept. 29 of that year the first passenger boat arrived in Evansville from Toledo. There was only one other passenger boat that ever made the complete trip again, although short-run freight and passenger service operated for a

time between Evansville and Petersburg. (Source? Not sure if this is true.)

"Landslides and washouts caused by heavy rains often damaged the canal channel, and competition for transportation dollars from railroads that were rapidly gaining a foothold in the state combined to make the canal a short-lived enterprise.

"Cleybern L. Brammer, 74, of Millersburg remembered a resident who told him of her ride on the first canal boat to come from Evansville. 'She was Mrs. Ellie Lockyear who was probably at least 80 years old when I was a young man.'

"Brammer, whose great-grandfather came here from England, operated the old Henry Pilkington Grocery in the village until 1968. The structure, built about 1870, is now used for storage by Brammer for his cattle

interests.

"A tavern and Kolley's Body Shop are the only places of business in Millersburg today.

"I went out of business because of my health, Brammer said. 'The store was profitable but I never found anyone with the experience and capital to take it over.'

"Millersburg, which now has a population of about 40 residents, probably reached its peak as a trading site during the latter half of the 19th century. There was a church, three dry good stores, two blacksmith shops, a tobacco warehouse and a Masonic lodge in town as well as the Odd Fellows hall which is still located here.'

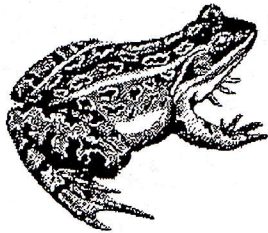
"Most of the farmland around Millersburg is now owned by the Peabody Coal Company."

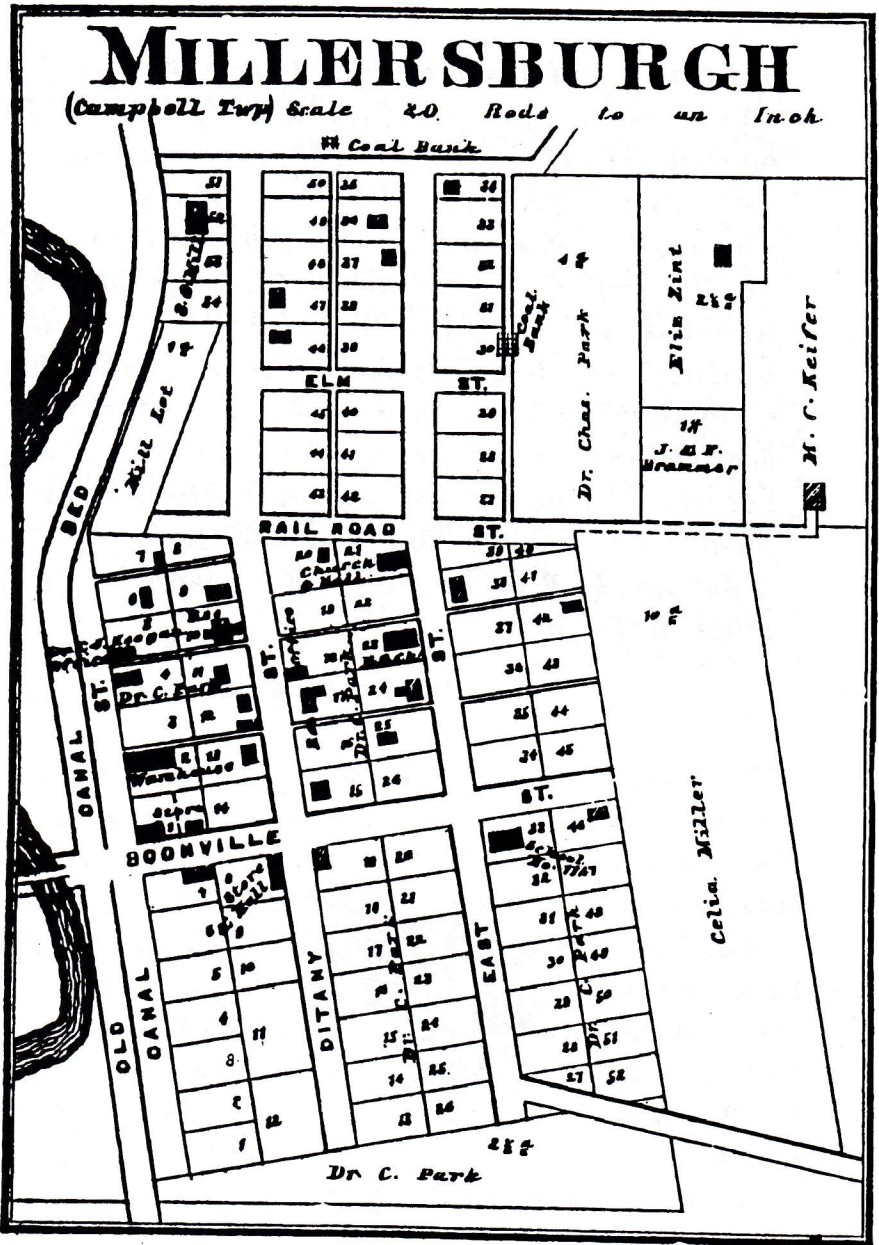
Although Millersburg had a population of 40 in 1981, its near future was not bright. In the 1950s AMAX purchased 10,000 acres of land on the west side of the Wabash and Erie Canal and the Peabody Coal Company purchased the land on the east side. The land along the canal near S.R. 62 west of Chandler was farmed in the 1950s, stripped in 1980, and has been put back into farmland. The Millersburg school was closed in 1965. The last family to live in Millersburg was that of Elmer Brown. They moved to land along the canal south of Millersburg in 1983 after the coal company purchased the town. (See Canal Society of Indiana Newsletter Vol. 13 No. 1 January 2000 for further information on the Browns.)

Wendell Woods, CSJ member from Evansville, lived near Chandler, IN, as a boy and remembers riding his bike on the canal towpath then a county road to Millersburg. He said the towpath was developed into a county road from Heim Road to Kansas Road before he was born and was used until about 1980 when the bridge over Squaw Creek was removed. About a two mile stretch of this Towpath Road is still in use between Heim Road and Warrickton Road. Portions of it are dirt and almost impossible to get through in wet weather.

Pigeon Creek was channeled in 1915. The old canal

bed was used for a portion of its new channel. The old meanders of the creek are now a great wildlife habitat. In other portions of the canal bed there are water and fallen trees. Wendell sent a good map showing Old Pigeon Creek, New Pigeon Creek, and the Wabash & Erie Canal. This map has been adapted for use as the centerfold of this publication. He points out where the canal still remains, where it was used for the creek, where it has been stripped, and where Millersburg (Canal) was located. He hopes that no further stripping will remove the canal bed but thinks this unlikely. The widening of S.R. 62 may take out the short stretch of prism in that area.





Map of Millersburg

4



Will the Real Robert Addison Coffin please Stand Up!

Charles Davis

In the last issue of Indiana Canals Vol. 10 No. 13 Pg. 18 in an article by Charles Davis entitled "The Sugar Creek Foundry and Its Wabash and Erie Canal Connections," the question was raised as to whether or not R. A. Coffin and Levi Coffin were related. Charlie did further research on the subject and found out that the two men were cousins. The two documents list Robert Addison Coffin's date of birth, date

of death, name of father and names of children differently. Charlie's article used August 17, 1818 as the birth date and Randolph County, N.C. as place of birth. The second source is probably the most likely to be correct. Will the real Robert Addison Coffin please stand up!

In the Biography of Parke County at the Rockville, Indiana Library he found the following which is quoted in its entirety:

Robert A. Coffin

R. Addison Coffin

b. Guilford Co., N. C. Jan. 22, 1822

d. April 16, 1897 at Amo, Indiana

Addison died at the home of a daughter Ida Coffin Doan - also had a son, Trenmor, an attorney and banker at Carson City, Nevada. He came to Bloomingdale, Ind. to teach school in the fall of 1843. Married Emily Hadley daughter of Alfred Hadley whose home was the underground R. R. station on the Wabash river route. She was the Mother of his son Trenmor. After her death a few years later, he was married to her cousin Ruth Hadley in Hendrix Co. where

he had purchased a farm. His father Vestal Coffin was a founder of the underground R. R. and Addison was known as the conductor. A cousin Levi Coffin, also very active in its operation, and his wife, are the Penias and Rachel Halliday characters in Uncle Tom's cabin.

Active in emigrating the Society of Friends from the east to the middle west and an extensive traveler all over the world in the interest of Christian living, he has written some very interesting and informative books: among them -- Life and Travel's of Addison Coffin, a book of 570 pages published in 1897 by Wm G. Hubbard and Co., Cleveland, Ohio, and History of the Society of Friends in North Carolina.

In the History of the Coffin Family, Rockville, IN Library (Genealogy 929.2) he also found the following which is quoted in its entirety:

HISTORY of the COFFIN FAMILY

Descendants of NICHOLAS COFFIN (1550-1613)

BRIXTON, DEVONSHIRE, ENGLAND

The Coffins were of English origin, there being a direct line through the **Coffin-Gayer branch to Edward the First** (1237-1307) King of England and his wife Eleanor, daughter of Ferdinand iii, King of Castile, as confirmed by family records in possession of Echlin Phillips Gayer, of Dublin, Ireland.

1. Nicholas Coffin was born in Brixton, Devonshire, England in 1550 and died in 1613.

2. Peter Coffin, his son, was born in 1580 and died in 1620. His wife was Jean Thieuber, born 1584, died 1661.

3. **Tristram Coffin** was born in Brixton, England in 1609, died October 2, 1681. He married Dorris Stevens, and at the age of 34 emigrated to America with his wife and five small children, his widowed mother and two single sisters. He was a strong leader and fine character.

He, with nine others, purchased the Island of Nantucket. Most of the Nantucketeers were made rich by whale fishing. It was the Nantucket fishers who first noted the Gulf Stream.

Samuel Coffin of the third generation was an eminently successful whaler, sending ships into the far reaches of the southern seas.

The Coffins were Quakers. Mary Coffin Starbuck established the Society of Friends, and was perhaps the first woman in America who all unconsciously represented the cause of woman's rights to take part in political council. She was famed for her sound judgment, her easy elegance and choice of language in every day conversation--entirely without affectation--which marked her as Nantucket's selection for a Quaker preacher. Since then Quaker preachers have appeared plentifully in the family; many of them gifted orators. The success of the granddaughter of Tristram--Priscilla Coffin Hunt was so outstanding that

much has been written of her.

Courts were established on Nantucket to settle differences, and no Indian was ever killed by a Colonist.

Tristram Coffin had a son, **John**, born in Haverhill, Mass., Oct. 30, 1647. He married Deborah Austin, daughter of Joseph and Sarah Austin. He removed to Edgartown, Mass., and soon after the death of his father, which occurred in October 1661, he removed to Martha's Vineyard, and from him this branch of the family descended. His wife died Feb. 4, 1718. Among other children they had a son, Samuel, who married Miriam Gardner in 1705. She was the daughter of Richard and Mary Gardner. Samuel died Feb. 22, 1704. His wife died Sept. 17, 1790. Among other children they had a son, **William**, born 1720. On Oct. 4, 1740, he married Priscilla Paddock, daughter of Nathaniel and Anne Paddock. In 1773 William and his family removed from Martha's Vineyard, settling in Guilford County, North Carolina. He feared trouble with England, so he joined the migration southward to Guilford County, North Carolina, where new homes were built. And where, ere long, there was a thrifty and prosperous community of Quakers. William, being a Quaker, would not take up arms against the British, but among other assistances rendered the Colonists, gave his home to house wounded soldiers, where many were nursed back to health.

William Coffin had the following children:

1. Deborah 1743
 2. Libui 1745
 3. William 1747 -- father of Elihu
 4. **Samuel** 1749 -- father of Jethro, 1793; William 1797
 5. Barnabus 1751
 6. Matthew 1754 -- Alice Virginia's ancestor
 7. Bethuel 1756
 8. Abijah 1760
 9. **Levi** 1763
 10. Priscillia 1763 -- Married Asa Hunt
- William Coffin died in 1803

Samuel, was the fourth child of William Coffin (1720-1803.) His first wife, Mary Duane Carr, bore him the following children:

1. Deborah 1772 -- Married Seth Starbuck
2. Priscilla 1774
3. Mary 1776 -- Married Gideon Stevens
4. John 1778 -- Married Abigail Hobbs
5. Samuel 1781
6. David 1783
7. Thomas 1785 - Married Meriam Worth

Samuel and his second wife Mary Macy had:

1. **Jethro** 1793 -- **Addison Coffin's father**
2. Lydia 1795
3. William 1797 -- Who was Dr. William Coffin of Eugene, Miriam Coffin Tutts' father.

Robert Addison Coffin, born 1818, died 1896. He had three sons: Clinton, Clarkson, and Humphrey David, better known as Sam--who was born in 1854 and died in 1936.

Humphrey David had three sons and three daughters: John Wilshire, born 1876; Effie Rosalie, born 1878, and Robert Forest, born 1892. The other three died in infancy.

John W. married Martha Ellen Swindle, and to this union two daughter were born: Lona May, (1897), and Leah Winona (1899).

Lona May Adams had five children: Joseph Edgar (1919), Charles Wilshire (1926), John Lowell (1931), Warren Dean (1934), and Mary Elizabeth (1938).

Leah Winona Lewis had one daughter: Barbara Ellen, born 1931, died 1945.

Effie Rosalie had four children: Everett, Mary Josephine, Shirley Inogene, and one who died in infancy.

There are many interesting notes which can be made regarding the Coffin family.

Levi Coffin of the fifth generation, tells of harrowing scenes they were forced to witness in North Carolina--the selling of children from heart-broken mothers; the cruel entrapment of slaves trying to escape, and the brutality which the slave chain encountered. These conditions, coupled with the difficulty of free labor competing with slave labor, impelled Matthew Coffin (1754), son of William (1720) with his children and grandchildren to join the covered wagon caravan and brave the long and dangerous journey over the Alleghenies, through the Cumberland Gap to their new homes near Salem, Ind. The Quaker element in North

Carolina, for some reason regarded the freeing of the slaves their own mission, in the yearly meeting of Friends, they chartered a ship called the "Sally Ann" for the purpose of sending slaves to Haiti, where they would be free.

The representative members of the Quakers in North Carolina then were the Coffins, the Worths and the Mendenhalls. The Manumission Society of North Carolina sought to put an end to slavery. The underground railroad was the outgrowth of this society. It was a secret organization begotten in the ingenious brain of the Coffins by which slaves were sent to the northwest. Addison Coffin was the originator of it. The couple portrayed as Penias and Rachel Halliday in Uncle Tom's Cabin were Levi Coffin and his wife.

Judith Coffin (Tristram's granddaughter), daughter of Steven Coffin, was Benjamin Franklin's mother.

Lucretia Coffin (whose line leads back to the Nantucket Coffins) in 1848, in conjunction with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, called the first Woman's Rights congress ever held.

Elihu Coffin, nephew of Samuel (1749), cousin of Jethro and Dr. William, was disowned in 1806 for marrying out of the Quaker faith. His wife was Jane Starbuck.

CANAL SOCIETY OF INDIANA

Organized on May 22, 1982 as a not-for-profit corporation, the Canal Society of Indiana was established to bring together those who share a common interest in Indiana's historic canals. The Society helps focus attention on these early interstate waterways through a variety of programs. Its aim is to provide interpretation of the era, to preserve canal bed and structural remains, and to support restoration of historic canal related sites.

BENEFITS:

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- New Member Welcome Package

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