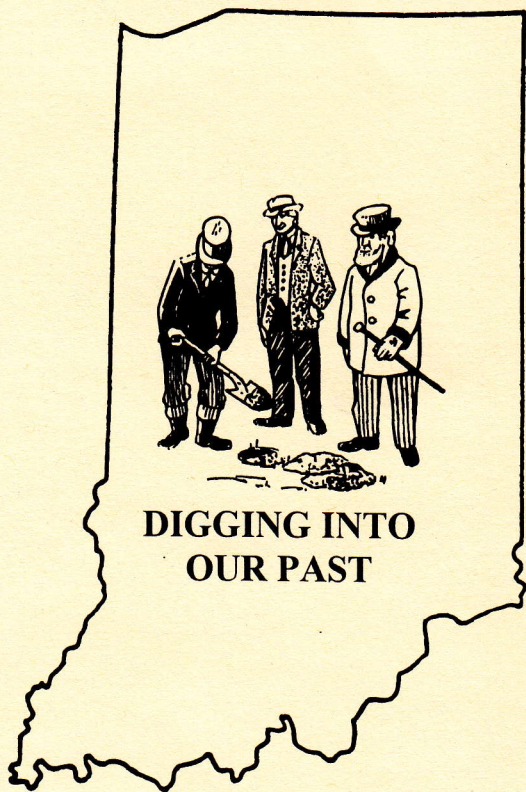


INDIANA CANALS



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Vol. 12 No. 2 Spring 2001

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Indiana Canals

The Journal of the Canal Society of Indiana

Volume 12, Number 2

Spring 2001

TOUR OF THE SUGAR CREEK AQUEDUCT AND LOCK

Conducted by Charles Davis, Fall 2000

Written by Chuck Hupert

Those who remember the CSI Fall Tour in 1995 will remember the group's pondering of the location of the Feeder canal on the left bank of Sugar Creek and the location of the aqueduct which carried the Wabash and Erie Canal across that Creek. We were all standing near the 1876 West Union Covered Bridge, the longest in Parke County, admiring the work of its builder J. J. Daniels. Then in October of last year (2000) I received that most welcome call from Charlie Davis of Parke County telling me of his discovery of the location of the Sugar Creek Aqueduct (aqueduct number 11) and, what he thought might be the location of lock number 38. We set the date of November 19, to explore his findings.

As can be imagined, the date was a long time in coming and that

morning I wondered if the day trip would be what I was hoping or a bust. I was not disappointed. Our small group met again at the West Union Bridge; and, after considerable conversation about how we were going to accomplish our mission we departed in three vehicles. Karen Lewis drove her standard auto with Lynda Huppert keeping her company. Berky Davis drove her SUV with Charlie Davis and me. Karen's husband, Ron, drove an ATV. He was wrapped up pretty warmly – it wasn't one of those warm Fall days.

Karen Lewis works in the Plat Office at the Parke County Court House. She obviously knows Parke County geography like the back of her hand. According to Berky Davis, Karen can go to the Recorder's Office and find the most obscure deed or indenture and unscramble a land question instantaneously. Karen and Ron live in Montezuma and as soon as my wife, Lynda, who used to work in her father's grocery store in Montezuma, saw her she recognized her. It became "old home week" for them.

We drove north on the county road about 1800 feet [to hex "A" on

Inside this issue:

Sugar Creek Aqueduct and Lock Excursion

1



Christmas "Noel" Dagenet

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Canawler's Quiz

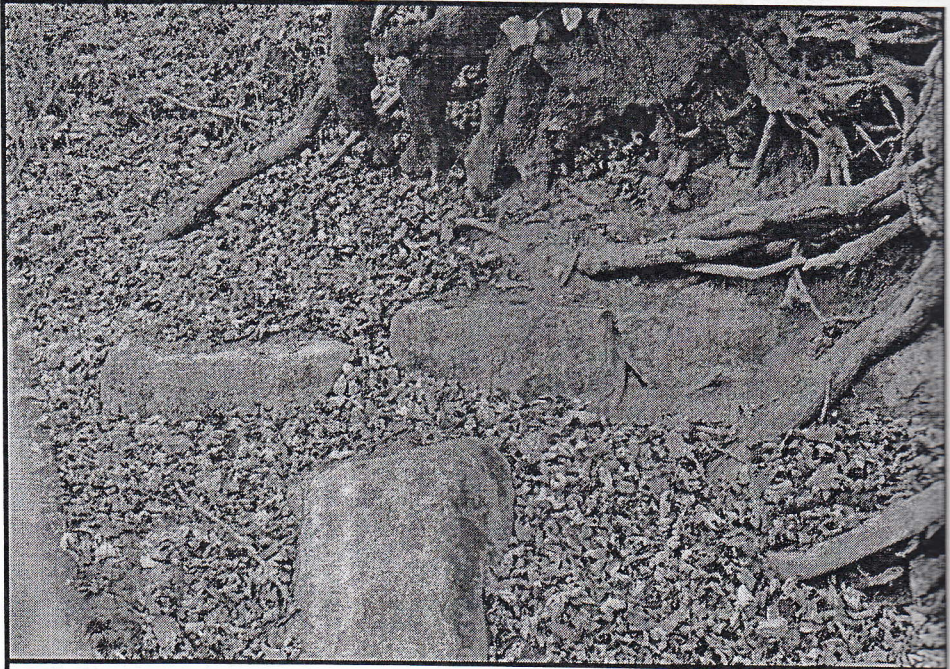
24





The Sugar Creek aqueduct foundation timbers are clearly visible in the water of the creek.

the map] and then turned left into a farm. Charlie had dutifully gotten permission from the owners and pointed out that this farm used to belong to Max Causey. We drove down the farm lane for 3800 feet westward and BANG there it was, the line of the old canal angling almost straight north [hex "B"]. We were on the right bank (north side) of Sugar Creek and we walked down the bank to the place Charlie directed. There wasn't much to see on this side, but we were fortunate that the stream was low and very clear. Just a few inches under the water lay the wooden foundation timbers for the north pier of Aqueduct 11, the Sugar Creek Aqueduct. Charlie remarked that he had not seen the timbers so clearly before. After spending some time photographing and explaining to our guests how the aqueduct worked, we returned to our vehicles. Two fellows came past in a large truck saying that they had lost two hunting dogs. We kept our eyes open for them the rest of the day but never saw them.



The south abutment stones for the aqueduct over Sugar Creek.

We then headed for the southern end of the aqueduct. Back on the county road we headed south. After we drove through West Union, we turned west on CR 500N. When the road turned to the southwest [hex "F"] we stopped and Charlie told Karen and Lynda that their vehicle would no longer be useful. Karen joined her husband on the ATV, and Lynda joined Charlie, Berky and me in the SUV. We then proceeded up the towpath of the canal. Once we turned north, the prism was evident. Breeches had been cut in the towpath bank of the canal to drain the adjoining fields and so we were up and down a lot and a normal automobile would have not been able to make it. We next arrived at the confluence of the Sugar Creek Feeder Canal and the main trunk [hex "D"].

The Sugar Creek Feeder was about three miles long. It began at a dam across Sugar Creek. The dam was 227 feet long and nine feet high above the low water mark. The top of the dam would have been about

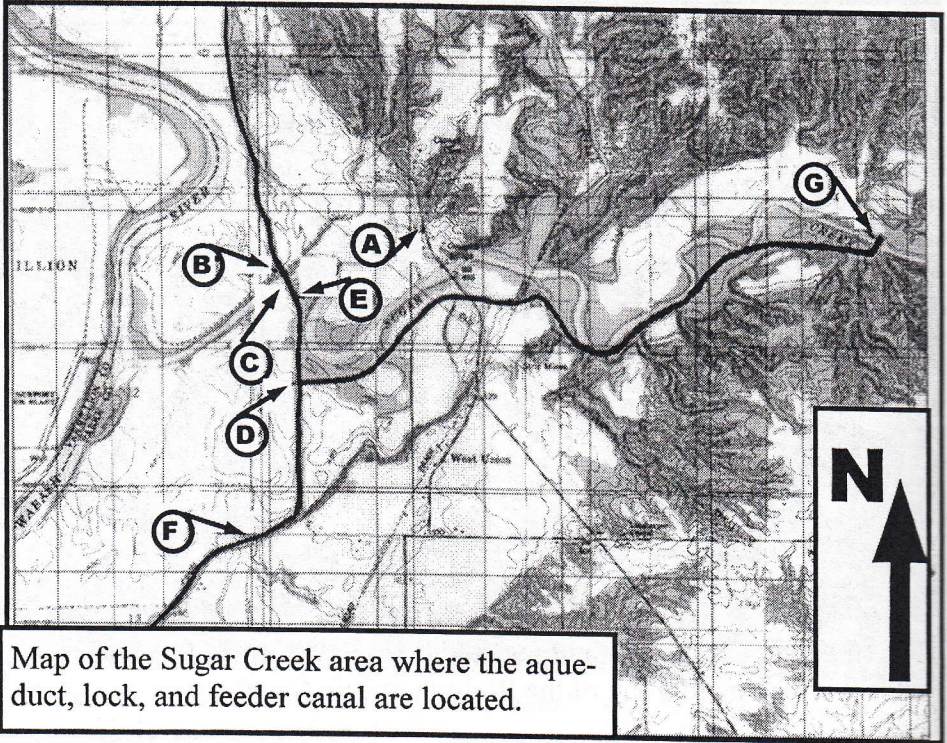


Karen Lewis is at the edge of the feeder prism just east of its confluence with the main trunk of the Wabash & Erie Canal.

490 feet above sea level.

We followed the feeder a short distance. I was surprised at its size, and we all agreed that it was used not only as a water supply but also for transportation purposes. After re-boarding our vehicles, we headed in a circuitous route toward the south abutment of the Sugar Creek Aqueduct. To continue along the towpath was impossible because of the trees, so we cut northwest toward the creek and then down to a cornfield and across it to where we could disembark and walk the short distance to the abutments.

The abutments were evident with much of the stone still in place [hex C"]. As we were pouring over the abutment Charlie was getting more and more excited. I had forgotten that he had said he had discovered something, which he thought might be lock number 38. We climbed to the top of the abutment and then tromped through the woods until the



Map of the Sugar Creek area where the aqueduct, lock, and feeder canal are located.

prism again became evident. All of a sudden there was a five-foot drop in the bottom of the prism [hex "E"]. It was obvious that this is where the lock was placed to drop the level of the Canal to where the water from the feeder would be useful -- 1750 feet to the south. The lock had a six-foot lift and was built on the wooden frame plan. We found no construction material, though it would be worth a trip back with a probe.

After clearing the cornfield for Berky's horses, we returned to the West Union Bridge but without the Lewises. They had decided to use their ATV to explore the Wabash and its confluence with Sugar Creek. Fortunately, Bill Davis was there to join us and we adjourned to Janet's Restaurant in Montezuma for some home cookin' and wonderful pie.



With outstretched arms Berkly Davis shows the location of Lock #38.

The next excursion in this neighborhood will be the feeder itself. That trip is something which Lynda and I happily anticipate.

Hex Locations for Map of Sugar Creek Area.

(Map on previous page. Hex symbols changed to circles for clarity.)

	Latitude		Longitude	
	Deg.	Minutes	Deg.	Minutes
Hex A	39	51.451	87	20.276
Hex B	39	51.261	87	20.952
Hex C	39	51.234	87	20.907
Hex D	39	50.885	87	20.875
Hex E	39	51.186	87	20.877
Hex F	39	50.300	87	21.073
Hex G	39	51.414	87	18.150



Christmas "Noel" Dagenet

and His **Wabash & Erie Canal**

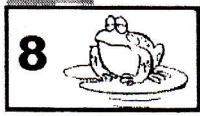
By Charles Davis

Christmas Dagenet a.k.a. Noel Dashney

Connections

The original name in French was Dagenais and has been corrupted to Dagenet. Surnames are Dashney, Dazney, Dajenet, Dagony, etc. The U. S. Government recognized seven of these different spellings. Noel is French for Christmas, thus we use the name Christmas Dagenet as he used this spelling in later years until his death.

Christmas played a significant role in the affairs of the Miami Indians during his entire adult life and especially at the end of it when the U. S. Government ordered their removal from Indiana. Noel was born on Christmas day, December 25, 1799 at Old Orchard Town, today known as Terre Haute, Indiana. Noel called it Old Wea Town. His father was Ambroise Dashney Jr., a French fur trader from Kaskaskia, Illinois. His mother was Mary "Mechinguamesha" Godfroy, sister of principal Chief Jacco Godfroy, Chief of the Wea band of the Miami na-



tion at Old Orchard Town. It is said Chief Jacco established this town.

Ambroise Dashney, Jr.- Father

Ambrose was born C. 1773 at Kaskaskia. He led a very colorful life as a fur trader among the Indians. By the late 1790s he was at Terre Haute where Noel was born. On November 20, 1801, the governor granted Ambrose a license to trade with the Miami nation at "their" town of Terre Haute.

Ambroise Dashney, Sr. - Grandfather

Ambroise Sr. was one of the original members of the first Vincennes Court. On July 26, 1779, Captain John Todd set up the Vincennes Court, and named its members. Todd was an uncle of Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, Virginia's lieutenant-in-charge of the civil affairs of George Roger Clark's conquered territory that had just been made the County of Illinois.

Old Vincennes, the British Period p. 81.

Ambroise Sr. had two wives. His first wife was Franciscos Out-las Dagenet. His second wife was the widow Antoine Droit de Richardville.

Christmas's father, Ambroise Jr., joined the troops of General William Henry Harrison and participated in the Battle of Tippecanoe. He served in Capt. Thomas Scott's company, 4th Regiment of Indiana Militia from Sept. 18, 1811 to Nov. 19, 1811. National Archives Records: 139047.

Mary Ann Isaacs Dagenet - Wife

Christmas married Mary Ann Isaacs, a Mohegan Indian from the Brothertown tribe of New York. Her father was Chief Joseph Isaacs. She came to Indiana to help Baptist missionary Isaac McCoy's mission

Elder Isaac McCoy, Baptist Missionary who performed first marriage in Park County when he married Mary Ann Isaacs and Christmas Noel Dagenet on February 16, 1819.



in Parke county, Raccoon township, west half of the northwest quarter, section 33, 80 acres near Raccoon creek.

Mary Ann and Christmas were the first couple to be united in marriage in Parke County. McCoy's diary in 1819 says, "On the 16th of February I joined in marriage Mary Ann Isaacs, of the Brothertown Indians, who had been spending a few weeks at our house, to Christmas Dashney, a half-breed Wea."

Chief Jacco Godfroy – Uncle

Christmas was present at the Treaty of St. Marys (Ohio) on October 2, 1818 for the "promotion of the desires of the government" and as a "nomination" by the Miami nation also at the request by his uncle Chief Jacco Godfroy. Jacco was one of the signers of the Treaty of St. Marys. For his services at the treaty, Christmas and his sister Mary Dagenet Shields were granted one section of land each by the U. S. government as contained in Article 3 of the treaty.

Mary Dagenet Shields - Sister

His sister Mary was first married to Thomas Shields. She later

married Lewis Peckham of Vincennes, a 1st Lieutenant during the battle of Tippecanoe. Peckham tried to select Mary's section grant at Fall Creek (later known as Indianapolis, the seat of government). He was swindled out of it by the commission, which was sent to locate the seat of government. His personal letters and search for this land is recorded in the Rhode Island History, January 1965, Lewis Peckham's Choice by Clara L. Davis.

His Sister's Land Grant

Before his untimely death in September 1822 Peckham did locate Mary's section. She filed at Palestine, Illinois for section 15, Danville township 19, Range 12W, 640 acres in Vermillion County, Illinois. Date of deed is June 27, 1822. Neither the history books nor today's Miami tribe knew where she had located her land grant until I obtained her deed from the Bureau of Land Management in 1999. Recorded history even states Mary died at Vincennes in 1824. Not only is this date wrong, she also was married a third time to Stephen Cott, a Miami. He is recorded on her land grant deed in 1832 when they sold a tract of it to Josephus and Stephen Collett. Papers to the War Dept., Nov. 30, 1837, Case NO 31.

Mary had children by Thomas Shields, Louis Peckham and Stephen Cott and their descendents of today testify to this fact. Information was given to Christmas' great great grandson Ken. E. Dagenet of Kansas City, Kansas that Ambroise Dashney Jr. lived on his daughter's (Mary) farm, died and was buried there. This is on the land grant I found. This information led Ken Dagenet to a corner on this land. There was once a Miami burial ground located there. After the removal of the Miami this burial ground became the Oak Hill Cemetery. Ambroise Jr. died in 1848 according to his family. Research by Ken and a local area researcher, Sally Powell, led to a large red crock in the Cemetery. With the legend that goes with this grave, they are 90 percent sure this is Ambroise's last resting place. The Danville News-Gazette

Township N: XV north, Range N: IX West 2nd Mer.

Section I Wabash Twp. Parke Co.,
Ind. Land Grant to Christmas Noel
Dagenet.



A true copy from the original, filed in this office
Surveyor General's Office

November 14, 1823

Edward Tiffin



L to R— Kenneth E. Dagenett, gg grandson of Christmas Noel Dagenet; Kathy Dagenett, Ken's wife; Brenda Lindley GGG granddaughter of Christmas Dagenet; Max Haffner, gg grandson of Christmas Dagenet and father of Brenda Lindley. April 27, 2000.

(Illinois) did an article on this find in the summer of 2000.

Christmas' Land Grant

Christmas' land grant was here in Indiana in Parke county, Wabash township 15N, section I, range 9W, 634.94 acres. This was the only Indian land grant ever given in Parke County. This grant was within the "Sugar Creek Reserve" that wasn't ceded at the Treaty of St. Marys. This reserve was seven miles in width from the Wabash River to two miles west of Rockville, Indiana, extending from a little north of the mouth of Sugar Creek to the mouth of the Raccoon Creek. Christmas' land was referred to as the "Dazney farm."

From 1821 to 1825 Christmas lived at Ft. Harrison as Indian Agent, interpreter and superintendent of the Wabash Miamis, whom he conducted westward in several migrations. We know he conducted the Indian removals to Missouri and Kansas in 1827, 1832, and 1846. It is speculated that he participated in as many as six or eight of these removals.

Mary "Mechinquamesha" Godfroy Dashney - Mother

History reveals his mother Mechinquamesha (Beautiful Shade Tree) was buried in Ft. Harrison's cemetery in 1822. This site is where the present Elks Club is located. (Why are these buildings always located on burial grounds?)

In 1824 Christmas was appointed Indian interpreter and acting in that capacity was present at the "Articles of Convention" June 18, 1824. He was a signer of it as witness, interpreter, Noel Dashney.

Christmas had been well educated by the Catholics. He spoke English, French and several Indian dialects.

Christmas Builds A House

In 1826 Christmas built a frame house on his grant of land and moved his family into it. This house stood just a few yards from the present brick house located $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Armiesburg, IN on the west side of County Road 600W that was the home of the late Marge and Luther Myers. The present home dates back to 1872 when Nathan Davies started construction of it. Sam Skeeters finished it. Christmas' relatives lived in cabins that extended north of his home and strung southwest to his southern section property line. This line of cabins that were linked together with poles looked like a string so it was called "Stringtown."

The first Wabash township school stood at this southern point

and was near the Catholic cemetery. This log school pre-existed the Armiesburg school and the Mecca school. The Mecca school built in 1834 somehow got credit in history as being the first in the township. It stood three-fourths of a mile southeast of that town. Records show that Joseph Burns, whom you have read about in my previous articles, went to the Dazney school in 1828. This proves the school at the end of Christmas' property was the first one built.

Christmas let the Catholics bury their dead on his farm. The cemetery is now known as the Catholic cemetery. It is connected with the Church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Montezuma. Sam Skeeters deeded it to them in 1890. The earliest burial there is of John O'Conner, d. 10-20-1818.

Mary Ann and Christmas were in the "best society of those times." This speaks well of them in those days because of their Indian lineage. However, our history books and pioneers call him a half-breed. The only interest the pioneers had in the Indians was to push them out and take their land. Squatters were on reservation land even before the government opened it up for sale.

Christmas bought other properties in Parke County. He owned lot 76 in Montezuma. This lot is located on the northeast corner of Washington and Wilkison streets. He also owned 40 acres, which included the land I, Charles Davis, live on in section four. They were sold off after his death.

Christmas continued to occupy and farm his land grant section. It became a kind of Catholic mission. Indians came frequently to visit him and seek help.

In a letter from Noel (Christmas) Dashney to the Hon. John C. Calhoun dated August 5, 1824, he states "and desires and unfortunate circumstances reporting the loss of one of my arms." Nothing is known what happened to his arm. In the Rockville Tribune dated May 19, 1892, the Historical Society Meeting (Parke Co.) article presents this

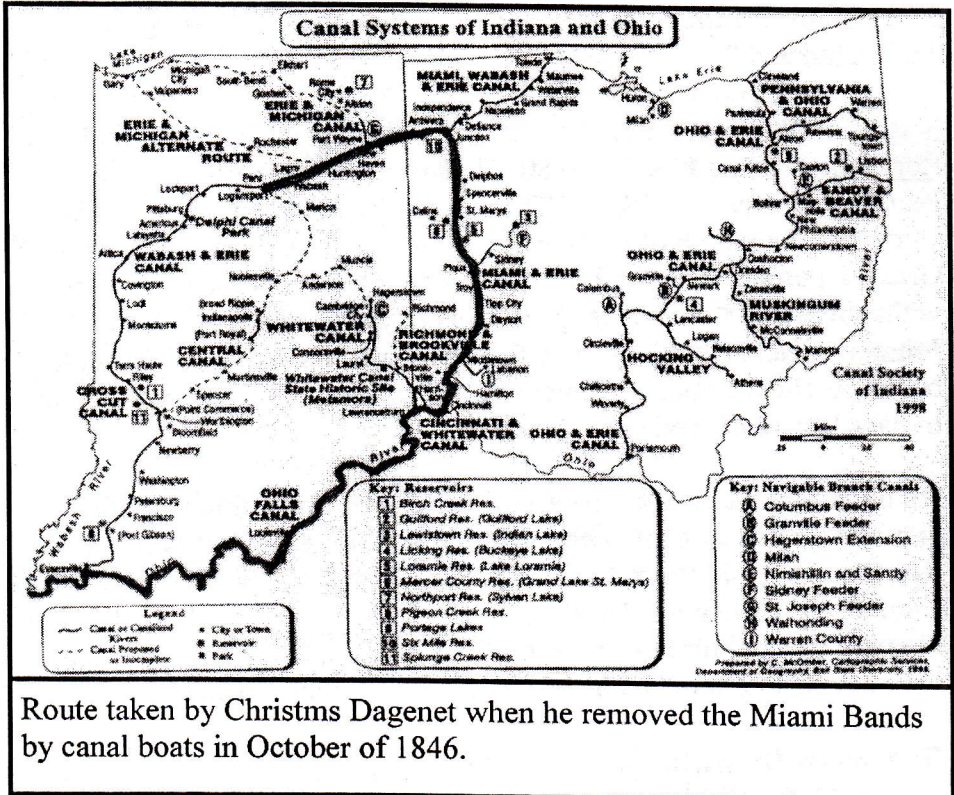
view: "Joseph Allen who was a boy had seen Dasney (Christmas), described him as a small, dark complexioned half-breed, having a withered right hand."

Another interesting account of the Indians in this area was in the Rockville Tribune June 17, 1880, "Thomas Woody—Pioneer." The year Woody recalls is 1826. "The Miamis had a large settlement extending to the mouth of Leatherwood (creek), their Chief was Johnnie Green, a peaceable and rather enlightened Indiana of much influence with whom Mr. Woody has spent many days in hunting and fishing. Johnnie Green was still living a few years ago, eighty-seven years old but in excellent health and quite wealthy in Kansas. On the prairie the Indians had considerable land in cultivation."

"In the meantime, while Hoosiers divided into rival political parties, they maintained an overwhelming consensus for early removal of the Indians. Construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal beginning in 1832 augmented this demand." Carmony, Donald. The Pioneer Period. p. 556 Plus the crooked fur traders of the American Fur Company practiced the most shameful impositions in their dealing with the Indians.

Removal Of Indians

"The largest removal of the Potawatomi, called the "Trail of Death," occurred in 1838. Chief Menominee insisted he never consented to either cession or removal but was forcibly compelled to emigrate. General John Tipton, with 100 soldiers and orders from Governor David Wallace, appeared at Menominees' village while he and many of his tribe were in church. The soldiers fired a volley outside the church and the Indians came tumbling out of the building in terror. Not Menominee--with a knife in his hand, he stood his ground. The soldiers lassoed him, bound him hand and foot and threw him into a wagon. Then they rounded up 859 Potawatomi men, women, and children and shunted them into a ragged line of march.. Most of them proceeded on foot." Carmony, Donald. The Pioneer Period. p. 556 This hasn't changed much today. If you don't pay taxes to the government on



Route taken by Christmas Dagenet when he removed the Miami Bands by canal boats in October of 1846.

property you own, you refuse to get off it, you are “compelled” to get off, thus the government steals your property “legally!”

In the Treaty of 1840 between the U. S. Government and the Miami, the Miami surrendered their tribal holdings and agreed to move beyond the Mississippi by 1845. However, this did not happen until 1846. Christmas Dagenet was in charge of it. A contract was made with Thomas Dowling to remove them by canal boats. There were three parties or sections in this removal. A military force was made available to compel removal, if force was required. The major Miami removal occurred on October 6, 1846. Christmas led the exodus of the Mississinewa, a Miami band on the Mississinewa River. Though this band is not identified, they were probably of War Chief Osages’ band

that lived at the mouth of the Mississinewa. Others located there were Chief Meshingomeshia's band and Metosanyah's band, all Miami Indians. Christmas and his family also left Indiana at this time. The band left Peru, Indiana via the Wabash and Erie Canal to Junction, Ohio, thence south down the Miami and Erie Canal to Cincinnati. From there the party continued by steamboat down the Ohio River, then up the Mississippi, thence west on the Missouri River to Westport near Kansas City, Kansas, arriving on November 9, 1846.

Dagenets Settle On Kansas Res- ervation

Christmas and his family settled on the new reservation in Miami County to live with his people, the Miami. He was the last Civil Chief of the Wea band of the Miami nation. He died at Coldwater Grove, Kansas, in 1848 and was buried in the Dagenet Cemetery there. This was also an Indian burial ground.

Mary Ann, his wife, (1800-1883) later married Baptiste Peoria. He became the Chief of the Con-



Headstone of Eliza Dagenet Ensworth, wife of John D. Ensworth, daughter of Christmas Dagenet. Old Montezuma Cemetery, Montezuma, Indiana. d. September 1, 1856 age 33 y 5 mo 28 days. The author mended this broken stone and reset it in concrete with a plaque September 2000.



Dagenet Cemetary, Coldwater Grove, Miami County, Kansas

federated tribes in 1867.

At Christmas' death, he left as his sole surviving heirs-at-law, his wife Mary Ann Dagenet, sons and daughters, Eliza, Noel, Hyacinth, Edwin, Emily, and Lucinda S., the land grant to be divided equally. They in turn sold it to strangers. This happened the year the Wabash and Erie Canal opened up through Christmas' section of the land grant.

Christmas' daughter Eliza and her husband, John D. Ensworth, came back to Indiana shortly after their exodus to Kansas. They were in Miami county long enough to bury one of their children, Lucy. John and Eliza moved back to Eliza's divided portion on Christmas' land grant. Information on them can be found in my earlier report of "Armiesburg and its Wabash and Erie Canal Connections" Indiana Canals. Vol. 11 No. 4 Autumn 2000.

A Bit Of Humor

In those times people were not without humor. A good example

is shown by John T. Campbell in an article in the Rockville Republican dated January 14, 1903.

“I once saw Col. Dashney, a son (of Christmas) in Montezuma in 1830 and I later once saw the daughter who was the second wife of John Ensworth (Eliza Dagenet) of Montezuma. Both son and daughter appeared to be dark Spaniards, black eyes and long straight black hair. Hon. Archibald Johnston, several times representative and senator from Putnam and Montgomery counties and an uncle of our James T. Johnston told me about 20 years ago an amusing episode that occurred at the Dashney house, a half mile north of Armiesburg sometime between 1830 and 1840.

“Johnston was loading a flatboat at Armiesburg and he and his five to seven hands boarded with Dashney. Dashney had said publicly that he would give a half bushel of dollars to any good white man who would marry one of his girls. One of Johnston’s hands was a heavy set, dark complexion swarthy looking fellow and he took a shine to one of the girls. Dashney eyed him very sharply for a day or so, and one evening as the men were going from the porch into the dining room for supper, Dashney collared him at the door and said to him in a loud and wrathful voice: ‘See here sir, I expect you have heard that I will give a half bushel of dollars to any white man who will marry one of my girls. I want you to understand that you are a little too dark sir,’ and with this remark slung him thru the door into the room, and himself went to the adjoining room. Johnston’s men took up the joke and gayed the poor fellow until he could not speak a word.

“The next day every remark that was made finished with the quotation, ‘a little too dark sir.’ This fellow had worked hard a whole week helping to load the boat, but sometime the next night he disappeared without calling for his pay and Johnston had to hunt another man to go down the river. None of the boat crew ever knew where he went.”

At the time this story is written, I have an application submitted

to the Indiana Historical Marker Program. Application identification is Christmas "Noel" Dagenet (Home Site). This will be the legacy for Christmas. May his memory live on.

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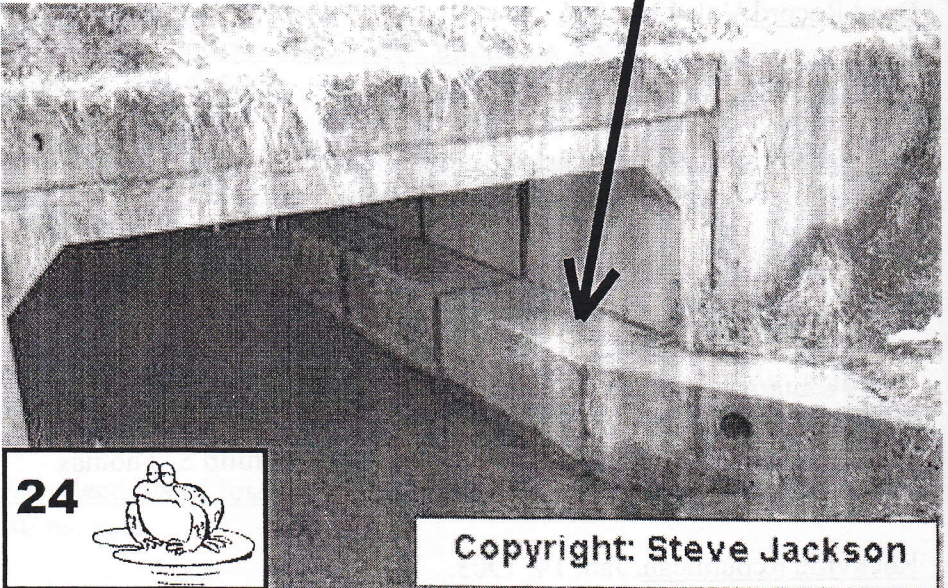
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Canawler's Quiz

Well, there haven't been any letters pouring into the central office complex of Indiana Canals identifying the purpose of the ledge at the side of the culvert shown below. Therefore, the first prize consisting of a free trip to Hawaii or your name printed in this issue of Indiana Canals, will not be given away this time. But the question still remains. What is the purpose of this ledge? Hint: your Editor stretched the truth (just a little bit) in stating that this culvert runs under a canal. This particular one goes under a road, but it could go under a canal just the same. A real hint: certain critters are appreciative of this ledge. The answer next issue—along with a new Canawler's Quiz. Editor

PS The prize list is still intact: either the trip to Hawaii or your name printed in Indiana Canals, whichever the budget allows when your entry is received.



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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.

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INDIANA CANALS

Wabash & Erie Canal 1832-1874 (468 miles)

On March 2, 1827, Congress provided a land grant to encourage Indiana to build the Wabash & Erie Canal. The original plan was to link the navigable waters of the Maumee with the Wabash through the seven mile portage at Fort Wayne. Work began five years later on February 22, 1832 in Fort Wayne. Construction proceeded west as the canal reached Huntington by 1835, Logansport in 1838, and Lafayette in 1841. Work was also performed east toward the Ohio line, but the canal did not open to Toledo until 1843. A second federal land grant enabled the canal to reach Terre Haute by 1849.

At Evansville, 20 miles of the Central Canal had been completed north by 1839. The W & E was extended south in the late 1840s through the abandoned Cross-Cut Canal route. The connection with the Evansville segment was completed in 1853 forming the longest canal in the United States. By 1860, portions south of Terre Haute were closed, and the process of decline continued northward. In 1876, the canal was auctioned off by the trustees.

Central Canal 1836-1839 (8 miles/296 planned)

This canal was to extend from Peru, down the Mississinewa River Valley to the White River, through Indianapolis, and on to Worthington. Here it would meet the Cross-Cut Canal and proceed 111 miles to Evansville. Construction stopped with the financial collapse of 1839. The 24 miles from Broad Ripple to Port Royal was watered, but only 8 miles in downtown Indianapolis was operational. The entire 80 miles from Anderson to Martinsville was left in various stages of completion. Today, portions are used as a water source for Indianapolis and have been modernized.

Cross-Cut Canal 1836-1839 (42 miles)

This waterway between Terre Haute and Worthington that connected the Wabash and White Rivers lifted canal waters 78' over a summit level. The Eel River feeder and the Birch Creek and Splunge Creek Reservoirs supplied water for this summit. Begun in 1836, the works were abandoned in 1839 only to later be completed in 1850 as part of the Wabash & Erie Canal.

Erie & Michigan Canal 1836-1839 (7 miles/110 planned)

Authorized by the 1836 Internal Improvement Bill, only the Northport feeder reservoir (Sylvan Lake) and a few miles nearby were constructed. Work stopped in 1839.

Whitewater Canal 1836-1865 (76 miles)

Construction began at Brookville in 1836 as part of the statewide Mammoth Internal Improvement Bill. With its southern terminus at Lawrenceburg on the Ohio River, the Whitewater Valley Canal Co. reached Connorsville in 1845. The next year 69 miles of canal were completed to Cambridge City which was on the National Road. In 1847, the merchants of Hagerstown financed their own 7 mile canal extension. At Harrison, the Whitewater also connected with the 35 mile Cincinnati and Whitewater Canal of Ohio, completed in 1843. Destructive floods in the narrow valley, inadequate financial returns, and the railroad doomed the waterway.