

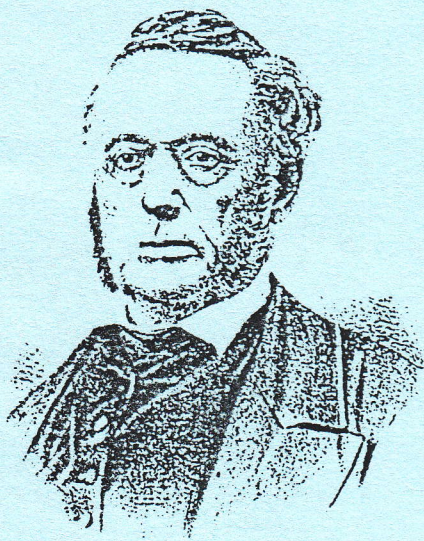
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INDIANA CANALS

JOURNAL OF THE CANAL SOCIETY OF INDIANA

Volume 7, Number 3.

Spring 1996



Dr. Elizur Deming



Dr. David T. Yeakel

(Pictures taken from the Biographical Record and
Portrait Album of Tippecanoe County, Indiana)

INDIANA CANALS is published quarterly. Send articles and comments to
the editor Stan Schmitt, 3900 N. Fulton #1F, Evansville, IN 47710.

An Act for the relief of the boatmen on the Wabash
and Erie Canal, and for the establishment of a
Medical Infirmary.

[Approved January 15, 1844.]

Section 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, That David T. Yeakel and Elizur Deming, together with such persons as they may associate with themselves, be and they hereby are authorized to erect at some convenient point in the town of Lafayette, in the county of Tippecanoe, an Infirmary for the proper medical and dietetic treatment of such boatmen and others connected with the navigation of the Wabash and Erie canal as may from time to time sicken and stand in need of medical assistance; which institution shall be known by the name and title of the Boatmen's Infirmary, and shall be constructed with all its apartments fitted for use by the first day of July, eighteen hundred and forty-four; the emoluments and privileges of which institution, as hereinafter provided, shall accrue to the said David T. Yeakel and Elizur Deming, as proprietors and superintendents, or to such one of them as proprietor and superintendent as shall cause said infirmary to be erected at his own expense within the time aforesaid.

Sec. 2. And for the purpose of ensuring faithful attention on the part of said superintendents or superintendent, Samuel R. Johnson, T.T. Benbridge and Rudolph S. Ford, residents of said Lafayette aforesaid, are hereby appointed as a board of examiners, whose duty it shall be to make a semi-annual examination of the manner in which said institution is conducted; for which purpose, the books of the infirmary shall be submitted at all times to their inspection, and who shall forward annually to the governor of the state a report or exhibit, setting forth the cases submitted to medical treatment or surgical operations, the number of deaths, or of patients dismissed cured, together with such other matters affecting the general character of the institution as they shall deem important; which board of examiners shall have power to fill vacancies as may

from time to time occur by death or resignation of its members.

Sec. 3. It shall be the duty of the superintendents or superintendent of said infirmary to receive all applicants from time to time bearing the proper certificate, as hereinafter provided, and to place the same under medical treatment, providing free of all charge such medicine and nursing as the case may demand; to provide and keep open for the inspection of the board of examiners a case book, in which the name, age, and disease of each patient shall be duly entered, together with the practice adopted and duration of the treatment, and in case of death, to provide without expense to the county, a proper and decent burial.

Sec. 4. For the purpose of defraying the necessary expenses of said infirmary, it shall be the duty of each and every captain or commander engaged in the navigation of the Wabash and Erie canal, within the limits of this state, and who are running canal boats to and from Lafayette, to deduct from the wages of each male person of the age of eighteen years and upwards, stewards, steersmen, cooks, boat hands, drivers, or others connected with the navigation of his boat, the amount of fifty cents from their monthly wages, from the first of April to the first of December in each year, which amount so deducted he shall pay over to the collector of the port at Lafayette on the first day of each month during the time aforesaid, taking his receipt for the same; and in order to ensure the faithful performance of said duties aforesaid, it shall be the duty of each captain or commander as aforesaid, to furnish said collector with a written statement of the number of individuals by him employed at the time of each monthly collection, which statement shall be verified by oath, if necessary; and each captain or commander as aforesaid, who shall fail to comply with any of the provisions of this section, shall be subject to a penalty of five dollars for each failure, to be collected by an action of debt before any justice of the peace having competent jurisdiction; and on all judgments rendered thereon there shall be no stay of execution.

on its construction and present ownership would be helpful, but not essential. If you know anything about the history, other uses, local traditions etc., please include them. We would like to make the inventory as comprehensive as possible. As you can see by the form section Bibliography, not all the information can come from someone doing an on site inspection. If your interest is more sedentary in nature, there is ample opportunity for research in libraries and court houses.

It is the opinion of this editor that now is the for us to make a concerted effort to compile an inventory of Indiana's remaining canal structures. Recent events concerning the Whitewater tunnel in Ohio, show that even the largest of canal structures may not be immune. Please help us in this endeavor to help preserve Indiana's canal heritage. Mail your completed inventory sheets to the Canal Society address in Fort Wayne.

A Strike.- We learn that there was a strike among the hands on our canal on Monday last, and consequently operations have ceased the whole length of the line. This move is on account of the heavy discount on the money with which they were paid. The hands have determined not to work nor let any person work, until something be done to raise the credit of the money. So far, we have heard of no disturbance of the peace, but the hands are all quiet, and peaceable.

Brookville American May 5, 1843.

of the infirmary becomes more complicated. On December 26, 1844, a memorial was presented by Mr. Orth on the behalf of Yeakel and Deming to the Committee on Claims of the Indiana General Assembly. On January 13, 1845, the General Assembly passed a joint resolution for the relief of Yeakel and Deming in their construction of the boatman's infirmary. Because the circuit court of Tippecanoe County had declared the original act unconstitutional the doctors were unable to enforce the collection of money from boatmen to pay for the expense of the infirmary, the Treasurer of the State was authorized to them \$1,100 for five years from the college, bank tax or other trust funds. In a further attempt to regain the money expended on the infirmary, Dr. Yeakel filed suit on May 30, 1845, against Matthias Peterson, the collector at Lafayette. In his suit, Yeakel alleged that Peterson had defrauded him by failing to collect and turn over to him funds required by the boatman's relief act. Because of the constitutional issue Dr. Yeakel was unsuccessful in his suit. In the two succeeding years Yeakel was forced to mortgage the property to the school fund in order to pay off its expenses.

From the brief history that exists on the boatman's infirmary it is hard to tell if it was ever used for its intended purpose. At the time of its inception, Lafayette was at the western most end of the navigable Wabash & Erie Canal. Because of its location there was reluctance on the part of boatmen to paying the required fees. An ill boatman had little interest in traveling all the way from Lake Erie to Lafayette for medical attention. Despite its failure, the idea of the boatman's infirmary was very progressive for its time. It combined prepaid health insurance with job benefits for a particular occupation. In the 1850s the federal government enacted the same system of hospitals for mariners on the Ohio and other major rivers. Under their system, hospitals were located in cities all along the river for easy admittance. The Wabash & Erie Canal Boatman's Infirmary remains as one of the many footnotes to the history of Indiana's canal era.

Dr. David T. Yeakel was born at Hagerstown, Maryland in 1818. He studied medicine under Dr. Charles McGill and graduated from Jefferson Medical College in 1838. He began his medical practice in Indianapolis and went to New Orleans two years later. After returning to Indianapolis, he relocated to Lafayette during the winter of 1841-42. For the next twenty five years, Dr. Yeakel was surgeon for the entire region between the Ohio and Illinois state lines. It was during this period that we have his association with the boatman's infirmary. He was married to Eliza Webb and had four children, George, Nathaniel, Nathan and Alice. When David T. Yeakel died on March 4, 1890, he was the oldest living resident physician of Lafayette.

Dr. Elizur Deming was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts on March 4, 1798. He was married in Wilkes-barre., Pennsylvania on July 7, 1818, to Hester Carpenter. After completing his medical studies he moved to Ohio and then to Lafayette in 1834. He taught at the Indiana Medical College in LaPorte and was appointed professor at the State University of Missouri in 1852. He was recognized as public speaker while campaigning for William Henry Harrison in 1840. In 1841 he was elected to the state legislature by the Whigs of Tippecanoe County. Because of his abolitionist stand, he was nominated by the Liberty Party as their candidate for governor in 1843. Dr. Deming died on February 22, 1855.

Paper mill Burnt- We are informed by a passenger on board the packet yesterday morning, that about the time the boat was passing Delphi, on Sunday night, the Paper Mill owned by Messers. Rinheart & Robinson, was enveloped in flames, and no doubt totally consumed.

Lafayette Atlas Nov. 20, 1849

HELP WANTED

The Canal Society of Indiana needs your help in preserving the remains of Indiana's canal heritage. Included in the center of this issue of INDIANA CANALS is a copy of a canal structure inventory sheet. Feel free to make additional copies for your own use. Construction throughout Indiana has, and will in the future threaten the physical remnants of Indiana's canals. In northern Indiana the improvement of US Highway 24 threatens the Wabash & Erie Canal between Logansport and the Ohio state line. In southern Indiana the possible extension of Interstate 69 could impact on several areas of the canal. Urban growth and activities such as mining are a constant threat to canal remains throughout the state. In order to prevent the destruction of canal remains it is necessary to document their existence before construction begins. It is possible that the road would have been realigned if the state had known about the Groenauer lock during the planing process. The same is true for other sites. The Canal Society of Indiana should be a repository for such information and an advocate for site preservation in the state. In order to do this we need the help of the membership in locating the remaining canal sites. Even more important, is transmitting that information to the Canal Society in Fort Wayne. The enclosed inventory sheet is not as complicated as it might appear. Fill out the parts of the form that you can. Others can fill out the more technical parts. The main purpose is to determine the location of structures, a description of what remains and anything else relating to it. Location is best determined from topographic maps. If they are unavailable a sketch showing the relation of the site to known landmarks will do. A description can consist of photographs with comments or sketch with measurements. Information

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Sec.52. If there be no Collector at such place, the master shall deliver the clearance to the last Collector whose office shall be passed by the boat, in the order of the voyage, and shall receive a permit from such Collector to proceed to the place to which the boat or float is cleared.

Sec.53. Every master who shall omit to deliver a clearance to the Collector to whom the same ought to be delivered, shall forfeit the sum of twenty-five dollars.

Sec.54. Whenever a difference shall arise between a Collector and the master of any boat, or float, as to the amount of tolls chargeable on the lading of such boat or float, the Collector shall detain the boat or float, and the articles on which toll is to be charged, and shall weigh, count or measure the articles, as the case may require; and if it shall be ascertained that the weight, number or feet exceeds the amount stated in the bill of lading thereof, the Collector shall charge the toll according to the weight, number or feet thus found, and the master shall pay the Collector the expense of such weighing, counting or measuring, and such expense shall be chargeable on such articles, and on the boat or float containing them.

Sec.55. The master of every boat or float shall be liable for the payment of tolls and the expenses chargeable on such boat or float and its cargo; and it shall be the duty of every Collector to detain all articles on which tolls and expenses are chargeable, and the boat or float containing them until such tolls and expenses shall be paid.

Sec.56. No boat or other float shall lie in a lock, nor in any other part of the canal in such a position as to prevent the free passage of any other boat or float, which could navigate or pass on the canal.

Sec.57. In all cases where the water shall be partially drawn off from any part of the canal in consequence of a breach, or for the purpose of making repairs, or from any other cause, so as to

prevent the passage of heavily laden boats thereon, every boat or other float, detained or prevented from proceeding on its voyage thereby, shall be moored and placed as not to prevent the passage of boats or floats requiring less depth of water, and if any boat or float, so detained or prevented from proceeding in consequence of the want of sufficient water, shall either by design or accident, or inadvertance, be so moored or placed, as to prevent the passage of other boats, the master or other person having, for the time being, the care of the boat or float so moored or placed, on the application of the master of any other boat or float, whose passage is obstructed thereby, shall immediately cause the boat or float, occasioning such obstruction, to be removed if practicable, so as to permit the free passage of other boats or floats.

Sec.58. The master of any boat or float who shall violate any of the provisions of the two preceding orders, shall, for every such violation, forfeit and pay the sum of ten dollars.

Sec.59. Any boat employed principally in the transportation of passengers, and paying tolls as such after having arrived within two hundred yards of any lock, shall have the privilege of passing through such lock in preference to any boat employed principally in the transportation of property other than passengers and paying toll as such, not having actually entered such lock, at the time when such passage boat shall have arrived within two hundred yards of such lock: Provided, nevertheless, that any boat employed principally in the transportation of property, passing on the canal in an opposite direction from such passage boat, if within two hundred yards of any lock which is at the same time ready to receive such freight boat, shall have the privilege of entering and passing through such lock so being ready, in preference to such passage boat.

(to be continued)

CANAL SOCIETY OF INDIANA

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