



ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 1833 01470 9676

CC 897.2 N47 P110

Newspaper clippings on the
Hobson and Erie Canal

Newspaper Clippings on the Wabash and Erie Canal v.10

December 1880 - July 1903

12/ 8/1880 Wabash & Erie Canal
2/ 2/1881 Huntington County vs.the State
2/12/1881 Enlarged Wabash & Erie Canal
2/18/1881 Canal Is Sold
10/31/1882 Transfer of Canal to FW, Lafayette & St.Louis RR
11/21/1883 Are We To Have a Railway...?
11/21/1883 Vanderbilt Purchase
4/28/1884 Big Ditch
4/ 4/1885 Wabash & Erie Canal--Court Cases
8/10/1885 Strides of Progress
12/ 1/1885 Old Canal
3/13/1886 Drowned in the Feeder
4/26/1887 Mad Mob
4/27/1887 Reservoir Riots
4/28/1887 Exciting Times in Ohio
4/29/1887 Reservoir Riots
8/ 3/1887 Canal Question
10/ 7/1887 Our Ship Canal
1/25/1888 Our Ship Canal
2/23/1888 Canal For Sale
9/10/1888 Old Canal
8/ 6/1890 On Indiana Canals
5/23/1891 Hoosier Canal Days
11/11/1891 Canal as a Barrier
12/21/1892 50 years ago
1/27/1894 Old Canal
3/ 4/1894 Fort Wayne's Greatest Opportunity
1/ 5/1900 Arrival of the Packet
1/ 5/1901 Giving Up Its Secrets
2/15/1902 Reservoir War in Clay
2/26/1902 Canal Boat Competition
7/18/1903 When the Locks Closed for the Last Time

WABASH AND ERIE CANAL.

From the Indianapolis Journal:

There was a decision rendered by the Supreme Court of the State, a few days ago, in relation to the title to the bed of the Wabash and Erie canal which is of more than local interest.

Ever since the canal was ordered to be sold by a decree of the United States Circuit Court, there have been parties along its line who contested the State's title, claiming that the State, when she took the ground on which the canal took only an easement, and not a fee-simple title to the same. The Supreme Court, in a well-considered case, known as the Burkhart case, more than eight years ago, held that under the statutes the State took the fee simple to the bed of the canal. Under this decision the United States Circuit Court ordered the canal sold, and purchasers all along its line bought it. Afterwards, in what was known as the Fleming case, the Supreme Court affirmed its ruling in the Burkhart case, and held the State's interest was in fee.

In the case recently decided, the Supreme Court has again affirmed the opinions held in the two former decisions, and decides that the State's title to the bed of the Wabash and Erie canal was a fee-simple title, and that the parties who purchased under the decree of the United States Circuit acquired a title in fee simple.

How the Supreme Court could have held otherwise we are at a loss to know. The doctrine of stare desises, a doctrine as old as the hills, will give the purchasers of this canal, under the first decision of our Supreme Court, an absolute title in fee. And, as the Supreme Court of the United States has recently held,

though the State courts may overrule their former decisions, the rights acquired under them become vested and cannot be interfered with--that such overruling "can, have only a prospective, but not a retroactive, influence."

We suppose this last decision of our Supreme Court on this important question settles permanently and forever the title to the Wabash and Erie canal, and the parties who purchased all the interest the State had in it, at the receiver's sale, will be allowed the full peaceable enjoyment of their property. Further litigation in relation to a title so well settled would seem either vindictive or foolish.

HUNTINGTON COUNTY VS. THE STATE.

The people of Huntington county have not been idle in the past few years. This county has never been considered a swampy part of the world, but we have had a few swamps lying around in one corner or another. For several years our farmers struggled against the failure of crops brought on by heavy rains. This only occurred in that part of the county that was low and swampy. This began to grow monotonous. It was not exactly encouraging to a farmer to labor hard, day after day and week after week, to raise a crop and then see their work destroyed in a few hours by a rain. Consequently when the new ditch laws came into effect, it found the farmers of this county ready to take hold of the matter which offered to them a systematic system of drainage. True it is that a few ditches had been cut before this, but they were only intended for private use. Within the past few years the work has been carried on so rapidly that now almost every portion of the county is thoroughly drained. It is after considerable trouble in which we have been assisted by persons in charge of the records from which the information was to be gained, that we have secured the following statistics:

From December, 1878, up to January, 1881--thirty-seven ditch petitions have been granted by the Board of Commissioners. The total length of these thirty-seven ditches in miles is seventy-seven and nine-hundredths. The shortest ditch in the number is one thousand and ten feet. The longest is thirty-nine thousand, two hundred and eighty-two feet, or seven and forty-four hundredths miles. These ditches, if put in one line, would equal three times the length of the county and have a good start for another trip.

These ditches are of all widths, the smaller being narrow at the bottom while the larger bear great resemblance to a young canal.

Huntington county has done nobly, and we challenge any other in the State to show an equal amount of ditching within the past two years that did not have more low surface to drain than this county had.

And then in the matter of gravel roads, we feel just a little proud, and the following table will show the cause of that pride. Take the toll roads first.

TOLL ROADS.

Name of Road.	Miles in length.
Huntington and Warren	10
Huntington and Mt. Etna,	7 $\frac{3}{4}$
Huntington and Goshen, or State Road,	4 7/8
The Lancaster	10
The Maple Grove	<u>7$\frac{1}{2}$</u>
Total length of all toll roads	39 5/8

FREE ROADS.

Name of Road.	Miles in length.
The Marble Road,	7.91
The Mishler Road,	8.13
The Stults Road,	7.66
The Columbia City Road.	<u>7.94</u>
Total length of free roads	31.64
Total length of all gravel roads	71 $\frac{1}{2}$

To which we may add the Huntington and Fort Wayne free road, which has been surveyed and will be built the coming summer, and which is eight miles in length, making a total of 79 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles. These roads are all in good condition, and spread like branches from a great tree, the center being this city, and the roads extending in every direction. Again we ask, can any county in the State show up with Huntington?

ENLARGED WABASH AND ERIE CANAL.

A. PROJECTED WORK OF GREAT CONSEQUENCE.

Mr. Byron Holley, C. E., of this city, has just returned from Ohio where he was since September 14th engaged in making surveys, estimates, and profiles for an important projected public work of consequence to the people of this state as a possible feeder to the Erie canal. The work is the proposed enlargement of the Wabash and Erie canal extending from Toledo, O., to Lafayette, Ind., a distance of 216 miles. It is a work proposed by the war department of the United States government, and, was under the general direction of Col. John M. Wilson.

It is proposed to enlarge the dimensions of the Wabash & Erie, and should the work be executed it will give employment to a large force of men, as the estimated expense is \$25,000,000. It would have 61 locks, 163 bridges, 126 culverts, 9 aqueducts and 20 waste ways, all of the most approved type. The summit level of the canal is 190 feet above the level of lake Erie, on the plateau, where Fort Wayne, Ind., is situated, which is midway in the length of the work. The inland end of the canal is 60 feet below the level of the lake.

The engineers' report has been sent to the War Department, Rochester, (sic) N. Y., Daily Union Advertiser, Feb. 9.

The above item appeared in the local columns of our leading evening paper and attracted my attention as touching the interests very materially of my former home. Perhaps a large number of your readers hardly realize the great importance, to them, of this project. Less than ten years ago, the present great and successful Erie canal, running through New York state, laid almost as dormant and idle as the Wabash and Erie canal continues to do to this day. As with your canal, the Erie was considered abandoned. This state wanted to but could not dispose of it; through every town it ran it was condemned as a nuisance. However, the increased demand for

transportation facilities and is an aid to the overtaxed railroads in moving the vast production of the west to the seaboard, it through necessity was brought into use and to-day is one of the most successful and useful water ways in the world. From a burden to the state it has rapidly become (to the surprise of all) a considerable source of revenue. For the commercial world and general public it is, during the most important seven months of the year a standing protection against monopolies. The state has a standing offer of one hundred thousand dollars as a prize to the successful inventor for propelling boats in canals by steam or other practicable motive power, and I believe the time is not far distant when a system of towage will be adopted by a narrow gauge railroad run on the towpath, drawing the boats by steam locomotive and the same road utilized in winter for general railroad purposes. That is now the hope of our canal officials in this state, and if once accomplished it will create a revolution in freight and shipping facilities. I state this from a knowledge acquired through my intimate acquaintance with some of the canal officials of the state. The same future is not only possible but probable for the Michigan and Erie canal and the project if carried out will be an untold benefit to the people to your entire state. The wide water ways of this country will yet hold an important position.

When it is considered that one ordinary canal boat can carry as much grain or coal as a whole and quite long train of cars, the difference in cost in favor of water transportation is at once apparent. You will then experience as we now do here, a revival in dead interests. Old and abandoned boat yards have been reopened, new ones started all along the line, and an activity prevails that heretofore has been unknown in what was formerly termed "boating circles," and now from the opening to the close of navigation an almost continuous fleet of boats loaded down to the waters edge is

seen passing to and fro, carrying freight cheap, but yet highly profitable to boat owners. When you people once come up to these true facts, as they now exist here and as surely will there, they will realize those same results and the great importance of this undertaking.

ALBERT H. NIRDLINGER.

Rochester, N. Y., Feb. 6, 1861.

FEBRUARY 12, 1861. FORT WAYNE DAILY GAZETTE. (1p)

\$137,000 Cash, the Consideration--No Longer any Doubt

About the New York Chicago & St. Louis Railroad:

As intimated in the GAZETTE of last Sunday, the canal owners made the sale to the new N. Y., C. & St. L. R. R. on Saturday, and yesterday Messrs. Bess, Simons & Co., received from the company \$137,000 in cash, in satisfaction of the purchase of fifty-six miles of the canal, the late owners reserving the waterprivileges in this city.

Chief Engineer Rank, of the Lake Erie & Western road is in the city and will with a surveying party, composed of Messrs. G. G. Platt, H. C. West and another gentleman, who arrives to-day, survey thoroughly fifty-six miles of the new road. Their instruments are here, and they will probably commence operations to-day. They are very reticent as to their movements, and but little can be ascertained from them. Why there is now need of secrecy, however, is something no fellow can satisfactorily find out.

The road has been incorporated, with an Indian charter and \$16,000,-000 authorized capital, the following gentlemen being named as subscribers to its stock and original incorporators: Geo. I. Seney, president Metropolitan bank; C. R. Cummings, president Lake Erie & Western R. R.; E. H. R. Lyman, of W. A. Love & Bros., the well known China merchants, 31 Burling Slip, New York; John T. Martin, storage, 97, Water street, New York; J. E. White, fur dealer, 63 Broadway; and W. H. Brown, banker, of No. 11 Pine street. The incorporators are directors in the Lake Erie & Western, Ohio Central and Peoria, Decatur & Evansville roads.

Contracts for the construction of the road have already been given out and it is stipulated that 340 miles are to be laid by Dec. 1st, next, the main section between Cleveland and Chicago running parallel with the Lake

There, but 15 miles shorter than Vanderbilt's road. Twenty miles west of this city at Fort Wayne Junction, the main line divides, one branch leading to St. Louis, which will be 325 miles in length, making 665 miles of main line in the shape of a Y. The contract requires a standard gauge track built in the best manner with 60 pound rails. As stated in the GAZETTE, Brown, Howard & Co., of Chicago, are the contractors. The St. Louis section is to be finished by July 1, 1862.

The shops of the new company will be located in this city. The immense advantages to our city to be derived from this arrangement, are apparent without lengthy comment. It is only a question of a short time when our city will expand into metropolitan proportions. It can't but be so. The depot will probably be at the foot of Columbus street, near the old Compere mill.

Real estate will now have an unvented boom, and we all, that is many of us, may yet be happy as well as rich. At least everybody will be helped in purse by the advent of the new road, about which there is no longer any question.

THE OLD DITCH

TRANSFER OF THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL TO THE FORT WAYNE, LAFAYETTE, & ST. LOUIS RAILROAD.

Wednesday the deed was made, says the Lafayette Courier, and duly acknowledged that conveyed to the Fort Wayne, Lafayette & St. Louis railroad company the road bed of the old Wabash & Erie Canal. The length of the ground conveyed was ninety-two miles, extending from the western border of Tippecanoe county to Lagro, Indiana. The land was owned by six men, of whom E. H. Shirk, of Peru, is trustee. The deed was acknowledged at Logansport, and then given in the charge of E. H. Shirk for him to send the same to New York for the purpose of confirmation and sale of the bonds of the Fort Wayne, Lafayette & St. Louis railroad company which are now in New York on sale. The deed of the ground on which to lay the track and the ultimate sale of the company's bonds indicates that the road will be built in the near future.

Fort Wayne Daily Gazette

October 31, 1882

THE OLD DITCH.

Vanderbilt Purchases the Right of Way of the Tow-Path Road.

Four very important documents were put upon the records of Wabash and Huntington counties last week, regarding the Wabash & Erie canal. The first was the original deed from the state; the second was to William Fleming, of this city, and others; the third was from these last mentioned parties to Howard, as trustee, and the fourth and last is from Howard, as trustee, to William K. Vanderbilt, in which he conveys to Vanderbilt all the land formerly belonging to the canal from the Ohio state line to Lagro, Wabash county. William K. Vanderbilt has now an unclouded and undisputed title to the land from Fort Wayne to Lagro. Is this move of the great capitalist made with a view of building a railroad along the old ditch? That is the question. Some will be quite confident that this is his intention. There are a good many reasons for believing that he would like just such an opportunity to crush the Wabash; but whatever his intentions, depend upon it they are to work no injury to himself. If it is he who made this purchase he has a purpose in it; the good guessers may guess what it is, and it is likely that the extent of their information will be their guessing.

THE SIO DITCH.

Our readers are familiar with the proposition to construct a ditch which shall drain the western, a short distance west of Fort Wayne, and they are also well aware that THE HERALD has at all times encouraged those that might be taken to include vast amounts of property that is of great agricultural valueless. We have recently spoken of the effort being made to construct a ditch, and a few days ago made mention of the fact that a report had been filed in the court of Allen county, relative assessments for the same. So manifestly unjust was many of these assessments that it is not right that the whole scheme should be laid down. It seems that Fort Wayne is exceedingly anxious that something should be done to enhance her interests, provided the work is paid for by outside parties, and a study of the figures in the report mentioned is only a verification of the facts. The whole plan seems to have been gotten up by the attorneys of that place and those interested, in the hopes of lining their own pockets at the expense of the people of Huntington county. It is well-known that these schemes lie almost wholly within Allen county, the benefit deriving would inure mostly to that county, and yet Huntington county land-owners are assessed much greater amounts than those directly interested and those whose property will receive all the possible benefits. We have not had the opportunity to give the matter a thorough investigation, but have sufficient figures to show the injustice in the matter. A reading of the assessments of lands, wholly distant from the ditches, and which would be benefitted really to scarcely any extent will not prove uninteresting. The land of Col. E. S. Sacket, over the Lewis crossing, is assessed for \$2,240; E. T. Brown, \$215; W. W. Hawley, \$1,370; Hawley Brothers, \$2,800; Chas. Wayne, \$4,050; Bishop & Sinton, \$1,595;

John Kenower, \$1,765; Wm. Fisher and daughter, \$1,835; Adam Bach, \$1,500; while the other property in that locality is assessed at equally exorbitant figures, but the amounts of which we have not learned. There are many other persons in that locality who have equally large assessments the amounts of which we have not yet learned. No one will for a moment honestly attempt to justify such an extortion when it is known that the lands in Allen county which will be directly benefited, and which will be made immensely valuable, if the ditch is constructed, are assessed at merely nominal figures. The people of this county along the line of the proposed work, would not and do not object to paying a fair sum towards the reclamation of the property. They have always expressed their willingness so to do, and have been interested in the work, but when the attempt is made to place upon them all the burden and expense, they do not propose to submit without at least a vigorous protest, and the Fort Wayne shirks who have control of this matter, will probably learn a few things before they are through.

WABASH & ERIE CANAL.

Endless and Innumerable Suite Pending in Various Courts.

A. B. Clark, land clerk in the auditor's office, is engaged in the musty task of going through the papers and records of the old Wabash & Erie canal. The investigation has brought to light a good many interesting documents, but no attention will be given in an official way to any except those throwing light upon state claims. It is generally known that the canal in itself is a thing of the past, and all that remains of it are the receivership and the innumerable (sic) suits springing up over the question of the ownership of lands through which the canal passed. Where the canal was built, the right of way was obtained by grant or purchases, conditioned in many cases upon the use of the right for canal purposes only. Now that the canal has been abandoned, and for the most part filled up and even cultivated, much litigation has arisen as to who is the rightful owner of the ground which comprised the right of way. William Fleming, Albert Shirk, D. W. Minshall, and others, are the owners of the canal company's effects, and under the deed made them, they not only claim the main line of the canal, but all cut-offs, feeders and other ground once used for canal purposes. The receiver of the property, George C. Day, still has charge of the canal's affairs, and if the office holds until the suits are all adjusted there will still be a receiver when Emi Kennedy's double-track road around

the world is completed. There are suits on title in every county through which the canal passed, and new ones innumerable would cumber the dockets if the documentary evidence of fifty years ago could all be uncovered. The state holds many claims against various pieces of property, and the thousands and tens of thousands of old deeds, leases, transfers, and other papers of the canal company are being indexed and put into intelligible shape. In arriving at an adjudication of the Wabash & Erie affairs, it is safe to say that there will be many "Jarndyce and Jarndyce" cases.

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS:

April 4, 1886

(rm)

STRIDES OF PROGRESS.

Indiana's Early Internal Improvement Schemes and How They Moved Along.

It is not the purpose of The News to trace the development of the internal improvement system through all its stages, from the first official suggestion to the completed legislation, but to show how the subject was steadily held before the legislative and general attention by the strong convictions of a succession of governors for fifteen years, and what the system was in which the original suggestion finally took form and action. The evil consequences are not wholly effaced yet, after the lapse of nearly fifty years. There are some of the internal improvement bonds of '36 still unpaid. And there are a good many of even what may now be fairly called "old residents" of the State—State who have little or no adequate idea of the conditions in which these results started. It is for their benefit that The News has taken up the subject, and has, in a previous article, traced the line of executive action in regard to it.

The urgency of Governor Ray in the message of 1827, that the large congressional grants in aid of a double connection between the lakes and the Ohio, should be promptly used, soon showed its effects. To enable the reader to understand the situation fairly a word of explanation may be needed here. The National Government was then, and had for many years, been making a national highway from Cumberland, Md., on the Potomac river, to the Ohio river, the first bill for which was introduced in

1806. The line was subsequently changed fo a more northerly direction; under the influence of steam navigation on the Ohio, which secured abundant facilities for transportation along the border of the northwest territory, and made more imperative the demand for an interior line of transportation and travel. In 1820, we think, the line of the road, partly by the efforts of the late Hon. O. H. Smith, then in Congress from the Whitewater region, was changed to pass through this city, then a juvenile village. Here was a connection of the East and the West, provided by the general government. The State needed quite as much a connection between the North and the South, the lakes and the Ohio and Mississippi. So came the scheme of an improvement of the Wabash and its connection with the Maumee and Lake Erie, and the construction of a wagon road from Madison to Lake Michigan. This arrangement divided the State into a half dozen pretty evenly balanced areas which would thus be more readily accessible to immigration. Here was the first sprouting of the internal improvement system.

In 1829 Governor Ray again pressed upon the Legislature the importance, as he expressed it, of securing "the source of many of the blessings of civilized life, a duty enjoined upon the Legislature by the obligations of the social compact." In 1830 the opening of the Michigan Road was commenced. The seaboard was making its way to the West, and the Ohio moving up to the lakes. In 1832 the construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal was begun. Both were conducted by the authority of the State by means of the grants made by Congress, as stated in the message of '27. A funny little story, very pertinent to this point of the subject, is told in ex-Senator Smith's "Early Indiana Sketches." A bill for an appropriation to the Wabash Canal was pending in the Legislature, and was warmly and eloquently supported by Colonel

James McNairy, "the chosen orator of the Wabash Valley, and deplly identified with the passage of the bill," rose, and with commanding form and ringing voice, sounded the bugle note of victory, "Mr. Speaker, our population on the Wabash am great, but our resources for salt am slim. Salt! they can not emigrate up the Wabash!" The bill passed triumphantly.

In 1831 Governor Noble, in his inaugural address, renewed the argument for a systematic prosecution of public works by the State, and again in 1834 seemed to take it for granted as if almost a settled issue, that something would be done. He said, "Since the beneficial policy of engaging in public works for the advancement of the commercial and agricultural interests of the country has been so frequently and clearly demonstrated, and while our credit is justly such as to command any amount of capital at an interest of 5 per cent, or less, no good reason can be assigned why we should longer hesitate to follow the successful example of other States." Things were now coming to a focus, as it were.

The Indianapolis News

August 10, 1885

(pg)

THE OLD CANAL.

A Gloomy Picture of the Once Powerful Factor in the Development of Indiana.

The Wabash and Erie canal, that in the childhood of Indiana, served as a nursing bottle for the young giant developing its resources and making manifest the splendid possibilities of the most productive state in the union, has gone into the sere and yellow leaf, slipped into a neglected old age, and from being the pride and glory of all Hoosierdom, is now only the object of their sneers and execrations. The Times, in commenting upon its present dilapidation, remarks that the old canal bed through this city and as far north as the river, presents a complete illustration of the ruin wrought by the ravages of time. From the principal highway of commerce that developed a state, it has fallen into a condition of not only absolute uselessness but into an unquestioned nuisance. Stagnant water accumulates in the lower places and is repulsive even to the wabbling duck and the wandering goose. The old tow-path that once resounded with the "thwack" of the mule-driver's lash, has melted away and in places is too narrow to afford a path for a marauding pig. Throughout its length there isn't water enough to wet the rudder of the "Minnie Bell" or the "Lillie Dale," the pride of early navigators, and all the canal water that could

be accumulated wouldn't wet down a cocktail for an old-fashioned captain. The old guard-lock has decayed and will afford no protection against the next high water, and there is little or nothing to prevent the Wabash from changing its course and coming down the canal like a tidal wave. The glory of the old canal has passed away and in a few years will live only in the memories of the oldest inhabitants--and the stories of the early minstrel who related the celebrated tragedy where

"The chambermaid and three men more
Took refuge on a sycamore."

DROWNED IN THE FEEDER.

The Body of Frederick Herbst Found
Floating in the Canal--The
Coroner Undecided as
to the Cause of
Death.

Yesterday morning the body of an unknown man was found floating in feeder canal near the swing bridge of the Lake Shore railroad. Coroner Dinnen was at once notified and upon reaching the scene ordered the body removed to the undertaking rooms of Franks & Wellman. Here the remains were laid out on a slab for identification. About 1:30 Chester Scarlet visited the rooms and at once identified the man as Frederick Herbst, father of Otto Herbst of the Postoffice. The latter was notified and had the remains removed to the late residence, 507 East Lewis street. There were no marks whatever on the body to show that there had been violence, and the general opinion is that it is a case of suicide. However, Coroner Dinnen will to-day make a post mortem examination to determine the cause of death. Mr. Herbst was a most exemplary citizen and was a prominent member of St. John's Lutheran church.

Blew up the Paulding Reservoir and
Burn the Locks in the Face of
the Militia--The Governor
Demands the Arrest
of the Rioters.

COLUMBUS, O., April 26.--The governor this afternoon ordered the Toledo companies of the national guards to the scene of the riot at the Paulding county reservoir. The following telegram was received by Governor J. B. Foraker last night:

"Two hundred men marched on the canal in a body, captured the guards and held them in confinement till daylight. They worked all night on the front and rear banks of the reservoir, cutting ground enough to let water out and then poured coal oil on the lock and the keeper's house at the reservoir and burned them all up. One hundred more men went to the Gale's and O'Mier's, the remaining locks, and blew them up with dry dynamite. No locks remain on the Wabash canal. The destruction is complete and mob law reigns supreme. The people of Defiance and Paulding counties call on you to protect state property."

(Signed)

E. SQUIRES.

The governor issued a proclamation reciting the facts of lawlessness and warning the rioters to disperse at their peril.

The governor telegraphed Mr. Flickinger, president of the board of public works, to ask for a special grand jury to indict the rioters, and demand that the Paulding county officials do their duty, and take prompt and vigorous measures to bring the guilty to justice, closing with this injunction: "If any official hesitates to do his duty inform me at once."

RESERVOIR RIOTS.

The Paulding County Dynamiters are
Doing Their Work in Sight of the
Militia.

CINCINNATI, April 27.--News from the disturbance at the Paulding reservoir this morning indicate no material change in the situation. At last accounts there had been no conflict between the troops and the men engaged in destroying the public works.

The Times-Star special from the Paulding county, Ohio, disturbance, says: "The depredations of Monday night have continued on a smaller scale, almost under the noses of the militia. There are only three companies of militia, who have to guard several miles of the reservoir bank. The damage having been done, there is no apprehension of an outbreak until the work of repairing begins. To-day Chief Engineer Bostello arrived with Wm. Hahn, a member of the board of public works, joining Wm. Flickenger, who lives here. They will arrange for immediate repairs and will also proceed to ferret out the conspirators who wrecked the reservoir. An ex-member of the legislature is reported as siding in the destruction on Monday. It is doubtful if any one can be convicted in Paulding county."

EXCITING TIMES IN OHIO.

STATE MILITIA PROTECTING THE
PAULDING RESERVOIR.

A Mob Overpowers the Guard Appointed
by the Governor and Proceeds to De-
stroy the Reservoir with Dynamite--
Cause of the Disturbance--More Troops
Ordered to the Scene.

TOLEDO, Ohio, April 27.---Not since the days of the Cincinnati riots has there been so much excitement in this city as upon the receipt of the news of the ordering out of the militia by Governor Foraker, caused by the blowing up of the Paulding reservoir near Antwerp, thus destroying the principal feeder for the Miami & Lake Erie canal, whose principal terminus is this city. The blowing up of the reservoir was done by a gang of 300 men, who, after having bound and secured the guards appointed by the governor, used dynamite in carrying out their purpose. The time selected was early Tuesday morning but nothing was learned of the outrage until after daylight.

It is alleged that the men who blew up the reservoir are interested in the land which it covers, title to which they have tried in vain to obtain from the legislature. Several attempts have been previously made to blow up the reservoir and great damage done.

Adj. Gen. Axline arrived here Monday afternoon and selected fifty men in addition to a Gatling gun squad and proceeded at once to Cecil where he will march across the country to Antwerp. One company has preceded him and the Toledo cadets and Fourth battery are held in readiness to leave at an hour's notice. The governor has ordered the reservoir to be restored at once.

Frederick Rivers, of company H, while on guard Tuesday night was shot and instantly killed by the accidental discharge of his gun. Troops are now on duty at Cecil.

The lawless attempt to destroy the reservoir is the result of discontent on the part of the people at the maintenance of a practically disused section of the canal. The Miami & Erie canal runs from Toledo to Cincinnati. At the town of Junction, Paulding county, the Wabash and Erie canal joins it. The latter originally extended through Indiana, but the state long ago abandoned it, and since then the Ohio section from Junction to the state line, eighteen miles, has been practically useless except for rafting timbers to Defiance. Just east of Antwerp, Paulding county, is the reservoir in dispute, covering 2,000 acres of ground.

From one of the guards at the reservoir the following particulars were obtained: He said there were four guards on the reservoir bank ever since the agitation against the maintenance of the canal began. About 10 o'clock Monday night they were suddenly surrounded by a body of 400 men, taken captives and disarmed. A portion of the mob at once went to work with spades cutting the reservoir and banks, while the remainder of the crowd started down toward the locks. Arriving at one near the bulkhead they saturated the lock with coal oil and set it on fire. The lock-keeper's house was next fired. The mob then went down five miles farther and placing a heavy charge of dynamite under the gates, blew them out. The third lock, near the junction of the Wabash and Erie canals, they blew out bodily. This completed the wreck, and they returned to the reservoir where they all worked on the banks until 5 o'clock.

Companies A, C, and E, of the Sixteenth regiment, arrived at Cecil at 8 o'clock Monday night. Soon after their arrival one of the reservoir guards who had been detained by the mob and had just come from the reservoir, four miles distant, reported four heavy explosions on the line of the reservoir since nightfall. Gen. Axline on receiving this news at once began preparation for a midnight raid on the mob and a heavy capture was expected before day-break.

At 10:30 a. m. Wednesday the remaining Toledo troops were ordered to proceed at once to Paulding.

DEFIANCE, Ohio, April 20.--Messrs. Flickinger and Hahn had a consultation here Wednesday morning with Col. Backett, state engineer, and Homer Meacham, division superintendent of Paulding, and all four left Wednesday noon for the scene of disturbance. They took printed copies of the governor's proclamation with them to post up.

THE SITUATION AT ANTWERP.

armed soldiers still stationed at Antwerp, while the farmers are arming themselves and swearing vengeance.

The situation at Antwerp remained unchanged up to last night. The troops are there, and as yet there has been no collision between the militia and the citizens. The feeling is very strained and the merest accident might precipitate hostilities. It is said that even should there be no encounter, the farmers would certainly destroy the reservoir as soon as the guards are removed. The circumstances which led to this incipient insurrection are related by a correspondent as follows:

"The farmers along the border of the reservoir and the canal have been under water and their lands made worthless for years, and they are ready to do just anything to relieve the condition of affairs. They have applied time and again to the state authorities to do their duty in repairing the canal, but without effect. The near approach to success in the last legislature made the failure all the more exasperating, and the farmers whose lands are damaged have taken the law into their own hands. The guards chosen to watch over the property were another source of exasperation. There were five of them. Their actions since they have been there have exasperated the people beyond endurance. They taunted and plagued people, and were known to come over on the canal bank and stop people going to and from home. They were plainly told that they would be shot if they did not stop, and they stopped. As to the Daulding Reservoir being necessary as a feeder

to the Miami and Erie Canal, the creek which feeds the reservoir has been cut off and feeds into a big ditch, which drains the land of Civil Service Commissioner W. J. Barton. It is simply stagnant water, and all through the summer the bottom is nearly uncovered except from dead fish and rotting vegetable matter, so that no one can go within a mile of it. It is a plague-spot and a pest-hole. The two thousand acres which the reservoir covers would make the best land in the state, but besides this land, which would revert to the state, the condition of the reservoir makes worthless nearly twenty-five thousand acres of private lands west of the reservoir. If they had kept it in repair and fresh water in it no one would have objected, but no one has any faith that they will do it any more, and the people do not want the canal under any circumstances.

OUR SHIP CANAL.

A SCHEME TO CONNECT THE GREAT LAKES AND THE OHIO RIVER THROUGH
FORT WAYNE--SURVEYS ALREADY MADE.

How many persons living along the line of the old Wabash & Erie Canal, from Toledo to Lafayette, know that it may become the link that is to connect the great Northern Lakes with the Gulf of Mexico? And yet that very thing may be done except of that portion of ten miles through Fort Wayne and east a few miles where the Nickel Plate now runs and for that portion another channel may be cut.

On June 14, 1830, Congress passed the following bill:

"That for the purpose of making a survey to ascertain the practicability and cost of construction of a ship canal from Lake Erie by the Maumee and Wabash valleys, in the bed of the old Wabash & Erie canal, or with any navigation thereto that may prove feasible, to the navigable waters of the Wabash river; also, for a survey and estimate of cost of a similar canal from Junction City, on the Wabash & Erie canal, to the Ohio river, by way of the Miami & Erie canal or any variation en route to produce the most practical and least expensive canal from Lake Erie to the navigable water of the Ohio river by the above routes, the estimates in each case to be for a water channel and locks of the same size and capacity as those of the present enlarged Erie canal in New York.

The bill contemplated an appropriation of \$15,000 for the cost of the survey, but this amount was omitted before the bill's final passage, and the expense of the survey was defrayed out of the general appropriations.

The bill says a "ship canal," but as that is rather misleading, it would be better to call it a "barge canal." The law says if the canal is made, it shall be the size of the Erie canal of New York. If constructed the canal would be 70 feet wide at the surface of the water, 52¹/₂ feet wide at the bottom, and 7 feet deep. The locks would be double, 110 feet long, 18 feet wide and 7 feet deep. All the locks and other structures would be of masonry and the bridges of iron. A canal of this size would float a barge with a carrying capacity of 8,000 bushels of grain, equal to twenty carloads. The motive power could be either small steam launches or mules, as at present. There are three proposed routes by which the Ohio river can be reached from the Great Lakes.

The first route surveyed by Major Wilson was from Toledo to Lafayette, Ind., through Fort Wayne, via the Wabash & Erie canal, thence to the Ohio river at Evansville via the Wabash river. The distance from Toledo to the Ohio at the mouth of the Wabash is nearly 500 miles. The canal from Toledo to Lafayette, Ind., would cost \$24,236,135-17 (sic), and it would require several million dollars more to place the Wabash river in a navigable condition from Lafayette to its mouth.

Another proposed route is from Toledo to Junction City, Ohio, by the way of the Wabash & Erie canal, and thence to Cincinnati by the way of the Miami & Erie canal, a total length of about 240 miles. The cost of the canal would be \$28,000,000. The Ohio

route would cost considerably more than the Indiana route and it is by no means sure that it possesses enough greater advantages to warrant its selection in preference to the other.

The importance of securing this great water highway to Fort Wayne, the GAZETTE believes, is not fully appreciated by our citizens. In Toledo and Cincinnati, which expect to be the termini at the north and south, the matter is one of the chief subjects of discussion in the press and by the people and as organized effort is being made to secure the adoption of the more costly but shorter Ohio route over the cheaper way of transportation through this city.(sic)

The canal means for Fort Wayne a far greater boom than any railroad could give her. It would bring to our doors the manufactured goods of the north, with salt, lumber and other natural products, wool, grain, horses, coal, wood and thousands of bulky articles which are now shipped by rail at a great expense. It would mean direct water connection with all parts on the great lakes and all the towns and cities on the great rivers. It would mean the creation of a port of entry at Fort Wayne and the establishment of a custom house here. Is there any question of the great benefits this city would derive?

The boating season is eight months in length. The original survey includes tow paths for horses and mules, but the nature of the traffic would require faster locomotion and steam launches, with speed of five to seven miles an hour could be used.

Here is a chance for Congress men White and other Indiana representatives in the next national legislature to bestir themselves in a cause that would mean incalculable benefit to this city and the adjacent country. Fort Wayne wants the ship canal.

OUR SHIP CANAL

Would Cost Uncle Same Only \$28,000,000. Surveys all Made and Ready to Begin. Lake Erie to be Joined to the Ohio. Fort Wayne is Fierce for the Canal Via the Wabash River--Our Big Boom Coming.

How many persons living along the line of the Wabash and Erie canal know that it may become the link that is to connect the great Northern lakes with the Gulf of Mexico? How many residents of Fort Wayne, who daily view the old canal bed, think that with a necessary detour to one side of the city because of the Nickel Plate occupation of a portion of it, it may become a channel of commerce, floating the grains of the north to the southern seaboard, or the cotton, lumber and other raw materials from the south to the northern factories and markets?

On June 14, 1880, congress passed the following bill:

"That for the purpose of making a survey to ascertain the practicality and cost of construction of a ship canal from Lake Erie by the Maumee and Wabash valleys, in the bed of the old Wabash & Erie canal, or with any navigation therefrom that may prove feasible, to the navigable waters of the Wabash river; also, (sic) for a survey and estimate of cost of a similar canal from Junction City, on the Wabash & Erie canal to the Ohio river, by way of the Miami & Erie canal, or any variation en route to produce the most practical and least expensive ship canal from Lake Erie to the navigable waters of the Ohio river by the above routes, the estimates in each case to be for a water channel and locks of the same size and capacity as those of the present enlarged Erie canal in New York."

The bill contemplated an appropriation of \$15,000 for the cost of

the survey, but this amount was omitted before the bills final passage, and the expense of the survey was defrayed out of the general appropriations.

The bill says a "ship canal," but as that is rather misleading, it would be better to call it a "barge canal." The law says the canal, if made, shall be the size of the Erie Canal, of New York. Thus constructed the canal would be 70 feet wide, at the surface of the water, 52½ feet wide at the bottom, and seven feet deep. The locks would be double, 110 feet long, 18 feet wide, and 7 feet deep. All the locks and other structures would be of masonry and the bridges of iron. A canal of this size would float a barge with a carrying capacity of 80,000 bushels of grain, equal to twenty carloads. The motive power could be either small steam launches or mules, as at present. There are three proposed routes by which the Ohio river can be reached from the Great Lakes. One of these routes, that from Cleveland by way of the Ohio canal to Zanesville, (sic) and thence to the Ohio river, by way of the Muskingum river, was abandoned after a survey, the Ohio river at the point where the Muskingum debouched being found too low for commercial purposes. The other two routes mentioned in the law quoted above, were found feasible, after a survey, in 1861, by Maj. John M. Wilson, U. S. A. There is still another ship canal proposed--the Hennepin canal, from Chicago to the navigable waters of the Illinois river. A bill has been before congress for several years to appropriate money for this route, and it has influential friends who are moving heaven and earth to lobby it through. They may succeed in this congress.

THE INDIANA ROUTE.

The first route surveyed by Major Wilson was from Toledo to Lafayette,

Ind., via. the Wabash & Erie canal, thence to the Ohio river at Evansville via. the Wabash river. The distance from Toledo to the Ohio at the mouth of the Wabash is nearly 500 miles. The canal from Toledo to Lafayette, Ind., via. Fort Wayne, would cost \$24,236,135.17, and it would require several million dollars more to place the Wabash river in a navigable condition from Lafayette to its mouth.

THE MIAMI AND ERIE ROUTE.

The other route is from Toledo to Junction city, O., by the way of the Wabash & Erie canal, and thence to Cincinnati by way of the Miami & Erie canal, a total length of about 240 miles. The cost of the canal would be \$20,000,000. The Ohio route would cost probably a little more than the Indiana route. Congressman White, and all the Indiana delegation, are working earnestly for this appropriation, and another year may see the work under way. With natural gas and a big ship canal Fort Wayne would soon be the Chicago of Indiana.

A CANAL FOR SALE.

The oldest canal in the country is the Union Canal in Pennsylvania, which was the first projected on the American continent. It was suggested by William Penn in 1690, and its route surveyed seventy years later, before there was a canal in operation even in England. It is now to be sold. The route on this canal was surveyed by David Rittenhouse, the astronomer, and Dr. William Smith, provost of the University of Pennsylvania, in 1762. It extended from the Schuylkill River, near Reading, to the Susquehanna, at the present site of Middletown, Duphin County. It was the first link in a proposed chain of water communication between the Delaware River and Lake Erie, a project so gigantic for that early day, when canals and even turnpikes were unknown, that the projectors were believed by the people to be crazy. Rittenhouse planned a system of inclined planes to overcome the Alleghany Mountains, a plan which was adopted seventy-five years later by the State in its old Portage Railroad. The Revolutionary war interrupted work on the pioneer canal and in 1791 Robert Morris, Robert Fulton and Tench Francis became interest in it. The work was too far in advance of the times, however, and it was not completed until 1827. The canal is eighty-nine miles in length, and some of the greatest engineering work of that day was necessary in its construction. The first tunnel in the United States was bored for this canal through nearly eight hundred feet of solid rock, and the summit of the canal being higher than its terminal feeder, a pumping apparatus had to be constructed to raise the water to the necessary height. The canal cost \$5,000,000. Railroad transportation having made the ancient waterway unprofitable, a few years ago it was abandoned, and is now offered for sale.--Boston Transcript.

THE OLD CANAL.

It Bobs Up Now and Then to New Fancies--The Latest Scheme For the Old Ditch.

The Indianapolis News says:

The old Wabash and Erie canal, which has a history in the court records of the state as a monstrous fraud, again comes to notice as an unabatable nuisance and a source of exasperating annoyance to people who own property along its course. The advantages afforded by the canal in the days of limited means of transportation (sic) have been enormously expensive to the people of the state, pecuniarily and otherwise. After prolonged and complicated litigation the use of the canal was abandoned many years ago, and it has since become simply a missmatic channel, spreading disease along its course from Fort Wayne down to Evansville, and yet, by the sufferance or neglect of the state board of health, it is tolerated without a murmur.

When the sale of the canal bed, with a path of fifty feet on each side, was ordered by Judge Drummond ten or twelve years ago, on the suit of Jonathan K. Gapen, it was held by the court that the purchasers acquired a fee simple, although in the opinion given by the supreme court judges it was maintained by Judge Biddle that there had been no fee simple given, but simply an easement. The canal was purchased for a nominal sum by a few speculators. For a time after its abandonment in 1875, the privileges of using it as a water supply to mills and for the ice that it yielded in winter was the only revenue that it afforded, but as its condition grew

worse the toils were not sufficient to properly maintain it, and it rapidly fell into that deplorable state that is now-a-days described as innocuous desuetude. For two or three years it has really become a great nuisance, and now the farmers who own land along its course are given special cause for complaint by the receipt of letters reading something like the following:

Dear Sir:--The Wabash and Erie canal, as you are aware, runs through your farm. On behalf of the owners, I beg leave to say that some arrangement regarding its further use must be entered into, for the following reasons. We do not desire the statute of limitation to run against us, and if you will pay a nominal sum for a lease, simply to recognize our ownership of it, we will send you the necessary papers for that purpose. Otherwise we shall be compelled to ask you to remove the fences inclosing the same and throw it out.

Very respectfully.

These letters bear the name of a man named Smith who is acting as an attorney for the owners of the canal. It is claimed that it is the intention to use the canal land as a right-of-way for a railroad parallel with the Wabash line, but it is generally believed that as a matter of fact, it is being held as a speculation, and it is necessary to retain the ownership, that it should be put to some use, in which the legal rights to the control of it are recognized, before the expiration of twenty years. The amounts that are asked for leases vary from \$1 to \$25, according to the willingness of the farmer to pay rather than be caused annoyance and expense by having their farms thrown open by the removal of fences. The notices that have been sent out have aroused much feeling among the farmers, and some of them have sought legal advice with a view to resisting the de-

mands upon them. It is only along the course of the canal, from Terre Haute to Fort Wayne, that the lease propositions are being made, as below Terre Haute the land is now owned and used by the Evansville and Indianapolis Railway company as a right-of-way for their line.

ON INDIANA'S CANALS.

AN ANCIENT MARINER RELATES HIS
THRILLING EXPERIENCES.

CHAPTER FROM THE EARLIER HIS-
TORY OF INDIANA'S COMMERCE.

HOW THE OLD TIME CANAL BOAT NOW
ROTTING ON THE BANK WAS THE
CENTER OF COMMERCIAL INTEREST.

A CAPTAIN'S TALES OF ADVENTURE ON
THE INDIANA CANALS--TOUGH CROW'S
REDEEMING TRAITS--SWIFT PACK-
ETS MADE SIX MILES AN HOUR.

Seated in an upholstered train with its stained plate glass, sparkling crystal and burnished silver trappings, one enjoys a traveler's life, but perhaps not more than did the traveler in the days of the old canal boat. The old "canawl" boat's hulk lies rotting against what was once the "herm" bank of a great water course, now a pool of fetid water, covered with green scum and breeding "ager" and insects. What memories cluster about that pile of decaying wood, and what tales it would tell had it but a tongue. The old canal men are on their last trip; the "level" is down, the lock broken, the "waste waves" running off, and in a few years the old-time

canal man will only be remembered as a figure in a misty dream.

One of the originals who has "canaled it" on every stream in Indiana, Ohio and New York, sat puffing a well-colored briar root pipe when the writer asked him for some reminiscences of the canals of Indiana. Accepting the reporter's proffered cigar and placing the pipe in his pocket without extinguishing the fire—a canal boatman's habit by the way—the old shipper commenced:

"The principal canal in Indiana for many years was the Wabash & Erie. The Legislatures of Indiana and Ohio made appropriations for it, I think in 1838, each State agreeing to keep up its portion. In 1841 the canal was opened from Fort Wayne to a place called Port Mahon a distance of about twenty-five miles, but the real opening was not until 1843, when boats commenced running through to Toledo. It was fed or supplied with water by a system of feeders or streams running into it. At Ft. Wayne it was fed from the St. Mary and Maumee Rivers, and in Ohio the water came from a huge reservoir near the State line. Beginning at Ft. Defiance the canal merged with the Maumee River for four miles and was fed to Wabash, and there a feeder supplied it with water to Carrolton. At that point it was merged in the Wabash River for three miles. From Lafayette and below a system of feeders supplied it.

"The first boats were owned by the Mahon Brothers, after whom Port Mahon was named. The place was a straggling village with a grain elevator, and if it is in existence now I guess it is called something else. The Mahon Brothers did a little business, and soon a fleet arrived and business opened on a grand scale. The boats came from

Buffalo, Rochester, the Erie and other canals in New York. They were towed up the lakes to Toledo and turned into the Wabash and Erie. These boats were in lines, as we have now the Vandalia Line, the Clover Leaf Line, the Bee Line and other railroads; then we had the "Troy & Erie Line," of twenty-five boats; the "New York & Ohio Line," of thirty boats; the "Commercial Line," and a line of mill boats from Ft. Wayne to Toledo. These carried the product of the Ft. Wayne mills and were called "Dutch boats," because they were managed by Germans almost exclusively. In 1844 the Red Bird Line of packets was put on, but they didn't do much business, and were withdrawn after one of them, the Kentucky, was sunk six miles below Logansport, and her passengers, three in number, drowned. The bones of the Kentucky could be seen at the spot she was wrecked for many years. Aside from these there were a number of individual boats. The Wabash and Erie Canal boats were odd structures. They were eighty feet long and thirteen feet wide, and from their shape were called cargo boxes. They had two cabins, one at the bow and one at the stern, each cabin being eighteen feet long and nicely furnished, some of them magnificently for those days. The afterpart of the forward one was the ladies' cabin, separated from the men's by a bulkhead. Every cabin had three rows of "lockers," each six feet long - "berths" they are called now and they were not uncomfortable by any means. There were no relay stations, the motive power - four horses - being stabled on the boat. This stable was built exactly amidships, and was to accommodate two horses, two horses resting, while the other two were standing their trick or pulling the boat. Forward and aft of this stable was the cargo hold. A load was 1,000 bushels of wheat, or 300

barrels of flour. The capacity averaged about fifty tons. Of course every boat carried passengers. In after years boats exclusively for freight were built to carry about 1,500 bushels of wheat. The boats ran night and day when on a trip, and always carried two head lamps on the bow. The crew comprised the captain, two steersmen or pilots, two bowsmen or general roustabouts two drivers, a cook, and sometimes a chambermaid. The steersmen were paid \$20, bowsmen \$20, drivers \$10 a month and their board. Where the captain did not own a share in the boat he was paid \$7.50 a day, and furnished his own crew.

"The average canal boatman in the days of which I speak was a tough customer and there are many living who can remember the bloody fights that used to take place. At that time there was no railroad route except by a long roundabout way, and the western passenger travel was immense. The fare was about 3 cents a mile and the toll one-half cent per passenger. I have seen boats pull along side of a steamer at Toledo and the passengers would crowd on the boat so that she would soon be loaded and would have to push away to keep from being swamped. Sometimes a steamer-load of emigrants would arrive and they would be stowed in the hold of the canal boats like so much merchandise. The rivalry between the lines was intense, and deaths often followed a fight for passengers. It was fight for everything. No revolvers were in use then, but every canaler carried a sheath knife strapped to his waist, and the steel was whipped out on the slightest provocation. There wasn't much law except the law of force, and murders were common. Men were hired as much for their fighting qualities as

for their skill as navigators, and after a bloody row it was not uncommon to ship another crew until the men engaged in the fight recovered from their wounds.

"And what races we used to have! Start out of Toledo under the whip and keep under it until the other end of the line was reached. If we couldn't pass an opposition boat; any other way we would cut the tow line and whale the crew if possible. If not possible, we took our whipping and stayed behind. There were no lock tenders in the beginning, and the boat that got her 'nose' into the jaws' of the lock first was entitled to it, but it was not uncommon to hitch on a rival and pull her back out of the way and take the lock. This always meant a fight and a fine assessed against the offending boat by the collector of tolls. When boat met boat there was often an exchange of compliments that resulted disastrously to both crews. Should the boats rub against each other one steersman would yell:

"'Saey, what in blank do you mean? Ain't this canal wide enough for you?'

"The other steersman would make some pleasant reply and then they would begin throwing stove wood at each other until out of hitting distance. There was always a pile of wood near the lazy-board, on which the steersmen stood; but I am not prepared to say that it was placed there for the benefit of rival steersmen.

"You have often heard of 'low bridge'? Well we had several low bridges on the Wabash and Erie, and it was not an infrequent thing for passengers to be hurt. They would sit on deck, and when the steersmen yelled 'Low Bridge,' down would go their heads, while the other

portions of their bodies went up. Consequently they would be brushed off into the raging canal.

"In 1845 I was master of the fast sailing freight packet "Lafayette," of the Troy and Erie line. She was the finest boat on the canal, her furniture alone cost over \$700. She carried one thousand bushels of grain and had accommodations for seventy-five passengers. Beside the finest boat, I had the best crew, men who would fight at the drop of the hat, and drop the hat themselves. Among them was 'Hutch' Butterfield, accounted at that time the best rough-and-tumble fighter in the United States. I paid him extra wages and settled all fines that might be assessed against him (which were not many, by the way) for his pugilistic abilities. Any old canal man living now will remember 'Hatch.' Then I had Bill Fuller, another fighter, and Billy Bobo, a half-breed Indian, who used to growl and snarl like a dog chewing a bone whenever he was fighting. When the packet Lafayette wanted a lock or a landing she always got it. We used to make the round trip of 222 miles in six days and load at both ends of the route. This was considered mighty fast sailing.

"In 1845-46 the Indiana Legislature passed a bill to extend the Wabash & Erie Canal to Terre Haute, and when the bill became a law Terre Haute celebrated it with a drunk that lasted a couple of days. The town blazed with bon-fires, and it was a season of jubilee unlike anything that has occurred there since. In 1848 the canal was extended to Attica, and in 1849 it reached Terre Haute. Five years later it was extended to Evansville, and thus a navigable water course of 523 miles was secured. In 1849 Doyle and Dickey, of Dayton, O., established

a line of packets. This was called Doyle & Dickey's United States Mail Packet Line. The boats ran between Lafayette and Toledo for a number of years, but about 1859 went as far as Evansville. They were superb crafts, and carried the United States mail, as well as passengers, but no freight, and were made light and trim for speed. A crew consisted of four men, cooks, scullions, steward, berth-makers, clerk, bar-keeper, and a chambermaid. The 'engine' was a team of three horses that were kept on a gallop all the time. Stations were established every ten miles, where fresh horses were procured and the mail was transported at the high speed of six miles an hour. The line was daily one; a boat leaving Toledo and Evansville every day at three o'clock. This line of mail boats also ran into Cincinnati via the Miami canal.

"Along about 1856 the east end of the Wabash & Erie canal began to go down, the business dropping off as railroads were built, and when the Toledo, Wabash & Western Line was completed there was not a great deal doing. The railroads made such encroachments that the canal men moved westward, and finally the Indiana portion of the canal became railroad property, and business was done on wheels in stead of on the water. Many of the boats rotted away, and many were taken to the other canals. Fortunes were made and fortunes were lost on the Wabash & Erie and a great many of the boats never paid their original cost - about \$2,500."

HOOSIER CANAL DAYS.

THE INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS OF EARLY DAYS IN INDIANA.

Sales of Land to Aid a Canal Project---Completion of
the Wabash and Erie Canal Project--Lafayette's
Importance---Fast Packets.

(Written for The Indianapolis News.)

Governor Ray, in a message delivered before the
Legislature in December, 1826, said : "On the con-
struction of roads and canals, then, we must rely, as
the safest and most certain State policy, to relieve
our situation, place us among the first States in the
Union, and change the cry of 'hard times' into an
open acknowledgment of contentedness. * * * *
We must stricke at the internal improvement of the
State, or form our minds to remain poor and unacqu-
ainted with each other."

Again in his annual message of December, 1827,
Governor Ray said: "Within the space of the last fif-
teen months public lands have been granted to the
State of Indiana, through the instrumentality of her
public functionaries, estimated to be worth about
\$1,250,000 free of cost, for special purposes." He
had reference to the following act of Congress:

On the 2d day of March, 1827, by an act of Congress, "every alternate section of land, equal to five miles in width," on both sides of what was to be the line of the Wabash, and Erie canal, was granted to the State of Indiana for the purpose of constructing(sic) "a canal from the head of navigation on the Wabash, at the mouth of the Tippecanoe river, to the foot of the Maumee Rapids, connecting the waters of the Wabash and Lake Erie, the same-to be commenced at the expiration of the five years following the passage of the act, and to be completed within twenty years from that time."

Soon after this grant the land office commissioners closed the sales and entries of all Government lands lying along and embraced within the limits of said grant, until the State should select and locate her bounty under the grant. These lands were finally located by a commission erected for that purpose, and were platted, and after some delay the sale was opened at Logansport in October, 1830, and also in October, 1832 in Fort Wayne.

The sales were large, and resulted in attracting an immense influx of emigration to northern Indiana and the Wabash valley. But owing to the length of credit given on the purchase (one-seventh in hand and the remainder to be paid in six equal annual payments)

availed but little in affording means for the prosecution of the construction of the canal. It was found necessary to appeal to the State for assistance. Accordingly a bill was introduced in the Legislature, during the session of 1831-32, for effecting a loan upon the faith of the State, predicated upon the moneys arising from the sales, with interest thereon, together with the tolls and water rents of the canal. The bill met with great opposition from many prominent members, but it finally passed.

As a result of this action on the part of the Legislature, there began an extensive system of internal improvements. In adjusting the details of the system the Legislature made serious mistakes, particularly in providing for the construction of needless and costly works, in order, as it was alleged, to prevent the defeat of the general system. Ten millions of dollars were appropriated to carry on the work.

In a short time thereafter, while the various improvements were under course of construction, financial embarrassments, the results of the errors of legislation, came on and in the summer of 1839 a period of great financial depression throughout the United States, caused a cessation in the progress of our public works; in many instances for the lack of funds the contractors abandoned their contracts. The State, as a consequence,

had an immense debt to carry with but little prospect of relief. Finally the Legislature, during Governor Wallace's administration, through his suggestions, in order to pay off the State creditors, authorized an issue of State treasury notes to the amount of one million five hundred thousand dollars. These notes formed a circulating medium, which, for a time, passed at their face value; but about the year 1842 they depreciated in value from 40 to 50 per cent. There were two issues of this currency, one was commonly called "White Dog" and the other "Blue Pup."

In the meantime, the Wabash and Erie canal, after many drawbacks, was completed from Toledo at the foot of the Maumee rapids, to the town of Attica, Fountain county, a distance of two hundred miles. Soon thereafter large numbers of freight boats made their appearance, and at once had all they could do in transporting the grain and other products of the Wabash and Maumee valleys. The boats on discharging their freights at Toledo, would return laden with merchandise for various points along the line of the canal, as also household goods, farming and mechanical implements of the emigrants that came pouring into the country along the line of the canal, which afforded cheap transportation and cheap lands on easy payments. This great influx of emigrants continued for several years.

Through the untiring energy and able management of the board of trustees (C. Vigus, David Burr and Samuel Hanna) and the chief engineer, Hon. Jesse L. Williams, the canal was completed in the spring of 1843, and on the 4th of July following a grand celebration and free barbecue was given by the citizens of Fort Wayne, in commemoration of the event. General Cass delivered the oration on the occasion. There was an immense concourse of people in attendance from every direction, also a large number of Indians that were yet residing in that vicinity, who were always on hand on such occasions, for they were then pretty sure of getting what shiskey they could drink.

The State continued to stagger, under its immense burden of debt. In the year 1841 the entire public debt of the State amounted to \$15,088,146, as stated in the message of Governor Bigger, December, 1841, and for a number of years was unable to pay the interest on its bonded debt. The Legislature in 1846 and 1847, during the administration of Governor Whitcomb, fortunately, was enabled, by an arrangement with its creditors, to avert the disgrace of repudiation and bankruptcy with which it was seriously threatened.

The Wabash & Erie Canal proved a great factor in the development of the State's resources and in increasing its population. And it had, also, the

effect to develop the adjacent prairie country of Illinois, as by it that region had a direct and cheap outlet for its products. Lafayette became the entrepot for this immense trade. The writer had often seen several hundred canvas-top wagons, or prairie schooners, as they were commonly called, arriving daily in that, then, most promising town in the Hoosier State. Here the produce dealers erected colossal storehouses for the reception of these immense treasures--corn, pork and wheat--the dealers being John Purdue, Spear & Case, Hanna & Wilson, and a number of the other smaller ones. Each of the firms named did an annual business ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000.

Along the entire north line of the canal a scope of country extending from a distance of fifty to one hundred miles, was tributary to this outlet, and on the south side it extended from forty to sixty miles. Ft. Wayne, having an extensive system of plank roads, was the principal receiving point for this trade. The entire farm produce of southern Michigan, north of Ft. Wayne, found its way to the canal by a plank road sixty miles in length, running from Ft. Wayne to Sturges, Mich.

A splendid line of fast packets furnished the residents of the same region fine facilities for traveling, getting out of a section of country that dur-

ing a large portion of the year was closed, by reason of its unimproved, muddy roads. These packet-boat, (sic) came from the Erie canal, where the New York Central Railroad, just finished, had absorbed the travel on that canal.

In a few years the Michigan Southern as also the Northern Indiana railroads were built, drawing most of the business from the canal on its north line, and in a short time thereafter the project of the "Toledo and Wabash Railroad" was agitated, and to the astonishment of the citizens along its line, was completed from Toledo to Lafayette, in the year 1856. Soon thereafter the packet-boats again, like birds of passage, took their flight, whither I never knew, but to some new field, no doubt, there again to be superseded by the lightning express.

The freight-boat interest did not for some time seem to be materially affected, as the water, transportation could be afforded at much lower rates than by rail, but finally, they began to dwindle in numbers and their visits were few and far between. The sharp crack of the driver's whip was drowned in the shrill whistle of the iron horse, and the Wabash and Erie Canal soon went to decay.

The age had become too fast for the slow travel of the packet-boat and stage. And yet, with what interest

do we remember the many pleasant trips we made on them. It is true the time made by the packet, would now be considered slow, averaging about eight miles an hour, but the monotony of the trip was relieved by the variety of ways we had for amusing ourselves. We usually laid in a good and ampy supply of reading matter, and when tired of this, could go upon deck and enjoy a cigar, a good article of which, together with other refreshments, could be had at the saloon. And frequently, when tired of this confinement, all hands, ladies included, would get off at the first lock and walk until the boat would overtake us, the ladies always with their arms full of wild flowers, that grew in abundance on the wayside. Then in the evening, seated upon the baggage (trunks) on deck, would the passengers tell anecdotes, (sic) or argue politics and religion. But the bane of the whole thing would now commence, which was that great tormentor the insatiate mosquito, which a progressive age has failed to get rid of, for today they present their bills as persistently and unceremoniously as they did then. But this pleasant mode of travel has ceased, and is now numbered with the things that were, but will never be again.

When it is announced that a ship has gone down at sea with all on board, we are not astonished, however sad we may feel, at the scrcital of the heart-rending tale, as such results are to be anticipated on the

expanse of the fathomless deep. But to hear of a total wreck and annihilation of a boat on the placid and shallow waters of the canal and the drowning of many of the passengers, we would become dumfounded and incredible as it may seem, such an event actually occurred on this canal.

On the evening of the 11th day of June, 1844, the packet-boat Kentucky was on her passage east from Lafayette. When within four or five miles of Logansport an immense body of water, caused by the giving way of a mill dam situated in the high country back from the canal, precipitated its flood into the canal, causing a break in the towing path in front of and behind the boat. The force of the water was so great that the boat was carried out of the canal into the Wabash river, which at that time was over-flowing the bottom lands at this point, and was broken to pieces against the trees. Most of the passengers were below deck at the time of the accident, seated at the supper-table, (sic) as little thinking of danger as you are now who read this, for it came upon them instantly, like the mountain avalanche. Fortunately, there were fewer passengers on board than usual, three of whom were drowned--a stranger who was not known, but was supposed to be from Indianapolis, from a conversation he had with the captain of the boat, Mr. Thomas Emerson, a prominent citizen of Logansport, and a Mr. A. J. Griffen, a

merchant of Fort Wayne. The other passenger making hair-breadth escapes were all rescued by the people residing in that vicinity. The remains of Emerson and Griffen, a long time after, were recovered, but the remains of the stranger never were found.

The boat and contents, together with the baggage and mails, were all lost, swept away by the resistless current. The Wabash river was higher than it had been for many years before.

E. F. C.

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS, May 23, 1891

(mk)

THE CANAL AS A BARRIER

CHICAGO GAS SYNDICATE SHUT OUT OF INDIANA FIELDS.

Signal Service That the Old Indiana & Erie Canal Is
Performing for Hoosier Natural Gas--Extra-
ordinary Case.

The old Wabash & Erie canal, which long ago went into disuse, promises in its latter and degenerate days to stand as a barrier to protect the Indiana gas fields from the capitalists who would drain it to supply Chicago.

A. C. Harris returned last evening from Logansport, where he had been the past several days trying a case which involves the question of whether the canal can be made to serve this purpose. Under the natural gas law of '89 it was provided that any company organized to pipe gas to patrons in this State might condemn and occupy land under the right of eminent domain.

After the passage of this law the Indiana Natural Gas and Oil Company organized, with headquarters at Hammond. The real purpose was to pipe gas to Chicago, and the company proceeded to acquire leases upon thousands of acres of gas lands in Howard, Grant, Tipton and Madison counties. The act of '91, intended to prevent the use of pipe-line scheme. To test the constitutionality of this act and to secure a construction of the law, it will be remembered that a case was made up

in Porter county, that of Jameson et al. vs. the Indiana Natural Gas and Oil Company. The Supreme Court held the law to be constitutional, but whereas the Legislature had intended to prevent the use of pumping apparatus entirely, the Chicago company claimed under the Supreme Court's decision the right to the use of such apparatus as would not increase the pressure beyond 330 pounds to the inch, which is the pressure of a swll in the belt. As the right-of-way could be acquired by purchase the right-of- eminent-domain feature did not cut much figure.

It happened that Elbert M. Shirk, of Peru, who is a large owner of Peru pipeline stock, and who is consequently interested in the permanency of the gas supply, is one of the largest owners and also trustee of the Wabash & Erie canal, from Ft. Wayne to Lafayette. The Indiana Natural Gas and Oil Company line as surveyed aimed to cross the canal two miles east of Logansport. The pipe was laid nearly to that point and the trenches had been dug through the canal when Mr. Shirk, by his attorneys, Mr. Harris and Mr. Justice, of Logansport, entered suit September 22 before Judge McConnell, at Logansport, showing that Mr. Shirk's canal property was about to sustain great and irreparable damage by the proposed scheme to lay a pipe line through and under it and an injunction was asked and granted. Failing to make arrangements with Shirk, the Pipe Line Company entered a motion to dissolve the injunction, and it was the hearing upon this motion that was concluded at Logansport yesterday. The principal point made by the Pipe Line Company was that the right of eminent domain as declared by the law of 1889, authorized the condemnation and occupancy of the canal. As against this claim Shirk's attorneys introduced the case agreed of record. Jameson et al. vs. the Indiana Gas and Oil

Company, in which it is stated that the purpose of the company was to pipe gas to Chicago, and hence it had no right under the law of eminent domain.

If Judge McConnell holds that the injunction shall stand, as the attorneys for Mr. Shirk are confident he will, the scheme to pipe gas to Chicago is practically dead. It would be out of the question to run the line around east of Ft. Wayne and just as impracticable to make a detour to the west of Lafayette, and the line of defense is unbroken between these two points. If this injunction is made perpetual, the most danger that threatened the Indiana gas field is averted. Judge McConnell will render his decision within the next few days.

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS November 11, 1891
(es)

FIFTY YEARS AGO.

I was at Fort Wayne on a visit to my daughter, Mrs. Charles D. Gorham, in October, 1889, and had an opportunity to see Fort Wayne as it was then. Its growth, I found, had been so great since I first knew it and the contrast so striking that I beg leave to express through your columns, to the public, the gratification it gave me to find there a city of 40,000 people, when in 1843, there were less than 3,000 inhabitants with no railroad, no good country roads, and only the Wabash and Erie canals as a means of transportation.

It is just forty-nine years ago this month that I landed in Fort Wayne from the city of New York and engaged in mercantile pursuits. I had been attracted there by the opening of the canal and the celebration of that event in 1843, at Fort Wayne, where General LOUIS CASS, of Michigan, had delivered the one especially interesting speech, which was published and circulated all over the country. I soon found that I had come to a place of very slow growth, and the feeling became general that something must be done to improve the wagon roads of the country and thus bring trade to Fort Wayne. A system of plank roads was devised. One was to run north to Lima, one west to Columbia one south to Bluffton and another to Decatur. The one north of Lagrange county was built, and so was the one to Bluffton. The others had a beginning and that was about all. These roads cost some \$1,600 per mile and it taxed all of the resources of the town and county to pay for their construction. Then railroads began to attract public attention in the West, but how could northern Indiana build railroads at \$25,000 per mile when our

plank roads at \$1,600 had exhausted our means for public improvements. We could not see our way clear, yet all these great lines of railroad that we now see completed and which added so much to the growth and wealth of the city of Fort Wayne and the whole state, had very small and most discouraging beginnings. It will not be without interest to the present public for me to refer briefly to those beginnings and then show what perseverance, good judgment, business skill and energy have accomplished for Fort Wayne and northern Indiana. In 1851 the late Samuel Hanna, Jesse L. Williams, Pliny Hoagland and the writer hereof went on a canal boat to Toledo, thence on a steamboat to Sandusky and thence on a falt iron railroad to Patterson, Ohio, near the point of crossing of that line of raod and the present Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railway and there held in a small log school house, with a few other persons from parts of Ohio, the first public meeting ever held; to build the Ohio & Indiana railread from Crestline to Fort Wayne, now a part of the great Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago route. There was then a general railroad law in Ohio, but no law in Indiana under which we could organize. We resolved to procure a charter and did so, and soon after organized the company. Samuel Hanna, Pliny Hoagland and Wm. Mitchell became contractors for the earth work and the building was pressed forward. Subscriptions to the capital stock were obtained, bonds sold and the work in a few years was completed. To pay the civil engineer, who made the first survey of the line from Crestline to Fort Wayne, a subscrption had to be secured from among the business men of the latter place, for there was no capital to draw upon then for such

expenses.

In the case of the Wabash Valley railroad, in 1852, Judge John W. Wright, of Logansport, Peter P. Bailey, of Fort Wayne, and another gentleman at Toledo whose name I cannot now recall, gave notice through the newspapers that on a certain day in August of that year a meeting would be held at Logansport to organize a railroad company to build a road parallel with the Wabash canal from Toledo west to the Illinois state line. Some 600 business men from all over the country attended that meeting. Articles of incorporation were adopted under the then general law of the state just passed. Wm. Rockhill, of Fort Wayne, was chairman of the meeting. Albert S. White, of Lafayette, Lew Wallace, of Crawfordsville, and other leading and prominent men were present, subscriptions to the capital stock were made, and at a subsequent meeting of stockholders, Albert S. White was chosen president of the company, and then began what is to-day the great Wabash system of railways, running through Fort Wayne and away into the far southwest.

In January, 1853, under instructions from a public meeting, the writer hereof left Fort Wayne one morning on horseback and alone, with the thermometer at about zero, to go to Cincinnati and make a preliminary examination of a route to that city for a railroad from Fort Wayne. His route lay through Bluffton, Camden, Winchester, Richmond, Eaton and Hamilton. He was joined at Camden by a Mr. Pittman, at Winchester by Mr. A. Stone, at Richmond by one or two others. He took cars at Eaton and days were spent in Cincinnati. The examination was made and reported on favorably and soon after a railroad company was organized

for that route and the writer hereof became president of it and devoted five years of the best portion of his life to the building of what is now the Cincinnati, Richmond, & Fort Wayne railway (but not completed until after the war), which is a part of the Grand Rapids line.

Afterwards (but some years before the war) the Chicago line from Fort Wayne was built and the first survey for it was made by a gentleman whose name I cannot recall, but who had taught school in Fort Wayne for half a lifetime and therefore known to all the men of today who were schoolboys there at that time. Other roads were built as time went on, the town grew and when the writer hereof left Fort Wayne for the south in January, 1866, the population had increased to some 19,000 souls, perhaps about half of the present number.

There are many other reminiscences of the city of Fort Wayne of the greatest interest, but which I cannot refer to now. I want to say in conclusion, however, that I missed when I was last in Fort Wayne from among the active men of the place many whose energies were ever given to build up this part of the state. I think of such names as Samuel Hanna, Allen Hamilton, William Rockhill, Samuel Edsall, William S. Edsall, Pliny Hoagland, Jesse L. Williams, John Hough, Dr. H. P. Ayres and R. E. Fleming and since I was there I. D. G. Nelson, Frank P. Randall and some others have been added to those who have gone to another world. Judge John Morris, Oliver Morgan, A. P. Edgerton, J. K. Edgerton, Dr. John S. Irwin and W. H. Jones are living and may be seen in their usual walks of live in and about the city while Hugh McCulloch is in Maryland, George L. Little in Maine and I am in Mississippi, where I have been for twenty six years past.

I established in 1858 the first republican newspaper ever published in the old Tenth congressional district of Indiana, and was in Fort Wayne when the war broke out, in 1861, and went to the field with the old Thirtieth Indiana volunteer infantry and I sent to the army one of my sons, the only one old enough to do military service. He served through the war and is now major in the United States army. After the war I established, with the help of others, the Merchants' National Bank, at Fort Wayne, and was the president of it, but at the beginning of 1866 I left it for the south where I have passed through the reconstruction periods, the revolutions of 1875 and 1876, and have lived under the continual supremacy of white men since the latter date, who now control the government of all the southern states. But few persons living at Fort Wayne now know from personal experience or observation any thing of the early struggles of the men I have named, to make Fort Wayne a great railroad center and to build up there a city, where the people might become prosperous and contented as they are there today. It was the men of Fort Wayne who planned and drove to completion the Ohio and Indiana and the Fort Wayne and Chicago railroads and not the man of Pittsburg or of Chicago. I hope this short contribution to the history of those early days may not be unacceptable to your readers.

PETER P. BAILEY.

THE FORT WAYNE MORNING JOURNAL DECEMBER 21, 1892

(ck)

THE OLD CANAL.

Its Title Cleared Up in the
Federal Court.

The Present Owners are in Full and
Lawful Possession of the
Property--Decision By
Judge Woods.

INDIANAPOLIS, Jan. 26.--Judge Woods, of the United States district court, has rendered a judgment which settles the ownership of a part of the old Wabash & Erie canal which has long been disputed. The canal was owned by the state prior to 1847, and extended from the Ohio state line to Evansville, passing through Fort Wayne and Lafayette. In 1847 it was sold to the Wabash & Erie Canal company and in a short time the company became involved and that part of the canal lying between Lafayette and Fort Wayne was sold to Johnathan Saxon, of New York. This was later sold to William Fleming, of Fort Wayne. In 1875 that part of the canal between Lafayette and Lagro, Wabash county, was sold to Elbert H. Shirk, of Peru. He died in 1886 and Milton Shirk and afterward Elbert H. Shirk was appointed trustee to hold the estate in trust for heirs, of whom there were twenty-eight.

A cloud has for some time rested on the title of the property by reason of certain persons claiming that they had interests in it. The suit was brought to dispel this cloud. A number of the persons, all of whom were summoned to appear in court, disclaimed any interest in or

title to the property. Judge Woods decided that the plaintiff's title was good and ordered that the costs of the suit be paid by the defendants who failed to file answers of disclaimer to the bill.

REPORT FROM THE JUDGE, January 27, 1898.

(ss)

A SHIP CANAL.

Fort Wayne's Great
Opportunity.

A Route Projected From To-
ledo to Chicago.

The Wabash and Erie Canal, the Tip-
pecanoe and Kankakee Rivers
Provide a Waterway--T
Routes Talked of--Mr. I.
L. Campbell's Strong
Letter.

A stupendous canal project, which, if successful, will entirely revolutionize the traffic of the great lakes, is said to be in contemplation by a number of capitalists in Chicago, New York, Boston and London. The proposed canal is designed to facilitate the passage of vessels from Chicago, Milwaukee and other northwestern points to the east, and to render entirely unnecessary the present long route through the straits of Mackinaw, Lake Huron, St. Clair river and lake, and thence down the Detroit river to Lake Erie. The plan now under serious contemplation is to construct a canal directly across the state of Michigan from the eastern shore of Lake Michigan to either Detroit or Toledo, O. Should either of these plans prove ___ feasible it will result in one of the most gigantic enterprises of the century. A

number of capitalists from Chicago, New York and Boston are said to stand ready to back the project to the extent of 50,000,000, and it is also said the the English capitalists who are interested in the Canadian Pacific road have also shown a decided disposition to render material financial aid in perfecting this great work.

At present those most intimately connected with the scheme are unwilling to divulge their plans, but it is stated on reliable authority that preliminary surveys of several proposed routes for this contemplated canal have already been made, and the feasibility of the project has already been vouched for by eminent engineers. One of the plans under consideration is to tap Lake Michigan at a point near Michigan City or New Buffalo, and to run the canal directly eastward to Toledo, O. Another plan, which also has a number of influential supporters is to strike Lake Michigan at Benton Harbor and thence run in a northeasterly direction to Detroit. Either of these canals would be about 100 miles long, and when it is considered that it would save about 700 miles of lake _____ which is at present necessary to reach eastern points, its importance to the commercial and financial world cannot be overestimated. The route from Michigan City to Toledo would, it is claimed, prove far more advantageous to Chicago than the other route, and hence is being more strongly urged by those whose interests are centered here. On the other hand, it is stated that the Canadian Pacific railway would be largely the gainers by the route to Detroit.

There is yet another proposition under consideration which may, it is stated, prove satisfactory to all parties concerned, although it would involve a greater expenditure of money. This idea is to adopt the Michigan City and Toledo plan, and to construct a branch canal from

some point east of Toledo direct to Detroit, and thus secure an outlet at both these points. Owing to the various interests so largely at stake, therefore, no definite or settled line or route for the proposed canal will be decided upon until a thorough investigation of the topographical conditions of the intervening country has been made by expert engineers, and values of the competitive points in a financial and commercial sense have been fully and carefully considered by the projectors.

The Indiana Route.

To the Editor of the Indianapolis News:

As to a ship canal from Lake Michigan to the ocean I have examined with some care the proposed route across southern Michigan, and I believe it to be impracticable. The elevation of the central part of southern Michigan above the lakes is from four hundred to five hundred feet and there are no streams of water large enough to furnish sufficient water for a ship canal at the summit levels.

In the paper I read before the Indiana Engineering society January 3, 1894, I suggested a practicable route for a ship canal from Lake Michigan to the Wabash river, which I believe will apply to the present discussion.

The route I would propose to connect Lake Erie with Lake Michigan begins at Toledo and extends along the line of the old Wabash & Erie canal to a point a few miles west of Logansport, thence by the Tippecanoe and Monon to the Kankakee at Dunn's bridge, and from Baumb's bridge to Lake Michigan.

The route has peculiar advantages in the abundance of water supply for the summit levels furnished by the Maumee, the Wabash, the Tippecanoe, and the Kankakee rivers, and the general topography of the country.

Ft. Wayne is situated at the lowest point along the summit of the great ridge through Ohio, Indiana and Michigan, which separates the waters which run to Lake Erie and those which flow to the Gulf of Mexico.

The crest of the ridge is shown by the following elevations above sea level:

Winchester, Ind.....	1,009
Portland, Ind.....	904
Bluffton, Ind.....	837
Fort Wayne, Ind.....	752
Auburn, Ind.....	672
Lagrange, Ind.....	915
Angola, Ind.....	1,042
Hillsdale, Mich.....	1,095
Jackson, Mich.....	928
Leroy, Mich.....	1,232

The summit levels for the canal will be:

Fort Wayne.....	750
Kankakee.....	660

The lowest levels will be:

Toledo.....	570
Logansport.....	600
Lake Michigan.....	585

The Maumee and Wabash will furnish the water supply from Toledo to Logansport; the Tippecanoe, Monon and Kankakee from Logansport to Lake Michigan.

The distance from Chicago to Toledo by this route is shorter than by

any other practicable line. The work to be done will be the revival and enlargement of the Wabash & Erie canal from Toledo to Logansport, and the construction of a new line to the Tippecanoe, Kankakee and Lake Michigan.

On this new section no elevation above 750 feet from sea level will be encountered, and nowhere will the excavation required exceed one hundred feet.

In the comprehensive improvement of our means of transportation this plan will serve the double purpose of connecting Lake Michigan with Lake Erie and the Gulf of Mexico. The improvement of the Wabash, Ohio and Mississippi would naturally follow the opening of the canal from Lake Michigan to the Wabash.

Along these lines, especially provided by nature, this great work must be constructed.

I. L. CAMPBELL

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Feb. 24, 1894.

THE FORT WAYNE MORNING JOURNAL, March 4, 1894.

(ss)

Ft. Wayne, Ind., August 27.-----This is one of the greatest railroad cities, in proportion to its population, in the United States, and the large shops here employ a great many men.

The railroads that center here are the Pennsylvania; Findlay, Ft. Wayne & Western; Grand Rapids & Indiana; Lake Shore, Nickel-Plate, and Wabash.

Yet it is one of the difficult towns in Indiana to reach from Indianapolis. There has been talk for years of building a direct line from Ft. Wayne to Indianapolis, but the project is as far-distant in the future as it ever has been.

Before the days of railroads the commerce of Ft. Wayne was important and the place was one of the principal cities on the old Wabash and Erie canal, now almost forgotten. This canal was a factor in the early development of Indiana. It was the largest continuous line of artificial water communication in the world, and did more to give Ft. Wayne, its early impetus than all other agencies combined.

The plan of uniting the waters of Lake Erie with those of the Ohio river is said to have been entertained by General Washington, who was a practical surveyor. The subject had been agitated in Ohio for some time, and a survey of the Miami canal was made in 1824. This survey was carried to Defiance, O., on the Maumee, and thence to the lake. The canal was anticipated in the treaty of 1826 with the Miami Indians. A survey was begun from Ft. Wayne in 1826, and completed two years later. On March 2, 1827, Congress granted to the State of Indiana every alternate section of land, equal to five miles in width on both sides of the proposed line, and throughout its whole length, for the purpose of constructing a canal from the head of navigation on the Wabash, at the mouth of the Tippecanoe river, to the foot of the Maumee rapids.

This grant, amounting to 3,200 acres of land for each of the 213 miles of the proposed work, was the first of any magnitude made by Congress for the promotion of public works. A subsequent act, approved March 24, 1828, provided a similar grant for the State of Ohio for the southern branch, and also for the cession to Ohio by Indiana of the territory granted to Indiana within the Ohio boundary. Commissioners were appointed by each State--W. Tillman, on the part of Ohio, and Jeremiah Sullivan, on the part of Indiana,--who arranged a treaty between the two States by which Ohio agreed to construct her territory in exchange for the land granted to Indiana between the lake and the Ohio boundary. At the session of the Indiana Legislature, in 1831-2, the canal commissioners were authorized to place the middle division under contract, creating a board of fund commissioners, and authorizing a loan of \$200,000 on the credit of the State. At the first meeting of this board, held in Indianapolis in 1832, it was found that the total amount realized from the sale of canal lands was \$28,651.

A GREAT ENGINEERING FEAT.

The work of building this canal was a stupendous engineering feat. The elevation of the Maumee above Lake Erie, at the head of the rapids, is sixty three feet, at Defiance, eighty feet; at the State line, 125 feet and at Ft. Wayne, 163 feet. The summit level of the water of the canal was 193 feet above the lake, two feet higher than the marsh, which is the summit between the Maumee and Wabash rivers. The surface of the head branch of the St. Joseph river is at an altitude of 423 feet. The reservoir at Rome city, built by the State in 1838, to aid in supplying a proposed canal from Ft. Wayne to Lake Michigan, has an altitude of 367 feet.

The ceremony attending the commencement of the work of building the canal took place February 22, 1832. A public meeting was called at the Masonic Hall in Ft. Wayne, and was attended by all the prominent men, not only

of this city, but of the entire Maumee valley. A procession was formed, and proceeded across the St. Mary's river to a point that had been selected. Charles W. Ewing made the address, and he was followed by a number of other orators. Commissioner Vigus, after his speech, struck a spade into the ground and exclaimed: "I am now about to commence the Wabash and Erie Canal in the name of and by the authority of the State of Indiana." He threw up a few spades of earth, a number of other men began an indiscriminate digging, and then the procession marched back to town. The first letting of the contract was in June, 1832. On July 4, 1835, the canalboat Indiana passed through the canal to Huntington. The completion of the canal was celebrated July 4, 1843, by a grand demonstration, held in a grove west of the city. People came from Cincinnati, Toledo, Detroit, Cleveland, Indianapolis and many other points. There was a great barbecue, and Peter Kiser drove a fat ox from the Wea prairie, 145 miles southwest from Ft. Wayne, at the rate of ten miles a day, to be roasted on that occasion. The principal orator was Gen. Lewis Cass, and Kiser, the man who furnished the ox, was afterward elected to the Legislature. While Gen. Cass was speaking a cannon, captured from the British by Commodore Perry, was frequently fired.

THE FIRST CANAL BOAT.

The first canal boat at Ft. Wayne was built in 1834. In 1843 the first packet was run between Ft. Wayne and Toledo, and in the summer of 1844, a regular line was organized, with eleven boats and a steam propeller, for use on both banks of the canal. In 1854 the opening of the Wabash railway caused the withdrawal of the packet lines forever. In 1847 the Wabash and Erie canal under the State debt act, passed into the control of the board of three trustees, two of whom were appointed by the holders of Indiana bonds, and one by the Legislature of Indiana.

As the years rolled by, the railway took away the business of the canal, and the glory of the "old Erie" departed. That portion of it running through this city was purchased by the Nickel-Plate railway company, who filled it up and now runs its trains over what was once one of the most important waterways in America. The long aqueduct over St. Mary's river was taken down, and near its side was erected a handsome iron bridge. The wide canal, just west of the St. Mary's was filled up, and converted into a railway yard.

What the fine vestibule train of to-day is to the traveler, the packet on the Erie was to the traveler then. It was drawn by better whipped mules than those that tugged at the slower freight boats. It was a craft of larger size, fitted up with comfortable accommodations for a passage of many days and nights. The packet's approach to Ft. Wayne was always heralded by a great blowing of horns from the deck of the boat, followed by a bustling of the tradesmen on the wharf, and the hurrying to the door of no small portion of the populace. The passengers went ashore and attended to what business they had. Then the blowing of the horn summoned on board those who were to continue their journey the mule driver cracked his whip, and away went the packet. The excitement was over until the arrival of the next passenger boat.

I stood last night near a magnificent sleeping car, side-tracked for its passengers, with a neatly-dressed porter at its step, and heard many stories of life on the canal. Near where that sleeping car stood once had plowed the packets on the Wabash and Erie canal.

W. H. BLODGETT.

(Special to The Indianapolis News.)

PETERSBURG, Ind., January 4.---With the passing of the last vestige of the old Wabash and Erie canal there has been brought to light evidences of one of the many tragedies that have occurred along the banks. Workmen employed in excavating along the only remaining stretch of tow path in this county unearthed the bones of a man and woman. It is believed that the find explains the mystery that surrounded the sudden disappearance of pretty Lillian O'Ryan and her sweetheart, Patrick Toole, almost fifty years ago. When the Wabash and Erie canal was in process of construction, the banks were lined with the huts and tents of Irish workmen, and in these little settlements there were many fights and quarrels that led to numerous murders. But the O'ryan mystery, as it was known for years occasioned unusual excitement. Lillian O'Ryan was the belle of all the Irish girls who followed the course of the winding canal, and her father was one of the overseers. Toole was a young laborer, who became madly infatuated with the girl, and declared he would marry her at any cost. One stormy night Toole went to the O'Ryan home and asked his sweetheart to accompany him to his tent, where his mother was dying. That was the last seen of the couple. The whole camp turned out to search for the missing ones, but no trace of them was ever found, and their relatives and friends passed away one by one, each with the belief that Lillian O'Ryan and her beau had been swallowed up by a mystery that would never be explained. But the men who found the initials-"L.-R."-engraved on-it-served- bones are certain they belong to the two lovers. A plain gold ring, with the initials "L. R." engraved on it, served to identify what remained of Lillian O'Ryan and a rusty dagger near by shows how she met her death.

THE OTHER SKELETON.

The remaining link in the mystery has been unraveled by Mike Conner, an old farmer, living near Evansville, and the only man now living who joined in the search for the missing girl. Conner says the day after Toole and his sweetheart disappeared; a break was reported in the canal bank, a short distance from the camp. But breaks in the bank were common, and this particular one was filled up as quickly as possible, it not being connected with the missing couple in any way. Conner says he often saw Toole with the knife that was found near one of the bony hands. He says the spot where the skeletons were unearthed is one where the break in the canal occurred. He thinks Toole, in a fit of rage over Lillian O'Ryan's refusal to marry him, killed her and carried her body to the side of the canal, where he tried to hide, the result of his deed by burying her near the edge of the water, where it would hardly be found by the searchers. That part of the canal was cut through a treacherous stretch of quicksand, and it is Conner's opinion that Toole was caught by a bank caving in with him, and the jealous lover was buried alive in the same grave that he had prepared for his fair-haired sweetheart.



RESERVOIR WAR IN CLAY

There are at this time but comparatively few people living having any knowledge, much less personal recollection, of the "Reservoir" or "Clay county" war, of nearly half a century ago, in which the State played a conspicuous part under the administration, of Governor Joseph A. Wright, the first executive under the new constitution, who dispatched the militia to the county for the protection of the property rights and interests of the Wabash & Erie Canal Company.

The feeder dam, on Eel river, proving insufficient to facilitate the operation of the canal, two reservoirs were constructed, known as the Splunge creek and Birck creek feeders. The resident population bordering on and adjacent to these feeders, as a sanitary precaution, protested against their being filled before the removal of the timber covering their areas, and demanded, also, that the minimum depth of water maintained should at no time be less than two feet, to which stipulations the canal company did not accede, but proceeded to fill the reservoirs.

To allay the feeling of hostility on the part of the aggrieved population, the canal company procured the passage of an act at the legislative session of 1853, authorizing the Governor to appoint a committee of five to visit these feeders, and report to the State Department as to their condition and their effects upon the health of the surrounding territory. This committee, composed of Joseph H. Cook, of Vermilion county; A. D. Gall, of Marion; John S. Ford, of Jackson; Samuel Grimes, of Carroll, and Matthew Smith, or Rush, proceeded to the discharge of their trust in the month of August, 1853, submitting their report at a subsequent date within the same year, which did not corroborate the

the contention of the residents, but, on the contrary, maintained that the feeders were a source of benefit to the health of the respective communities.

On the night of September 9 succeeding the Feeder dam was fired, burning the breastwork down to low-water level, when, to avert any further depredations and damage, Governor Wright issued a proclamation, dated October 19, offering a reward of \$500 for the "apprehension, arrest and lodgment in custody of the offenders, or any of them." A handbill, proclaiming this offer of reward, which had been posted conspicuously on the site of the reservoir, was clandestinely removed by night, and another substituted in writing, offering the same reward for the "apprehension, arrest" and delivery of "Old Joe Wright," in good order, on the banks of the Feeder.

COMPROMISE NOT KEPT IN GOOD FAITH.

But the compromise "patched up" by the meeting of the joint interests at the Feeder dam was not kept in good faith. The company continued to maintain an armed guard, both day and night, on the embankment of the Birch creek feeder and on the 10th day of May, 1855, a party of 100 men, in disguise and armed, marching under the flag and to the music of fife and drum, moved upon the company's works, drove away the guards, and deliberately cut and drained the feeder.

As an incident in this connection, the Cincinnati Commercial on receiving the issue of the Clay County Citizen, giving details of this depredation, published the following editorial comment: "We were yesterday, surprised to receive a paper from Clay county, Indiana. We did not even presume that the people read the papers in that swampy, sloppy, soggy, sticky, stinking, stifling, stubborn, starving, subsidiary, slav-

oring, slavish, swinish, sheepish, sorrowfully dark, desolate, direful, devilish, dim, doleful, downcast, dirty, despairing, deluded, degenerate, dismal, dreary, driveling, demoniac, dilapidated, locality, where public works are destroyed, and the officers, whose duty it is to defend the laws, with blacked faces trample them under foot. On first opening this paper, we felt hopeful, thinking there would be light shining in the midst of darkness, but we discovered that the Clay County Citizen only makes darkness visible, as it is the organ of the canal cutters."

MILITIA CALLED OUT.

In the latter part of May, 1855, in compliance with the urgent and repeated appeals of the trustees of the canal interests for the protection and preservation of their property, Governor Wright issued his proclamation ordering two companies of militia, under command of Col. John W. Dodd, of Indianapolis, to repair to the scene of damage and trouble. This force, preparatory to the march to the seat of war, was recruited, organized and equipped at Evansville, from which point the canal company provided transportation into the very heart of the "enemy's country."

In detailing the campaign of the army of occupation the following quotation is appended from a letter received by the writer from the Hon. Charles Denby, of Evansville, written a short time before embarking on his Government mission to China:

"I shall take pleasure in giving you my recollections briefly of the "reservoir war." As nearly accurate as I can recall the exact date of going into encampment at the reservoir, it was on the day that the so-called Maine liquor law went into effect, which was in June, 1854,

I think, but you can get the date accurate from the records of the Secretary of State. I am satisfied, however, that it was on that day, because the command started out with a jug of whisky, which was ordered broken by the captain while we were marching on the towpath. Then there was not a drop to be had by any of the command for ten days.

DIVIDED INTO DETACHMENTS.

"Our command was divided into two detachments. About fifteen of us were encamped at the lower reservoir, and had our meals, and very good ones they were, at a house on its banks. Our time was mostly occupied in chasing and deluding ducks, fishing and watching Clay county people shoot fish with their rifles.

"Some of the command vainly scoured the country for 'something to drink.' One of them succeeded in getting (sic) some aquqa fortis. We were supposed to patrol the canal and reservoir at night, which we did in a very deliberate fashion--taking frequent rests. Nobody ever assaulted or threatened to assault us, and we were entirely peaceable on our side. Of course we had many false alarms and a good deal of fun.

"We remained on the ground ten days. The remainder of the troops occupied two old canal boats, which were high and dry. I think they did more service than we did; but playing cards seemed to be their chief engagement. Sheriff Gavett arrested a few citizens, and took them before a justice, but nothing was proved against them, add there were no convictions. Indeed, a conviction would have been impossible. The reservoirs were considered nuisances by the residents, and the Supreme Court afterward almost justified their suppression by the cut-

ting of their banks by Clay countians. None of the command met an enemy in the field nor elsewhere. The Clay county people were very friendly. They came into the camp in numbers, and discussed the situation. Their mark was a dime in the fork of a stick at twenty steps, and they hit it every time with their rifles. We were rather glad that the battle did not impend.

"There were no companies but the Evansville volunteers that I can recall, although I have an indistinct recollection that there were others with us. There were no incidents of note aside from three square meals a day. The diet was principally fish, and the bass were excellent. Our military labors were very light, and indeed, the whole affair was a rather enjoyable picnic. On our return to Terre Haute we were banqueted by the citizens, when Will Dement opened a basket of champagne. Under its influence we made speeches and became very patriotic. We explained in beautiful phrasology how we would have fought if there had been any occasion, but we were all very glad that there was no occasion.

AGREEMENT BRINGS PEACE.

To facilitate an amicable adjustment of the hostilities pending, and avert a conflict between the militia and the Clay countians, Governor Wright detailed Col. John B. Nees, then the most public-spirited and best-known citizen of the county and ex-member of the State Legislature, in the civil capacity, to meet and confer with Colonel Dodd on the site of the Birch creek feeder, where the army of occupation was encamped in two canal-boats, now the ground on which Saline City stands, in part. When asked by Col. Dodd whether he anticipated any armed resistance, Colonel Nees replied (half-way jesting) that in his ride of

twelve miles that day about every man along the way was molding bullets and wiping his rifle, saying that he was going squirrel hunting. By agreement a public meeting was called for, jointly considering the situation, which was addressed by Cols. Dodd and Nees, at a point then known as the Grimes hill, with ex-sheriff Charles W. Moss as spokesman for the immediate resident population. An instrument of writing was drawn up and presented for the signatures of those supposed to be implicated in the depredations committed, and their abettors and sympathizers, plighting their word and honor that there should be no further interference with the property of the canal company, but no pledges were made, no signatures procured. Though wholly fruitless in results, the meeting was a peaceable one throughout.

INDIANAPOLIS NEWS FEBRUARY 15, 1902
(ck)

CANAL BOAT COMPETITION

A strange old place this is now. A few handsome dwellings, a store or two and a railway station that might be better, and you have what was once a great point in Indiana. It was in 1837 that the place was laid out, and was known as "Rochester." It was an Indiana traveling post, and a fort built on a point that extended into the river was known for many years as "Conner's Fort," but it is all washed away now, and where it stood for years is only a memory. In the early days of the old Whitewater canal Cedar Grove was a place of importance, for here were located dry docks, where T. Morse & Co. carried on extensively the business of repairing and building canal-boats. The firm was composed of T. Morse, U. Kendall, S. Coffin and B. G. Child, all of whom and their descendants have been identified more or less with Indiana history.

SURVIVOR OF CANAL-BOAT DAYS.

Half way between here and Brookville in a handsome country home, lives Josiah McCafferty, the last of the captains who sailed the canal in its busy days. He is almost eighty years old, hale and rugged; considerably deaf, but beyond that as lively as a man of sixty. His memory is clear and bright, and when I spoke of the old canal days his eyes twinkled and his smile increased.

"Well, I know a few things about that old canal," said Captain McCafferty, "for, man and boy, I have been near it all my life. I used to hide behind the trees and throw stones at the Irish laborers, who were brought here to dig it. The digging began, I think, in 1836, and I think it was along some time in 1839 that the water was let into it from Lawrenceburg to Brookville, and if I remember right, it was opened

to Cincinnati along about 1848. The canal broke in 1847 and again in 1852, and caused considerable damage, but it was built up again and business increased for a while and then began to let down.

RECHRISTENED THE HENRY CLAY.

"The first boat was the Ben Franklin. She had been running on the Miami canal for a number of years, and it was decided to bring her over here. She was dropped down from the Miami canal to the Ohio river and floated to Lawrenceburg and put into the Whitewater canal. I bought her and changed the name to the Henry Clay, and there weren't any boats on the canal that could make any better time. I built a number of boats to sell, and always got a good price for them. The first boat built at Cedar Grove was called the Native, and when she started on her first trip there was a good deal of excitement all along the canal. The Native was a passenger and freight boat and was fitted up in a manner that was gorgeous for those days. There were two cabins and large state rooms ranged on the side, the same as is now seen on passenger steamers. Stephen Coffin was the builder and captain, and when he started out on a trip he always made a good deal of fuss about it.

"Finally I built a boat call the Belle of Indiana, and there was nothing on the canal that touched her anywhere. The swan line of packets was put on about that time. They did not carry anything but light freight and passengers, and it was expected then they would make a fortune for their owners. But they did not pay, and after a season or two they were withdrawn. I carried passengers on the Belle Indiana and some of the most famous men of the day used to ride with me, but I did not pay a great deal of attention to them, for I generally was too busy."

"There used to be some lively times on the canal, no doubt?"

INTENSE RIVALRY BETWEEN BOAT CREWS.

"Lively isn't the word for it," chuckled the old captain. "There was an intense rivalry between the boats, and the way they used to race was a caution, and when one boat tried to pass another it was about sure to end in a fight. The crew of a boat was the captain, two steersmen, cook and driver, and sometimes they all got into it. Down near Cleves, O., one time, two ---at crews got into a fight and one of the men was killed--that was the only killing I ever knew of, but I saw a whole lot of them beat up."

"Ever get into a scrap yourself?"

"Oh, I guess I had my share," and he pulled his tall athletic form up to ^{its} height (sic), "but none of them was ever serious. You see, I had one of the fastest boats on the canal, and when I came round the bend, the other fellow just took it for granted that I would go by, so he hugged the shore and let me pass."

"What was the most exciting time you ever had on the canal?"

"Well, I had right smart of excitement, but the greatest time was when they opened the canal to Cambridge City. We knew for a long time that the canal was to be opened up to that place, but we did not know just when it would be, so we all laid away as much as possible and waited for the word. Several times it was reported the water was coming down, and we would edge up closer and get ready for the rush. It was just like the rushes they make down in the Indiana Territory, except we have canal boats instead of horses. At last the word came that the water was in the canal at Cambridge City, and we started.

"There were twenty boats, and everyone tried to get by the other, and when we had to make the locks, I tell you, there was some tall swearing and not^a little fighting, but no one was hurt. My boat and all the other packets were crowded with passengers. I had the Belle of Indiana then, and there was such a crowd on the deck that I had to separate them so the steersman could see the bow of the boat. When we got in sight of Milton it seemed as if the whole United States was there. There were two or three cannons fired and a band and the people were shouting and yelling like Indians. John Lemon was captain of the Belle of the West, and I was pushing him mighty hard, for he was in the lead. But the water was not deep enough for a good race and he beat me into Cambridge City, but I was right behind him.

GREETING AT CAMBRIDGE CITY.

"The crowd at Milton was not a patching to the crowd at Cambridge City. There were cannons, more bands, the State officers were there, and everyone had a great jubilee. They kept it up all night and most of the next day, and everyone had any kind of fun he wanted, and did not have to pay for it. I tell you, there is a big difference now and then. Why, we went through stretches of woods four and five miles long then to get to Cambridge, and it would be hard to find a stretch now half a mile long. Those were great days, though, and everyone made money, but mighty few kept it. It was come easy and go easy."

"How long did you run a boat on the Whitewater, Captain?"

"Of course, I was around the canal about all my life, but I ran a boat about seven years, and good years they were, too. But I saw that business on the canal was falling off, and so I sold all my boats,

closed out my business, bought a farm, and have been a farmer ever since. I'm getting to be a pretty old man, and want a rest. I guess that I am about the only one of the boys who used to run on the canal that is left, and it won't be very long until I tie up forever."

INDIANAPOLIS NEWS FEBRUARY 26, 1902
(ck)

WHEN LOCKS OF THE OLD WABASH AND ERIE CANAL CLOSED FOR LAST TIME
IT MARKED THE DECLINE OF THE THEN PROSPEROUS TOWN OF PITTSBURG

Pittsburg, Ind.

When the locks of the old Wabash and Erie canal were closed for the last time, some thirty years ago, the incident was important to Pittsburg, then the head of navigation on the song-historic Wabash. The closed water gates marked a turn in the commercial tide of the town, and it drifted into a slumber, peaceful and unbroken.

Pittsburg has had a strange history. When the Wabash and Erie canal was opened in the early 40's the canal company built a dam across the Wabash river above the town, then a trading post. Delphi, the present county-seat of Carroll county, two miles to the south, was not on the map then. The building of the dam was made necessary to fill the canal and make it navigable. That dam made and unmade Pittsburg.

The river lay between the town and the canal. The dam, therefore, made it possible to build millraces along the northern bank of the river. This opportunity was readily grasped by millers and manufacturers and the canal company, anxious to have factories along the canal, readily consented to the use of the dam to flush a millrace. From all sections of the country, spectators flocked and Pittsburg promised to be a great manufacturing center.

Water Space at Premium.

The millrace was made, the water pured through its gates and soon the town was in the midst of a manufacturing boom. Water space along the millrace was held at a premium. The millrace began and ended

in the Wabash, covering a distance of half a mile. Mills began to build on every available site on the race.

For thirty years following the opening of the millrace Pittsburg prospered. Woolen mills, saw mills, grist mills, foundries and factories were built along the race and the song of the water wheels became familiar music to the people of the town. The canal company made Pittsburg an important port between Toledo and Evansville. Boats ran into the town by the score and products of the Pittsburg mills were carried to innumerable marts.

The Wabash river was navigable for small boats running between Pittsburg and the Ohio river, but small packets reached Logansport. The trade and town grew in proportion and Pittsburg, then built on the northern shore of the Wabash and under a high hill, found it necessary to extend its confines to the hilltops.

Pittsburg Looked Good.

From a trading post to a town of five or six hundred inhabitants, Pittsburg grew within a few years. Schools and churches came with prosperity. The evil came, too, for groggery was necessary to satisfy the inner cravings of the canal boatmen. Homes, pretty and pretentious, were erected on the hill. Pittsburg looked good for a hundred years of prosperity.

But the dream was broken. Today there is not a manufacturing concern in Pittsburg. Two or three small country stores find an existence through trade with the farmers. The once splendid homes of the manufacturers are passing to dust, and in many places in Pittsburg the foundations of good old homes are all that are left to tell the story. Where there were streets in the old days, weed patches now hold sway.

Along the old millrace one may find portions of the stone foundations of the old mills. Not one of the mills has been left standing by floods and Father Time. The millrace is weed-grown and dry.

Railroad Caused it All.

The wrecking of Pittsburg's future began when the canal gates were closed in 1872. The survivors of the days when Pittsburg was prosperous say that the Wabash railroad was the cause of it all. The railroad crosses the Wabash on the eastern side of the town, but it does not stop there. The trains pass the once vigorous town as though hurrying to get away from it.

They tell it this way: The Wabash railroad wanted to end the days of the canal in commerce. It also had trouble keeping its tracks in traffic form because the canal and river frequently overflowed and damaged them. The railroads had seriously crippled the canal's business in 1872, and when the canal company received an offer from the Wabash railroad to buy the waterway the company quickly came to terms. No sooner had the deal been closed than the canal gates were closed for the last time and traffic suspended. That deal was Pittsburg's undoing.

Dam Had to Go.

The closing of the canal meant the closing of the millrace. The railroad company wanted to get rid of the dam. So did the farmers in country above it. Frequent attempts had been made to blow up the canal with dynamite while the millrace and canal were in operation. On numerous occasions the canal men found kegs and boxes of dynamite

under it. After the canal was closed the determination of the farmers became more marked. The dam had to go. The attempts at its destruction became more frequent, and in the winter of 1872-74 it went out with dynamite as a persuader.

The "night the dam went out" is a part of Pittsburg's history. Every incident dates from before and after that event. For months prior to the "going out of the dam," the manufacturers had fought to protect it, it being necessary for the life of their mills. They employed a watchman to keep an eye out for dynamiters.

John Mader, now a deputy sheriff of Carroll county, and a citizen of Delphi, was employed to watch the dam and protect it from the dynamiters. One night, when the Wabash was ice-bound and the thermometer well below zero, three hundred marked farmers, their sons, and sympathizers, marched upon Mader and his dam. The watchman was quickly overpowered and carried to a neighboring forest. There he was bound to a tree.

A half hour later Mader heard an explosion and the forest in which he was held a prisoner was showered with ice. The dam was wrecked by the explosion and the river broke from its long prison and flooded the lands below. The dynamite threw chunks of ice on a hill called Mount Pisgah, a quarter of a mile away.

The mills did not run the next day. The millrace was left high and dry by the receding river and it has not since turned the mill wheels, for "the mill will never grind with the waters that have passed."

One by one the manufacturers of Pittsburg sought other locations. Husbands, fathers and sons left old Pittsburg to find other employment. Not a few of the old canal boatmen, who had acquired homes in the town decided to leave their fortunes to its future and remained there. They took to their gardens in the summer and spent the winters dreaming of the old days and spending the money they acquired on the canal. Some of these old-timers are there today. They are spending their days in the quiet of the town and the glory of kins could not drag them from it. It is home, sweet home to them and not a factory whistle breaks upon the silence.

An Old Canal Boatman.

Among the old-time canal boatmen who have linked life and death with Pittsburg is Capt. George Prough, now in his seventy-fifth year. He ran a canal boat between Pittsburg and Toledo. He is hale and hearty and frequently remarks that if the old canal were open today he would be earning dollars on it. He takes daily walks along the old paths he used to tread when his mules jogged along the towpath carrying the lazy scow and its burden to distant Toledo. They were good old days to Captain Prough and he would give his all to live there over again. The joys and sorrows of river boat life were one to him.

Today good old Captain Prough sat on a knoll of the old millrace and gazed toward the river. He stroked his beard, smiled and looked good for some reminiscence.

"When I came to Pittsburg, in the late 30's," the old canal boatman began, "the Wabash wasn't as big as it is now. The years and

and the floods have widened her out to a right respectable river."

Picture was Delightful.

As he talked his eyes wandered far across the river and its cornfields. The picture was delightful. The river wound around a chain of tree-studded hills that lay to the north of the stream that made Paul Dresser and his song famous. The cornfields of the Wabash on the southern side of the river waved their banners in the breezes.

"This isn't a bad place to live in," continued the captain, after he had imbibed the grandeur of the scene. "Somehow I couldn't leave old Pittsburg. All of the factories are gone, nearly all of us old fellows of canal boat days are gone and there's nothing left in the town but a few homes and a lot of memories.

"I'll tell you, boy, those were good old days that I'm telling you about in Pittsburg. Maybe we didn't used to have some merry fights up around the locks when the dam was there. The men on the mail packets used to run down the canal-boat lines and cause us all kinds of trouble. Then there would be a fight to a finish, and many's the sore head I've had and seen.

"How the canal-boaters did hate the packet men! The steamboat people always thought themselves about the best on earth and their brags only made us hate them all the more. One reason we hated them was that the Government always required that if a canal--boat was starting into the locks and then sighted a packet, it had to stay out and let the despised mail packet go though the locks first. Then the packet men would give us the laugh. Then that meant fight

the next time we caught them on land.

"I don't know what I'd give to have those old days back again. But it all went when the canal went. Here, along the millrace, was factory after factory. They paid good wages, and there was a scarcity of homes here. Now it is different. All of the mills have gone, and so have the old boys. When a child grows up in Pittsburg he usually goes to the city to live. Pittsburg has nothing to offer her children now. There isn't a place to work here."

An Unsolved Mystery.

The old man looked out toward the remnants of the old dam and smiled. He recalled the excitement that the destruction of the dam caused in Pittsburg, and laughed about how some of the women thought the world had come to an end. Nobody ever found who the dynamiters were, and their identity is as much of a mystery today as it was thirty years ago. That blast of dynamite ruined Pittsburg. But it is still home, sweet home to three hundred folk.

W. M. Herschell

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS, Saturday, July 18, 1903

(bb)

HECKMAN
BINDERY INC.



JUL 91

N. MANCHESTER,

